

DISSERTATION

AFGHANISTAN: INTERNAL STRIFE AND EXTERNAL RESPONSE IN THE POST-SOVIET DISUNION PERIOD



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**AFGHANISTAN: INTERNAL STRIFE AND EXTERNAL
RESPONSE IN THE POST-SOVIET DISUNION PERIOD**

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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
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30 MAY, 2000**

CERTIFICATE

This is certified that the present thesis entitled *Afghanistan: Internal Strife and External Response in the Post-Soviet Disunion Period* is written by Mr. Sheikh Mutahir Ahmed, Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, University of Karachi, towards the fulfillment of the requirement of Ph.D. degree in International Relations. The dissertation is based on original research.



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ABSTRACT

Afghanistan is connected with three very important regions of the world-- South, West and Central Asia. Therefore, it increases its importance in region and outside the region. Though the Soviet disunion changed the order of international politics, the struggle for power remains the same. Afghanistan is one of the afflicted areas where regional and extra-regional powers are trying to dominate the internal politics, which leads the country towards chaos and anarchy. The premature exit of Najibullah's regime intensified the problem. The Resistance Movement had taken full advantage of the situation and the regional states helped them in grabbing the power. But the multi-ethnic and multi-lingual character of Afghanistan did not permit Resistance Movement to take any firm and unified stand. Thus, right from the beginning, the Resistance Movement was divided on ethno-linguistic tribal and sectarian lines. Due to these reasons the Resistance Movement had not been able to create any broad-based representative government to replace the Najib's regime.

The Peshawar and Islamabad Accords did not yield any positive results. Hence, during the period between 1992 to 1996 various Resistance groups were locked in the power struggle, which deepened the crisis. The outside interference in the Afghan turmoil is not a new phenomenon. When the Soviet's deployed troops in Afghanistan, the Resistance Movement carried out guerilla operations with the assistance of Pakistan, the United States, China, Iran, Saudi Arabia and several other countries. In this way, the regional and extra-regional powers were involved in the Afghan crisis. They openly supported their favorites on the basis of sect and ethnic composition. The direct involvement of these powers institutionalized anarchy, power struggle and changing loyalties. The gap between State and Society widened, which led the country towards political chaos. Moreover, the political disunion deepened because 50,000 Afghans were killed in the senseless power struggle in the civil war. In this anarchic situation, a new phenomenon emerged on the Afghan scene known as Taliban. The emergence of Taliban is a symbolic expression of the Afghan society and state, which is passing through anarchy and senseless power struggle. Ideologically, Taliban has institutionalized religious nationalism, which is an extension of religious fundamentalism. In the Muslim world, they are working side by side on common platform. Both want to radicalize politics and cultural institutions purely on religious lines. The religious nationalism has been imported from the Middle East. With the investiture of the religious nationalism, the regional powers are also divided, which are supporting nationalist forces (Northern Alliance and religious nationalists (Taliban)). Thus, the Afghan crisis spills over to the South and the Central Asian regions. The effects of religious nationalism can be seen from Kashmir to Chechnya.

Taliban raised the slogan of Islam as an ideological factor. However, it becomes obvious that Taliban is also propagating Pashtun nationalism with a touch of religion. Afghan Islamism has its own dynamics borrowed from the two mainstream organizations: one from Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and other Pakistan's Jamaat-I-Islami. Strategically, the close connection with the Middle East was developed in 80's

with the help of Pakistan's ISI, American CIA and Saudi Intelligence. An international network was created, which imported Arab militants to fight along with Afghan militants. These militants brought their own view of Islam and also carrying back home their combat experience in the name of *Jihad*. These Arab militants have broken the traditional Sufi ideology. They were against all types of enlightenment in the society. The drastic changes in 90's have altered the alignment of these forces. Gulf crisis had radicalized politics in the Muslim world. The radical Islamic groups took hard-line position against the US and its allies. The conservative Middle Eastern states, which were the main supporters of the Islamic groups had changed their policies and withdrew their support. In this scenario, the Taliban factor emerged on the Afghan political scene. Presently, Taliban is trying to project its image as mature regime in the eyes of international community. Though Taliban has provided shelter to Bin Laden, the manner in which they handled the hostage crisis of the Indian aircraft in December 1999 at Kandhar, it has earned admiration from the UN and the other diplomatic circles.

Afghanistan shares borders with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Iran and Pakistan. Thus, Afghan crisis has a direct impact on Central and South Asian regions. These states have failed to provide any viable option for the solution of the Afghan crisis. Moreover, the political rivalries among regional states have provided fuel to the ongoing civil war in Afghanistan. The direct competition between Pakistan and Iran to capture trade route for Central Asian states do not allow any serious work on this direction.

The small arms proliferation and drug smuggling are also threatening the South and Central Asian societies. Presently, there is a clear linkage between opium, heroin production and weapons, which are used both to protect the drugs and bring drug profit and become a source of income for various Mujahidden groups. Furthermore, the availability of small arms, accessed through different routes and sources has changed the nature of conflict in South Asia. Whereas Kashmir conflict has escalated, involving India and Pakistan militarily. In this way, the regional actors have failed to maintain peace in Afghanistan. They involved themselves in the internal conflict and thus become the party to the conflict.

As far as the role of extra-regional powers is concerned, they tried to formulate a mechanism for the establishment of a broad-based government. The UN tried to find out a possible solution acceptable for Afghanistan and neighboring countries. From Geneva Accords to the formation of Six-plus-Two group, it failed to achieve its objective. The US focuses on the containment of terrorism and human rights as a part of its global agenda. The US wants to implement its policies in Afghanistan. Thus, the only viable option is to have a broad-based government.

The multi-ethnic societies in the developing world have a tendency to disintegrate easily. The process of disintegration spills over to other weak and fragile states. The only viable option for Afghanistan is to form a consensus among the warring factions of the Afghan society through available options prescribed by the UN.

INTRODUCTION

The Soviet disunion has changed the dynamics of international relations and internationalism (domination of the then superpowers on the international scene) has been replaced with regionalism. Thus, regional blocs are trying to dominate different regional power centers. Moreover, the struggle for regional supremacy has further enhanced the insatiable situation in various regional trouble spots of the world, particularly in Afghanistan, where the regional and extra-regional powers are trying to dominate the Afghan politics and are further intensifying the problem.

The topic of the dissertation covers the developments in Afghanistan after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. It was hoped that after the exit of Najibullah from power, the Afghan problem would be resolved. But the crisis is further aggravated and there is no hope for peace as yet.

The dissertation will try to answer the following questions: -

1. What were the political, ideological and strategic implications of the Soviet disunion on Afghanistan?
2. Why Najibullah's exit from the Afghan power did not bring peace?
3. What are the weaknesses of the Afghan Resistance movements?
4. What is the nature of ethnic and sectarian conflicts in the Afghan Society?
5. Why have the regional actors failed to maintain peace in Afghanistan?
6. How the civil war in Afghanistan destabilized the political order in Central Asia?
7. How has small arms proliferation affected the Afghan Society and its impact on other conflicting areas?
8. How are Islamic extremist forces trying to destabilize the South and the Central Asian regions?
9. How has the drug smuggling created regional and international problems?
10. What is the role of extra-regional powers in Afghanistan?

Hypothesis

Afghanistan is one of the by-products of the old bipolar system, which is based on anarchy, state, sovereignty and power politics. However, there is no central authority in internal systems, which can curb the hostile ambitions of the aggressive states. The impact of the global transformation on regional conflicts is reflected in Afghanistan, which has its own local dynamics. Anarchy and power politics in Afghanistan is not an indigenous phenomenon but an echo of internal systems of the Third World. This is further reflected on the struggle for power among various Afghan factions and the interests of regional and extra-regional powers which is continue to threaten peace and stability in the South and the West Asian regions.

Time Limitation

The topic covers a detailed study of internal and external dynamics of the Afghan problem. Therefore, the time limitation is from 1991 to 1998. I have planned to embark on a comprehensive study of the Afghan crisis in the context of the politics of regional and extra-regional powers and their impact on the Afghan crisis.

Source material

The dissertation is a combination of primary and secondary sources. I have tried my utmost to collect primary source materials like speeches, interviews, documents, statements and newspapers and also tried to get first-hand information concerning the topic of the dissertation. A separate portion on reading material in the shape of bibliography is included along with synopsis.

Division of Dissertation

The thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter one deals with the implications of the Soviet disunion on Afghanistan and Najibullah's exit from Afghan political scene. An attempt has been made to define the topic and to discuss its scope and limitation. The central idea has been discussed in this chapter. Chapter two deals with the Afghan Resistance movements. In this chapter I have tried to analyze the nature and the weaknesses of the Resistance movements. Moreover, the nature of ethnic and sectarian factors in Afghanistan and their impacts on Afghan society have also been analyzed in detail. Chapter three deals with the concerns of the regional powers and the impact of Afghan civil war on South and Central Asian regions. The chapter also tries to see the contemporary issues of the post-cold war era, i.e., the rise of religious nationalism, drug problem, small arms proliferation and its impact on Kashmir and other conflicting areas.

Chapter four deals with the role of extra-regional powers. Attempt has been made to analyze the role of the United Nations (UN), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the European Union (EU) and the United States in detail and analyzes the entire spectrum of the thesis. Effort has been made to include recent developments in the thesis to make it more comprehensive. Finally, Appendix is included which focuses on interviews of renowned academicians who have given their views on the Afghan crisis that makes the thesis more graspable and knowledgeable.

Theoretical Framework

The scholars in the field of International Relations devoted their energies on the Soviet-US confrontation during the Cold War era. After the breakup of the ideological socialist bloc, the global transformation on international scene has been emerged but it has no new and significant impact on the theoretical work in the discipline of International Relations. However, the mainstream International Relations theory focuses on stabilizing or destabilizing effects of the bipolar system and has a direct impact on the Third World. Even the central concepts such as anarchy, state sovereignty, rational

choice, alliance and the international system are troublesome when applied to the Third World.¹ There are four elements of this approach. First, realists, neorealists and neoliberal scholars who viewed that anarchy or anarchical internal system exists in the international system because there is an absence of central rule or central government with the power to curb the offensive ambitions of others.² Furthermore, they also observed that the assumptions about the nature of the international system may describe as relations among the major powers, whether they reflect the situation of lesser power, who that perceive international system has been regulated by few major powers.

Moreover, a significant theory launched by Carlos Escobar who stated that it is not anarchy but hierarchy that constrains the external behavior of the most of the Third World states. The two distinguish scholars Alexander Wendt and Michael Barnett take the middle position in the debate, arguing that the international system is existentially anarchic but is overlaid by informal hierarchical "authority structures" he called "Informal empires" that are not anarchic for the dependent political units within them.³

Second, on international system, Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky view that the key to understand the real world order is to separate the world into two parts. The first part comprises the zones of peace, wealth and democracy while the other part is zones of turmoil, war and underdevelopment.⁴ It means that it is a matter of centre-periphery relationship. The developed North represents 'Centre' while underdeveloped South represents 'Periphery'. Third, state which is central concept of the present International Relations, is a democratic constitutional institution, an effective government, inviolate geographical boundaries and a monopoly over the use of force within boundaries. But the concept of State does not fit easily into most non-western settings. The arbitrary boundaries drawn by the external powers are often unacceptable to warring ethnic groups that reside within them and the ruling central government is frequently perceived as a threat to be challenged. The Third World intellectuals reject it on the grounds because they were drawn by imperial powers. However, there is a little consensus among the scholars on state as a political institution. Finally, sovereignty which is closely associated with state the common definition of sovereignty is to get freedom from external control. Practically, the major powers not only influencing the sovereignty of the state but also sometimes physically intervene in state affair, which further aggravate the situation. Even the United Nations cannot do anything particularly when foreign military intervention takes place. In this context, the neo-Marxist is very much popular in the Third World. The theory link economic underdevelopment in the periphery within the exploitative policies of the capitalist core. These radical scholars reject western form of democracy and term it a ploy against the people of the Third World. Instead of it, they propagate an idea of self-reliance in economic and political spheres. In order to link all these theories, one can conclude that the role of the Third World in international politics remains a theoretical puzzle. However, the anarchy and power politics in the Third World countries are basically a reflection of International System, which has no central authority.

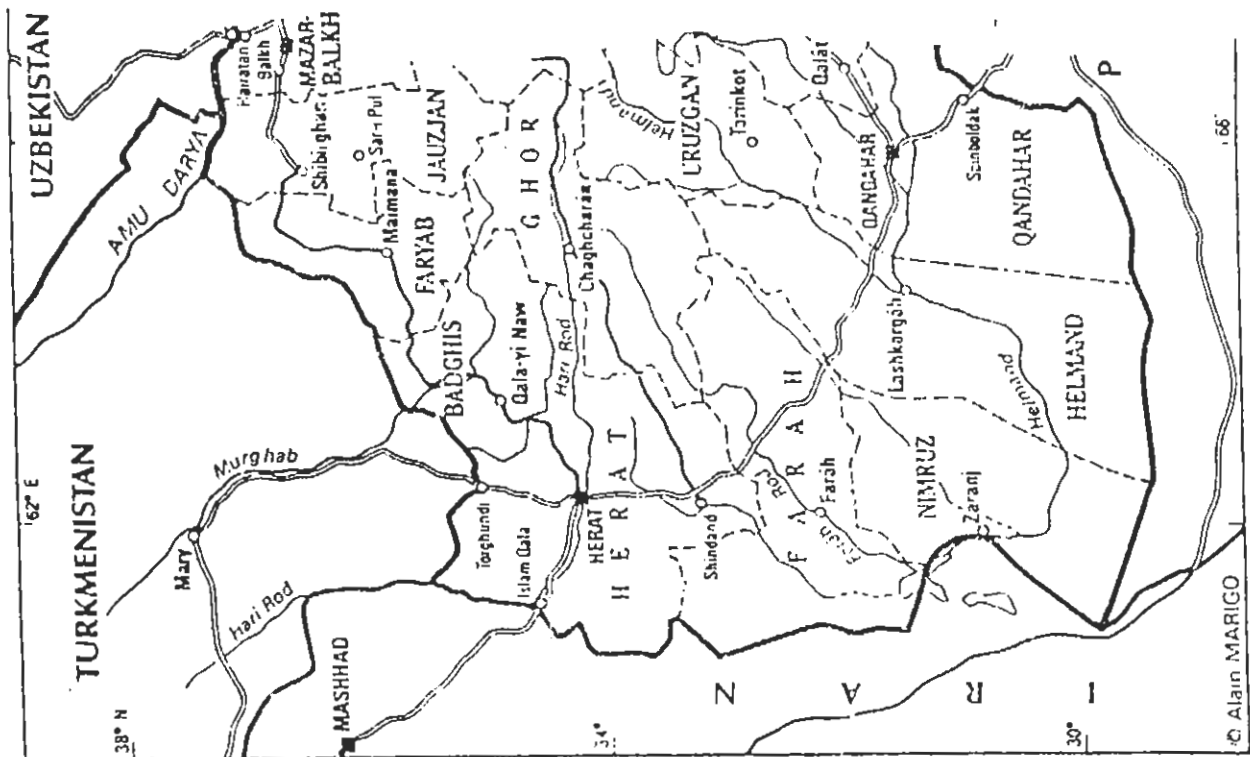
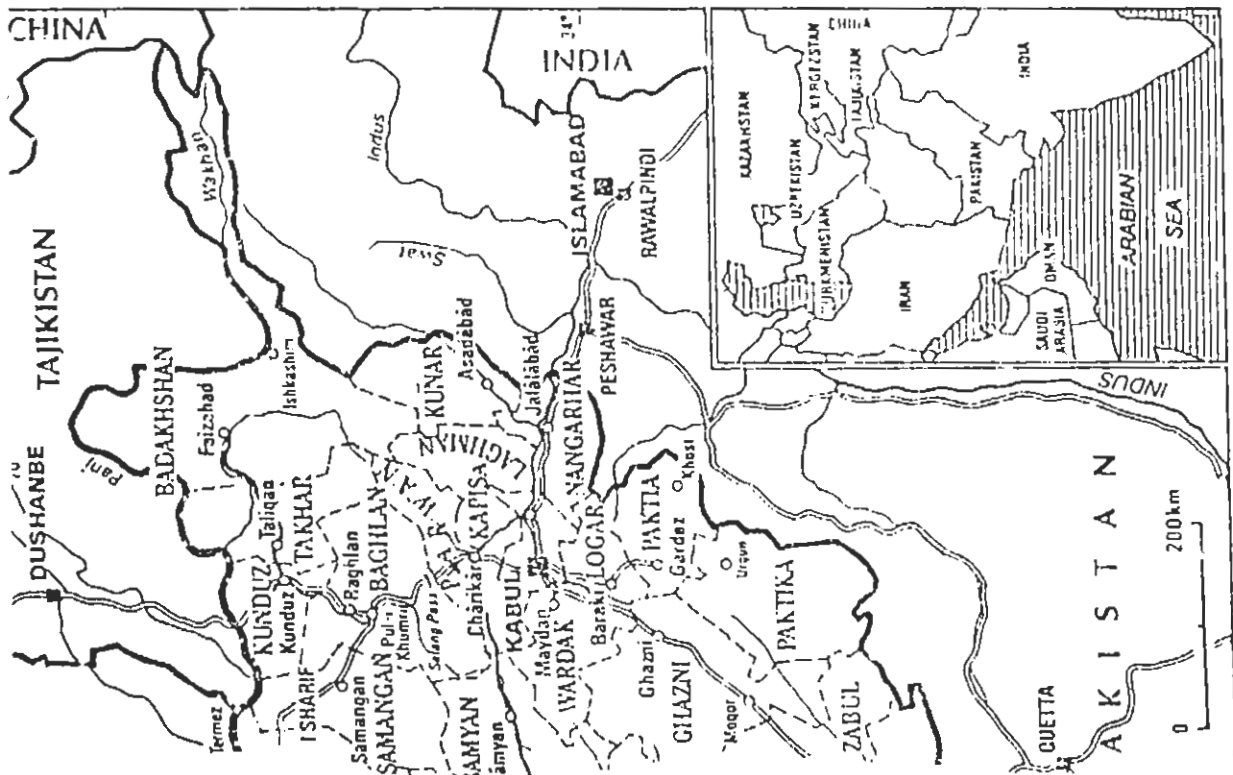
¹ Stephanie G. Newman, *International Relations Theory* (London Macmillan Press, 1998), p.2.

² Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison Wesley, 1979) pp.102-104.

³ Stephanie G. Newman, *op.cit.*, p3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

In the case of Afghanistan, the conflict is domestic in nature having no central authority to control the fragile state or to hold sovereignty, naturally it spill over to other regions ie. South and Central Asia. Presently, when the global transformation has taken place in economic, political, ideological and social spheres, Afghanistan still locked in civil war. The effects of unipolarity has not make any difference in Afghanistan. Fragile state, shattering sovereignty, domestic power politics are the symbolic expressions of a crumbling state which further highlighted the anarchic situation of International systems. The problem of Afghanistan is a combination of anarchy and hierarchy, which is a symbolic expression of International Systems. In conclusion, the Afghan crisis is a reflection of anarchic International system though the Afghan crisis is purely domestic in nature.



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Political Map of Afghanistan and Surrounding Countries, January 1992

Note: Before 1992 the territory north of Afghanistan was part of the USSR.

Chapter One

The disintegration of the Soviet Union and its implications on Afghanistan

The dynamics of international politics has changed with the disintegration of the Soviet Union. However, Afghanistan, the last hitch between the United States and the former Soviet Union, remains to be settled.

The Soviet Union deployed its troops in Afghanistan in December 1979 under a treaty signed in 1978 between the then Government of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. In 1979, the regional scenario had changed. The Shah of Iran was overthrown by the clergy and other segments of the Society through a revolution. In Pakistan, Martial Law was imposed in July 1977 and the process of Islamization was launched.

Internally, in March 1979, military officers in Afghanistan led by Captain Ismail Khan, a member of Jamiat-e-Islami, took over the city of Herat and killed the Soviet advisers. The state apparatus of Afghanistan was heading towards collapse because insurgents operated from their bases in Pakistan.¹ In this scenario, the centralized Soviet Politburo analyzed the situation in two ways. On the one hand, they were of the opinion that the US would try to install a pro-American government in Kabul with the help of Pakistan, and on the other hand, the US reacted to events, which took place in Iran after the Revolution. Thus, the Soviet Union deployed troops in order to strengthen the communist control state apparatus and preserved the status of Afghanistan as a "buffer".

The US and the Soviet Union heavily poured military and non-military resources in Afghanistan. The Soviet intervention had cost about 5 billion dollars per year, compared with a total of about 2.5 billion dollars of aid in the previous twenty-five years.² During the period from 1986 to 1989, the US poured total aid to Mujahideen from all sources exceeded 1 billion-dollar per year. Like the Soviet expenditure exceeding the amount was also fifty times the average yearly expenditure by the US on aid to Afghanistan from 1955 to 1978.³

Gorbachev's policies of Glasnost and Perestroika

Mikhail Gorbachev, the last Secretary General of CPSU, took power in March 1985. He had presented a unique policy, which transformed international politics from confrontation to cooperation. Moreover, the policies of *Perestroika* and *Glasnost* were introduced in the Soviet Union which meant to restructure the fragile economy; integration of Moscow with the world economic system and opening up of the political institution within the country. The main idea was to introduce democracy in the Soviet Union and to send message to the world community that Moscow was now following the policy of peaceful cooperation rather than confrontation with its neighbors.

¹ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Search for Peace in Afghanistan from Buffer State to Failed State* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 28.

² See the cost estimate was given by the Soviet Premier Nikolai Ryzhkov in 1989, *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hong Kong), 13 July 1989, pp. 16-17. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 29.

³ Barnett R. Rubin, *op.cit.*, p. 30.

Mikhail Gorbachev's policies created a cordial atmosphere on international scene, which further led the Soviet-American rapprochement on both international and the regional levels. On Afghanistan, Gorbachev stated. "We want our soldiers back home as soon as possible. The Soviet Union wants Afghanistan to be independent, sovereign and non-aligned as before. It is the sovereign right of the Afghan nation to decide which road to take, what government to have, and what development programs to implement".⁴ Mikhail Gorbachev wanted to settle the Afghan problem as soon as possible, because he was of the view that the Afghan settlement would pave the way for the solution of other regional conflicts.

On 13 November 1986, the Soviet Politburo secretly decided to withdraw the Soviet troops from Afghanistan by the end of 1988 and to encourage the replacement of the socialist regime with a broader coalition, a regime of "national reconciliation".⁵ Actually, the policy of *Glasnost* changed the traditional Soviet foreign policy formulation, which focused on ideological orientation. The process of new thinking was to ease tension at the global level and focused more on domestic issues. In this regard, the Soviet policy makers tried to coordinate regional issues with its global policy and Afghanistan was the main area of regional tension.

Gorbachev's decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan appeared to be a product of his new political thinking. Finally, in a ceremony in Geneva presided over by the UN Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar in Geneva on April 14, 1998, the Foreign Ministers of Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Soviet Union and the United States signed the Geneva Accords, committing the Soviet Union to the withdrawal of its 115,000 troops from Afghanistan in February 1989.⁶ Thus, the "bleeding wound", which Gorbachev remarked at 25th party conference in February 1986⁷ ended after the Geneva Accords was signed.

Under the United Nations sponsored agreement, the Soviet Union began withdrawing its troops in 1988. But the United States and the Soviet Union poured enough stockpiles of arms and ammunition to their supportive parties to keep fighting going on for years to come. On 13 September 1991, the US and the Soviet Union announced negative symmetry in Moscow. According to it, both would stop arming to their allies in the Afghan conflict by the end of 1991.⁸

The Resistance movement were hoping that when the Soviet Union would have withdrawn from Afghanistan, they would easily overrun government outpost and would take the control of Kabul but they did not succeed because the Resistance movement were lacking an overall coordinated strategy and were divided on various issues and

⁴ Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika, New thinking for our country and the world* (London: William Collins Sons and Co. Ltd, 1987), p. 177.

⁵ Barnett R. Rubin, *op.cit.*, p.8.

⁶ Chronology Pakistan and the World (April-June 1988) *Pakistan Horizon*, (Karachi), Vol. XL1, No. 3, July 1988, p. 134.

⁷ Mehrunnisa Ali, "Geneva Accords and the superpowers", *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. XL1, No. 3, July 1988, p. 113.

⁸ Mutahir Ahmed, "Pakistan's Foreign Policy Quarterly Survey", *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 44, No. 4, October 1991, p. 9.

inexperienced tactics in battle field. However, the Kabul regime under the leadership of Najibullah successfully defended his regime after the Soviet withdrawal from 1989 till the disintegration of the Soviet Union in December 1991.

With the Soviet disunion, the Afghan political scene has changed. The ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA, also known as *Watan Party*) was divided on various issues particularly on ethnicity. The first crack appeared when Uzbek warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum defected from PDPA and allied with Tajik commander Ahmed Shah Masud. Thus, Dostum's defection resulted into the loss of entire northern part of the country from the government's control.⁹

Najibullah's exit from power: calculated move or miscalculation?

On 25 December 1991, Gorbachev announced his resignation and the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Soon after his speech, both the US and the Soviet Union agreed to complete the work, which began in Geneva in 1988. First to stop deliveries of weapons. Second, to stop aid to all parties in Afghanistan and third, to accelerate the UN sponsored political solution of the Afghan civil war. On 5 December 1991, the UN General Assembly called for an end of hostilities in Afghanistan so as to accomplish a political settlement acceptable to the people of Afghanistan and emphasized the need for an "early start" of an intra-Afghan dialogue for the establishment of a broad-based government. The UN also called on the parties to "exert every effort". The call was contained in a resolution worked out by Pakistan and the Soviet Union, and adopted by the 166 member Assembly by consensus and without a debate.¹⁰

With the break-up of the Soviet Union, the main supporter of the Kabul regime was no more on the international scene. Moreover, the US, which was backing to the most of the Resistance factions, also changed its policy due to its own compulsions. The external supporters of the Afghan factions seemed to be seriously working for a political settlement of the Afghan crisis under the UN aegis. The two sides had decided to cut off all military assistance to their respective allies from 13 January 1992, marking an end to the superpower competing role in Afghanistan. The UN Secretary-General outlined a peace plan to serve as the basis for a settlement of the Afghan issue and called on Afghan leaders to resolve their differences through political dialogue.

Internally, the UN Secretary-General's special envoy to Afghanistan, Benan Sevan, played a very vital role in persuading Najibullah to agree for the transfer of power in favour of a caretaker government. The Najib's government, which previously had shown remarkable resistance, became weak. The collapse of the Soviet Union was a great set back to Najibullah. But before the disintegration of the Soviet Union, in a dramatic move, it put its weight behind the Resistance movements. On 15 November 1991, Moscow Agreement was signed and the joint commission was formed which gave legitimacy to the Resistance

⁹ Thomas Barfield, "The Afghan Mo'ass", *Current History* (Philadelphia), Vol. 95, No. 597, January 1996, p. 41.

¹⁰ Chronology Pakistan and the World (October-December 1991) *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 45, No: 1, January 1992, p. 90.

elements and pulled the rug from under the feet of Najibullah.¹¹ This agreement basically paved the way for the release of the Soviet prisoners from the custody of the insurgents. However, Najibullah miscalculated the ethnic formation of *Watan* Party. He deployed the Pashtun army in Mazar-i-Sharif, which proved to be the last nail into the coffin of the beleaguered Najib's government because after this action the Uzbek and Tajik protested against the act of Najibullah. Moreover, Najibullah sent General Nabi Azmi, a Tajik, and Sayed Paigar, a senior party leader to quell the uprising but it was too late.¹² The people of Mazar-i-Sharif joined Commander Ahmed Shah Masud and the defected General of Najibullah's regime Abdul Rashid Dostum. Thus, Najibullah miscalculated the situation. The external situation was already changing very fast and it was nearly impossible for Najibullah to accommodate himself with the changing pace of the Afghan politics.

In a speech written for him by the UN envoy Benar Sevan, Najibullah said that his resignation would take effect once the UN had established an "interim government" to which he would transfer all "powers and executive authority".¹³ The disunion of the Soviet Union had isolated Najibullah and deprived him of "powers and executive authority" to transfer. Later, on 5 April, he tried to leave the country but his mutinous armed forces blocked him at the airport, and he sought refuge in the UN offices in Kabul. On 17 April 1992, he stepped down in favour of an interim government. On 26 April 1992, a transitional council was formed in Peshawar. According to the accord which was agreed by the majority of the Afghan Resistance groups, Professor Sibghatullah Mujaddedi became the head of the Afghan Council. It was also agreed that the transfer of power would take place within two months, and the interim government would work for the establishment of an Islamic Government.¹⁴

It has been proved from the above discussion that at the initial stage Najibullah had successfully calculated his strategy and controlled the state apparatus from 1989 to 1991. Later on, the situation had changed and he lost the control on state apparatus. Najibullah had no other option but to support the UN moves. However, the disintegration of the Soviet Union was the main cause of his failure and the Resistance movement got an opportunity with the help of regional states to grab the power in Kabul. Thus, Najibullah became the first victim of the de-ideological post-cold war era.

¹¹ Shameem Akhtar, "Implications of current developments in Afghanistan", *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 45, No. 3, July 1992, p. 23.

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ Barnett R. Rubin, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

¹⁴ *Pakistan Horizon*, *op.cit.*, Vol. 45, No. 3, July 1992, p.1.

CHAPTER TWO

THE AFGHAN RESISTANCE: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The coup d'état (later called as the Sour Revolution), which took place in April 1978 in Kabul with the assistance of the PDPA, could not build a mass support base in the Afghan Society. The aim of the PDPA was to transform and modernize the tribal and feudal structures through a series of radical reforms. The task was "to abolish and eliminate a feudal and pre-feudal social structure and make it fit for a non-capitalist development of Afghanistan".¹

Furthermore, the Afghan Society was divided on ethnic lines. As far as the policy regarding nationalities was concerned, the PDPA officially recognized Afghanistan's ethnic, cultural and linguistic pluralism. The languages of the various ethnic minorities, including Tajik, Uzbek, Turkmen and Nooristani, were declared official languages, along with Pashtun and Dari.² The PDPA, however, failed in its efforts because the Afghan Society was not ready for economic, political and social transformation. Within the PDPA there were many "leftists" who opted for sheer violence; neglected national and Islamic traditions, customs and morals.³

Moreover, the PDPA itself was divided on ideological and ethnic lines. The dominant Khalq faction was predominantly Pashtun speaking, largely urban and partly rural support base. Ideologically, the Khalq supported a more radical approach towards social and political transformation. The Parcham was mainly composed of urban middle-class and Dari speaking Pashtuns, along with some non-Pashtun, including the Tajik. They supported and favoured gradualist reform programme.⁴ As far as the PDPA's social reforms were concerned, it failed to gain support from politically underdeveloped rural peasantry class, mobilized by the clergy to resist the proposed changes in the country's social norms. In the absence of internal support base and lacking the administrative skills, the Centre was incapable of countering the resistance of the traditional tribal/feudal elite from the countryside, who possessed the capacity to mobilize resistance against the State and to protect their internal autonomy, demonstrating the resilience of sources of power.⁵

Besides, the PDPA's official policy regarding nationalities, the Taraki and Amin governments composed mainly of Ghilzais (Pashtuns) were perceived by non-Pashtuns minorities, as Pashtun. Their bid to assert state control over the periphery was regarded as yet another form of Pashtun expansionism. The infighting between the two wings of the PDPA, which resulted in purges of the more heterogeneous Parcham opposition, both in

¹ Samina Ahmed, "The Crisis of State Legitimacy in Afghanistan", *Regional Studies* (Islamabad), Vol. XIV, No. 3, Summer 1996, p. 22.

² *Ibid.*, p. 23.

³ G.M. Kornierko, "The Afghan Endeavor: Perplexities of the Military Incursion and withdrawal", *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* (Villanova), Vol. XVII, No. 2, Winter 1994, p.4.

⁴ Bhabani Sen Gupta, *Afghanistan, Politics, Economics and Society: Revolution, Resistance, Intervention* (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1986), p. 15.

⁵ Samina Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 24.

government and bureaucracy, reinforced this perception of the Pashtun identity of the ruling elite. Therefore, the first outbreak of the opposition to the PDPA rule came from non-Pashtun minorities, such as, the Nooristanis, the Hazaras and the Tajiks.⁶ For tribal Pashtun, the PDPA's nationality policy threatened the interest of orthodox clergy and tribal elite, which had dominated the Afghan State for centuries.

In 1979, the PDPA confronted two kinds of Islamic Resistance. First, a political conservative element and second were hardliner fundamentalists. The conservative Islamic elements were those who were disposed by the reforms because they did not want the involvement of the government in the life of the common Afghan.⁷ The hard-liner fundamentalists wanted to implement a particular brand of Islam and the radical restructuring of the Afghan Society based on explicit Islamic mandate.

Outside Interference

In 1970's the Government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto gave shelter to a number of Afghan Islamist opposition leaders. The Bhutto government used these opposition groups in order to pressurize Daud Khan to abandon his support to Baloch dissidents and to change his Pashtunistan policy. With Pakistan's assistance, these Islamic warriors carried out limited and largely unsuccessful insurgencies inside Afghanistan in areas, such as, Wardak and Badakhshan in 1975.⁸ The 1978 coup had provided an excuse to anti-PDPA forces to mobilize their action against the ruling regime from the neighbouring territory of Pakistan. A number of Afghan Islamist opposition leaders took refuge on Pakistani soil. Moreover, in July 1977, a military dictatorship was imposed in Pakistan. After assuming power, the dictatorial regime of Pakistan continued to follow the Afghan policy set by the previous government.

Internally, the PDPA was not in a position to control the Centre. Thus, the first request to send the Soviet troops came from the Afghan leadership in March 1979 when anti-government mutiny in Herat was encouraged by Iran. The Revolution in Iran had an impact on the civil war in Afghanistan. Hazara tribe, the most oppressed of the Afghan nationalities being Shia, was particularly susceptible to Khomeini's Islamic voice. The PDPA's regime lost nearly all its non-Pashtun cadre and was dependent very much on Pashtun.⁹ Though the internal situation of Afghanistan was not favourable, the Soviet leadership had strong reservations regarding deployment of its troops. They were of the opinion that this would be considered by the world as the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. "This is a complicated political and international issue", as was stated by an official of the Soviet Union.¹⁰

Later on, the Soviet perception changed because of the following reasons. First, internal power struggles in the PDPA. Second, incapability of the PDPA's regime to

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁷ Bhabani Sen Gupta, *op.cit.*, p. 60.

⁸ Raja Anwar, *The Tragedy of Afghanistan: A first hand account* (London: Verso, 1988), p. 80, quoted in Samina Ahmed's article, *op.cit.*, p. 19.

⁹ Bhabani Sen Gupta, *op.cit.*, p. 80.

¹⁰ G.M. Kornienko, *op.cit.*, p. 4.

control the state apparatus. Third, increasing fear that Americans could station themselves in Afghanistan after having lost Iran. Finally, the firm support provided by Pakistan to the Resistance movements. Thus, the Soviet Union deployed troops in Afghanistan in December 1979. The Soviet intervention changed the dynamics of the region. The regional states coordinated their policies with the international currents and the Mujahideen took refuge in Pakistan and Iran.

Weaknesses of the Resistance Movement

The insurgents only shared a common goal: to overthrow the central government of Afghanistan, backed by the Soviet Union. Attempts had been made to unify and coordinate the Afghan opposition, which was divided on social, ethnic, regional and sectarian lines. It was nearly impossible to forge a unity among them.

Since 1978, at least seven Resistance groups had established their headquarters in Pakistan. Their leadership and ideological programs represented a wide spectrum of Afghan society and political ideology. They competed for international support in order to acquire military supplies necessary to carry out the war.¹¹

Iran also criticized the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Iran supported the Shia element, which was 11 per cent of the population,¹² particularly the Hazara tribe the most suppressed nationality of Afghanistan.

Internal Dynamics of the Afghan Resistance Movement

The Afghan Resistance carried out large-scale guerrilla operations with generous assistance from Pakistan, the US, China, Saudi Arabia, Iran and several other countries. Pakistan had been a recipient of 3.2 billion dollars package of military and economic assistance from the US spread over the period from 1981-86.¹³

There were seven recognized Resistance (Mujahideen) political parties having their own leaders and their headquarters in exile in Pakistan. Four could be classified as Islamic fundamentalists, while three were Islamic moderates.¹⁴

Hizb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar)

Hizb-e-Islami was one of the most militant hard-line resistance parties. The party orientation was radical-revivalist around the concept of a centralized religious leadership. The Hizb-e-Islami was more identified with Gulbaddin Hekmatyar than with any of its other founding members. The original Hizb was divided into two major factions, Hizb-e-

¹¹ Richard S. Newell, *The Struggle for Afghanistan* (London: Nancy Pealedy Newell, Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 81.

¹² M. Farr and John G. Merrian, (ed.) *Afghan Resistance: The Politics of Survival* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1983), p. 93.

¹³ Bhabani Sen Gupta, *op.cit.*, p. 131.

¹⁴ Mohammad Yousaf and Mark Adkin, *The Bear Trap Afghanistan's untold Story*, (Lahore: Jang Publishers, 1992), p. 2.

Islami (Hekmatyar) and Hizb-e-Islami (Khalis). The power of Hizb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar) rested on its approach, which regarded the ultimate Islamic revolution as more important than the war and emphasized the need to consolidate its results. Hence its efforts were directed at gaining complete control over the entire movement.¹⁵ Hezb support base, thus, grew on the dogmatic followers devoted to the party or the peasantry living in extreme poverty. Gulbadin Hekmatyar, Kharruti Pashtun from the Baghlan province, spent four years with the PDPA before adopting radical Islamic politics. He fled to Pakistan with others and founded Hizb-e-Islami and instigated the abortive anti-Daud insurrection in Panjsher in 1975.¹⁶ Since 1979, his base has remained in Peshawar, though he subsequently established a branch organization in Iran with the Iranian Revolutionary Guards called the Jundullah.¹⁷

Hizb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar) became more functional and effective in guerrilla warfare than any other group. Thus, the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) promoted Hekmatyar's party. Particularly, the ISI considered Hekmatyar's organization and its ideology as most compatible with Pakistan's security interests.¹⁸

In the changing political and security scenario, Hizb-e-Islami lost its support due to other power centers, which had emerged on Afghan political scene, particularly Taliban. During the Gulf crisis, Hekmatyar criticized allied forces, which caused resentment among the orthodox Arab regimes. They stopped financial assistance and political support to Hizb-e-Islami. Thus, after 1990, Hizb-e-Islami has been marginalized and replaced with Taliban.

Jamiat-i-Islami (*Burhanuddin Rabbani*)

The founder of Jamiat-i-Islami was Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani, a Tajik, who graduated from Al-Azhar University and taught in Kabul University as Professor of Islamic Law and became known through his writings on religion and literature. When the Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwanul Muslimeen) branch was established in Afghanistan, he was one of its leading figures. He also helped in the formation of Hizb-e-Islami along with Hekmatyar. The organizational structure of Hizb-i-Islami was highly centralized.

Rabbani was the first to break away, after which many followed his footsteps, notable among them was Ahmed Shah Masud, who was relatively unknown at that time. In 1978 he established the Jamiat-e-Islami. Most of his followers joined it and it soon became the most prominent party of northern Afghanistan. It held special appeal for the Tajiks and other non-Pashtun minority ethnic groups, as well as some Pashtun in the North. Many resistance groups of the northern and western areas of the country also switched connection to the Jamiat. Moreover, the Jamiat's influence was greatly

¹⁵ Amera Saeed, "Afghanistan: Peshawar Accord and after", *Regional Studies*, Vol. XI, No. 2, Spring, 1993, p. 3.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Barnett R. Rubin, *The Search for Peace in Afghanistan from Buffer State to Failed State* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 65.

enhanced by the exemplary reputation of its commanders in the North, notable among them being Ismail Khan (operating between Herat and Maymana).

Though the party orientation in the beginning was of revivalist Islam, it became more moderate in 1984. The party came into limelight when Ahmed Shah Masud launched seven major offensives on the Soviets in Panjsher Valley between 1980-84 and became a living legend.¹⁹

Later on, Rabbani became the President of Afghanistan but was ousted by Taliban in October 1996. Presently, Rabbani is based in the Panjsher valley, which is the stronghold of Ahmed Shah Masud.

Afghan National Liberation Front (*Mujaddidi*)

The founder of the Front, Professor Sibghatullah Mujaddadi, belongs to one of the most prominent religious families of Afghanistan, holding the religious leadership of the Naqshbandiya Sufi order, with adherents not only in Afghanistan but all over the sub-continent and Central Asia. Thirty members of his family were executed under the Taraki/Amin regime²⁰. He himself was imprisoned under the Daud regime and when freed, left for Denmark where he was received by the Muslim community as their religious leader. Another important connection was his association with Al-Azhar University where he was trained as a theologian and later as Professor of Islamic Law in Kabul University which was the nursery of many political activist groups. Following the coup, he came to Pakistan and established the Jabba-e-Milli Najat-e-Afghanistan (National Liberation Front). His Party had been described as moderate, traditionalist and nationalist, which wanted to revise the traditionalist colour of the Afghan Society. After the exit of Najibullah from power, Professor Mujaddadi became the President of Afghanistan, but he faced problems right from the beginning and had to step down in favour of Professor Rabbani.

National Islamic Front (*Gillani*)

The Front is closely identified with the image of its founder, Pir Syed Ahmed Gillani, who is a religious leader of international importance in the Muslim world. Like Professor Mujaddadi, Pir Gillani is also the hereditary head of a religious order, the Qadiriya Sufi order with an ancestry going back to the twelfth century. His followers included many Afghans, especially, the Pushtuns on both sides of the border. Before the 1973 coup, he was a religious advisor of King Zahir Shah. The Front was well organized and effective. Its political orientation had been described as traditionalist, nationalist and moderate, favouring a government incorporating Islamic law and Afghan tradition, with a parliament based on free elections.²¹

¹⁹ Amara Saeed, *op.cit.*, p.131.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

Islamic Revolutionary Movement (*Nabi Mohammadi*)

The political ideology of the movement engenders a traditional, nationalist dispensation based on Islamic law. Moulvi Mohammadi belongs to the same generation as Professor Mujaddadi or Pir Gillani. Moulvi Mohammadi, a Pashtun, combines religious authority with political experience. He also studied at Al-Azhar University, who established and headed an influential religious academy. He was considered to have a considerable following among tribal leaders and mullahs in Kandhar and Helmand regions.²² The section of urban middle class also supported the Movement. In the early 80's, the movement was a major party, but most of its local commanders in Herat and Faryab joined Rabbani's Jamiat-i-Islami. With the passage of time, Professor Rabbani attracted the moderate elements, especially from Tajik dominated areas, whereas Hekmatyar drew the radical Pashtuns towards him. As a result, Nabi Mohammadi had lost his support in Afghanistan.

Hezb-e-Islami (*Khalis*)

Hezb-e-Islami split into two major factions. One was headed by Hekmatyar and the other by Moulvi Mohammed Yunus Khalis. The later was a Pashtun from Nangrahar province, trained as a mullah in the traditional Afghan religious schools and eventually became a university lecturer. The Hezb (Khalis) was considered less radical than some of the other Islamic parties closer to its political orientation to the groups headed by Gillani, Mujaddadi and Nabi Mohammadi. The Hezb was tribally based, better organized with influence in strategic areas, though in terms of membership it was smaller than others. The conflict between Hekmatyar and Khalis emerged in 1979. Khalis blamed Hekmatyar for avoiding combat. Throughout the war, Khalis party was well prepared for combat. His own participation in the battlefield added prestige to the Hezb faction.²³

Ittehad-e-Islami (*Sayyaf*)

Ittehad-e-Islami emerged in 1980. It was headed by Abdul Rashid Sayyaf, a Pashtun who was also originally a high ranking member of the Muslim Brotherhood, with Gulbaddin Hekmatyar as his deputy. The Ittehad was organized on the principle of an Islamic Shoorā, which envisages that all power be vested in the religious leadership. Sayyaf speaks fluent Arabic and has an excellent contact with the conservative Arab elite in the Middle East. He was greatly responsible for a steady flow of substantial aid from the Middle Eastern countries to Afghanistan during the period of the Soviet military intervention. In the beginning, he joined Hekmatyar to reduce the influence of Khalis and Rabbani in the alliance. In 1983, he developed differences with Hekmatyar and finally, he converted the Ittehad into a party.²⁴

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

Resistance Movement and Iran

When the Soviet Union deployed its troops in Afghanistan, Iran took the Soviet action very seriously and called it a violation of the principle of non-interference in the affairs of other countries. Domestically, the Iranian Revolution had bolstered the morale of the Afghan Shias who constituted 11 per cent of the Afghan population.

Iran not only gave refuge to the Afghan asylum seekers, but also backed and supported the Shia groups who were fighting with the Kabul regime, like Harkat-i-Islami of Sheikh Assef Mohsani. The other group was Hazara Nasr Party, which recruited young Hazaras working in Iran.²⁵ Presently, all these groups have merged into a single party known as Hezb-e-Wahdat, allied with anti-Taliban faction and based in the area where Hazara Shias are in a majority.

Nature of Differences, Strengths and Weaknesses of the Resistance Movement

These resistance factions fought against the Soviet troops and the Kabul regime with the help of Pakistan, the US, China, Iran and Saudi Arabia. ISI trained seven groups, planning their combat operations and accompanying them inside Afghanistan as advisors. During 1984-87, 80,000 Mujahideen were trained; hundred of thousands of tons of arms and ammunition were distributed and several billion dollars were spent on logistic exercise. The ISI teams regularly entered Afghanistan along with the Mujahideen for combat operations.²⁶

In 1984, an idea to forge an alliance among these groups was launched. Saudi Prince Turki al Faisal, who was also the head of Saudi intelligence agency, came to Pakistan. But, the Islamic fundamentalists took a very hard-line approach. They did not want to sit with the moderate elements. Consequently, Zia-ul-Haq put pressure on them to unite.

The hard-liners were not in a position to annoy Zia. Thus, an alliance was formed. But the most significant aspect of that alliance was that decisions should be made unanimously rather than by a majority vote.²⁷

The role of CIA was very significant in the Afghan Resistance against the Soviet military intervention. There was a remarkable coordination between ISI and CIA with reference to military operations. Moreover, the great bulk of aid and assistance came from China, Egypt and Israel.²⁸

The rapprochement between the US and the former Soviet Union had changed the established international political order of the 1980's. Under the Geneva Accords, signed

²⁵ M. Farr and John G. Merrian, *op.cit.*, p. 93.

²⁶ Mohammed Yousaf and Mark Adkin, *op.cit.*, p. 4.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

on April 14, 1988, Moscow committed the withdrawal of its 115,000 troops from Afghanistan over a nine-month period starting from May 15, 1988.²⁹

With the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the US found its interests increasingly diverged from those of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The change can be seen in the context of the termination of military and economic aid to Pakistan including the delivery of F-16 Fighters for which Pakistan had already paid.³⁰

²⁹ Mutahir Ahmed, "Geneva Accords: A Historical Prospective", *Journal of European Studies*, (Karachi), Vol. 4 and 5, July 1988 and January 1989, Nos. 1 and 2, p. 115.

³⁰ Barnett R. Rubin, *op.cit.*, p. 112.

CHAPTER THREE

I. AFGHANISTAN IN THE CHANGING REGIONAL SCENARIO

The rise of regional concerns

After Najibullah's exit from the Afghan political corridor, the struggle for power began among the various warring factions of the Resistance movement in order to seize power in Kabul. The first non-Pashtun government was formed under the leadership of Burhanuddin Rabbani (besides, Bacha Saqa's government in early 1930s). The history of Afghanistan shows that for the last three hundred years Pashtuns have traditionally dominated Kabul.

During the period between 1992 to 1996, Afghanistan was locked in the power struggle of various resistance groups. The post-Najibullah era brought anarchy in the Afghan politics. Initially, there was a little success in forming a national government, but in 1993, fighting erupted between Iranian-backed Shia party Hezb-i-Wahdat and the Saudi-backed Itihad-i-Islami, Abdul Rasoul Sayyaf followed by Hekmatyar and Masud forces in 1994. Since the beginning of the year 1994, 1,000 people were killed and 100,000 had been rendered homeless.

Involvement of the Regional and Extra-Regional Powers

Right from the beginning, Hezb-i-Islami (Hekmatyar) was the favorite organization of the ISI. The Pakistani generals aimed to place Hekmatyar in power in order to assure themselves of a friendly government that would provide them strategic depth against India.¹

The ISI and the Saudis tried to use Hekmatyar several times in pursuit of a military victory. The first attempt was made in March 1990 when Hekmatyar tried to forge an alliance with his fellow Pashtun in Khalq faction, General Shahnawaz Tanai. Hekmatyar took an advantage of the old rivalry between Khalq and Parcham faction of *Watan* party.² In December 1989, Najibullah announced the arrest of Khalqi officers. These officers were charged to overthrow the PDPA's government with the help of Hekmatyar. On March 7, 1990 when the accused had gone on trial, the Khalqi Defence Minister, Shah Nawaz Tanai, launched a coup against the regime of Najibullah. He bombarded the presidential palace while trying to break the security cordon in south of Kabul to let Hekmatyar battalions in the city, but he failed.³ In that coup, fifty soldiers were killed and two hundred were wounded. Najibullah had overpowered the coup and had exposed the weaknesses of the Resistance movement against his government.⁴

¹ The former Chief of the Army Staff, General Mirza Aslam Beg's "Strategic Defiance", theory can be seen in this context.

² Najibullah had changed the name of PDPA to *Watan* Party in late 80's in order to show the solidarity among various nationalities.

³ Barnett R. Rubin, *op.cit.*, p. 114.

⁴ Mutahir Ahmed, "Pakistan's Foreign Policy Quarterly Survey", *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 43, No. 2, April 1990, p. 11.

Nature of Differences

During this period (1990-92), the fighting among the different factions of the Mujahideen had intensified. The performance of the Afghan Interim Government (AIG) could not be regarded as very satisfactory. In order to solve the crisis in peaceful atmosphere, Pakistan tried to find out a regional consensus.⁵ The superpower struggle for global supremacy had ended and it was relatively simple for the regional powers to solve their differences through peaceful means. Pakistan invited Iran and the Afghan Resistance groups in Islamabad for ripartite talks. On 29 July 1991, the two day tripartite talks ended on a declaration, jointly addressed by the Secretary Foreign Affairs, Akram Zaki, and the Iranian Foreign Minister, Ali Akbar Velayati emphasizing, "pursuit of just and peaceful settlement of the Afghan problem that restores the Islamic identity and the independent, sovereign and non-aligned character of Afghanistan".⁶

Internationally, the rapprochement between the US and the Soviet Union created a political atmosphere that could settle the thirteen-year-old Afghan crisis. The then Soviet Union invited the Resistance movement's leaders in Moscow. In November 1991, the first ever Mujahideen delegation visited Moscow to find a political solution of the crisis. The hard-liner Mujahideen groups, headed by Hekmatyar, Yunus Khalis and Sayyaf, refused to join the delegation.

The high level meeting between the Mujahideen leaders and the Soviet officials continued for five days. A joint statement issued at the end of the talks stated "to pass all powers to AIG". The Soviets pledged to halt arms shipments to Kabul and the Mujahideen promised to send the first batch of the Soviet POWs within six weeks. The acting Foreign Minister of AIG, Professor Rabbani, termed the Accord as the basis for a political solution of the problem. Moreover, Iran also supported the joint declaration and stressed on the continued support to any future step for the establishment of an Islamic, independent and non-aligned government in Afghanistan.⁷ In this connection, Pakistan's Foreign Secretary, Shaharyar Khan, stated that all the five countries namely Pakistan, the US, the Soviet Union, Iran and Saudi Arabia agreed that Najibullah had no political role in Afghanistan.⁸

But the Mujahideen were divided among themselves on the question of power sharing. Moreover, the Gulf crisis had also bifurcated the Resistance movements. The hard-liners, especially Hekmatyar, criticized the US and Saudi Arabia against Iraq, while the moderates supported the US-Saudi positions. Some five hundred Mujahideen from moderate groups (Gillani and Mujaddidi) went to Saudi Arabia in order to offer symbolic support to the US led coalition. The Saudi government cut off financial aid to Hekmatyar for his support to Iraq.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. 43, No. 3, July 1990, p. 8.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. 44, No. 4, October 1991, p. 7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. 45, No. 4, January 1992, p. 2.

⁸ *Dawn*, (Karachi), 20 November 1991.

The victory of the allied forces in Iraq and the Soviet disunion reduced the military pressure on the Mujahideen. The Resistance fighters captured all the frontiers attached with Pakistan's border. A largely Hazara Shura took control of central Afghanistan. Masud captured Takhar province bordering Tajikistan. Several other provincial garrisons fell in the hands of the local Mujahideen. But these local victories did not transfer power on national level because of inadequate structure and differences among the various factions of the Mujahideen. The Soviet presence was the justification of *Jihad*, but after the Soviet withdrawal, the *Jihad* could not be justified. Those who thought that *Jihad* would continue did not have any answer to the Hekmatyar-Tanai alliance. If Khalq and Hezb could sit for an alliance on the basis of nationalism, then, there was no more a *Jihad*, it was just a struggle for power.

Ethnic and Sectarian Factor: The Role of Pakistan and Iran

The Kabul regime tried to dilute the ethnic conflict within the PDPA. The regime abandoned its ideology. Najibullah changed the name of the Party to the *Watan* Party; renounced Marxism and single party rule. Socialism in Afghanistan had been transformed into Islam, pluralism and market economy.⁹

But Najibullah failed to find any formula of ethnic alignment. The open conflict was between Parcham and Khalq, whose members found different allies in the Resistance movement and the government armed forces. The Tanai-Hekmatyar sponsored coup was the most dramatic example of an alliance across an ideological gulf and based on ethnic alignment. Najibullah lost power because he failed to control factionalism and ethnic conflict in his own ranks.¹⁰

Furthermore, Iran and Pakistan openly supported their favourites on the basis of sectarian and ethnic composition. Iran openly criticized the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. But in the changing scenario, with the increase of Pakistani and Saudi influence over Sunni Islamist, Iran had very strong reservations. In 1989, Rafsanjani told the Shia parties that the *Jihad* was over and that they should seek a political settlement with the Kabul regime.

Iranian policy was to contain the US, Saudi and Pakistani backed Resistance groups. In order to strengthen their favourites, Iran, in 1990, induced the Shia parties to go beyond an alliance of parties by uniting into a single party known as Hizb-e-Wahdat. Moreover, Iran took full advantage of ISI-CIA-Hekmatyar axis, which had undermined the role of Persian speaking Resistance groups. By 1991, Iran had signed a treaty of cultural cooperation with Hezb-e-Wahdat and Jamiat Islami. The moderate groups, like Gillani and Mujaddidi who received the least Saudi aid along with Rabbani, headed the largely Persian speaking Jamiat. They opened their offices in Iran.¹¹

The alliance formulation can be categorized in the following way. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were aligned with Pashtun fundamentalist groups. Iran was aligned with

⁹ Barnett R. Rubin, *op.cit.*, p. 122.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

Shia and Persian-speaking groups. These non-Pashtun elements also enjoyed support from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and other Central Asian States. The most interesting feature of this ethnic politics is that these groups found allies during the days of the PDPA. The Pashtun Resistance elements allied with Khalq, while non-Pashtun with Parchamits.¹²

TABLE 1

A

COUNTRIES	PARTIES
Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United States	1) Hezb-e-Islami (Khalis) 2) Ittehad-e-Islami (Sayyaf) 3) Islamic Revolutionary Movement (Nabi Mohammadi) 4) National Islamic Front (Gillani) 5) Afghan National Liberation Front (Mujaddidi) 6) Hezb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar)

B

COUNTRIES	PARTIES
Russian Federation, Iran, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and India	1) Supporters of PDPA 2) Jamiat-i-Islami (Rabbani) 3) Harkat Islami (Sheikh Mohsani) 4) Hazara Nasr 5) Jumbish-e-Milli (Dostum) 6) Hezb-e-Wahdat (Khalili)

The most significant aspect regarding ethnicity was the civil war, which had provided an opportunity to non-Pashtun minorities to challenge the State, dominated by the Pashtuns.¹³ In Hazarajat region, the Hazara Shia, the third largest and the most disadvantaged of the Afghanistan's ethnic groups (Pashtun and non-Pashtun groups), attained political, social and economic autonomy over their own territory for the first time in the history of Afghanistan. Moreover, all the non-Pashtun forces forged an alliance against the Pashtun, known as Northern Alliance, composed of defecting Uzbek and Tajik militias, like Dostum of Uzbek Jawzjan Militia, non-Pashtun military official in the capital, such as, Tajik General Abdul Momin; with Tajik commander Ahmed Shah Masood, Ismaili commander Jaffer Nadeir; and Hazara leader Abdul Ali Mazari. Thus, two alliances were institutionalized. On the one hand, there was Northern Alliance centered around Jamiat Islami, supported by Rabbani and on the other hand, Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami.¹⁴

Najibullah's exit from Power

On 18 March 1992, Najibullah resigned in favour of a neutral interim government guaranteed by the UN. With the fall of Kabul, the last string that had unified the

¹² Samina Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p. 29.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Gilles Dorronsoro, "Afghanistan's Civil War", *Current History*, (Philadelphia), Vol. 94. No. 497, January 1995, p. 39.

Mujahideen was gone.¹⁵ It was the first time in the history of Afghanistan when the State model, created by Amir Abdul Rehman, had collapsed and the non-Pashtun elements took control of Kabul.

Since 1992, several internal and external factors have contributed to accelerate the Afghan civil war. Internally, the divisions along regional, ethnic, sectarian and linguistic lines were based on common interest that was to get rid of Sunni Pashtun dominated parties based in Pakistan. For last fifteen years, the non-Pashtun forces successfully controlled over their territories, acquiring access to resources and military power. They were now in a position to defend their interests on the basis of ethnicity, sectarianism and territory.¹⁶

Externally, Iran supported Shiite Hizb-e-Wahdat (Khalili); Pakistan advocated Hizb-e-Islami (Gulbadin) Pashtuns; Central Asian States preferred Uzbek Junbish-e-Milli (Dostum) and Tajik Jamiat-e-Islami (Rabbani and Masud). Moreover, extra-regional states also played a significant role. Russia extended material and moral support to Dostum against orthodox Sunni extremist elements. The US interest was to fill the gap after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. So the US had no favorites, but it wished to see moderate and anti-Iranian regime in Afghanistan. In this regard, Pakistan played a very pivotal and active role.

Peshawar Accord

After Najib had stepped down from power, the Peshawar Accord was signed on 24 April 1992, among Pakistan based Mujahideen groups. On 26 April, a transitional Mujahideen Council was formed in Peshawar. According to the consensus the Accord which had been agreed by the majority of the Afghan Mujahideen groups, Professor Sibghatullah Mujaddedi became the head of the Afghan Council. It was decided that the transfer of power would take place within two months, and the interim government would work for the establishment of an Islamic Order.¹⁷ But, instead of cooperating with each other, the two Mujahideen guerrilla groups followed the policy of confrontation. These were the forces of Ahmed Shah Masud and Gulbadin Hekmatyar. Both these groups were the symbolic expression of tribal and religious feud, inter ethnic tensions (Pashtuns vs non-Pashtuns) and Islamic sectarian struggles (Sunnis vs Shias).

Since April 1992, rival factions within and outside the government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan have been struggling for power, within the countryside and on the streets of Kabul. These disputes are connected primarily to a variety of ethnic and national issues. The Islamic factor plays a secondary role in the politics of Afghanistan. The main conflict is between Pashtun and non-Pashtun forces. Moreover, there was a serious subjective factor—personal hatred. For example, Masud was hostile towards Hekmatyar because in 1988 his brother was killed on Hekmatyar's order and in 1989 Hezb-e-Islami forces murdered ten of his senior commanders. Undoubtedly, these

¹⁵ Thomas Barfield, "The Afghan Morass", *Current History*, Vol. 95, No. 597, January 1996, p. 40.

¹⁶ Samina Ahmad, *op.cit.*, p. 35.

¹⁷ *Pakistan Horizon*, *op.cit.*, Vol. 45, No. 3, July 1992, p. 1.

personal antagonisms, so much a part of Afghan tradition and culture, will continue to have a relative influence on relations among the Mujanideen.¹⁸

The Peshawar Accord attempted to settle the issue of representation in the transitional administration and allocation of cabinet posts to various parties. Mujaddidi was made head of the fifteen-member Working Council to supervise the transition. After two months, power would be transferred to Rabbani, who would be the President of the State for four months. A transitional government was to be formed for two years. The post of Prime Minister was given to Hezb-e-Islami who nominated Ustad Farid as the Prime Minister. Mujaddidi abided the Accord, but Rabbani refused to yield power when his term was expired. In December 1992, Rabbani was re-elected as the President for a period of eighteen months. Yunus Khalis and Pir Syed Ahmed, two rivals, dropped out of the race amidst allegations that Rabbani had bribed delegates to vote for him.¹⁹ In January-February 1993, fighting broke out and over 1000 people were killed. Scratching the Peshawar Accord, one can conclude that the top positions in this interim arrangement were in the hands of non-Pashtuns. In this context, Najibullah's resignation and his subsequent refuge in the UN premises, was accompanied by the killings of some of his prominent associates. It was noted that these Pashtuns were killed by the non-Pashtuns of the *Watan* Party.²⁰ Even in the Revolutionary Council, which had overthrown Najibullah and was in control of Kabul, the top positions were in the hands of Persian speaking non-Pashtuns.

In the light of the present scenario, non-Pashtuns took the charge of the State, which was controlled by the Pashtuns for two and a half centuries.

TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT

PORTFOLIOS	ETHNIC COMPOSITION
Afghan National Liberation Front (First two months)	Sibghatullah Mujaddidi (Tajik)
Jamiat-e-Islami	Burhanuddin Rabbani (Tajik)
Prime Minister	
Hezb-e-Islami	Gulbadin Hekmatyar (Pashtun)
Ministry of Interior:	
Ittehad-e-Islami	Abdul Kasool Sayyaf (Pashtun)
Ministry of Education:	
Hezb-e-Islami	Yunus Khalis (Pashtun)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs:	
National Islamic Front	Pir Gillani (Persian Speaking)
Ministry of Defense:	
Jamiat-e-Islami	Burhanuddin Rabbani (Tajik)
Supreme Court:	
Harkat-e-Inqilab-e-Islam	Nabi Muhammadi (Pashtun)

¹⁸ Afghanistan and Kashmir, *Report of a joint American-Russian Study Mission*, (Asia Society and Institute of Oriental Studies, New York, 1993), pp. 5-6.

¹⁹ Charles H. Norchi, "Afghanistan after the Soviets: Time, Culture and Chaos", *International League for Human Rights*, (Yale University, April 1995), p. 11.

²⁰ Amara Saeed, *op.cit.*, p. 133.

According to the Afghan sources, it was Babrak Karmal, a non-Pashtun, who was behind all these events leading to the ouster of Najibullah and the subsequent onslaught against the Pashtun officers of the Afghan army. They accused him of trying to divide the country along ethnic and linguistic lines and, thus, to take revenge from the Pashtun dominated Khalq, which had earlier been behind his downfall.²¹ Prior to the signing of the Peshawar Accord, it was reported that the Pashtun governors of the Najibullah's regime, in some Pashtun dominated areas, had sided with the Pashtun Mujahideen belonging to Hekmatyar and Khalis factions of the Hezb, against their former associates in Kabul whose ethnic alliances were with Tajik Masood.²² When Mujaddadi became the President of Afghan Interim Government, the Pashtun factions, especially Hekmatyar, rejected his authority. He was of the opinion that the interim council was working with the remnant of the former regime and small parties were given big ministries. Thus, right from the first day, Mujaddadi saw deep hostile atmosphere. Mujaddadi saw his administration battling with a worsening law and order situation. The Dostum's militia was involved in widespread looting in Kabul. Hezb-e-Wahdat pressurized Mujaddadi's administration to give them a share in power. Wahdat's claim was that since the Shiites had 25 per cent of the total population, there should be a federal system of government, which would give formal recognition to the minorities.

Islamabad Accord

Though Peshawar Accord was signed in haste and did not make any provision for settling any dispute among the parties, which might occur in the course of implementation, it had provided a good starting point. In accordance with the Peshawar Accord, Mujaddadi transferred power to Rabbani in the last week of June 1992. After assuming power, President Rabbani took some immediate actions. First, setting up a commission for holding elections by covering a broad spectrum of Afghan commanders, *Ulema*, intellectuals and elders. Second, he appointed Syed Noorullah Emad of his own faction as his representative. His job was to send delegations, each headed by a judge from all over the country to meet notables. He prepared a list of delegates for the proposed grand gathering to be held in Kabul for selecting representatives who would then hold free and fair elections. But, the name of the Grand Assembly, known as "Shoora-e-Ahle-Hal-O-Aqd", was criticized by some sections. It was argued that the very word of Grand Assembly was not familiar with this name. Instead of it, *Loya Jirga* was more acceptable as an Afghan cultural institution. *Shoora-e-Ahle-Hal-o-Aqd* or the Council of Wisemen was denounced as a non-Afghan traditional institution.²³

This Shoora issue resulted in fiasco. Rabbani's tenure came to an end on October 22, 1992. The grand gathering was not convened and elections of delegates for the next phase had not been materialized. However, Rabbani had built his credibility and when his

²¹ *Ibid*

²² *Ibid*.

²³ Zahid Anwar, "The Future Political Role of Afghanistan in the Region", *Defence Journal* (Karachi), Vol. XXI, No. 7-8, 1995, p. 2

four-month tenure ended, the Leadership Council held an extraordinary meeting in Kabul on 31 October 1992. They approved an extension of 45 days to his tenure. Rabbani's mandate was to convene the proposed gathering by 15 December 1992, failing which power would be transferred to the Leadership Council to elect a new President.²⁴ The meeting was attended by Gillani, Sayyaf, Mujaddidi, Nabi Mohammadi, and representatives of Hezb-e-Islami and Hezb-e-Wahdat. Moulvi Khalis did not participate. He criticized the decision of the Council for granting membership to two members of the Harkat-e-Islami and Hezb-e-Wahdat without taking other members into confidence.

Fighting between Tajiks (Masud) and Pashtuns (Hekmatyar) broke out in October 1992. In this situation, Rabbani announced that he would denounce power only if the Leadership Council agreed to a successor. A day after his tenure ended, Rabbani was still in power. He issued a statement that he would transfer power only to a council of elected national representatives. He refused to answer questions as to why he was not handing power back to the Leadership Council. The fractious leaders of the Leadership Council, while supporting the *Shoora* in principle, alleged that Rabbani had bribed delegates. Rabbani announced that *Shoora* members from Kandhar, Badghis, Ghor, Faryab, Kabul, Herat, Helmand and Nimroz provinces had already been flown in and some more from other areas would follow.²⁵

Rabbani's opponents demanded his resignation and advised him to hand over power to Vice-President Maulvi Nabi Mohammadi to avoid any bloodshed. But Rabbani rejected this demand. On 19 December 1992, it was announced that 1000 *Shoora* members would meet to draw future line of action. It was announced that the participants would be granted power to legalize political decisions as per Afghan traditions and in accordance with the collective religious and tribal interests of the people.²⁶ Rabbani was re-elected as the President of the transitional government for a period of two years. Hekmatyar rejected the results of the *Shoora* and said that it had no legality. He declared war against other organizations and fight broke out among the parties. In this bleak situation, Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia intervened in order to promote dialogue and peace in the war-torn country. Thus, on 7 March 1993, eight rival Afghan military factions signed a peace agreement. Professor Rabbani was elected as President and Hekmatyar as the Prime Minister for the transitional arrangement for a period of 18 months.²⁷ Though the Islamabad Accord was signed by the Afghan leaders, it was not implemented. The cabinet to be "formed by the Prime Minister in consultation with the President" was not agreed upon. Prime Minister Hekmatyar felt too insecure to enter Kabul. The Accord collapsed. Hekmatyar attacked the capital though he was repulsed.²⁸ Misunderstanding, personal ambiguity and lust of power spoiled the whole process of peace in the country. By May 1993, rival factions had renewed fighting in order to control Kabul despite cease-fire.

²⁴ Aina Saeed, *op.cit.*, p. 140.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

²⁷ *Dawn*, 8 March 1993.

²⁸ "Afghanistan: Jihad to Civil War", *Spotlight on Regional Affairs*, (Islamabad), Vol. XV, No. 10, October 1996, p. 16.

New Alliances under the Shadow of Civil War

During the period between 1992 to 1996, Afghanistan was locked in the power struggle of various Resistance groups. Changing loyalties and alliance shifting became the very fabric of the Afghan politics. Rabbani became the President, Masud the Defense Minister and Hekmatyar as the Prime Minister. This arrangement was based on cooperation, but the political reality was that they wanted to displace one another. Thus, the Prime Minister Hekmatyar feared entering capital and remained encamped on the hills South of Kabul from where he shelled the city and the troops of President, Rabbani.²⁹ Historically, changing allegiances on political front is not an anomaly. In January 1994, a radical change in alliances occurred. A Pashtun hard-liner Islamic fundamentalist, Gulbaddin Hekmatyar forged alliance with his former enemy General Abdul Rashid Dostum, an Uzbek and former communist militia Chief from the North. Their foe was Rabbani and his government forces. Masud's and Dostum's men became embroiled in bitter and brutal fighting at Kabul airport. Kabul's shiite Hazaras had earlier formed a loose front with Hekmatyar against the government. In the early weeks of the fighting they remained neutral. By February 1994 it was unclear where the Hazaras stood.³⁰

In early 1994 the heaviest fighting took place in Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif, Kunduz, Faryab and Ghazni. During this year, there was no central authority of the State. The State's designated titles such as Prime Minister, President, were captured by individual warlords. Authority of the State was in the hands of regional councils operating as traditional Afghan tribal institutions.³¹

The political fragmentation deepened in 1994, which further frustrated the regional powers, particularly Pakistan, because of its aspirations for trade and influence in the Central Asia. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia began to support Afghan religious students who later on came to be known as Taliban.

Emergence and Rise of Taliban

The struggle for power among various Afghan factions created anarchy in the Afghan Society. Around 50,000 people were killed in this senseless Civil War, which resulted people to lose faith in them. They betrayed the faith of Islam because they promised in Holy Kaba to solve their problems through mutual respect and consensus but those were only the promises. Because of these reasons, Mujahideen lost popularity among the people. Besides, Mujahideen parties managed to field an effective force to contest and seize important strategic or practical objectives. The lavish logistic support provided to them by their foreign friends corrupted them. The deteriorating moral standards of the commanders were a known fact, and eventually they became bandit's

²⁹ Thomas Barfield, *op.cit.*, p. 42.

³⁰ Charles H. Norchi, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

chiefs. Taliban was a reaction to their excesses.³² The word "Taliban" is an Arabic word, which means one who seeks something for himself. Taliban have been trained in Deeni Madaras around Quetta and Peshawar by semi literate Maulvies. Therefore, they have a narrow mindset and they become very hard-liner orthodox Muslim believers.

The leadership of Taliban emerged from amongst the disgruntled young Afghan refugees studying in these Madarsas. These Madarsas were established by Zia-ul-Haq's dictatorial regime in order to promote a particular brand of Islam and to create a base of orthodox religious students who could cooperate with Mujahideen against the Soviet Union. Moreover, it meant to build his own constituency to gain some support because he was isolated on the political front.

Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam is a political ideologue of Taliban. The origin of Taliban is a mystery. It has been said that ISI trained them but there is no substantial record to prove this point. Mullah Omar, a *Jehad* veteran, is the Chief or *Amir-ul- Momeneen* of Taliban. He wants to establish an Islamic government in Afghanistan based on Shariat Law and Sunni Hanafi Fiqah. Taliban are ethnically Pashtun. They have a superiority complex on the basis of Pashtun nationalism and want to unite Afghanistan on the basis of Afghan nationalism with a touch of religion.

Taliban first emerged as a force in 1994, helping to set free Pakistan's convoy, which was going to Central Asia. Soon Taliban became a united force capturing Khost, Qandhar and other areas. Beginning with Qandhar, they quickly took control of almost all the Pashtun provinces in the South, often without fighting, as other factions joined them or simply fled. By March 1995, they were at the gates of Kabul.³³ Finally, in October 1996, Taliban captured Kabul. Rabbani vacated Kabul and moved towards Panjsher valley for strategic reasons.

Taliban radicalized the Afghan policies and institutionalized the division of the Afghan society into Pashtun and non-Pashtun entity. The process of Talibanization spilled over to other parts of the region. Presently, Taliban regime controlled more than ninety per cent of the Afghan territory. Domestically, Taliban took some rigid steps, ban on working women and forced foreign aid agencies to shut down key programs.

Politically, Afghanistan is divided into three geographical areas. First, Taliban control Twenty-two provinces of Southern Afghanistan. Second, Tajik area, which is being controlled by Rabbani-Masud forces. Third, Uzbek area controlled by Dostum. Moreover, Northern Alliance has been formed against Taliban by non-Pashtun elements of Afghanistan, comprising Shiite Hazarjits, Tajiks and Uzbeks. Today, Taliban control Kabul and have emerged as the voice of Pashtuns who traditionally ruled over Kabul for last three centuries. With the emergence of the Central Asian States, the political dynamics of the region has changed. Tajiks and Uzbeks find natural allies in the North, while Iran is supporting Shiites and Northern Alliance along with Russia, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

³² Muhammad Yahya Effendi, "Afghanistan: A Eurasian Perception", *Defence Journal*, Vol. XXI, Nos. 7-8, 1995, p. 20.

³³ Thomas Barfield, *op.cit.*, p. 42.

The struggle for power among various Afghan factions created anarchy in the Afghan society. Around 50,000 Afghans were killed in this senseless struggle for power. Taliban exploited the situation. They believed that their leaders were not sincere and were engaged in party politics rather than a strong commitment to Islam. Under the leadership of Mullah Omar, an Afghan *Jihad* veteran, 50 Taliban had gathered to spread his message to the people. Their aims and objectives were:

- 1) To disarm all rival militias.
- 2) To fight against those who do not accept their request.
- 3) To give up the weapons.
- 4) To retain all those areas which they had captured.

Taliban wanted to establish an Islamic government in Afghanistan based on Shariat Law and Sunni Hannafi Fiqah.

Immature Leadership

Emotionally charged, Taliban is a by-product of fragile Afghan political structure. Politically, Taliban leadership lacks a sense of history and vision for the future of the war-torn country. Over the decades, the Pashtun rulers of Afghanistan had created a fine balance between various ethnic groups and ensured an accepted power balance between various tribes³⁴.

Taliban have not only destroyed the political balance, but also introduced a medieval interpretation of the religion, which is not acceptable to the other power blocs of the society. Moreover, Taliban committed another mistake when its leadership had projected Rabbani's rule in Kabul as that of an ethnic minority controlling the majority Pashtun. It also gave rise to the fear that Taliban have got a superiority complex on the basis of Pashtun nationalism. Actually, Taliban want to get Afghanistan united on the basis of religious nationalism.

Moreover, it can be assumed that intra-religious and intra-ethnic conflict is the main hurdle in the contemporary Afghanistan. Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazarjits and Pashtuns are historically locked in power struggle in Afghanistan. Traditionally, Pashtuns had controlled Afghanistan for last three centuries. But after a long time non-Pashtun elements had ruled over Kabul, which was not acceptable to Pashtun, dominated Taliban. Presently, the emergence of the Central Asian States has changed the dynamics of the region. Tajiks and Uzbeks find natural allies in the North in the shape of the Central Asian States. Iran is also supporting the anti-Taliban alliance and is in agreement with India, China, Russia, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in this regard.

³⁴ . Sreendhar Mahendra Ved, *Afghan Turmoil Changing Equation* (New Delhi: Himalayan Books, 1998), p.20.

II. Rise of Islamic fundamentalism: concerns for South and Central Asian regions

Secular nationalism vs religious nationalism

With the disintegration of the socialist camp, ideology has no place in the contemporary international politics, because the socialist camp supported the movements of right of self-determination against western imperialism. These movements were secular and nationalistic in nature. However, in order to contain these nationalist and anti-imperialist movements, the imperialist powers used right wing religious fundamentalist groups to counter these forces that wanted genuine change in society.

Today, all these nationalist secular oriented forces of yesteryears pose no threat to liberal West. In the post-cold war era, the West has changed its strategy according to its interest. Presently, the West supports secular and democratic forces against religious orthodox fundamentalist forces because they pose a threat to liberal democratic and secular pro-West regimes. All these secular nationalist forces are aligned with the West which has created a vacuum between state and society in their own respective countries.

Religious nationalism can be divided into three categories: ethnic, ideological and ethno-ideological.

Ethnic

Ethnic nationalism is rooted in race, history and culture. The people who are living in a particular territory wish to establish a political identity on the basis of nationalism. For example, the Muslims in Chechnya assert their independence from the rule of Russia, and Muslims in Tajikistan defend their resurgent nationalism after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In former Yugoslavia, the groups of three ethnic religious nationalists are pitted against one another. They are Christian Serbs, Croats and Bosnian Muslims.

In South Asia, mainly three ethnic nationalist movements can be identified on the basis of ethnic nationalism. First, the struggle to form a separate state by Tamils in Sri Lanka. Second, the Kashmiri Muslims fighting for the right of self-determination against India. Finally, the Sikhs in East Punjab under the banner of Khalistan movement. In these cases, religion provides the identity that makes a community coherent and links it with a particular land.

Ideological

Ideological nationalism is attached to ideas and beliefs. The difference between ethnic nationalism and ideological nationalism is that ethnic religious nationalism politicizes religion by employing religious identities for political ends, while ideological religious nationalism religionizes politics. It fills political issues and struggles within a sacred context. For example, in India, BJP has become the largest movement for religious nationalism. One can see various ethno-ideological religious nationalist forces confronting against secular elite in Pakistan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Sudan Algeria and Palestine.

Ethno-ideological

Ethno-ideological religious nationalism is a combination of ethnic ideological nationalism. It combines the other two and is both ethnic and ideological in character. These religious nationalists have double sets of enemies; their ethnic rivals and the secular leaders of their own people. The Hamas Movement in Palestine is a prime example in this regard. While fighting against Israel they are simultaneously confronting with Yaser Arafat. The leaders of the movement believed, as their founder Sheikh Ahmed Yasin said, "the only true Palestinian state is an Islamic state"³⁵. It means that the movement must simultaneously wage war against both Israeli leaders like Rabin and Peres and secular Palestinian leaders, such as, Arafat. The Sikh separatists are also falling in this category, aimed at creating a separate ideologically religious state. Taliban is another example. They brutally hanged the former secular president of Afghanistan Najibullah and presented an ultra right-wing colour of Afghan nationalism, dominated by ethnic-religious of Pashtun nationalism and controlled by Taliban.

Three Types of Religious Nationalism
TABLE I

Ethnic religious Nationalism	Ideological religious Nationalism	Ethno-ideological Nationalism
1. Ireland (Protestant and Catholic)	1. Iran (Iranian Clergy)	1. Palestine (Hamas)
2. Tajikistan (Islamic Renaissance Party)	2. Israel (Likud Party)	2. India Sikhs (Khalistan)
3. Sri Lanka (Tamil Tigers)	3. Saudi Arabia (Neo-Wahabis)	3. Former Yugoslavia (Bosnian Serbs)
4. Kashmiri Muslims	4. India (Bharatiya Janta Party)	4. Sri Lanka (Tamil Tigers)
5. Afghanistan (Hezb-e-Islami)	5. Egypt (Jamat-e-Islamiya Islamic Group)	5. UK (Irish Republican Army)
6. Turkey (Rafah Party)		6. Kashmir (Al-Jehad Lashkar-e-Tayba)
		7. Afghanistan (Taliban)

The rationale of Ideological Religious Nationalism

The shifts in economic and political power that have occurred following the break-up of the Soviet Union and the sudden rise of other economic power centers have had significant social repercussions. In order to analyze the rationale of ideological religious nationalism, one has to identify five crucial steps in the development of ideological and ethno-ideological religious nationalism.

³⁵ Mark Juergensmeyer, "The Worldwide Rise of Religious Nationalism", *Journal of International Affairs* (Colombia), Vol. 50, No. 1, Summer 1996, p.5.

[illegible]

UOSA Map by KBK

1. Despair over Secular Nationalism

The process of globalization directly affected the developing world. In the yesteryears, leaders like Gamal Abdul Nasir and Nehru committed to follow the liberal path for the development of the Third World countries. Today, the new leadership has rejected the westernized vision of Jawaharlal Nehru, and Nasir. They wanted to assert the legitimacy of their own traditional values in the public sphere and built a postcolonial national identity based on indigenous culture. Moreover, it has confronted with western culture which is now beaming globally, threaten the local and traditional forms of cultural expression. The result of this disaffection with the culture of the modern West has been brought out in the shop of "anti-secular nationalism".

2. Seeing politics in a religious way

It means religionizing politics in two ways: by showing those political difficulties, which have a religious cause and religious goals and which have a political solution. However, secular nationalism is isolated here.

3. Identify the Enemy

Mixing politics with religion leads toward "Religionization of Politics". They portray social, economic and political problems through religious prism. For example, during the Gulf War in 1991, the Hamas movement issued a communiqué stating that the US "Commandes all the forces hostile to Islam and the Muslims"³⁶. Moreover, Iranian politicians described America as the "Great Satan". It shows intellectual feed back putting in the minds of the people in order to give the image of the so-called "enemy".

4. Inevitable confrontation

Once the enemy of religion has been identified the fourth step follows the idea of grand war.³⁷ The language of warfare, fighting and dying for a cause, is appropriate and endemic to the realm of religion. The violent images are given religious meanings such as historic battles, which provided image of symbolic violence. Today, violence can be identified with real acts of political violence such as fire bombings and political assassinations. Those who are involved in these activities fanaticized it with religion and history.

6. Ultimate objective: Peace

The most important aspect of all these terrorist activities and violence is peace. It is a view of peaceful world that will come when the cosmic war is over. The Hamas leadership claims that the bombings in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv would ultimately lead to peace. In Afghanistan, the Taliban leadership propagates the idea of peace and continues

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.7.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.8.

to fight with their opponents. These religious nationalists are of the opinion that it is not the will of the people that matters in a religious frame of reference, but the will of God. In a religious context, democracy can be operated only within limits. Most religious nationalists agree and regard the discernment of truth as ultimately beyond the democratic process.³⁸

The present discussion revolves around one major point that all the forms of religious nationalism cannot be tolerated as the Western secular model for state. The international scene of the post-Cold War era has supported them, especially in the developing world. That is why we have seen a shift of secular nationalism to religious nationalism in many parts of the developing world.

Transformation from secular nationalism to religious nationalism

Table II

Country	Secular Nationalist Parties	Religious Nationalist Parties
Tajikistan	Ruling Communist Party turn secular	Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP)
Algeria	Algerian Nationalist Party	Islamic Salvation Front (FIS)
India	Congress	Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP)
Turkey	Motherland Party and others	Rafah Party
Kashmir	Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF)	Hizb-ullah, Al-Jehad, Lashkar Tayba
Palestine	PLO and other secular Nationalist forces	Hamas
Afghanistan	Peoples Democratic Party (PDPA)	Taliban

Islamic fundamentalism: myth or reality?

The word "fundamentalism" means basic principles of a group of people, nation or party united on specific political or ideological system of governance. The Islamic fundamentalist forces are those who want to use "Islam" as a political force to mobilize the masses, gain authority and control the state apparatus. Islamic extremism as a phenomenon has flourished whenever there is economic hardship, political chaos and social unrest. With the end of the ideological tussle between communism and capitalism at global and regional levels, Islamic extremist movements are increasingly presenting themselves as an alternate to fill the ideological vacuum in the Muslim world³⁹. The

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³⁹ Muthahir Ahmed, "China and Regional Muslim States: Challenges and Opportunities in 21st Century", *National Development and Security*, (Rawalpindi), Vol. VI, No.1, 1997, p.49.

individuals, groups and movements that favour a revival of Islam can be placed in four broad categories.

Muslim fundamentalists

The Muslim fundamentalists in the contemporary politics have been described as those who believe in rigidity, extremism and intolerance. They have rejected Western ideas and ideals and they desire to establish an Islamic state based on *Sharia* (Islamic Law)⁴⁰. They also support democracy as long as it provides them with an opportunity to propagate their ideology and mould public opinion in their favour. But once their objectives are achieved, democracy for them becomes superfluous. Democracy is there to be replaced with theocracy.

Fundamentalists claim that an Islamic state cannot be democratic, because democracy is the name given to that particular form of government in which sovereignty ultimately rests with the people, in which legislation depends, both in its form and content, on the force and direction of public opinion. The fundamentalists also uphold that the Islamic State pervades all aspects of human life.⁴¹

Muslim Traditionalists

The traditionalist revivalists are those who want to conserve and preserve Islamic values from the medieval period of Islam. They are often apolitical and status quo oriented⁴².

Muslim Modernists

They advocate the reconciliation of traditional religious doctrine with secular scientific rationalism. They also advocate the incorporation of "modern day" ideas into Islamic law and its revision. In contrast, the fundamentalists reject anything "modern" as un-Islamic⁴³.

Muslim Pragmatists

They are Muslims by name and birth that choose Islamic ideals and values and identify themselves with the Muslim culture. Many of them get an opportunity to visit the West, acquire Western education and understand secular thought. They use Islamic zeal to promote their economic, social and political policies and programs of modernization⁴⁴.

⁴⁰ Mir Zahir Hussain, *Global Islamic Politics* (New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1995), p.11.

⁴¹ Hussain Mutalib and M.S. Agwani (ed.) *Islam, Muslim and the Modern State*, (London : Macmillan Press, 1994), p.26.

⁴² Mir Zahir Hussain, *op.cit.*, p.12.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Presently, the Islamic movements all in over the Muslim world are a product of the action, reaction and interaction between the above mentioned four types of advocates of Islamic revivalism.

Major Characteristics

TABLE III

Fundamentalists	Traditionalists	Modernists	Pragmatists
Based on Islamic fundamentalism	Based primarily on Islamic orthodoxy with a minimum of custom-laden popular Islam or folk Islam	Based on progressive Islam, Islamic nationalism	Based on Islamic nationalism although Islamic component is largely rhetorical and symbolic
Mulla Umer	Gillani	Ahmed Shah Masud	Faction of the former PDPA
Sayyaf	Mujaddidi		Dostum

III Islamic fundamentalism: State-Society relations

The end of the bipolar system has sharpened the contradictions between state-society relationship. In bipolar world, states were controlled by "supra national powers" and, thus, keep the internal contradictions in balance. Muslim world is a classical example in this regard. The defeat of Iraq in 1991 has radicalized Arab world in particular and Muslim world in general. The entire Muslim world watched helplessly as allied forces penetrated in the region. Almost all the fundamentalist groups condemned the foreign aggression and branded the ruling Muslim elite responsible for the war. The Gulf War provided an opportunity to those fundamentalists to raise slogans against Western world and the ruling establishments of Muslim countries. Moreover, Islamic extremism as a phenomenon has sharpened because of economic chaos, political instability and societal injustices. These Islamic extremist forces hit the core issues, which confront the young educated factions of middle and lower middle classes. Furthermore, growing unemployment, corruption, worsening economic condition and establishment's deliberate attempt to channel resources towards non-development expenditure frustrated the young minds. All these factors widen the gap between state-society relationship, which has broadened with the passage of time. Presently, the internal contradictions between state-society have sharpened because there is no "supra national power" which can balance this contradiction.

Islamic fundamentalism vs religious nationalism

Religious nationalism is an offshoot of Islamic fundamentalism. However, religious nationalism is a radical form of Islamic fundamentalism. With the passage of time, Islamic fundamentalism has been further transformed into religious nationalism. It is a dangerous trend in the contemporary politics. As the leading figure of Sudan's fundamentalist movement Torabi stated: "Today if you want to assert indigenous values,

originality and independence against the West, then Islam is the only doctrine"⁴⁵. Presently, it seems that Islamic movements all over the Muslim world have been divided on these lines. In order to accommodate with the current trends, Islamic fundamentalist parties are using a very mild language while addressing the various political issues. For example, Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt issued a statement clarifying its position on several questions designed to dispel the negative image associated with fundamentalism. Issuing a declaration, Muslim Brotherhood clarified its position regarding contemporary issues, including political pluralism, democracy and women's rights⁴⁶. The declaration also noted the importance of political opposition. In the best tradition of liberal democratic norms, it denounced and rejected terrorism and violence as detrimental to the security of the nation and a threat to economic and political progress. Moreover, Muslim Brotherhood stated that it would respect human rights of all and seek to facilitate the means by which freedom could be practiced within existing legal and moral framework.

On the contrary, religious nationalists are toeing the hard-line, which is very explosive in nature. From Algeria to Afghanistan, strong groups of violent activists gain support from the masses⁴⁷. Presently, these religious nationalists are very strong in Pakistan, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Algeria, Sudan, Palestine and Egypt. They have also replaced the secular nationalist's force in two trouble spots of South and West Asia. First, Kashmir where the secular nationalist force Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) is replaced by dozens of Islamic and religious nationalist groups. Second, Afghanistan where People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), has been replaced by Taliban, representing ultra-religious nationalist force in Afghanistan.

Moreover, terrorism is also added in the name of religion. Between mid 60's and mid 90's, the numbers of fundamentalist movements have tripled worldwide⁴⁸. They are all clear on one point that religion and politics cannot be separated in Islam. Furthermore, in Cold War era, these groups were internationalized in terms of contacts and strategies. For example, many Algerians, Egyptians and Palestinians participated in the Afghan war alongwith Afghan Resistance fighters. These Afghan fighters supported them both physically and ideologically in the war. The Afghan conflict served as a training ground for these Muslim extremists during 80s. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, these Muslim fighters returned to their respective countries in order to radicalize the Islamic struggle at home front, resorting to increased violence in the process, either within existing movements or as splinter groups.

⁴⁵ Mohammad A. Faksh, "The prospects of Islamic fundamentalism in the post-Gulf war period", *International Journal* (Toronto), Vol.XLIV, spring 1994, p.183.

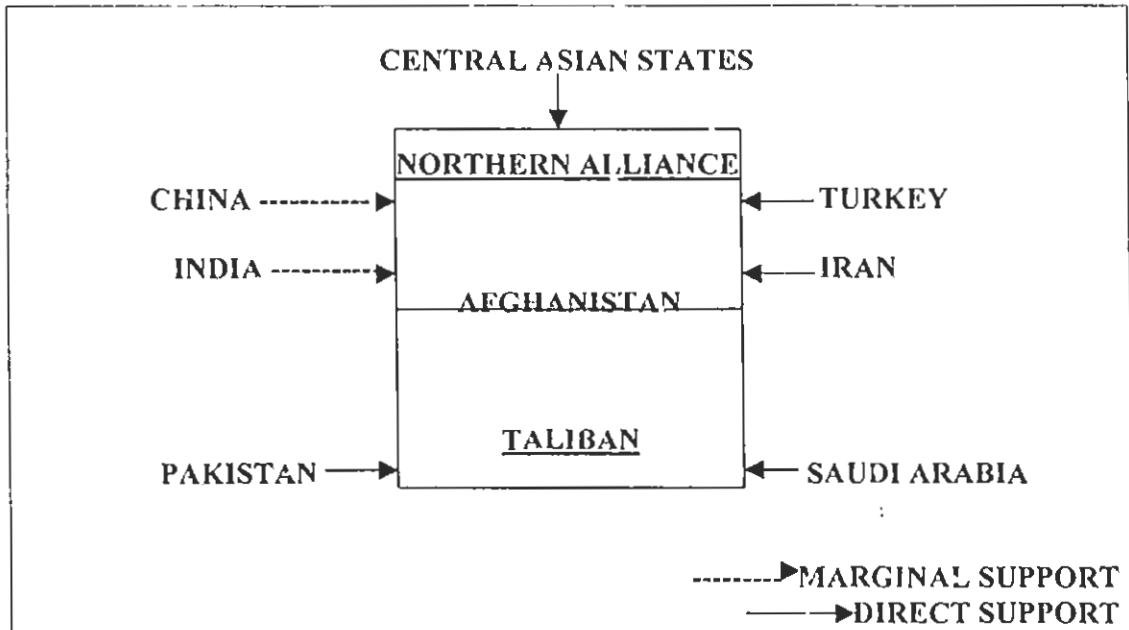
⁴⁶ Statement to the Public from the Muslim Brotherhood in Cairo, May 2, 1995 (FBLS-NES-95-090, May 10, 1995).

⁴⁷ Sami G.Hajjar, "The US and Islamic Fundamentalists: The need for dialogue", *Strategic Review* (Washington), Vol. 25, No.1, Winter 1997, pp.50-51.

⁴⁸ Magnus Ranstorp, "Terrorism in the name of religion", *Journal of International Affairs* (New York), Vol. 5, No.1, Summer 1996, p.44.

TABLE IV

Concerns for South and Central Asian regions



Najibullah's exit from the Afghan power corridors had created a vacuum that was temporarily filled by Rabbani's government. But his government was not a representative government of all Afghan factions. Thus the problem remained unsolved. Afghanistan shares borders with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Iran, China and Pakistan. All these states have some genuine concern regarding the political development in war-torn Afghanistan.

The leaders of the Central Asian States along with China want to contain religious extremism. Iran fears from Sunni dominated political groups, while Pakistan outrightly supports Sunni Taliban. This leads toward a clash of interest among the regional powers.

Central Asian States

Afghanistan shares borders with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Due to its geographical location, Central Asia faces a potential security problem with war-torn Afghanistan. The exit of Najibullah and the take over of power by the Resistance movements have had a domino type effect on Tajikistan. There are 4 million Tajiks in Afghanistan, more than in any Central Asian State. The Tajik Opposition consequently received strong support from Afghanistan. The former Afghan Prime Minister, Gulbaddin Hekmatyar, trained several hundred Tajiks Opposition militants in Dushanbe, while the former Defence Minister Ahmed Shah Masud, has also been arming his supporters in Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) of Tajikistan⁴⁹.

⁴⁹ Mark Juergensmeyer, *op.cit.*, p.10.

Thus, because of common borders with CARs Afghanistan not only has large ethnic minorities linked with these republics, but also economically integrated with them. Almost one fifth of the Afghan population consists of Turkmens, Uzbeks and Tajiks⁵⁰. Almost all the leaders of CARs have been facing problems, like inter-ethnic rivalries and fears of religious fundamentalism. Ethnic tensions, economic depravation and political turmoil are the basic problems of the CARs. The entire leadership of CARs is trying to neutralize the religious fundamentalist forces. They have presented a very secular and liberal outlook of their region. In March 1992, the President of Kyrgyzstan, Askar Akaev, visited India and stated that he saw no possibility of religious fundamentalists turning the CARs into an Islamic bloc⁵¹ toward a future market economy and its goal was to build a secular democratic society⁵². During a visit to Pakistan and India in 1992, he stated in India that "the Central Asian Republics are now eager to revitalize their cultural and economic relations with the neighboring countries like Iran and Afghanistan but it does not mean that we want to form a fundamentalist bloc"⁵³. Moreover, the intelligentsia in CARs does not support the fundamentalist forces. While giving an interview to *CNN*, a Kazakh intellectual said that they had suffered a lot from the Stalinist federal system and now we did not want an Islamic federal system⁵⁴.

Nevertheless, democratic and secular ruling elite of CARs has been trying its best to maintain a status quo and a balance between State-Society relationship in the region. But it is an objective reality that Islamic fundamentalists are likely to be one of the main beneficiaries of the growing polarization between State-Society relationship. The fundamentalists are stronger in Tajikistan than in any other republic because it is a country of ethnic and tribal contradictions. However, it has a very narrow power base despite the existence of the fundamentalist IRP. The Chairman of the IRP, Mohammad Sharif Himat Zade claimed, "For 75 years the communists tried to wipe out the memory of *Allah*, but every Tajik today still remembers *Allah* and prays for the success of the Party of *Allah*"⁵⁵.

⁵⁰ Mutahir Ahmed, "Turmoil in Tajikistan: The Role of Internal and External Powers", *Eurasian Studies* (Ankara), No. 3, Fall 1995, p.73.

⁵¹ "Impact of Central Asian Developments on South and West Asia", *Spotlight on Regional Affairs* (Islamabad), Vol. XI, No. 4, 1992, p.31.

⁵² *The Hindustan Times*, (New Delhi), 19 March 1992.

⁵³ *The Frontier Post*, (Peshawar), 28 July 1992.

⁵⁴ *CNN Report*, 6 March 1992.

⁵⁵ *FarEastern Economic Review*, (Hong Kong), 9 January 1992.

China is a secular socialist state where religion is an individual matter. Naturally, China wants to see such regimes in the region that can control religious extremist forces in their respective countries. Religious extremist forces pose a threat to Chinese authorities in Xianjiang a home of 8 million Muslims. Massive riots took place in that region in 1997. The problem of Xianjiang province is a natural off-shot of changing regional scenario. Religious extremist forces in Central Asia, Afghanistan and Kashmir have influenced Xianjiang province. Presenting a paper on 7 May 1996 at a bilateral seminar held in Beijing between Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament and Foundation for Research on International Environment National Development and Security (FRIENDS), Mr. Xie Zhiqiong, Deputy Secretary-General of the Association clearly stated:

Violence committed by international terrorism has not only seriously threatened the security of the concerned countries, but also has become a major factor threatening world peace and regional stability. It needs to be noted that some terrorist activities have backstage support of certain countries, and are in collusion with religious fanaticism and political extremism. They can hardly be controlled or guarded against. The consequences will be dreadful if some terrorist possess weapons of mass destruction.⁵⁶ Xianjiang Uighur an autonomous region of China occupies a pivotal position in Asia with its borders touching Mongolia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Afghanistan and Kashmir. In Xianjiang province Huns (Chinese 37%) and Uighur Muslims (47%) have been involved in violent clashes leaving more than 80 people dead and 100 injured⁵⁷.

This incident is not an isolated phenomenon. Increased trans-border trade and traffic between Xianjiang and adjoining region of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan (via Karakoram Highway) passing through Azad Kashmir has resulted in greater interaction between Turkic people of Xianjiang, their ethnic counterparts and co-religionists in Central Asia, Pakistan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. On the country, the Chinese government has taken these activities seriously. The Communist Party Chief of Xianjiang province Wang Lequan, vowed to adopt a policy of "no compromise" with separatist's elements. "We must oppose separatism and illegal religious activities in a clear and comprehensive manner striking hard and effectively against our enemies"⁵⁸.

Chinese are concerned over the issues of Islamic fundamentalist religious nationalism and cross border infiltration of drugs and arms. Chinese want to restrict foreign subversives from Afghanistan, Pakistan's Islamic parties and other Uigher groups in CARs. China was incensed over the activities of Pakistan's Islamic parties in Xianjiang. According to diplomatic sources, China noted with concern the activities of some 200 activists of various Pakistani religious parties engaged in propagating religion

⁵⁶ Xie Zhiqiong, "Views on Current International Political and Security Situation", *National Development and Security*, Vol. V, No. 1, 1996, pp.138-139.

⁵⁷ Moonis Almar, "Ethnic assertion in Xianjiang", *The News*, (Karachi), 6 March 1997.

⁵⁸ *The News*, 18 December 1996.

in Xianjiang⁵⁹. China claims that Taliban have trained Islamic fundamentalists and has provided them arms to assist their battle for independence⁶⁰.

In 1997, Taliban leadership floated the idea that support to the Muslim Chinese in Xianjiang should be further increased. Reports also indicate that ISI field operatives have tacitly approved Taliban's new initiative of exporting and supporting Islamic revolution across the borders. Around fifteen middle ranking Taliban representatives are reported to have visited Xianjiang in the summer of 1997 to coordinate their activities with the local Muslims. In mid 1997, border checkpoints were installed on the Karakoram Highway by the government in Beijing, the avowed official purpose being to check smuggling but in reality to monitor militant movements and stops smuggling of narcotics and guns⁶¹.

Pakistan and Taliban vehemently deny these allegations. However, it is no longer a secret that the Chinese Muslim separatists operate from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey and other CARs. Some 200,000 and other CARs. Some 200,000 Uigurs live in Kazakhstan, where exiled separated organizations are reported to have united on 8 February 1997 to create a movement calling itself Uighuristan. Meanwhile, at the State level, the government of Kazakhstan supported Chinese policies regarding Xianjiang. The Kazakh Foreign Minister Kazymzhomart Tokoyev, stated that it would never support separatist activities in the neighboring Chinese region Xianjiang because "Kazakhstan is resolutely opposed to those activities meant to separate China"⁶².

Turkey

Among the other regional countries, Turkey has a significant potential to contain religious extremism within and outside the borders. The West urges greater economic and technical support to Turkey, which it considers as the only positive force in the region which has the potential to drive out fundamentalist forces. Significantly, Pan Turkic revivalism has boosted after the CARs got independence. From Turkey to Chinese Xijiang province these forces are operating to change the existing nomenclature of the region. For example Uigure and Kazakh exiles from Xianjiang settled in Turkey have also been keeping close touch with their counter parts in Xianjiang. They are running at least seven organizations in Turkey, which are working to achieve the goal of separation of Xianjiang from China⁶³.

But Turkey officially follows cooperation with its neighbors on the basis of mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. Ideologically, Turkey opposes every form of religious nationalism and committed to follow Ataturk's ideology that exposed nationalism in a modernizing way. Its secular structure that glorified Islam in the hearts of believers and its principles can be the only secure system of thought⁶⁴.

⁵⁹ *Dawn*, 5 March 1997.

⁶⁰ *The News*, 25 April 1997.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Dawn*, 5 March 1997.

⁶³ K. Warikoo, "Ethnic Religious Resurgence in Xinjiang", *Eurasian Studies*, No. 2, Winter 1995, pp.37-38.

⁶⁴ Svat Ilhan, "Geopolitical developments and the Turkish world", *Eurasian Studies*, No. 3, Fall 1995, p.35.

Since the creation of Pakistan, emphasis has continuously been laid by the fundamentalists on the point that since Pakistan was created in the name of Islam, Islamic ideology must be strictly implemented in the social, economic and political spheres of the state. Islam has a dominant role in Pakistan's political system. But the interpretations of Islam have varied greatly. Ayub Khan's modernist Islam, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's populist Islam, Zia-ul-Haq's theocratic and fundamentalist Islam are indicative of these varying interpretations of the Islamic political and economic system. Though it had always been present in the Pakistani polity, fundamentalism gained grounds in 1977 when Zia captured power. Religious zealots found easier expression under his rule that imposed Martial Law and expressed support for the Islamic system. In the late seventies turmoil in Afghanistan transformed the political landscape of the region. Zia-ul-Haq took full advantage of this development. He secured the support after Western world portraying himself as an anti-Communist warrior who supported hard-line fundamentalists of the Afghan Resistance movements. With the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan in 1989, these Mujahideens lost a common enemy.

The Afghan conflict has had a direct impact on Pakistan's domestic political scene. These fundamentalist groups have forged alliance with various religious and political parties in Pakistan. Many Pakistan-based religious parties send their activists to fight alongwith Afghan fundamentalist groups. But since there is no common enemy, these groups are now divided on religious and sectarian lines. The Iranian Revolution has also affected the domestic scene especially sectarian politics in Pakistan⁶⁵. Analysts have generally laid the blame on late Genral Zia-ul-Haq for the chauvinism in Pakistani politics. He has even been accused of encouraging Islamic fundamentalism in armed forces. On 26 September 1995, a group of army officers comprising a major general, a brigadier, three colonels, half a dozen other officers and 25 to 30 civilians had plotted to eliminate the top army leadership and tried to impose fundamentalist Islam in the country through an "Islamic revolution"⁶⁶. It is said that the plotters were closely linked with the fundamentalist organizations Hizb-ul-Mujahideen and Harkat-ul-Ansar, which were known for their involvement in international terrorism. It is also said that the arrested officers wanted Pakistan to become militarily involved in the Kashmir freedom struggle⁶⁷. Moreover, the polarization, which Zia introduced in Pakistan, has been institutionalized. He generously funded madrases to win the support of the religious leaders. In 1988 there were 1,320 religious madrases in Punjab, in 1995 they increased to 1,686 and in 1997 to 2,512. About 2,18,939 students are studying in these institutions⁶⁸. There is fresh evidence indicating that some sectarian activities in the Punjab are being

⁶⁵ *Newsline* (Karachi), November 1994.

⁶⁶ *Dawn*, 16 October 1995.

⁶⁷ M. H. Askari, "The coup that failed", *Dawn*, 18 October 1995.

⁶⁸ Tariq Rahman, "The Making of the Pakistani Taliban", *The News*, 26 May 1997.

spearheaded from Afghanistan. According to an activist, "whenever the police hunt intensified, their most convenient escape route had been to Afghanistan"⁶⁹. A number of Pakistan religious scholars now visiting Afghanistan have reiterated their support for Taliban. The Ulema affiliated with Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (JUI) have expressed solidarity with the Taliban and criticized their opponents⁷⁰.

Sponsoring international terrorism and separate subversion and insurgency is not new in Pakistan. The transformation of the Kashmiri insurgency to Islamic revivalism is quite clear. Indeed Kashmir is the only area in India where Islamic revivalism has taken a radical political stance and where the slogans of the Islamic state have been publicly raised and received with growing popularity.

It is noted that this transformation was assisted and reinforced by an active ISI programme. Initially, the emphasis of this programme was on using the Afghan-support infrastructure in Pakistan to support Kashmiri militants. During the main escalation of Islamist violence in the Indian held Kashmir in mid 1988, Pakistan provided assistance in the training and arming of the Kashmiri terrorists as well as sanctuaries to Kashmiri insurgents across the border. At times, the ISI assistance to the Kashmiri Islamists was even funneled through the Afghan rebel leader Gulbaddin Hekmatyar's Hizb-i-Islami group⁷¹.

Thus, the rise of Islamic ideology to predominance throughout Indian Kashmir facilitated the emergence of a tight link between the Kashmiri insurgents, their supporters and Islamabad. Thus, it was with the widespread adoption of Islamic ideology that Kashmiri Muslims could not seek ideological sustenance from a transitional Islam while, simultaneously basking in the guaranteed patronage from across the border. Moreover, Pakistan's defence establishment views it as a commitment to the global Islamic cause. "Muslim fundamentalist in Pakistan ... see the Islamic surge in Kashmir as the long awaited hour for *Jihad* against Indian infidels, a holy war for which Pakistan must funnel material and moral backing"...⁷².

As the regional situation changed in early 1991, the Islamic fundamentalist groups shifted their attention to the training of thousands of "Brethren" from all over the Muslim World⁷³. The organized transfer of training installations to several camps in Pakistan and Afghanistan began in the summer of 1991 and still continues as *Jehadi* teams arrived from other Muslim countries. In 1991, thirteen Kashmiri Islamists were accepted for about six months of highly specialized terrorist training in Sudan under the personal

⁶⁹ Rana Jawad, "Sectarian activities in Punjab being plotted from Afghanistan", *The News*, 11 January 1998.

⁷⁰ Rahimullah Yusufzai, "Inspiring neighborhood", *The News*, 30 October 1997.

⁷¹ Excerpts from the report, "The New Islamist International Task Force on Terrorism and unconventional warfare", set up by the US House Republican Research Committee, 1 February 1992, p.2.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

supervision of the Sudanese leaders Turabi and Mustafa Uthman. By then Turabi, had already visited Pakistan and Afghanistan in September 1991 to coordinate terrorist support activities.

Indeed, Jamat-i-Islami (Pakistan) Hizb-i-Islami and Jamiat-i-Islam (Afghanistan) and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (Kashmir) became the members of the Turabi-led Popular International Organization (PIO) and in this capacity, provided assistance to, and closely cooperated with, Islamists from Egypt, the Hizbullah in Lebanon, FIS in Algeria and NIF in Sudan. PIO members exchanged experts and cooperated in joint support and training activities⁷⁴. At present the armed Islamic Movement supports and trains Islamic fighters for *Jihad* throughout the world. In this context, Pakistan's State and Society are facing serious structural crises. There is a wide gap between the State and Society. State has a grave economic and security problems while medieval revivalist backlash in the shape of the "Afghanistanisation" of Pakistani society is a new phenomenon.

India

When the Mujahideen took control of Kabul in 1992, India was diplomatically isolated. However, Rabbani's government made its first low key, but significant, contact with India. India, on several occasions had expressed its apprehension that Pakistan might misuse Afghan territory for training and exporting militancy in Jammu and Kashmir. The annual report of India's Ministry of Home Affairs, released on 27 April 1997, listed Harkat al Ansar as one of the many pan-Islamic organizations trained by the ISI in camps run in Afghanistan by the Taliban controlled areas⁷⁵. Moreover, the launching pad for the Mujahideen was the Pakistan-held Kashmir. Several foreign mercenaries, among them Jordanian, Lebanese, Egyptians and Afghans, were captured or killed by Indian forces in Jammu and Kashmir⁷⁶.

The Foreign Minister of the Afghan government visited India in October 1992. During the meeting he expressed the apprehension that the triumph of Mujahideen might be diverted to Jammu and Kashmir at Pakistan's behest. He assured the Indian official that the Afghan territory would not be allowed to be used for anti-Indian activities. The Indian policy towards Afghanistan has four main goals:

- 1) Immediate cease-fire.
- 2) To solve the problems through dialogue.
- 3) No foreign interference.
- 4) Inflow of all foreign arms must stop⁷⁷.

Theoretically, these goals are ideal for the resolution of the Afghan conflict, but practically these are highly unrealistic. However, India's main concern is Kashmir. The present crisis in Jammu and Kashmir is characterized by an interaction of the Islamic fundamentalism and religious Nationalism and the rising sentiments for Kashmir independence. One of the basic reasons of this uprising is the growing strength of Islamic

⁷⁴ . Sreendhar Mahendra Ved, *op.cit.*, p. 137.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁷⁷ Sreendhar Mahendra Ved. *op.cit.*, p. 147.

ideals of the Islamization policy in Pakistan and the *Jihad* in Afghanistan have all had an impact. Citing intelligence estimates, India's premier news magazine *India Today* reported in September 1995 that at least 16,000 foreign Islamic militants had crossed the border into Kashmir during the summer of 1995 to fight on the side of the Kashmir Muslim insurgents⁷⁸. Foreign collaboration on this scale does not pose a major military threat to Indian forces, but it does promise to help sustain the insurgency. In the presence of two nuclear powers of South Asia and the frightening political impact on the subcontinent's Muslim and Hindu communities the Kashmir conflict might be seen in the context of the Muslim Pakistan against Hindu India. The persistent appeal of Islamic militancy in Pakistan and the rise of Hindu Nationalism in India, only underscore the Kashmir conflict's capacity to incite South Asians to greater political extremism.

However, the Afghan civil war has become a breeding ground for terrorists all around the Muslim World. From the Indian perspective, Islamabad perceives these Afghan warriors as an instrument to achieve its foreign policy objectives. Now, Pakistan has introduced another batch of Islamic warriors in the name of Taliban to continue their *Jihad*. After the initial round of success, Taliban were sent to Xinjiang province of China to fight the Han Chinese and to Central Asia to fight the communist turned secular regimes⁷⁹. From India's point of view, if Islamic fundamentalists succeeded in Afghanistan, they might infiltrate on Indian soil and subvert the secular and democratic fabric of their society⁸⁰. India with a Muslim population of over 120 million cannot escape the impact of this *Jihad* launched by groups like the Taliban. There are reports of the Taliban sympathizer groups getting organized in places like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Though Indian Republic has acquired the necessary resilience to deal with these pulls and pressures, in the short run they do create problems in upholding the core values of the Republic. Therefore, the Indian policy-makers face the task of minimizing the backlash effect of the civil war in Afghanistan on the Indian Republic.

Iran

The primary consideration of Iran is to see viable and territorially integrated Afghanistan. Iran believes that if Afghanistan's territorial integrity is disturbed, it would open a Pandora Box in the existing nation-state structure of South West Asia. Since 1979, when Revolution took place, Iran resisted the attempts made by Saudi Arabia and Pakistan to export Wahabi-Sunni version of Islamic revolution as a challenge to Iran's Shia model. With the independence of the CARs, Iran visualizes its role as a regional power. Iran shares its borders with Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan. It has historical, religious and cultural ties with CARs. By the end of 1992, Iran was backing different political groups with money and military supplies. Iran has backed only Shia fundamentalist groups in the region. For example, Iran is supporting Shiaat Hizb-i-Wahdat in Afghanistan. Al-Jihad in Kashmir influenced by the ideology of the Iranian Revolution and publicly raised the issue of an Islamic Revolution as the only way to

⁷⁸ . Robert G. Wirsing, "The Kashmir Conflict", *Current History* (Philadelphia), Vol. 95, No. 600, April 1996, p. 174.

⁷⁹ . *Ibid.*, p. 151

⁸⁰ . *Ibid.*, p. 153.

liberate Kashmir in the mid 80s⁸¹. Presently, Iran follows a more broad based policy by backing all the groups who are interested in neutralizing the growing influence and support to the opposition groups from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Taliban⁸². Instead of ideology, Iran is reconciled to its position, as its first priority continued to be economic reconstruction. But whenever Wahabi Sunnis persecuted Shias, Iran comes to their rescue in order to keep its Shia constituency intact. However, Iran is guided in its approach by pragmatism rather than by ideology. For example in CARs, though there are religious ties based on adherence, Iran focuses more on political and economic issues rather than religious matters. But with the induction of Taliban phenomenon in Afghanistan, Iran's policy has totally changed. According to Iranian perception, Taliban has been created with four objectives:

- 1) To promote a surrogate power structure in Kabul.
- 2) To promote Wahabi Sunni Pashtun dominated Taliban as a direct challenge to Iran.
- 3) To facilitate the process of capturing the CARs market.
- 4) To reduce the role of Iran in the region.

In order to contain Taliban, Iran's policy towards the Afghan civil war revolved around four factors.

- 1) To confine Taliban to southern Afghanistan.
- 2) To support all those forces that appeased Taliban.
- 3) To ensure the success of the strategy of containment of Taliban and involve the immediate neighbors of Afghanistan especially CARs, Russia, China and India.
- 4) To Work for the establishment of the broad-based government in Afghanistan.

Iran's effort is to promote negotiations, to abandon the use of force and to help set in place a mechanism for establishing a broad-based government a guarantee to Iran's national security⁸³.

Russia

The former Soviet Union directly involved itself in Afghanistan, which had far reaching implications for present day Russia, the successor of the former Soviet Union. Presently, Russia's main concern is to contain Islamic extremist elements not only in Afghanistan, but also in the CARs. In an interview, IRP Chairman, Mohammad Sharif Himatzade, disclosed in Islamabad that they had bought US-made stringer missiles from Afghan Mujahideen, because the Mujahideen sold these missiles to Tajiks for less money than the Americans had offered⁸⁴. Moscow feels threatened from these developments

⁸¹ . Excerpts from the report, "The new Islamist International and Task Force on Terrorism and the unconventional warfare", set up by the US House Republicans Research Committee, 1 February 1993, p.1.

⁸² Mutahir Ahmed, "Civil war in Tajikistan: Internal strife and external response", *Pakistan Horizon* (Karachi), Vol. 47, No. 4, October 1994, p.91.

⁸³ Kamal Knarrazi, "What Iran wants in Afghanistan", *Dawn*, 8 November 1996.

⁸⁴ *The Pakistan Times* (Lahore), 28 July 1993.

due to many reasons. First, direct involvement of the former Soviet Union in Afghanistan has highly affected things at Tajikistan's borders with Afghanistan. Second, Moscow fears that an unstable Tajikistan can destabilize and disrupt the neighboring countries up to northern Kazakhstan. Third, Moscow sees Tajikistan as the key point of the reemerging balance of power in Central Asia and controlling Tajikistan means to contain outside powers, such as, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia to prevent them from exerting their influence in the region. Fourth, Moscow perceives Islamic threat from Tajikistan, because Tajik opposition is directly linked with certain extremist Islamic groups in the region⁸⁵. Finally, the protection of Russian minorities in Tajikistan has been one of the excuses, which Russia used as the legal basis for the presence of its troops on Tajik border. President Boris Yeltsin and CARs leaders declared that Tajikistan was on the verge of civil war and ordered CIS forces, which numbered some 10,000 in Tajikistan to take control of its 1300 kilometer border with Afghanistan⁸⁶. Actually, Russia desires to see the neo-communist secular elite, which could control the Islamic fundamentalist forces in the region⁸⁷.

Russia has deployed border guards in Tajikistan in order to consolidate communist turn secular leadership of Tajikistan and contain religious extremist factions outside the borders of Tajikistan. Russians call it "Near Abroad Policy". During the 1992 turmoil of Tajikistan, Yeltsin proclaimed that the Tajik-Afghan border was in fact Russia's border⁸⁸.

A section of the Russian leadership, led by General Alexander Lebed reacted with alarm by Taliban's advancement. He issued a statement claiming that Taliban intended to sweep north and annex portions of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Moreover, the Northern Alliance contends that Taliban are actually aiming for Samarkhand and Bukhara in Uzbekistan⁸⁹.

Thus, it clearly shows that all the regional powers have shown serious concern towards the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. Sharing the same view, the regional powers are of the opinion that in the absence of a cohesive central government and an on going fighting among rival factions, Afghanistan remained training ground for Islamic militants and terrorists. According to the Patterns of Global Terrorism 1996, Ahmed Shah Masud, Gulbaddin Hikmatyar, Abdul Rasul Sayyaf and others, maintained training and indoctrination facilities in Afghanistan mainly for non-Afghans. They continue to provide

⁸⁵ Julien Thoni, "The Tajik Conflict: The External Vulnerability 1991-94", *Occasional Paper* (Geneva), No. 3, 1994, p.8.

⁸⁶ Mutahir Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p.90.

⁸⁷ Mutahir Ahmed, "Turmoil in Tajikistan: The role of internal and external powers", *Eurasian Studies*, No. 3, Fall 1995, p.71.

⁸⁸ Sreendhar Mahendra Ved, *op.cit.*, p.102.

⁸⁹ Jamil Rasid, "Tajikistan—Quagmire of Central Asia", *Strategic Studies* (Islamabad), Vol. IV, No. 2, 1996, p.154.

logistic support and training facilities to Islamic extremists despite losses in the past years. Individuals who trained in these camps were involved in insurgencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chechnya, Tajikistan, Kashmir, the Philippines and in the Middle East. The Taliban militia, which took control over the Kabul in September 1996, has permitted Islamic extremists to continue to train in territories under their control even though they claimed to have closed the camps. The group confiscated camps belonging to rival factions and turned them over to groups such as the Pakistan-based Kashmiri terrorist group Harakatul Ansar⁹⁰.

IV Civil War in Afghanistan: impact on Central and South Asian regions

The civil war in Afghanistan is not only a result of individual or power group interests, but also an outcome of those external powers who are backing various resistance factions during and after the Soviet occupation.

After the collapse of the PDPA's rule, its cadres took refuge in CARs, Pakistan and Russia. Former Khalis, who were predominantly Pashtuns and extreme nationalists, joined Hekmatyar's Hizb-i-Islami and are also providing military leadership to the Taliban⁹¹. The Parchamis, multi-ethnic and moderate secularists joined Rashid Dostum's Jumbish-i-Milli.

Politically, Afghanistan has been divided into various ethnic zones. This internal division within the Afghan society has further exacerbated by external factors, such as, the support for particular majority and minority groups by regional actors. Iran is supporting pro-Iranian faction of the Hezb-i-Wahdat on sectarian lines. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are supporting Pashtun Taliban. CARs, Russia, China, Turkey and India have been supporting Dostum and Masud led Northern Alliance. The involvement of outside powers not only adds as fuel to the civil war, but has also a far-reaching implication, on South and Central Asian regions. Pakistan is certainly behind the Taliban movement⁹², in order to compete with Iran and Turkey for a share of the resources of Central Asia. One reason why Pakistan decided to intervene openly in the Afghan civil war was that the former President of Afghanistan Burhanudin Rabbani had started intra-Afghan dialogue with the help of Iran, CARs and Russia. This would have resulted into Taliban's isolation on the Afghan political scene and the marginalization of Pakistan⁹³.

In 1997, the Taliban made a dent in Dostum's stronghold through General Malik Pehlwan for a sum of estimated 20 million dollars⁹⁴. Dostum fled and took asylum in Turkey. The revolt against General Dostum did come as a surprise to us, stated a Pakistani official. According to Pakistan's Foreign Office sources, "Dostum had been alienating his supporters and friends, ... Now that this has happened this may pave the way for the Taliban to take control of all of Afghanistan"⁹⁵. A day after the Taliban

⁹⁰ *Patterns of Global Terrorism 1996*, April 1997, United States Department of State (Washington), p.3.

⁹¹ Zahid Anwar, "The future political role of Afghanistan in the region", *Defence Journal* (Karachi), Vol. XXI, Nos. 7.8, 1995, p.21.

⁹² *Newsline*, August, 1998.

⁹³ Sreendhar Mahendra Ved, *op.cit.* p. 29.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁹⁵ *The News*, 27 May 1997.

captured Mazar-i-Sharif, Pakistan accorded formal recognition to the Taliban government on 25 May 1997 and became the first country to do so. According to Pakistan Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub, "We feel that the new government fulfills the criteria for de jure recognition. It is now in effective control of most of the territory of Afghanistan, including capital Kabul, and is representative of all ethnic groups in that country"⁹⁶. After Pakistan, Saudi Arabia became the second country to recognize the Taliban government in Afghanistan⁹⁷.

The situation ultimately changed when in October 1997 Dostum ended his self-exile in Turkey. He went to Tirmiz in Uzbekistan and then crossed over to Herat, 100 km into Afghan territory and returned to northern Afghanistan. He drove Malik from his bases in northern Afghanistan. Malik fled to Iran in November 1997⁹⁸.

Thus, Dostum's presence in Mazar-Sharif again altered the situation and maintained a balance of power. But it was a great set back to Pakistan, UAE and Saudi Arabia who recognized the Taliban government in haste and exposed the support, which they had provided to the Taliban. It also shows that Pakistan miscalculated the events. Actually, Pakistan is following a two-track policy in Afghanistan. At one level, the Pakistan Foreign office speaks in terms of broad-based government, but on the other hand, ISI pursues a policy of supporting the Taliban materially. On the contrary, Turkey, Iran and CARs are outrightly supporting Northern Alliance (formed in June 1997), comprising Rabbani, Masud, Dostum, Karim Khalili, Gulbadin Hekmatyar and Pir Gillani. The Northern Alliance, which is also known as United Islamic Salvation Front (UISF), has the blessings of all the regional powers. For example, Dostum fled from Afghanistan to Turkey via Uzbekistan. President Rabbani, whose government remains recognized by a majority of the countries, initially fled to Tajikistan. As compared to the Taliban, the UISF leadership is far mature. At no stage did they give the impression that they are a front organization to one of the neighboring countries. Rabbani and Masud could muster support from fellow Tajik and Uzbek across the border, Hezb-i-Wahdat from Iran. It means that each faction is able to mobilize support from different power centers to further the common cause. The same cannot be true about the Taliban, a creation of Pakistan. Additionally, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan gave full support to Dostum to repulse the Taliban's attack. Dostum gets large consignments of arms and ammunition from some of the CIS states and his men are undergoing training in various CIS capitals to meet any future assault from the Taliban⁹⁹.

On the other side, Iran is also a central player in the region. There is a competition between Iran and Pakistan to become the gateway for the CARs. With Iran having the political advantage, Pakistan expedites the pipeline agreement between UNOCAL/BIRDAS, for exporting Turkmenistan natural gas via Afghanistan and Pakistan. But the growing domestic instability in Pakistan does not allow any serious work in this direction. Pakistan made another mistake by not participating in Teheran

⁹⁶ *The News*, 26 May 1997.

⁹⁷ *The News*, 27 May 1997.

⁹⁸ *The News*, 21 November 1997.

⁹⁹ Sreendhar Mahendra Ved, *op.cit.*, p.66.

conference for the resolution of the Afghan conflict, because India had been invited, which in the Pakistan's view has nothing to do with the Afghan crisis¹⁰⁰.

Iran's policy towards the Afghan civil war revolved around four main factors.

- 1) To confine Taliban to southern Afghanistan.
- 2) To support an alternative leadership against Taliban.
- 3) To ensure the success of the strategy of containment of Taliban, involving immediate neighbors of Afghanistan especially CARs, Russia, China and India¹⁰¹.
- 4) To evolve a broad-based government as early as possible.

Iran has sharply criticized Pakistan's recognition of Taliban led government. Iranians are of the opinion that Pakistan had shown that it was least interested in solving the problem of its northern neighbor and sabotaged all attempts to bring peace in Afghanistan made so far by other regional countries¹⁰².

Meanwhile, on 2 June 1997, Taliban closed the Iranian embassy in Kabul on the grounds that Iranian embassy staff was creating unrest among the Afghan people and releasing negative propaganda. According to the statement issued by the Taliban, Iran deployed military personnel and advisors to fight with the anti-Taliban forces. The statement further added: "Iran has endangered regional security to maintain its own strategic, political and economic interests by helping the protected fighting in Afghanistan"¹⁰³. However, Iran rejected charges leveled by the Taliban administration dismissing it as a retaliatory move against recent heavy defeats from the opposition.

The matter of fact is that Iran supports Northern Alliance diplomatically and materially. Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister, Allaudine Brougerdi visited Mazar Sharif in June-July 1997 to discuss various measures to strengthen and coordinate their activities against Taliban. He also formulated plans for the supply of arms, ammunition and necessary military training to the forces of the Northern Alliance. As a result a minimum of twenty cargo flights carrying arms ammunitions are operating from Mashad and Tehran to Mazar-e-Sharif on a weakly basis. Besides training to Hizb-i-Wahdat fighters at Mashad camp, the Iranian Passadaran are also being dispatched for participation in anti-Taliban operations¹⁰⁴. This is a signal for Taliban and Pakistan that Iran's role in Afghanistan cannot be ignored and Iran do not take the development in Afghanistan casually. Iran perceived Taliban's victories as part of the US policy of encirclement and acted accordingly.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.74.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.81.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 82.

¹⁰³ *The News*, 3 June 1997.

¹⁰⁴ Sreendhar Mahendra Ved, *op.cit.*, p.86.

The civil war in Afghanistan has polarized the Central and South Asian regions. The advancement of the Taliban, aided by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, alarmed Russia, Central Asia and Iran each of them for somewhat different reasons. Tajikistan and Uzbekistan feared that the Taliban might sweep north of Kabul, intensifying the civil war in Tajikistan and threatening CIS security border. Iran saw this extremist Sunni force a threat to the Shiites of Afghanistan. The regional dimension of the problem clearly is one of vital importance. The emergence of ethnically defined sovereign Central Asian states has strengthened ethnic identities in Afghanistan. Competition over control of trade and pipeline routes from Central Asia has also constrained the relations of Iran and Pakistan.

The fighting led to new movement of migration. Some observers estimated that as many as 250,000 residents fled from Kabul, some attempting to go to Pakistan as in the past, but an increasing number fled northward¹⁰⁵.

In order to tackle this grim situation, an emergency summit of the CIS was called in Almaty in October 1996. The purpose was to tighten security along the border with Afghanistan. Tajikistan's government was facing internal strife and was trying to secure its southern border against the Afghan infiltration. However, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan along with the Russian federation dispatched 25,000 member peacekeeping forces to guard the Tajik border. All this exercise was just to confine the Taliban in south of Afghanistan.

Regarding the security of Central Asia, Russia has formulated "Near Abroad Policy". It means to protect the borders of the CIS starting from Tajikistan. In May 1992, Russia and CIS except Turkmenistan took a major step by signing the "Collective Security Treaty". It was further expanded in July 1992, when it was agreed to set up a force for rapid deployment in any area of conflict within the CIS. In January 1993, Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan signed an agreement whereby it was accepted that the external border of the CIS was also the border of Russia. At present, Russia deployed more than 15,000 troops and has stationed the 201 Motorized Rifle Division in Tajikistan¹⁰⁶.

In the post-cold war era the emphasis is on resolving conflicts on regional basis. Pursuing this trend the CIS has initiated an idea to create an Asian version of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The idea was first mooted in Almaty, Kazakhstan in February 1996. Later on, China, Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran and Palestine had also supported the idea¹⁰⁷. The aim of the proposed body would be the conference on interaction and CBMs in Asia. An Asian organization modeled on the OSCE would create a balance of power, which would help in promoting peace and stability in the region and try to solve the conflicts like civil war in Afghanistan and Indo-Pak dispute over Kashmir.

¹⁰⁵ Barnett R. Rubin, "Afghanistan: The forgotten crisis"-- update March-November 1996, (December 1996), *UNCHR Website*, pp. 1-2.

¹⁰⁶ *Spotlight on Regional Affairs*, op.cit., p. 29.

¹⁰⁷ Mutahir Ahmed, "China and Regional Muslim States: Challenges and opportunities in 21st Century", *National Development and Security*, Vol. VI, No.1, 1997, p.56.

The cooperation on state level can also be seen in the shape of a treaty signed on 24 April 1997 among Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. According to it, all these states have agreed to cut total troop level along their 300-km border at least 15 per cent¹⁰⁸.

Though the treaty focuses on the realities of multipolar world, both Russia and China want their share in global affairs. Indirectly it has far reaching implications. On South and Central Asian regions the treaty has sent a message that CIS and China would cooperate and resist against all those groups and parties who are inducting terrorism in the name of religion. Moreover, Russia and the CIS have formulated a joint strategy vis-a-vis Afghanistan because of following reasons. First, the formation of a broad-based national government. Second, non-Pashtun elements have ethnic connections with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Finally, the CIS wants to control the spread of Islamic extremism into CIS. The opposition is directly involved in Tajik civil war.

The civil war in Afghanistan has directly influenced the South and Central Asian regions. Drug problem, militarization, induction of sophisticated arms, religious extremism, ethnic tensions and de-intellectualization of societies are threats to the democratic culture of the South and Central Asian regions.

V. Small arms transformation and drug problem

Small weapons that were once supplied by the superpowers in support of the "proxy wars" have become one of the biggest problems for the security and stability of South and Central Asian regions. Moreover, drug cartel in Pakistan and Afghanistan is a major factor, which is active in prolonging the civil war in the Afghanistan¹⁰⁹.

Afghanistan has a long history of opium production, but its cultivation and processing into heroine have increased tremendously since the beginning of the Afghan war. Presently, Afghanistan is the world's largest opium producer in the Golden Crescent, which also includes Iran and Pakistan. Much of the poppy grown in Afghanistan is in the South West (Helmand and Kandhar provinces), east (Nangarhar) and northeast (Badakshan)¹¹⁰. There is a clear linkage between the opium-heroin production and weapons, which are used both to protect the drugs and are brought with drug profits and become a source of income for the Mujahideen and those, whose regular means of livelihood was disrupted by the War¹¹¹.

¹⁰⁸ *The News*, 25 April 1997.

¹⁰⁹ Muhammad Yahya Effendi, "Afghanistan: A Eurasian Perception", *Defence Journal*, Vol. XXI, No. 78, 1995, p. 21.

¹¹⁰ Larry P. Goodson, "The Future of Afghanistan Ethnic conflict and political fragmentation", paper delivered at the 3rd *Asian Studies Annual Conference*, Centre for Asian Studies, University of Cairo, Egypt, 24-25 December 1997, p.13.

¹¹¹ Afghanistan and Kashmir, *Report of a joint American-Russian Study Mission*, The Asia Society and Institute of Oriental Studies (New York), 1993, p.24.

Furthermore, availability of small arms and light weapons, accessed through different routes and sources have changed the nature of conflicts in South Asia where Kashmir conflict is the bone of contention between India and Pakistan.

In the past, the intelligence agencies turned to narcotics as the one commodity that would give massive returns. The history of Asia is replete with instances of French, British and US intelligence agencies patronizing the trafficking of drugs to fight against the communist. Therefore, the emergence of narcotics smuggling is the main source of income for funding covert operations and militant objectives.

In Afghanistan the promotion of narcotics and the movement of weapons merged into one operation with often the one exchanged for the other. During the Afghan conflict, drug labs and weapons bazaars began flourish in Pakistan. By late 1993, police sources noted that the city alone probably had more than 100,000 weapons while analysts assessed that the frontier region had more than one million weapons. Baluchistan, the main base of narcotics traffickers and Mujahideen recruitment was also flooded with weapons.

Thus, the inflow of arms from the Afghanistan has a far-reaching implications in the South and the Central Asian states. It has not only militarized the regions, but has also fragmented State-Society relations. A level of high involvement of external forces characterizes the present crisis in Kashmir. A large quantity of weapons captured by the Afghan Mujahideen has found its way through Pakistan to the Indian held Kashmir. The rebels are clearly backed by a segment of the Kashmir valley population, and Pakistan provides them with training and weapons¹¹².

In 1986, with growing experience in training, organizing and running the Afghan Mujahideen's cadres, Pakistan began to expand its operation. According to a report published by the US House of Republican Research Committee, "a large number of youth from the Kashmir valley and Poonch Sector were given extensive training in the use of automatic weapons, sabotage and attacks on security forces. Automatic weapons and explosives were now issued to these people¹¹³.

Thus, it clearly shows that the civil war in Afghanistan has resulted in the proliferation of small arms in the entire region. The Afghan Mujahideen have managed to establish linkages with other insurgency movements in South and Central Asia. In Central Asia, the primary repository of weapons is obviously Afghanistan, which is assessed to have received up to 1992, combined "weapon aid" of 8 billion dollars. The weapons have spread to a variety of customers from Tajiks to Chechens. Tajikistan, the trouble spot of the Central Asia, has been directly affected by the Afghan civil war. The Tajik opposition continuously received support from the Afghanistan. The former Afghan Pashtun Prime Minister, Gulbaddin Hikmatyar, trained hundreds of opposition Tajik

¹¹² Excerpts from the report "The New Islamist International" of Task Force on Terrorism and unconventional warfare set up by the US House Republican Research Committee, 1 February 1993, p.2.

¹¹³ Mutahir Ahmed, "Afghanistan and Tajikistan: Destabilizing Factors for Central and South Asian regions", *Perceptions* (Ankara), Vol. III, No. 1, March-May 1998, p.135.

militants, while the former Afghan Tajik Defence Minister, Ahmed Shah Masud, armed his supporters in Tajikistan's opposition Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP).¹¹⁴

Moreover, Kazakhstan has identified the availability of weapons as a major source of instability. Parts of Kyrgyzstan appear to have become a drug and weapon bazaar, while Turkmenistan's relatively unpopulated areas are ideal for transit of men and weapons¹¹⁵. Besides small arms, drugs are also very significant aspect of regional politics.

Afghanistan rapidly gained ground in opium production in the 80s. Due to the Afghan civil war agricultural production factories were greatly disrupted and the government paid very little attention to the agricultural sector. Furthermore, the educated personal in agricultural sector left the country and all form of assistance from the West and the Muslim World was stopped. The combination of these factors led to the abandonment of the legal agricultural economy and sometimes, in those places, which were beyond the Soviet control, turned to opium cultivation. As a finished product, heroin brought profits that were used to purchase weapons and food. During the days of the Soviet military presence, large parts of the country fell out of the Kabul government's control. Various Mujahideen groups were involved in drug trafficking. The opium and heroin flow from Afghanistan transits Pakistan, India and then Sri Lanka by overland and air routes. Another route transits Pakistan to Hong Kong and Malaysia and then to North America by ship, while others transit Iran, Turkey, and Lebanon by land and then to Europe by land or sea through the Indian Ocean to the Red Sea, through the Suez canal and on to key markets in Europe and North America¹¹⁶. During 80's the West supported the Afghan opposition, majority of them was involved in narcotics cultivation and trafficking. With the end of the Cold War, the Afghan political scene has changed. The West finally broke its decade of silence to reveal the involvement of the Afghan Resistance in the region's heroine trade. On 13 May 1990, *The Washington Post* published a front page article charging that the United States had failed to take action against Pakistan's heroin dealers because of its desire not to offend a strategically, Pakistan's military establishment¹¹⁷.

Despite considerable US pressure, Zia's regime failed to achieve satisfactory results in its anti-drug campaign. After his death, democracy returned to Pakistan. Today, the democratic forces in Pakistan are very weak and are in no position to counter the drug mafia. Afghanistan is a major poppy-producing country and Pakistan is the leading manufacturer and exporter of heroin. Both are playing a devastating role in international opium and heroin markets.

¹¹⁴ Mutaahir Ahmed, "Civil War in Tajikistan: Internal Strife and External Response", *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 47, No. 4, October 1994, p. 88.

¹¹⁵ Tara Karathia, "Light Arms Proliferation and Regional Instability in Central Asia", *Strategic Analysis*, (New Delhi), December 1996, p. 1285.

¹¹⁶ Ikram ul Haq, "Pak-Afghan Drug Trade in Historical Perspective", *Asian Survey* (California), Vol. XXXVI, No. 10, October 1996, p. 951.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 953.

The goals of Taliban are to bring peace and security to the country and introducing strict Islamic laws. But when it comes to the cultivation of the manufacture of opium, the Taliban are decidedly permissive. They have allowed processing laboratories be moved into Afghanistan from Pakistan. Indeed, according to a high-ranking US official, the Taliban are directly involved in drug trafficking¹¹⁸. The same allegation was put forward by Burhanuddin Rabbani who is recognized by the UN as the President of the Afghanistan. Addressing the Drug Summit in New York, he accused Taliban of financing the war in Afghanistan through illicit drug money and promoting poppy cultivation and drug production. He also accused Taliban of allowing free pass to drug smugglers across Afghanistan's borders and said that it was not possible to turn a blind eye to the symmetry that existed between the extra-ordinary rise in drug production and the rise of Taliban¹¹⁹. Additionally, the most dangerous trend is emerging in the region, that is the anti-Western sentiments have developed among the people due to the US-led war against Iraq and subsequent sanctions imposed against it. In this scenario, some strong anti-Western fundamentalist religious groups have emerged in the region, who are openly supporting the drug trade to the West as a mark of what they call "Our weapon" to combat "anti-Islam" policies¹²⁰.

The only way to contain drug trade is to strengthen the democratic forces of the region; otherwise the fundamentalist forces will destabilize the South and Central Asian regions through terrorist activities with the help of drug money and small arms for trade.

TABLE V

Small arms (Involvement)	Period	Implications
United States Former Soviet Union China	1979-88	Proxy war Political destabilization
Pakistan Iran Central Asian Republics	1998 to present	Regional instability Rise of religious nationalism Militarization of Societies Economic, political and social chaos.

¹¹⁸ Larry Weymouth, "Drugs and Terror in Afghanistan", published in *The Washington Post*, reproduced in *The News*, 21 November 1997.

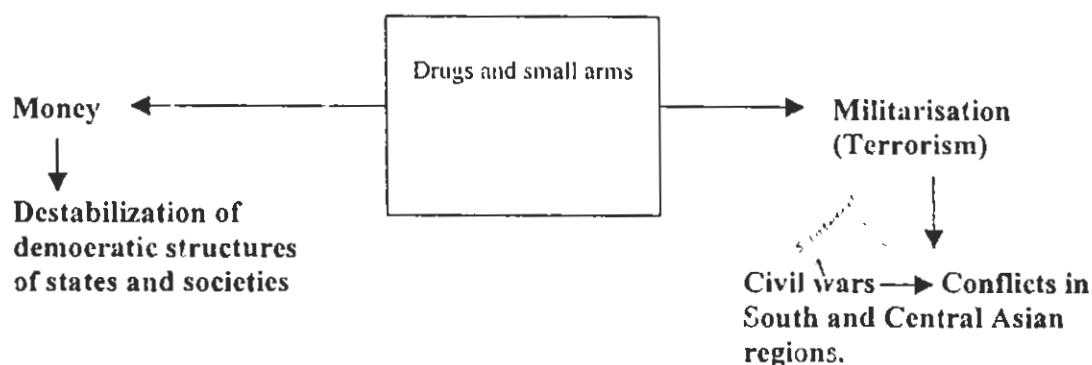
¹¹⁹ Commonwealth Network, *Afghan News*, 9 June 1998, p.1.

¹²⁰ Ikram ul Haq, *op.cit.*, p.963.

TABLE VI

Drugs (Involvement)	Period	Implications
Various Mujahideen groups Pakistan Present regime in Afghanistan (Taliban)	1979 to present	Source of income for Mujahideen leads to civil war Flow of drugs to Sri-Lanka, Hong Kong, Malaysia, North America, Iran, Turkey, Lebanon and Europe, lead to social and psychological chaos.

TABLE VII
Linkage between drugs and small arms



The rise of religious nationalism has challenged the traditional form of secular nationalism. In Afghanistan, the phenomenon of religious nationalism can be seen in the shape of Taliban.

The regional actors are supporting secular nationalist forces (Northern Alliance) and religious nationalists (Taliban). Thus, the crisis of Afghanistan spills over to South and Central Asian regions. Moreover, on the one other hand, small arms transformation has militarized the South and Central Asian societies while posing a threat to existing establishments of these States. On the other hand, the drug problem has caught the international attention towards Afghanistan. In this way, the Afghan crisis has now become a challenge not only for the regional powers but also the world community.

CHAPTER FOUR

AFGHAN CONFLICT AND THE EXTRA-REGIONAL PLAYERS

United Nation's efforts to resolve the Afghan Conflict

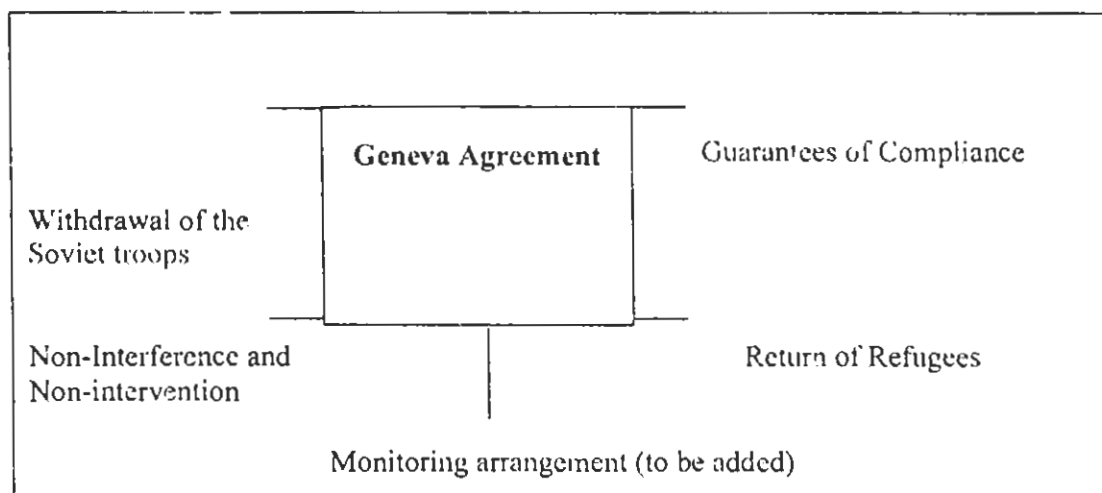
Since December 1979, when the Soviet forces intervened in Afghanistan, the United Nations played an active role in resolving the Afghan imbroglio. After the Soviet invasion, the UN General Assembly called for the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the establishment of a genuine Afghan government. From 1979 to 1982, the United Nations was not directly involved in the Afghan affairs. Direct involvement of the UN came in 1982 when the UN Secretary-General, Perez de-Cuellar, took keen interest in the resolution of Afghan crisis. He appointed Diego Cordovez as his special representative to Afghan affairs.

The process of negotiations began in Geneva on 16 June 1982 and concluded on 14 April 1988 in the shape of Geneva Accords¹. Mr. Diego Cordovez had been assigned the job to pursue the Geneva negotiations. The sole commitment of the United Nations was to find a political solution to the Afghan crisis.

Geneva Process

The first round of proximity talks began in Geneva on 15 June 1982. The UN Secretary-General's special envoy to Afghanistan, Diego Cordovez, outlined five principles for resolving the Afghan conflict viz.: -

Principles of Geneva Accords



1. Mutahir Ahmed, "Geneva Accord: Historical perspective", *Journal of European Studies* (Karachi), Vol. 4, No. 2, July 1998, p. 109.

In Order to analyze the Geneva process, it is important to understand the positions of the parties involved in the conflict.

Generally, Pakistan, China, Iran, the European Union and the United States wanted the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, while the Afghan regime and the Soviet Union were of the opinion that if foreign interference ceased to exist then all other issues would be resolved.

The Soviet Position

To find a way out of the Afghan conflict, the first serious attempt was made by the newly appointed General-Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Yuri Andropov (November 1982 – February 1984). During internal debates of the Communist Party, he was very critical of the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan and termed the Soviet action as a serious blunder. According to his close associates, despite the hard-line opposition from the civil and defense establishments, he was willing to withdraw the Soviet forces under the aegis of the United Nations. However, the United States and Pakistan had some strong reservations against Andropov's intentions. During a meeting with Cordovez he said that he did not understand why so many doubts had been raised about his sincerity. He saw no reason for keeping the Soviet forces in Afghanistan. He was of the opinion that by keeping forces in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union had been facing many problems. First, considerable expenses, second, domestic political and economic crises and finally, international isolation. While analyzing all these factors, he sincerely wanted "to put an end to this situation"². But the conservative Soviet establishment did not want to toe Andropov's line of action. Thus, the pace of the diplomatic process had slowed down.

Andropov died in 1984 and his successor Chernenko became the Secretary-General of the Communist Party. Chernenko altered the whole process, because he belonged to the conservative school of thought. He was not interested in the Soviet withdrawal, because he believed that the Soviet army did not bog down in Afghanistan. During this period, all the diplomatic activities initiated by the UN were in doldrums. On 10 March 1985, Chernenko died and within a few hours it was announced that Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev had been appointed as the new Secretary-General of the Communist Party.

Gorbachev had a totally different approach on foreign and domestic policies from his predecessors. He was determined to reach a settlement under the UN auspices and had removed the deadlock of the Geneva process. Focusing on diplomatic initiative rather than military solution, Gorbachev had unleashed a process of rethinking on Afghan affairs. Internationally, he initiated process of *Glusnost* and *Perestroika* and linked the Afghan issue to it. Drifting from the traditional Soviet position that the withdrawal would be covered only in a Moscow-Kabul agreement, the new format directly linked such an agreement with the other parts of the settlement. It meant that the Soviet Union was

2. Diego Cordovez, Selig S. Harrison, *Out of Afghanistan, The Inside Story of the Soviet Withdrawal* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 124.

committed to the fulfillment of the projected withdrawal timetable. Gorbachev made a series of concessions on the coordination of change of strategies and enforcement of cooperation. He proposed that the Soviet withdrawal be linked more tightly to the end of interference and explicitly included in a legally binding international agreement. He then made unprecedented concessions on monitoring and allowed a UN body to inspect the troop withdrawal³. Furthermore, Gorbachev's foreign policy revolved around the relaxation of tension in international politics and strategic disarmament. Progress towards disengagement became vital and important not only for Afghan affairs, but also for the entire process of negotiations on other fronts.

After the first Reagan-Gorbachev Summit in Geneva in November 1985, Gorbachev took drastic initiatives and gave numerous concessions in the field of arms control and the Soviet pronouncements on Afghanistan⁴. At that summit, the Soviet official spokesman declared that the entry of the Soviet forces in Afghanistan was a "mistake" and the Soviet Union was in favor of a political, not a military solution of the Afghan conflict. After 1986, the Soviet policy was to link withdrawal timetable with the formation of a coalition government in Kabul, which would provide a guarantee to prevent a blood bath in Afghanistan after withdrawal. But the UN committed to provide a guarantee for a broad-based government. Thus, Gorbachev delinked the withdrawal with the formation of a coalition government. Moreover, on 8 February 1988 in a statement issued from Moscow, the Soviets were ready to reduce the time-limit of the pull out of the Soviet forces to ten months with half of them departing from Afghanistan in the first three months⁵.

Afghan Position

The Soviet justification for its military and political intervention in Afghanistan came at the request of the Afghan government. According to an agreement signed between the Afghan government and the Soviet Union in 1978, if the Afghan government would feel insecure from hostile states it could invite the Soviet Union to defend from the aggressors. In this scenario, Soviet Union involved militarily in order to defend the so-called revolution. The Soviet Union recognized the Afghan government, but a large majority of the members of the UN regularly protested that the Soviet involvement amounted to unwarranted interference in the Afghan affairs.

When the Geneva process began Pakistan refused to involve directly in such talks because of the following reasons. First, the position of the Afghan government was that all the parties must recognize its government. Second, there must be no indirect talks in Geneva. Finally, withdrawal of the Soviet troops must be linked to non-interference.

In May 1986, General Najibullah, the Chief of Afghan Intelligence Agency, replaced Babrak Karmal. After assuming the power, Najibullah took some drastic steps. First, he proposed a policy of national reconciliation in which he showed his willingness

3. Barnett R. Rubin, "Afghanistan: The forgotten crisis", March 1996, *UNCHR Website*, p. 69.

4. Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika, New Thinking for our Country and the World* (London: Collins, 1987), p.p. 176-177.

5. *Dawn*, (Karachi), 9 February 1988.

to incorporate non-Communist elements. Second, he gave general amnesty to all those who were involved in civil war. Finally, he changed the name of his party PDPA to *Watan* Party, which symbolized the Afghan secular nationalism. Najibullah had taken these steps, because he wanted to coordinate with the changing policies of the Soviet Union. Moreover, when the Soviet Union delinked coalition government with the Soviet pull out, Najibullah had no other way but to support Geneva Accords.

Pakistan's Position

Before the deployment of the Soviet troops in Afghanistan, Pakistan's official policy was that the turmoil in Afghanistan was its internal matter. But the presence of hundred and twenty thousand Soviet troops just across Pakistan's border posed a direct threat to Pakistan's security. Moreover, the influx of three million Afghan refugees left Pakistan with no choice but to provide them shelter and food on the basis of Islamic brotherhood and of humanitarian grounds⁶. In this scenario, Pakistan urged the United Nations to take active part in bringing an end to the occupation of Afghanistan by the Soviet troop and to restore peace in the war-torn country. When the UN launched the Geneva Process, Pakistan agreed to participate in such negotiations.

Domestically, the Afghan crisis had provided an opportunity to General Zia-ul-Haq to perpetuate his military rule. He had represented himself as the only alternate, who had not only challenged the Communist threat, but also fulfilled the interests of the West. Moreover, he had long term goals. In a conversation with Diego Cordovez, he said that he wanted to destroy the Communist infrastructure, install a client regime and bring a "strategic realignment" in South Asia. He also declared, "We took risks as a front-line state and we won't permit it to be like that as it was before, with Indian and Soviet influence there and claims on our territory. It will be a real Islamic state, part of a pan-Islamic revival that will one day win over the Muslims in the Soviet Union, you will see"⁷.

Iran's Position

The Iranian government did not recognize the Afghan regime. Iran's principled position was to endorse a comprehensive political settlement, which would involve the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the return of the refugees to their homes in safety and honor. Thus, Iran was in the line of the UN initiatives.

Chinese Position

China had aligned itself with some regional countries against the Kabul regime and the Soviet Union. China criticized the Soviet troop deployment and insisted on the UN negotiated settlement. The Chinese had indicated that they could act as guarantor only after the withdrawal process of the Soviet troops had been completed.

6. Zain Noorani, "The Geneva Accords and Afghanistan", *Pakistan Horizon* (Karachi), Vol. XII, No. 3, July 1998 p.51.

7. Diego Cordovez, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

The above-mentioned positions of the regional powers, who were directly involved in Afghan affairs had outrightly supported the UN initiatives. Though some personalities had created hurdles for time being in order to fulfill their own selfish agenda, the regional powers supported the Geneva process.

The radical posture taken by the Soviet Union had accelerated the peace process in Afghanistan. The process of negotiations started in Geneva in June 1982 and, thus, concluded in April 1988, when Geneva Accords were signed. It clearly showed the commitment of the UN Secretary-General Perez de-Cuellar and his personal representative, Diego Cordovez, who had pursued the Geneva negotiations for five years for resolving the problem through political and diplomatic means in very odd circumstances.

Geneva Accords

The special representative of the UN to Afghanistan, Cordovez referred Geneva accords as the second phase of the UN peacemaking for Afghanistan⁸. The Accords were signed on 14 April 1988 under the supervision of the UN. The Accords comprised four instruments, constituting component parts of a political settlement on Afghanistan. First, bilateral agreement signed between Afghanistan and Pakistan on the principle of mutual relations, in particular, on non-interference and non-intervention. Second, declaration on international guarantees supervised by the Soviet Union and the United States to respect the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-alignment of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Third, bilateral agreement signed between Pakistan and Afghanistan on voluntary repatriation of the Afghan refugees with the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Finally, agreement on inter-relationship for the settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan. Besides, setting out the inter-relationships between the different instruments, the document provided for the phased withdrawal of the foreign troops starting from May 15, 1989. One half of the troops were to be withdrawn by August 15, 1988 and the entire process of the withdrawal to be completed within nine months⁹.

In spite of the fact that the Geneva Accords were signed despite several obstacles, two major issues remained to be unresolved. First, Pakistan demanded that before signing the accords, an interim Afghan coalition government must be formed. Second, the US insisted that the Soviets must agree to stop their arms supplies to the Kabul regime simultaneously with a cut-off of the US arms supplies to the Afghan guerillas¹⁰. However, the UN mediator had outrightly rejected these demands by saying that such issues were not a part of the four points that formed the basis of the Geneva negotiations.

Moreover, the US and the Soviet Union urged Cordovez to provide his good offices, in his personal capacity, to promote an agreement among various Afghan factions

8. Selig Harrison, "Inside the Afghan Talks", *Foreign Policy* (Washington), Fall 1988, p. 38.

9. Agha Shahi, "The Geneva Accords", *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. XLI, No. 3, July 1988, pp. 23-24.

10. *Ibid*.

for the formation of a broad-based government. Perez de Culler stated that the signing of the instrument would lay the foundation for the exercise of the right of self-determination by Afghan people—a principle enshrined in the charter of the UN¹¹.

Post -Geneva Accords and the United Nations (1989 – 1992)

The Geneva Accords were widely hailed. From May 15, 1988, the Soviet forces began the withdrawal process from Afghanistan and the UN officials confirmed that by the first week of June, over ten thousand troops had returned to the Soviet Union. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) tried to rehabilitate the refugees to their homes. Perez de Cullar launched a worldwide appeal for aid for the resettlement of the Afghan refugees and appointed Prince Agha Khan as the UN coordinator¹². Besides, UN provided substantial aid for food, medicine and transport equipment for repatriation and rehabilitation program for Afghan refugees.

Politically, Geneva Accords were an extra-ordinary achievement for the Soviet Union. Though the Soviet Union had withdrawn its troops, it got guarantees for non-interference in Afghanistan. Furthermore, it obliged Pakistan to concede the de facto recognition to the Kabul regime, which had been withheld throughout the Soviet occupation. The Accords also imposed a reciprocal prohibition of “hidden” and “open” political or military actions described between the signatories. In other words, these provisions assumed that Pakistan, the US and other supporters of Resistance would force to discontinue their assistance. Moreover, the Kabul regime had been legalized after the Soviet withdrawal and the role of Resistance movement was ignored. In this scenario, the leadership of the Resistance movement wanted a total military victory over the Kabul regime. Perez de Culler expressed grave concern over the escalation of fighting in Afghanistan, as well as the danger of its spreading and increased suffering of the Afghan people.

But the drawback of Resistance movement was that these were incapable of converting themselves from a scattering of small insurgent groups into a coherent military force able to launch large scale coordinated attacks. This weakness was demonstrated by its defeat at Jalalabad within weeks of the Soviet departure. The leadership of the Resistance groups was divided. Thus, it lost its political and military momentum. By 1991, the Kabul regime and the Resistance movement were exhibiting symptoms of fatigue and disillusionment. Both adversaries were fractionalized especially the Resistance leadership to the point of near collapse. Thus, circumstances appeared increasingly to favor a UN peacemaking initiative.

Diego Cordovez outlined an option after the Soviet troop withdrawal. He pursued the possibility that exiled King Zahir Shah might form the nucleus of a neutral presence, which could involve all sides to a transitional authority that would lead Afghanistan to a new set up. But strong opposition to the King's participation came from Pakistan and the other hard-liners of the Resistance movement. Instead of Zahir Shah they sought a neutral

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

entity acceptable to all elements. This search was linked to the Afghan institution of *Laya Jirga*. Cordovez announced that he had developed a list of "30 Afghans considered impartial and respected enough to be a part of a government of national peace and reconstruction", who might organize such a *Jirga*¹³. Though it was never implemented, it showed the efforts of Cordovez searching various possibilities for the UN peacemaking. After the Soviet withdrawal, the superpowers' international diplomacy was focused on the political future of Afghanistan. The watchword was "broad-based" government for Afghanistan. It was a "code word" for including both the Resistance parties, elements of the Kabul government and political elements left out during the war. Various plans were devised to include such elements in a "broad-based" set up as each of the foreign governments involved attempted to slant such formulae in favour of their particular proteges. Iran wanted a prominent role for the leadership of Afghanistan's Shia community. Pakistan continued to support the Islamist parties, which were closely identified with Afghanistan's Pashtun Community. Saudi Arabia's financial commitment was directed at promoting religious reforms and a political role through the support of a *Wahabi* movement among Afghans.

In this background, the UN took a diplomatic initiative. On 3 November 1988, the General Assembly adopted a consensus resolution calling for a "broad-based government in Afghanistan ... to ensure the broadest support and immediate participation of all segments of the Afghan people". The resolution "affirmed the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and to choose their economic, political and social system, free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatsoever"¹⁴. Perez de Cuéller met Najibullah and Rabbani to discuss a political settlement. The Kabul regime responded with a proposal for a UN sponsored international peace conference, which would guarantee Afghanistan's neutral status and enforce its demilitarization. In December 1988, Gorbachev endorsed the suggestion and further proposed a cease-fire in Afghanistan and a halt in foreign military supplies. He asked for the assignment of a UN peacekeeping force inside Afghanistan while a "broad-based government" was being established¹⁵.

In 1989, Perez de Culler proposed an assembly of Afghan leaders representing all sections of the Society to meet in neutral circumstances to choose a council of the members to form the leadership of a transitional government. The transitional entity would replace the Kabul government under a cease-fire and the cessation of international military assistance to the government and the Resistance. Perez de Culler's proposed plan faced some hurdles. Deployment of the UN peacekeeping force to protect and assist the transitional process was not put forward, because there appeared little prospect that it could guarantee security. It could not install a credible and physically secure political process in the amid of a civil war. Selecting representatives was greatly complicated by different factions within the warring sides, compounded by the inability of either side to represent significant elements of the Society and further complicated by the external refugee status of more than one-third of the population. On 10 May 1989, Benan Vahe

13. *UN Chronicle* 25 - 4 (December, 1988), p. 37.

14. UNGA Resolution 43/20 *UN Chronicle* 26-1 (March 1989), p. 60.

15. *UN Chronicle* 26 - 1 (March 1989), p. 61.

Sevan, a career diplomat from Cyprus, was appointed the UN Secretary-General's personal representative on Afghanistan and Pakistan at the rank of Assistant Secretary-General¹⁶. Sevan had served as Cordovez's political advisor. For the next three years, Sevan and his staff made an intense effort to apply the transitional formula for Afghanistan.

The Kabul regime, Resistance movement, regional and extra-regional powers agreed for a political arrangement. They all endorsed de Culler's five-point plan for peace in Afghanistan, which he presented on 21 May 1991. The elements put forward as the basis for a political settlement were:

- 1) To protect Afghanistan's sovereignty as a territorially secure, politically independent, non-aligned and Islamic State.
- 2) The right of Afghans for self determination regarding the form of government and the character of their political, economic and social system.
- 3) A transitional period permitting an intra-Afghan dialogue leading to the creation of a broad-based government.
- 4) Termination of all foreign arms deliveries.
- 5) International funding and material support adequate to permit the Afghan refugees to return and to make possible Afghanistan's economic and social reconstruction¹⁷.

Meanwhile, a very significant development took place, which changed the dynamics of global politics. Moreover, the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the Central Asian States began to effect the Afghan politics. The Kabul regime lost its major ally i.e. Moscow. Najibullah declared his readiness to step down as President after Benan Sevan persuaded him to transfer the power in favor of a caretaker government. The caretaker setup was a part of a five-point peace plan, presented by the UN Secretary-General in May 1991. Sevan shuttled constantly between Peshawar, Kabul, Tehran and Riyadh, attempting to shore up international backing while edging the transitional government proposal.

In March 1992, the scheme called for a meeting of some 150 respected Afghan representatives of all communities and parties somewhere in Europe. The purpose was to create a political framework for a government leadership of some 35 members to assume control of Kabul before May 1992¹⁸. Sevan put much effort into generating lists of participants in the transitional process from all elements concerned. He continued to face resistance, especially from the orthodox fundamentalist parties. However, events in Afghanistan changed drastically when on 18 March Najibullah decided to step down in order to facilitate the UN peace process. As events accelerated the UN was forced into a hectic effort to keep pace with the situation. Sevan's efforts to ignite dialogue between Kabul regime and resistance movement and to promote the UN's transition strategy became accepted as the credible vehicle leading to a political solution. Apparently, the Resistance leadership, especially the fundamentalist parties demanded a total defeat of

16. *Dawn*, 11 May 1989.

17. *UN Chronicle* 28 - 3 (September 1991), p. 26.

18. *New York Times*, 13 March 1992.

the Kabul government. They described it as a perfidious inflictor of massive atrocities upon the Afghan people, which could not allow participating in a future political order¹⁹.

Though privately, Resistance leaders were asking the UN representatives to take initiative to launch negotiations, which were politically impossible for the Resistance to initiate them. Following Najibullah's decision to step down in order to make way for an interim transitional government proposed by the UN, it appeared that a bloodless process would produce neither winners nor losers. Sevan was authorized by all sides to make the final choice of Afghans, who would participate in the transition process. The elaborate arrangement appeared to be in place in early April 1992 when Sevan announced that Najibullah and eight of the Resistance parties, including the fundamentalist Hezb-Islami of Gulbaddin Hekmatyar had agreed to transfer power to the proposed transitional government²⁰. In fact, the developments were so rapid that Sevan could not control them. The Islamic fundamentalist parties, alongwith Shia parties backed by Iran, refused to cooperate or submit lists.

In the end, his plan was pushed aside by political agreements. A coalition of army commanders, composed of Ahmed Shah Masood and Abdul Rashid Dostum, brought down Najibullah's regime. Thus, on 26 April 1992 a transitional Mujahideen Council was formed in Peshawar through a broad consensus among the Mujahideen groups. From early 1989 to 1992, there was no visible hope to bring peace in Afghanistan. The UN filled a vacuum by offering a plan that promised to bring eventual resolution without offending any major power. The UN efforts did not bring peace in Afghanistan but offered its agencies in support of refugees and coordination for reconstruction and resettlement after the Soviet troop withdrawal, which were highly appreciated. There was very little room left for the UN to work for a political consensus among different factions in Afghanistan though the UN put forward various proposals and took initiatives time by time.

UN and the Afghan crisis in the post-Cold war era

The drastic changes on International level had changed the entire spectrum of the Afghan crisis. The fall of the Berlin Wall, demise of the Warsaw Pact and cooperative approach between two superpowers led Afghanistan in a different direction. On 30 September 1990, the majority of the Congressmen in the US House Sub-Committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs supported the idea of reducing military aid to Resistance fighters at the close of the current fiscal year²¹. It clearly showed the changing policy of the US disengagement vis-a-vis Afghanistan.

After the disunion of the Soviet Union and the disagreement of the US, Afghan crisis came directly under the aegis of the UN. The disunion of the Soviet Union eliminated the concept of common threat that held together all the actors involved in the Afghan affairs. Thus, in the changing scenario, the positions of the actors were also

19. *Dawn*, 19 March 1992.

20. *New York Times*, 9 February 1992.

21. Mutahir Ahmed, "Pakistan's Foreign Policy: Quarterly Survey", *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol.43, No: 3, 1990, p.8

changed. The US wanted to replace Najibullah with "moderate" regime. Pakistan's defense establishment wanted "strategic depth" against India by inducting friendly regime in Afghanistan. Iran and Saudi Arabia supported various Resistance groups as proxies for their rivalry within the Muslim World.

Perez de Cuellar tried to secure cooperation among all the states involved. He visited Saudi Arabia and Iran²². All states committed to support a political settlement. After completing these consultations, Perez de Culler received further encouragement when the Soviets agreed one of the last demands of the US that Najibullah would not be a part of the transition. Perez said, "I have been given assurances that some of the controversial personalities concerned would not insist on their personal participation, either in the intra-Afghan dialogue or in the transition mechanism"²³.

On 13 March 1992, Najibullah addressed the nation on television and radio. Reading a speech written for him by Sevan, he announced his resignation in which he said that it would effect once the UN had established an "interim government", "to which he would transfer all powers and executive authority"²⁴.

After the exit of Najibullah, Pakistan based Resistance groups, alongwith Abdul Rashid Dostum and Ahmed Shah Masood, tried to fill the vacuum. But rivalry began among all the factions on controlling the country. With the help of regional and extra-regional powers two accords were signed: Peshawar and Islamabad Accords, but both failed to provide peace and stability in the war torn country. From 1992 to 1994 Afghanistan was under the grip of civil war.

However, the UN tried to concentrate on mediation among the Resistance groups. The UN constituted a transitional plan according to which a "pre-transition council composed of impartial personalities chosen from the lists submitted to the UN would take over all powers and executive authority from the current government"²⁵. The Council would, then, convene a *Shura* in Kabul to choose an interim government. Furthermore, according to the plan, on the night of April 15-16, 1992 the UN plan took the members of the interim government into Kabul, where Najibullah transferred power to them at the airport and leave for exile in India on the same plan²⁶. But Resistance leaders disagreed on the composition of the Council. On 16 April Benan Sevan flew to Kabul. However, the *Parcham* rebels, allied with Masood, controlled the Kabul airport and blocked Najibullah from reaching the airport. On 25 April the forces of Dostum and Masood entered the city to preempt a coup by Hizb-i-Islami. From 1992-1994, Rabbani had controlled the Afghan political power.

After months of consultations in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan, a new anti- Rabbani alliance was formed. In July 1994, after receiving fresh military equipment

22. *Dawn*, 17 September 1991.

23. Barnett R. Rubin, *The Search for Peace in Afghanistan from Buffer State to failed State* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 126.

24. *Ibid*.

25. *Dawn*, 11 April 1992.

26. *Op.cit.*, Barnett R. Rubin, p. 132.

from Pakistan and Uzbekistan, Hekmatyar and Dostum launched combined attack on Masood's forces, but Rabbani had refused to step down. According to a rough estimate, from April 1992 to December 1994 twenty thousand people had died²⁷.

The year 1994 brought total anarchy, civil war and ethnic hatred for Afghanistan. Practically, there was no central administrative authority that could administer the country. In this bleak scenario, the UN once again tried to resolve the conflict through its good offices.

The UN officials faced several hurdles to overcome the crisis. First, the US and Russia did not want to involve directly in Afghanistan. Second, high officials of the UN had very strong reservations because of the past experience. Finally, regional powers, especially Pakistan, did not want to lose the initiative to others.

The matter of fact is that the UN officials had failed, because they focussed too much on so-called representative elements in resolving the conflict rather than formulating a strategy to mobilize broader political spectrum of the Afghan society. Furthermore, the UN officials failed to address the question of how to disarm the Opposition and to enforce an agreement.

Keeping this analysis in view, the new corps of the UN diplomats tried to pursue new strategy. Meanwhile, Secretary-General Boutros Ghali appointed former Tunisian Foreign Minister Mahmud Mistri as his special envoy to Afghanistan. Under his supervision, the UN special mission met with a wide range of Afghan personalities during its first visit to the region than in any previous mission. The mission created a healthy debate on the solution of the crisis, which had long been absent from the Afghan politics. Between 27 March and 29 April, 1994, the mission traveled to eight cities in Afghanistan, the Pakistan refugee centers of Peshawar and Quetta, Tehran, Riyadh, Jeddah, Moscow, Ankara and Rome. In many places, hundreds or even thousands of Afghans demanded that the UN should return to Afghanistan and involve there. The mission received over three hundred peace proposals, letters and requests²⁸.

However, the mission encouraged Afghans to put pressure on leaders to make peace. On 11 August 1994 nine hundred tribal elders, claiming to represent one million refugees in Pakistan, released a petition for peace through the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Islamabad²⁹. On the contrary, the main Resistance groups, who were involved in the civil war, tried to use the UN mission in order to strengthen their positions. Mistri focussed on "neutrals" and others included independent Afghans from the old regime, including a close adviser and relative of Zahir Shah and several other prominent individuals.

In order to institutionalize the process, Mistri called a meeting of a forty member Afghan "Advisory Council" in Quetta on 29 September 1994. The Council proposed that

27. *Ibid.*, p. 135.

28. *Dawn*, 15 November 1994.

29. Mutahir Ahmed, *op. cit.*, "Afghanistan and Tajikistan: Destabilizing Factors for South and Central Asian regions", p. 50.

Rabbani would hand-over power to an authoritative council that would also disarm the opposition and prepare a ground for *Laya Jirga* to decide the future of the country. Moreover, a neutral security force would take control of Kabul though it was unclear how this force would be recruited and who would pay for it. All the main opposition leaders accepted that proposal. Thus, on 30 November 1994, the UN Security Council endorsed the proposal.

Moreover, regional and extra-regional powers pressurized warring parties to formulate peace formula, but the tussle between Hekmatyar and Rabbani was not over. The two sides continued to attack each other with rockets and the sufferers were the people of Kabul. The intra-factional fighting provided an opportunity to Taliban to make inroads in Kabul. On 10 February 1995, the UN Secretary-General announced that the Council would meet in Kabul on 20 February. But on 14 February, Taliban occupied Hekmatyar's main base in Charasyab, Logar province. Hekmatyar fled without any resistance. The neutralization of Hekmatyar removed one of the main obstacles to the UN plan, but the emergence of Taliban created another problem. The *Ulema* who belonged to Taliban, proposed that they alone would carry out disarmament and oversee security in Kabul. They also insisted that the UN sponsored Council would consist of "Good Muslims". Moreover, instead of party representation, they insisted on two representatives from each province³⁰. Such conditions put forward by Taliban leadership were so harsh that it was nearly impossible for anyone to accept them. Through independent action of few UN officials and the Afghans, who turned out to support their effort, it could not reverse the harsh realities on the ground.

Taliban radicalized the Afghan politics and institutionalized the division of the Afghan society into Pashtun and non-Pashtun entity. The process of Talibanization spilled over to other parts of the region. Though, Taliban regime had controlled more than ninety per cent of the Afghan territory, the UN still recognized Rabbani's government. Rabbani still holds the UN seat. Only Pakistan, the UAE and Saudi Arabia have recognized the government of Taliban³¹.

In 1996, UN Secretary-General's special representative, Mehmoud Mistri, shuttled among Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran in order to evolve joint consensus among the varying parties³². In October 1995, the Security Council called for a halt to hostilities in Kabul and an end to a month long blockade. Furthermore, the Security Council called on the parties involved to end the hostilities forthwith and not to obstruct the delivery of humanitarian aid and other needed supplies to the innocent civilians of the city. It called for a full cooperation with the UN special mission working for a peaceful solution

30. Mutahir Ahmed, "Afghanistan and the rise of Regional power rivalries", *Pakistan Perspective* (Karachi), Vol. III, No. 1, June 1998, p. 108.

31. Mutahir Ahmed, *op. cit.*, "Afghanistan and the rise of regional power rivalries", p. 109.

32. *Dawn*, 11 February 1996.

through the establishment of a representative, broad-based and authoritative council acceptable to all Afghans³³.

In July 1996, Norbert Holl, a senior German diplomat, took over the peace-making mission from his predecessor, Mahmoud Mistiri³⁴. Soon after taking the charge, he faced problems in dealing with Taliban. Terry Pitzer, local head of UNHCR, warned Taliban against ban on working women, and stated that foreign donors might halt millions of dollars in vital development aid to war-torn Afghanistan³⁵. On 22 October, 1996 the UN Security Council passed a resolution denouncing discrimination "against girls and women in Afghanistan and other human rights violations which have been widely reported and condemned following the takeover of Kabul by Taliban". The resolution further called on "all Afghan parties to immediately cease all armed hostilities, renounce use of force and engage in a political dialogue aimed at achieving national reconciliation and work towards establishing a government of national unity³⁶".

The Security Council asked all Afghan parties to cooperate with the UN special mission to Afghanistan and encouraged "all interested states and international organizations to take all steps necessary to promote peace in Afghanistan, to support the UN efforts and use any influence they have to encourage the parties to cooperate fully with the UN special mission to Afghanistan³⁷". In order to accelerate the peace process, the UN held a one-day conference in New York. The UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali convened the conference. Britain, France, China, Egypt, Germany, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, India, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, US, Pakistan and Iran attended the Conference. Holl told delegates that warring factions were prepared for cease-fire but problems remained over how to enforce it. Norbert Holl chalked out a cease-fire plan including de-militarization of Kabul and the deployment of a neutral police force³⁸. However, the UN plan was not implemented because the power centers were not willing to talk. Norbert Holl stated that the warring factions had not yet reached a stage where both sides were ready to compromise. He was, in particular, skeptical about Taliban's willingness to opt for a negotiated settlement³⁹. The pressure was slowly building up from the US and the UN Security Council on the neighboring governments to impose arms embargo on Afghanistan. The UN mediator called on Pakistan and Iran to facilitate an arms embargo since they had served as the

33. *Ibid.*, 17 February 1996.

34. *Ibid.*, 7 August 1996.

35. *Ibid.*, 6 October 1996.

36. *Ibid.*, 23 October 1996.

37. *Ibid.*

38. *The News*, (Karachi), 20 November 1996.

39. *The News*, 17 July 1997.

main conduits for armaments to Afghanistan. Meanwhile, the US envoy to the UN, Bill Richardson, visited Afghanistan and South Asia. After his visit, the process of peace making was accelerated. It was decided that representatives of Taliban and Northern Alliance would sit together in Islamabad to establish peace in the region.

Peace Formula

On 26 April 1998, representatives of Taliban and Northern Alliance began talks for peace. The Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Gohar Ayub, OIC's Assistant Secretary-General, Ibrahim Bakr and acting head of the UN mission on Afghanistan, James Ngobi, jointly chaired the meeting. During the meeting, Ngobi reminded the Afghan leaders of both the sides of the political divide of their commitments made to Bill Richardson, who met in Kabul and Shibergan⁴⁰.

On the contrary, the two factions suspended peace talks on the ground that they wanted to consult their leaders amid differences over who should be allowed to sit on a commission of *Ulema*. Taliban wanted the focus of talks on the selection of the *Ulema*, but the opposition wanted talks on a cease-fire and prisoner exchange. Taliban rejected the Opposition alliance's list of proposed *Ulema* and said that the scholars must possess a degree from a recognized university. According to James Ngobi, the definition of *Ulema* was discussed but no consensus was reached. However, the definition of *Ulema* held the key to the outcome of the negotiations as the definition and credentials of an *Aalim* (Singular for *Ulema*) had generated controversy between the two sides⁴¹. The talks failed without any note. On 8 August 1998, Taliban captured the Northern Alliance stronghold Mazar-i-Sharif, thus, controlling over 95 per cent of the Afghan territory. The victory of Taliban changed the entire spectrum of the Afghan politics. The success of Taliban threatened the regional power imbalance. The Central Asian states, Iran and Russia directly criticized the Taliban's victory. They accused Taliban of committing an ethnic massacre when they captured Mazar-i-Sharif. Eleven Iranian diplomats were missing when they captured the city. Later on Taliban found the bodies of nine diplomats on the outskirts of Mazar-i-Sharif. The Iranian Foreign Ministry held Taliban and Pakistan responsible to such killings⁴².

The Security Council condemned the "complete disregard displayed by Taliban towards the will of the international community, demanding an urgent and an unconditional cease-fire leading to the final end to the hostilities"⁴³. The Council also said that it was deeply concerned about persistent reports of outside involvement in Afghanistan and called upon all states to refrain from interference in the on-going civil war.

40. *The Frontier Post*, (Peshawar), 27 April 1998.

41. *Dawn*, 28 April 1998.

42. Mutahir Ahmed, "Friends at odds", *South Asia* (Karachi), November 1998, p. 46.

43. Mutahir Ahmed, "Fall of Mazar-i-Sharif and After", *South Asia*, September, 1998, p. 46.

Meanwhile, the UN Secretary-General strongly condemned cruel murders of nine Iranian diplomats and asked Taliban to cease all military activities in Afghanistan without any pre-condition⁴⁴. The UN also halted armed conflict between Iran and the Taliban regime and urged them to resolve their bilateral issues through OIC or the UN offices in Geneva.

Six plus Two talks

On 22 September 1998, under the aegis of the UN, six neighbors of Afghanistan—Pakistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, China, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan along with the US and Russia decided to send a fact-finding mission to investigate the killings in Mazar-i-Sharif. Six plus Two passed a resolution in which it, called for negotiations between Taliban and other parties for “achieving a political settlement culminating in the establishment of a broad-based, multi-ethnic representative government in Afghanistan”⁴⁵. The Six plus Two resolution called for release of all including the Iranians and said that Taliban should expedite the return of the three Iranian diplomats in Afghanistan, cooperate fully with an international investigation into the killings of the Iranian diplomats and bring the guilty parties to justice. It said that the UN should investigate the reports of mass killings and mass graves in Afghanistan and asked Taliban to fully respect international humanitarian law and human rights, guarantee rights of women and prevent production and trafficking of narcotics. The most important aspect of the resolution was the support of the US demand to “cease providing haven to international terrorists residing on its soil”⁴⁶. It meant a direct reference to Osama bin Laden, who is wanted by the US.

In October 1998, UN Secretary-General's special envoy, Lakhdhar Brahimi, visited Afghanistan, Iran and the Central Asian States. During his meeting with Mullah Omar he clearly stated that the UN recognition of the Taliban regime depended mainly on its willingness to associate all communities of Afghanistan with political system in the country. He stated that though Taliban ruled over 90 per cent of the country, they had not brought peace for the people of Afghanistan⁴⁷. The UN took serious view of Taliban. On 9 December 1998, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution calling upon warring Afghan factions, especially Taliban, to stop fighting and engage themselves in peace talks and stop protecting international terrorists. The Russian Federation sponsored the Council's resolution, adopted unanimously, first since August 1998. The Council demanded that Taliban should stop providing refuge and training to international terrorists and that all Afghan factions should cooperate in efforts to bring indicted terrorists to justice. In resolution 1214 (1998), the Council supported Kofi Annan's proposal to create a civil unit to be a part of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSM). An assessment team would be sent to the country, as soon as

44. *Dawn*, 13 September 1999.

45. Shaheen Sehbaei, “Pakistan backs Taliban – rivals talks to end crisis”, *Dawn*, 23 September 1998.

46. *Ibid*.

47. Hasan Akhtar, “Taliban told to recognize all communities”, *Dawn*, 20 October 1998.

security conditions permit, to determine the exact mandate, composition and location of the civilian monitors. It urged all the parties, particularly Taliban, to cooperate with the mission and ensure safety and freedom of movement for its personnel⁴⁸.

Ashkabad Accord

In order to accelerate the peace process, Lakhdar Brahimi proposed Six plus Two meeting in Uzbekistan to sort out the problem of Afghanistan and restoration of peace and formation of a broad-based government. He also visited Kandahar to talk to the central leadership of Taliban. Lakhdar Brahimi also visited Iran and Pakistan to evolve a consensus for restoration of peace and resumption of dialogue process among the warring factions⁴⁹.

Russia and the European Union (EU) supported the points of common understanding issued at the Foreign Minister's level talks. These powers supported the UN efforts in order to promote peace in that country. On 14 March 1999 Ashkabad Accord was signed after three days of UN mediated talks to share power and workout on *Agenda for Peace* between the representatives of the ruling Taliban militia and the Opposition coalition based in Northern Afghanistan. The Accord stated, "In order to join both the groups, we have agreed to have a shared executive, shared legislation and shared judiciary"⁵⁰.

It was hoped that the agreement would bring peace in Afghanistan, which was a step towards confidence building. But on 20 July 1999, both parties failed to reach an agreement on ending their conflict at the peace talks, stating that more diplomacy was needed to stop the fighting. The representatives of the warring parties met in Uzbekistan's capital Tashkent. However, the UN attempts to bring peace in Afghanistan proved to be fruitless. The civil war re-erupted. The Six plus Two initiative, which had brought the UN special representative, Lakhdar Brahimi, to the region in November 1998, had been put into cold storage. Lakhdar Brahimi, who had spent ten days in the region, returned to New York giving an obvious signal of yet another failure of his mission to Afghanistan⁵¹. Before leaving Islamabad, the UN envoy said that Taliban used Pakistan and Arab Muslim militants to fight in the civil war, which could rebound on their countries of origin when they went home⁵². However, he made it clear that Taliban had provoked the anger of the global and regional countries by not abiding to the peace accords particularly the latest agreement in the meeting of the Six plus Two in Tashkent⁵³. Despite all the UN initiatives, the warring parties kept up their offensive against each other. In this grim scenario, there was very little room for the UN to resolve the conflict through mediation.

48. Masood Haider, "UN Council Calls for end to Afghan fighting", *Dawn*, 10 December, 1998.

49. *Dawn*, 24 February 1999.

50. *Dawn*, 15 March 1999.

51. Mutahir Ahmed, "Who will resolve the Afghan problem?" *South Asia*, 15 October 1999, p. 29.

52. *Dawn*, 17 March 1999.

53. *Ibid*.

Afghan crisis and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was established in 1985. Its predecessor Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) had achieved very limited results during its fifteen years history, completing less than 40 per cent of the projects approved by it. The ECO is the second largest regional economic organization after the EU. But it did not play any significant role in this regard. The most important reason is the conflict of interests among the member states. The ECO comprises three original states, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey. It was extended on 28 November 1992 when six Central Asian States, namely, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan alongwith Afghanistan joined the Organization. According to the Charter of the ECO, all member states strive forward together towards their common goals. Although the ECO members are presently concentrating on economic matters, they also exchange views on regional political and strategic issues as well.

Moreover, an ancient rivalry exists in the Central Asian States (CAS) along ethno-cultural worlds: Turan and Iran. The former is Turkic speaking and the latter are Farsi speaking people. The CAS leadership finds Kamalist ideology appealing its fundamental principles of secularism, nationalism and democracy, which fit well with traditional Central Asian societies⁵⁴. On the contrary, Persian speaking Tajikistan endeavors not to show its preference for the Turkish model because the Tajik government wants to neutralize Iran, which is supporting the Tajik opposition⁵⁵.

The conflict has accelerated with the passage of time. The Farsi speaking world, represented by Iran, Tajikistan and part of Afghanistan feels threatened by the expansion of Turan, represented by Turkey, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. Iran's policy vis-a-vis the CAS is to cultivate economic, social, political and cultural links with them. The only Farsi speaking state of the CAS is Tajikistan, which has no border with Iran, but has racial and linguistic affinities. Moreover, when the first non-Pashtun government of Rabbani assumed power, Iran welcomed it. After Taliban took control in Kabul, Iran showed strong reservation against the Taliban⁵⁶. Pakistan wants to develop cordial relations with all the ECO members' countries, but the allegation that Pakistan is directly involved in Afghan affairs and spreading religious extremism in the region compelled others to take strong reservations against Pakistan. At the ECO Summit held in May 1997, the Uzbek President, Islam Karimov, told the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif that Pakistan must desist from interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan⁵⁷.

54. Igor P. Lipovsky, "Central Asia: In Search of a New Political Identity", *The Middle Eastern Journal*, (Washington), Vol.1, No.2, 1996, p. 212.

55. *Ibid.*

56. Mutahir Ahmed, *op.cit.*, "Afghanistan and Tajikistan: Destabilizing Factors for Central and South Asian regions", p.140.

57. *Dawn*, 25 May 1997.

Taliban factor in Afghanistan forced Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to raise the question of their own security. An emergency summit of the CIS took place in Almaty to formulate a joint strategy. The purpose of that Summit was to tighten security along the borders with Afghanistan⁵⁸. The CAS objective was to contain the infiltration of the religious extremist ideology in the region. All the CAS are directly involved in the Afghan crisis. Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have ethnic connection with Uzbeks and Tajiks living in Afghanistan. They want to secure their borders against infiltrators from Afghanistan. Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, alongwith Russian Federation, dispatched peacekeeping forces to guard Tajikistan's border being the biggest non-Russian member of CIS-Uzbekistan-contributed the longest number of force⁵⁹. All this exercise was aimed to confine Taliban to the South of Afghanistan.

Furthermore, Uzbekistan provided Dostum a safe passage in May 1997, when his commander, Abdul Malik, switched sides and struck a deal with Taliban. But Malik could not retain power for a long time. Dostum came back in September 1997. He flew from Turkey to Turmiz in Uzbekistan and then crossed over to Hairatan, 100 km into Afghan territory⁶⁰. Rabbani, whose government has been recognized by the majority of the CAS, shows that the CAS are directly involved in the Afghan affairs and recognize the Northern Alliance⁶¹.

At the fifth Summit of ECO, held in Almaty in May 1998, Burhanuddin Rabbani had participated in the Conference. He also attended an extra-ordinary ECO Summit in Ashkabad as the legitimate President of Afghanistan⁶². The diversity of views on Afghanistan by the ECO member clearly shows the political upheaval in the region. Pakistan is the only ECO member who recognizes the Taliban regime, while all the other members recognize the Government of Burhanuddin Rabbani.

The second challenge, which the ECO faces, is the outside interference in terms of economic activities. The external interference has blocked the natural cooperation among the member states. In the third ECO Ministerial Conference, held in Quetta in February 1993, it was decided to draw a *Plan of Action* for cooperation in the main areas, namely transport and communications, trade and energy, with specific targets to be achieved by the year 2000. Since then four summits have been held, but no progress has been achieved. The extra-regional powers have developed economic interests. The US

58. *Ibid.*, 16 October 1996.

59. "Tajikistan in the 1990's", *Spotlight on Regional Affairs* (Islamabad), Vol. 15, No. 9, September 1996, p. 106.

60. *Dawn*, 11 May 1998.

61. Sreedhar Mohendra Ved, *Afghan Turmoil Changing Equation* (New Delhi: Himalayan Books, 1998), p. 61.

62. Metahir Ahmed, *op.cit.*, "Afghanistan and the rise of regional power rivalries", p. 106.

wants to explore rich oil and gas field from Turkmenistan. The US Oil Company UNOCAL led one of several Consortiums negotiating to build a pipeline from Turkmenistan across western Afghanistan into Pakistan. At present, Turkmenistan alone is estimated to have 21 trillion centimeters of gas and 12 billion tons of oil, of which only 30 per cent are being exploited. In order to explore these oil reserves, several MNCs have been competing to take the lead. Among them are Japanese, Latin American and the US MNCs. But the US MNCs are playing a major role in pursuing forward the US interests in Central Asia.

The Government of Turkmenistan invited Argentine Oil firm Bidas, the US MNC UNOCAL and the Fauji Foundation of Pakistan to develop a gas pipeline of the cost of 2 billion dollars built from Turkmenistan via Afghanistan to Pakistan. Politically speaking, this project cannot be completed until there is peace in Afghanistan. Interestingly, Chinese, Japanese, Malaysian and other Asian Oil companies are in race with the US and European Oil companies to take advantage in exploring energy fields of the CAS⁶³.

In this scenario, the role of the ECO has been marginalized. The perceptions and the political models of the member states are very different from one other, which leads towards a competition among the member states. Moreover, the post-Cold War era is based on geo-economics and the geo-economic competitors have been competing to grab the markets of the regions through their own MNCs. The powerful MNCs from outside the region can easily exploit the regional markets. The political turmoil of the region suits them for economic gains. The only alternate is to prepare a common minimum agenda based on economics and politics in order to keep away outside powers from the region. In this regard, ECO must play its role for the betterment of people of the region.

The European Union and Afghanistan

In the Cold-War era, the bipolar system restricted Europe's independence of action. Throughout the Cold War period, Europe was overshadowed by the then superpowers. The liberal revolutions in the Eastern Europe transformed the region into pluralistic democracies. The unification of Germany strengthened the process of European integration and further paved the way for a "United Europe". In December 1989, Presidents Bush and Gorbachev announced at the summit in Malta that the ideological division of Europe was over⁶⁴. With the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union, Europe got an opportunity to achieve the status of United Europe. One of the most important issues, which had influenced Europe during Cold War era, was the issue of human rights⁶⁵, which was further institutionalized on 7 February 1992 when

63. Mutahir Ahmed, "Politics of Natural Resources", *South Asia*, July 1998, p. 42.

64. Mutahir Ahmed, "European response to Islamic fundamentalism", Navid Ahmed Tahir (ed.) *Post Cold War: European order and South Asia* (Karachi: Area Study Centre for Europe, Karachi 1996), p.187.

65. G. Wyn Rees (ed.), "International Politics in Europe", *The New Agenda* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p.8.

Maastricht Treaty was formally signed among twelve European states. The EU prepared "Guidelines". One of the basic principles of the guideline was to observe Human Rights Charter⁶⁶. Europe in the post-Cold War era has focussed on free market economy, democracy, human rights, anti-terrorism and environment as the basis of its policy towards other regions. Europe finds it hard to deal with Islamic fundamentalists who, they feel, uphold a doctrine of rigidity, extremism and intolerance.

The fundamentalists have been apparently interested in democracy only as long as it provides them an opportunity to propagate their ideology and mould public opinion in their favor. But once they gain power, they become intolerant and undemocratic and do not allow other parties to flourish⁶⁷.

Thus, there is a sharp contrast between fundamentalist Islam and Europe's pluralistic democracy. Fundamentalists are of the opinion that the nation states outside the Western sphere are based on European model, which is alien and unacceptable in other parts of the world, especially in Muslim World. Over 200 years of "Enlightenment" and the separation of the Church from the State have inculcated a deep aversion in the European mind to any suggestions about a theocratic state. The idea that Islam is not only a religion, but also a comprehensive design for a societal and state order is, therefore, completely alien to the European way of thinking. Moreover, the fundamentalist forces in the Muslim World are anti-West and they describe the ruling elite of the Muslim World as "agents" of western imperialism. According to Western perception, fundamentalism flourishes wherever there is economic hardships, political chaos and injustice to the poorer sections of society. Taliban are the by-product of these developments. The EU tries to contain Taliban in the region by supporting the secular ruling elite of the region, particularly in Central Asia.

In Central Asia, the neo-communist elite adopted the policies of liberalization and democratization, which are the pillars of the post-Cold War international order. The Afghan crisis has, however, left dark imprint on Central Asia and has further "fundamentalized" the politics of the region. The ruling elite of Central Asia has presented its image as secular and liberal in order to secure external support. They are eager to get financial and technological support from the EU. On the other hand, the EU formulated the criteria for the observance of human rights, democracy and free market. In October 1992, the European Commission began negotiations with Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. It was agreed that these states would respect the CSCE (now OSCE) commitments, especially the rule of law, respect for human rights and the holding of free and fair elections. In this changing milieu, there is apparently no room for Islamic fundamentalist forces. In order to control these forces, the CSCE admitted Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and granted them full membership on 30 January 1992⁶⁸. The inclusion of the Central

66. *Ibid.*

67. Mutahir Ahmed, *op.cit.*, "European response to Islamic fundamentalism", p. 187.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 188.

Asian states in the OSCE could help in neutralizing the religious and ethno-religious forces in the region. As far as Afghanistan is concerned, the EU has called for the formation of a broad-based government, representing all the segments of the Afghan society. The EU supports the central role of the UN efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement of the conflict and Six plus Two process. Moreover, the EU supports the points of common understanding issued by Six plus Two group for a political settlement culminating in the establishment of a broad based, multi-ethnic representative government in Afghanistan. The EU has strongly condemned the brutalities committed by the Taliban regime. Emma Bonino, the EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs, launched high profile campaign on behalf of the Afghan women since the Taliban militia seized power. Bonino stressed, "I have respect for religious beliefs, but I am very concerned about the violation of human rights in Afghanistan. Let's not forget that Afghanistan has signed the UN convention on Human Rights and let's not forget the UN Conference on the Right of Women"⁶⁹. Bonino added that she found "silence" of the international community, including the UN. Urging international community, she said that it should not sit and wait until there was an explosion in Afghanistan.

On 18 July 1998, the European Commission suspended its humanitarian aid projects in Kabul because of two reasons. First, non-discrimination against women. Second, unacceptable restrictions imposed by the Taliban regime⁷⁰. The EU said that it would continue its aid to other parts of Afghanistan.

The EU policy towards Afghanistan can easily be defined. First, to contain religious extremism. Second, support to the secular ruling establishments of the region. Third, economic and technical assistance in order to develop infrastructure. Fourth, aid and assistance on humanitarian grounds. Finally, support for a broad-based government and search for a peaceful political solution of the Afghan crisis.

The US policy and posture

After the Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, the US lost interest in the Afghan affairs. The post Cold-War era's first President of the US, Bill Clinton, who assumed office in 1993, did not show any interest in resolving the Afghanistan conflict. Clinton's foreign policy agenda simply did not have any space for Afghanistan. For more than two years after assuming office, Clinton sent no envoy to Afghanistan even to take stock of the situation in a country that was pivotal to the US Cold War strategy for more than a decade. It was in November 1995 that the US Assistant Secretary of State visited Afghanistan⁷¹. Additionally, Pentagon no longer considered Afghanistan strategically important in the post-Cold War setting. The US legislators too did not show any interest in this regard. It is

69. Shadaba Islam, "EU concerned over Afghan Women's plight", *Dawn*, 3 October 1996.

70. *Dawn*, 19 July 1998.

71. *Ibid.*, 12 November 1995.

significant to note that the US Congress held the first discussion on Afghanistan in May 1996 after an interval of six years⁷².

The debate was an outcome of Senator Hank Brown and Assistant Secretary of State, Robin Raphel, who visited Afghanistan in March 1996. These visits were interpreted as the renewed US interest in Afghanistan. In spite of these visits, Afghanistan remained at low profile in US foreign policy bureaucracy. However, the US supported ineffective UN efforts to resolve the factional fights but financial assistance for humanitarian purposes also declined gradually. While the US multilateral assistance to Afghanistan in 1989 was 74 million dollars, it came down to 44 million dollars in 1995⁷³. The bilateral assistance, on the other hand, declined 102 million dollars in 1989 to 1 million dollars in 1995. Five important factors prompted the US policy makers to review their policy towards Afghanistan. First, to control small arms trafficking, second, to control drug trafficking, third, oil factor, fourth, growing Iranian influence in Afghanistan, and finally, to contain religious nationalist fundamentalism.

As far as small arms trafficking and drug trafficking are concerned, the US has taken certain drastic measures with the help of regional states. However, the oil factor deals with economy. The US oil companies looked Central Asia more lucrative than the Middle Eastern allies. But the gateway towards Central Asia is Afghanistan. Peace and stability is a pre-requisite for the construction of pipelines through alternative route other than through Iran.

In October 1996, Robin Raphel said in Sub-Committee on Far Eastern and South Asian Affairs that "Afghanistan has become a conduit for drugs, crime and terrorism that can undermine Pakistan, Central Asian States and can have an impact beyond Europe and Russia⁷⁴". In a Senatorial hearing in the following month, Robin Raphel explained in detail the State Department's views on the Afghan problem. She said: "The conflict in Afghanistan prevents the new Central Asian States from establishing trade and oil and gas outlets to the South: it provides another venue for Pakistan-India competition; it feeds Iranian fears of being surrounded by unfriendly regimes. Finally, it promotes a dangerous fragmentation of Afghanistan. The stability of this region is important to USA... This proliferation of militants having camps and increased narcotics production and trafficking can only be reversed by cooperation between inside and outside Afghanistan... Afghanistan is the second largest producer of opium in the world after Myanmar... Opium processed into heroin finds its way into Pakistan, Central Asia, Russia, Europe and the USA... We remain convinced that the only solution to this impasse (in Afghan Civil War) is a negotiated settlement that leads to a representative, broadly supported Central government.

72. Chintamani Mahapatra, "US policy towards Afghanistan", *Strategic Analysis* (New Delhi) January-February 1997, p. 1496.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 1499.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 1502.

steps along the way must include a cease-fire, a neutral security force, demilitarizing Kabul, agreement on an interim government amendment and planing for a permanent form of government. The USA does not favor one faction over another nor does it support any group or an individual. We believe that the Afghan people have the right to a government of their own choosing from outside interference"⁷⁵.

Robin Raphel's policy statement had shown renewed US interest in Afghanistan. When Taliban captured Kabul in September 1996, Washington gave a "cautions welcome" to the Taliban's advancement and hoped that they would bring peace in Afghanistan⁷⁶. However, Iranians are of the opinion that Taliban are fulfilling the interests of the US and have become part of the US strategy set for the region. It aims to isolate Iran in the region and to make sure that its MNCs can easily dominate Afghanistan⁷⁷. The US endorsed the Iranian's claim and the US MNC UNOCAL planned to construct Oil pipeline through Afghanistan at a cost of 8 billion dollars. The Clinton Administration openly applauded the UNOCAL project "as an alternative to schemes involving links through America's old nemesis Iran to the Arabian Sea"⁷⁸.

Moreover, the President of the company's Pakistan Operations, Richard Keller, expressed hope that Taliban "will be good for us" and that it would bring stability and clears the way for the construction of the gas pipeline. Washington, on the other hand, gave a "cautions welcome" to Taliban advance, taking the view that a unified country would at least be at peace after 17 years⁷⁹. However, the expectations of Washington and UNOCAL were short lived. Taliban turned out to be hardcore religious fundamentalist force. Under such circumstances, Washington had no other alternate but to distance itself from Taliban and to keep reiterating its support to the UN efforts.

Three very important events took place in the month of August 1998. First, on 7 August, bombing of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salam in which 257 people were killed, including twelve Americans. Second, on 8 August, Taliban captured the Opposition's strong hold Mazar-i-Sharif. Third, on 20 August, US cruise missiles bombed the hideouts of Osama bin Laden inside Afghanistan at a time when an estimated 600 men were present in his camp⁸⁰. The 7 August bombings in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salam killed more than 250 people and injured more than 5,500. Twelve US citizens, including military personnel and dependents were among those who were killed. The US Defence Secretary, William Cohen, said that according to some evidence, the US officials believed that Osama bin Laden was behind the assaults. The US officials have long called Bin Laden as sponsor

75. *Ibid.*, p. 1502.

76. *Dawn*, 25 September 1996.

77. Mutahir Ahmed, *op. cit.*, "Politics of Natural Resources", *South Asia*, p. 42.

78. Chintamani Mahapatra, *op. cit.*, p. 1499.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 1503.

80. *Dawn*, 28 August 1998.

of terrorism⁸¹.

The issue of Osama bin Laden

Osama bin Laden was one of the first Arabs to join the Mujahideen's struggle against the Soviet Union, and he stayed throughout the war years in Afghanistan. He funded much of the participation of Arab and other international volunteers. Throughout that time he worked in collaboration with the Saudi intelligence agency and its Pakistani and US counterparts. During the Gulf War, he opposed the presence of the US troops in Saudi Arabia. Thus, a cleavage was created between him and former sponsors. After being deprived of his Saudi citizenship in 1994, he lived in Sudan, but under the US pressure, he was expelled from that country. He, then, returned to Afghanistan. Bin Laden and his followers lived under the protection of the Jalalabad *Shura* until Taliban captured the area in September 1996. He moved to Kandahar in 1997⁸². Bin Laden is listed in the State Department's Report on *Patterns of Global Terrorism* as terrorist. The Report listed all those terrorist organizations that are involved in terrorist operations all over the world.

On the bombings on the US embassies, the US government's case against Bin Laden was largely "circumstantial", as most of the evidence collected by the investigators "may not be usable in court, either because making it public would reveal the US intelligence sources and methods"⁸³. The US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, indicated that Taliban leaders must hand over Bin Laden if they hoped to win recognition. But the Taliban government vowed to protect Bin Laden in line with the Afghan traditions⁸⁴.

The US retaliation

On 20 August, the US cruise missiles struck without warning at paramilitary training camps in Afghanistan and a Sudanese pharmaceutical plant that the US intelligence identified as a chemical weapons facility⁸⁵. The US missiles were aimed at six sites in eastern Afghanistan, where terrorists were allegedly trained and at a suspect chemical weapons plant in Sudan. According to Pentagon, the *Zhawar Kili Al-Badr* camp was 94 miles south of Kabul, and about 1 mile from the Pakistan border, included a base with a command and control operation, a support and supply camp with weapons and ammunition and four training facilities⁸⁶. Moreover, up to 600 people had been observed using the

81. *CNN Interactive*, "Pentagon: Strikes sought to protect US citizens overseas", 20 August 1998, p. 1.

82. Barnett R. Rubin, "Afghanistan under Taliban", *Current History* (Philadelphia), Vol. 625, February 1999, p. 86.

83. *Dawn*, 1 August 1999.

84. *Dawn*, 18 August 1999.

85. *CNN Interactive*, *op.cit.*, p. 2.

86. *Ibid.*, "Profiles of the Missile Targets", 20 August 1998, p.1.

complex at one time. It was functioning like a military camp and terrorists in training learned how to handle explosives and operated armed personnel carriers and tanks. Trainers were of variety of nationalities, including Afghans and Saudis. The terrorist training camp near Khost operates with the blessing, if not outright support, of the Taliban. On the other hand, in Sudan, the strike hit the El Shifa Pharmaceutical Industries plant, an alleged site, which was used to make precursor chemicals for the deadly nerve gas VX. However, there is no evidence that the plant, which is fenced and guarded by the Sudanese military and controlled by the Sudanese government, manufactures medicine.

The US Defence Secretary, William Cohen, stated that the military's goal was to disrupt and attempt to destroy the suspected training and supported facilities used to train "hundreds, if not thousands". He further added that the sole motivation was to protect US citizens stationed overseas from further terrorist attacks. He called the strikes "an exercise of self defense"⁸⁷. Tacing the same line, the US Secretary of State, Madeline Alright, called on the international community to take whatever action was necessary to "deter and defeat terrorist acts"⁸⁸.

Moreover, President Clinton described synchronized blows as retaliation for the twin bombings. He described the training complex in Khost as "one of the most active terrorist bases in the world, operated by groups affiliated with Osama bin Laden"⁸⁹.

The US used Tomahawk cruise missile, which gained fame in the Gulf War in 1991 for its ability to strike at enemy targets such as specific buildings with pinpoint accuracy. The 1 million dollar missile, which find targets up to 1,000 miles away with guidance Earth-orbiting satellites is capable of traveling up to 550 mph (880 km)⁹⁰.

The Block III variant of the Tomahawk, which was used in strike is 18 feet long and weighs 2,650 pounds. It can carry conventional 1,000-pound bombs. It can be launched from either ship or submarine. Tomahawks were also used in the US air strikes that helped end the war in Bosnia in 1995. The Clinton administration also launched about two dozen missiles against Iraq in 1993 to retaliate for an assassination attempt against former President George Bush⁹¹.

As far as the legality of strike is concerned, according to the US Justice Department, President Clinton's military strikes have been authorized under the US constitution and a 1996 anti-terrorist law. According to Justice spokesman, Bert Brandenburg, "the President acted pursuant to his constitutional authority, including that as Commander-in-Chief and his constitutional authority to use military force to defend the US and its citizens"⁹².

87. *Ibid.*, "US Attacks Sides in Afghanistan and Sudan", 21 August 1998, p. 1.

88. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

89. *Ibid.*, p.1.

90. *Ibid.*

91. *Ibid.*, "Since 1991, Tom Howks have carried US message", 20 August 1998, p. 1.

92. *Ibid.*, "Why are the strikes legal ?", 20 August 1998, p. 4.

Previously, the US launched attacks under similar authority include President Reagan's 1986 air raid on Libya. Then, the US 1993-missile attacks on an Iraqi intelligence headquarters were in response to Iraq's attempted assassination of President George Bush paying a visit to Kuwait. The spokesman also cited an authority for the strikes because of the anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act passed in 1996 after the Oklahoma city federal building was bombed in 1995. According to the Act, "The President should use all necessary means, including covert action and military force to disrupt, dismantle and destroy international infrastructure used by international terrorists, including overseas terrorist training facilities and safe havens"⁹³.

On the other hand, a statement was issued by Bin Laden's spokesman to the London based newspaper *al-Quds al-Arabi* in which he threatened to carry out more attacks against American targets in retaliation for the US missile strikes against his base. Furthermore, Bin Laden directly addressed his warning message to the US president, pledging more attacks against the US targets. He said, "the battle has not started yet. The response will be with action and not words"⁹⁴. Moreover, in an interview with *Qatar's al Jazeera* satellite television station, bin Laden said that his mission was to incite Muslims to rebel against the American "Occupation" of Saudi Arabia. He also said, "Every American man is an enemy to us"⁹⁵.

Besides, the Taliban regime has refused to hand over Bin Laden to the US. They have outrightly supported Bin Laden and have launched an appeal to Muslims to back them against any further US military action. On the eve of the first anniversary of the US missile attacks on Afghanistan, the Taliban regime stated that Washington was planning to carry out another military strike against the Taliban for harboring Bin Laden. However, the US Assistant Secretary of State, Karl Inderfurth, stated, "As long as the political and military situation continues to foster, the dangers of spreading extremism, terrorism, and drug trafficking continue to pose threats to the region and the world at large"⁹⁶.

In order to pressurize the Taliban regime, the US aligned itself with Russia. On 11 March 1999, the US and Russian delegations headed by Assistant Secretary Inderfurth and Deputy Foreign Minister, Grigoriev Karasin, respectively met in Moscow for consultations on how to promote peace in Afghanistan and to review the overall situation in South Asia. At the end of the meeting a joint statement was issued. According to it, "Russia and the US urge the authorities in Afghanistan to expel all terrorists from the country and specifically

93. *Ibid.*

94. *Dawn*, 22 August 1998.

95. *Ibid.*, 12 June 1999.

96. Mutahir Ahmed, "Who will resolve the Afghan problem", *South Asia*, 15 October 1999, p. 28.

that the Taliban and its supporters ensure that Bin Laden and his network be expelled and be brought to justice⁹⁷”.

Osama bin Laden has made some statements, which were mentioned above and seriously considered by the US administration. The US also suspects Bin Laden for financing the June 1996 Khobar bombing of a US military complex in Saudi Arabia, in which 19 American servicemen were killed. He denied such charges and said, “I look with much praise and respect to these great men for they have lifted the humiliation from the heads of our nation. The US accusations are invalid unless they mean I am linked to inciting them. However, I confess. I was one of those who signed the *fatwa* calling for the holy war”⁹⁸. Furthermore, on 5 July 1999, the White House announced sanctions against Taliban for continuing to harbor Osama bin Laden. President Clinton issued an executive order blocking all property and interests of Taliban and its leaders in the US⁹⁹.

The US policy towards Afghanistan clearly shows that its policy is based on certain interests and if these interests are in danger, it will retaliate forcefully. The US sent a clear signal to its enemies that it would not hesitate from violating national boundaries to trace out and destroy the terrorist groups, whose primary target has been the US diplomats and citizens residing abroad.

Analysis

Under the present circumstances, the efforts of Six plus Two have failed to provide a positive result. Taliban have controlled nearly ninety per cent of the Afghan territory. However, the UN is reluctant to legitimize the government of Taliban. The Northern Alliance is still holding the seat in the UN. In order to resolve the crisis, the United Nations, the United States, the European Union and all the members of the ECO, except Pakistan, share a consensus that the broad based government representing all the factions of Afghan society is the only viable option for the resolution of Afghan crisis.

Presently, the Taliban regime is totally isolated in the region. Though there are rumors that the US supports Taliban to build pipelines and isolate Iran, there is no evidence that Washington will give any material support to the Taliban regime. Under the first Clinton Administration, the US government expressed some supportive views on Taliban. It suggested that it might consider the re-opening of the US embassy if security improved in Kabul. It also advocated engagement rather than isolation of the Taliban regime among international community¹⁰⁰. Since Madeline Albright became the Secretary of State, she condemned Taliban's policies on gender discrimination. The influential lobbying network of feminist, human rights and humanitarian groups,

97. *Dawn*, 12 March 1999.

98. *Ibid.*

99. *Ibid.*, 6 July 1999.

100. Barnett R. Rubin, *op.cit.*, "Afghanistan under the Taliban", p. 88.

supported by some Afghan women exiles in the US, have also made Taliban gender policies as a political issue. Moreover, the EU has also toed the same line. Criticizing the discriminatory policies of the regime towards women, several European based NGO's urged the EU to put pressure on Taliban to treat women as a human being. Presently, gender issue is no more a cultural or social issue, but a political issue. However, the US policy is to support the UN efforts on peacemaking in the hope that an oil and gas pipeline can be reconstructed from Central Asia through Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, the US has taken strong action against terrorism. The attack on Taliban-controlled Afghanistan is a part of its policy towards terrorism. It seems that in future the US will follow the same policy vis-a-vis Taliban.

On the other hand, the prospects of the UN initiatives are also very dim. The UN worked with the OIC, but its role has been largely symbolic. The UN has also been working with various NGOs, both Western and Islamic. The International Committee of the Red Cross has also performed the full range of its activities throughout the country.

The role of the UN depends on the strategies of states, which has changed with the transformation of the international political system. Its humanitarian role in Afghanistan began with aid by the UNHCR to the first flow of refugees, mainly in Pakistan in 1978. The political role of the UN began in 1981 with the first mission of a personal representative of the UN Secretary-General.

During the Soviet occupation, the UN's humanitarian and development activities were highly political. The aid for three million Afghan refugees in Pakistan came from the US and Saudi Arabia which could be seen in political perspective. Similarly, the Western NGOs, which participated in this effort largely, saw themselves as supporters of those who were struggling against the Soviet occupation. The NGOs from Muslim countries supported the Arabs and other Muslim fighters who joined the Mujahideen ranks.

The political efforts of the UN during this period paved the way for Geneva Accords, signed on April 14, 1988¹⁰¹. The Accords provided the basis for the withdrawal of the Soviet troops by February 15, 1989¹⁰². However, none of the other objectives of the Accords were ever implemented. The UN provided diplomatic cover to the Soviet decision of withdrawal, which was negotiated through direct bilateral channels with the US. Before the Soviet collapse and exit of Najibullah, the UN shuffled between the US and the Soviet Union in helping them to reach an agreement on an interim set up in Afghanistan. The humanitarian efforts similarly tried to bridge gaps among warring parties. Following the signing of the Geneva Accords, a coordinator was appointed for all humanitarian efforts for Afghanistan. The coordination operation was known as "Operation Salaam". The main purpose of the operation was to provide humanitarian

101. 101. *Dawn*, 15 April 1998.

102. *Pakistan Horizon*, Chronology (April-June 1998), Vol. IV, No. 2, p. 192.

assistance across the divided political and military lines in Afghanistan. Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan was its first coordinator.

While the humanitarian operations continued, the political efforts accelerated after 1992. Ethnic rivalries and emergence of religious nationalism appeared on the Afghan scene. In December 1993, the UN re-established a political office the UN Special Mission for Afghanistan (UN SMA). The mission was inactive until the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appointed a high level special envoy, Lakhdar Brahimi, in July 1997 to resolve the conflict in Afghanistan¹⁰³. When Brahimi took the charge, the situation of Afghanistan was very grim. Taliban captured Kabul, but Rabbani's government held the UN seat. Except Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and UAE, no other member of the UN was willing to recognize the Taliban regime. The UN's humanitarian and development Program had their own impasse. In the absence of central authority, the UN had developed its own "strategies framework". The various UN agencies have separate mandates and funding sources and each agency and the NGO pursued its own agenda. To bring a consensus among all these agencies, the UN materialized an idea of strategic framework to set goals for its programs in Afghanistan and established a new organizational structure to assure that all agencies should engage in "common programming"¹⁰⁴. These structures were aimed at bringing representatives of all agencies, together with donors and NGOs, to make joint decisions about priorities and programs. The UN had faced problems in both areas controlled by the Northern Alliance and Taliban. In North, the UN office was attacked in Mazar-i-Sharif in May and again in September 1997. The UN withdrew from all of Northern Afghanistan except the Hazarajat. Though Taliban provided full protection to the UN personnel and property, they had arrested nationals (Afghan) staff for alleged espionage or violations of their various decrees. For example, the UN and NGOs found it difficult to operate when Taliban did not permit women to work with the UN. In some cases it was nearly impossible to implement such programs without the participation of the women. Taliban also issued a decree banning the UN from employing foreign Muslim women staff in Afghanistan unless a *Mahram* (adult male member of their immediate family) accompanied them. In order to defuse these kinds of conflicts, the UN sought to reach a written understanding with Taliban on the principles governing humanitarian and development program.

After two weeks of hectic talks, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed. Taliban said that they would respect the privileges and immunities of the UN international staff. They agreed that women could work in the health sector. They also agreed to construct eleven schools each for boys and girls and the improvement of health and higher education facilities for both sexes. There was no agreement on the *Mahram* issue, which was referred to international Islamic scholars.

Though Taliban's approach was very reconciliatory, they were facing pressures within Taliban's rank. They asked the UN not to publicize the Memorandum because that

103. Barnett R. Rubin, *op.cit.*, "Afghanistan under the Taliban", p. 89.

104. *Ibid.*

would create a problem for the ruling hierarchy. In spite of the agreement, the situation remained the same. By July 1998, Brahimi openly stated that the UN might withdraw from whole Afghanistan. The NGOs left Kabul (though not all of Afghanistan) soon after Brahimi's announcement. After the US missile raids, all the NGOs left the country, only the International committee of the Red Cross remained there¹⁰⁵.

As far as human rights are concerned, the UN also took an initiative. The UN Human Rights Commission has repeatedly renewed the appointment of the special rapporteur. In 1997, the UN Human Rights Center in Geneva upgraded its High Commissioner, Mary Robinson, whose job was to explore and investigate war crimes accusations. Meanwhile, in September 1997, Dostum disclosed thousands of Taliban's mass graves. He accused Abdul Malik Pahlawan, who captured Mazar-i-Sahrif, for the execution of Taliban brutally. Moreover, Hezb-i-Wahadat also accused Taliban for massacring nearly 100 Hazarajits civilian¹⁰⁶.

Taliban and Northern Alliance urged the UN to investigate the massacre, and also asked for international war crime trials of those responsible. Replying positively, the UN Human Rights Center in Geneva sent some investigation tours for a preliminary inquiry in November 1997. Furthermore, the mission examined the sites in May 1998. When Taliban captured Mazar-i-Sharif in August 1998, the investigation had been stopped. The failure of the UN efforts contributed to the environment in which Taliban carried out the massacre in Mazar-i-Sharif. The UN proposed three investigative missions. The Human Rights Center investigated both the mass killings of Taliban in 1997 and those by Taliban in 1998. An agreement, in principle, signed between Taliban and the UN, under which the Secretary-General proposed the stationing of civilian observers in key locations to monitor basic humanitarian standards and prevent further massacres. The Security Council also proposed an inter-governmental mission to investigate the killing of nine Iranians¹⁰⁷. The UN expressed concern over that incident and called for a peaceful settlement under its auspices. On the one hand, Taliban's point of view was that the splintered Opposition was wasting time. While on the other hand, Taliban stressed on military solution, which further aggravated the situation. Presently, it seems that both sides are right. But the UN has some strong reservations against the military solution. Lakhdar Brahimi stated that Taliban would continue to face the problem of non-recognition by the international community even if they captured the entire Afghan territory through military means¹⁰⁸. He expressed deep concern over the heavy offensive by Taliban against the Opposition and provoked the anger of the global and regional states by not abiding to peace accords, particularly at the meeting of six plus two group in Tashkent.

105. 105. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

106. *Ibid.*

107. Mutahir Ahmed, "Friends at odd", *South Asia*, November 1998, p. 47.

108. *Dawn*, 1 August 1999.

The UN's assessment is that the concept of military victory is related to the foreign intervention. The regional states supply arms and provide military training on their territory. Until and unless it stops, the situation cannot be improved.

The situation gives rise to the internal strife among the regional states. The ECO, the largest regional economic bloc after the EU, is paralyzed due to the Afghan problem. The member states are blaming each other for the Afghan mess. At the ECO Summit, held in May 1997, the Uzbek President, Islam Karimov, told the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif that Pakistan must desist from interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan¹⁰⁹. Moreover, Iran had also accused Pakistan for interfering in the Afghan affairs by supporting the Taliban regime.

Keeping all these developments in perspective, the emerging future scenario can easily be seen. First, the Afghan problem cannot be solved militarily. Second, the fragmented Opposition cannot play any positive role. Third, the UN is helpless until and unless genuine outside support is provided. Fourth, outside interference has accelerated the crisis. Finally, lack of political will of all the concerned parties will lead to further deterioration of the situation. In this scenario, the future of Afghanistan appears to be uncertain.

109. Mutahir Ahmed, *op.cit.*, "Afghanistan and the rise of regional power rivalries", p. 108.

CONCLUSION

The Soviet disunion changed the chemistry of international politics. Although the bipolarity of international power structure has been transformed into multipolarity, the struggle for power remains the same, particularly in the insatiable regional trouble spots of the world. Afghanistan is one of the conflicting areas where regional and extra-regional powers are trying to influence the domestic politics. Thus, it fulfils the hypothesis of the dissertation based on "Power Realist-Theory", which focuses on the elements of anarchy, power politics and warfare and further leads to violence and conflict.

The dissertation has tried to answer all the fourteen questions (listed in the first chapter) which cover the developments in Afghanistan after the Soviet disunion and other important aspects of the Afghan conflict. An attempt has been made to analyze the Afghan conflict and its impact on domestic, regional and international politics.

Political, ideological and strategic impact of the Soviet disunion on Afghanistan

The dissertation has tried to answer question one in the first chapter. The deployment of the Soviet troops in Afghanistan changed the regional alignment and, thus the struggle for power began between the then superpowers. Both had outrightly supported their allies to control the Afghan political apparatus. However, the Soviet disunion had far-reaching implications on Afghanistan. On the political front, the PDPA and the Resistance movement were not in a position to provide any viable option for the Afghan crisis. Ideologically, both had been divided on ethnic and sectarian lines. Moreover, personalities are dominated on both sides because both were institutionally weak. But at the initial stage, Najibullah had successfully calculated his strategy and controlled the state apparatus from 1989 to 1991. Later on, the situation changed when cracks appeared within the PDPA because it was divided on ethnic lines. Thus Najibullah lost the control over the state apparatus. He did not have any other option but to support the UN initiatives. But more than that the Soviet disintegration was the main cause of his failure.

Najibullah's exit from power

The answer to the second question is also covered in the first chapter. The collapse of the Najib's regime aggravated the problem. The Resistance movements had taken full advantage of the situation. With the help of the regional states, they grabbed the power, but remained divided on ethno-linguistic, tribal, and sectarian lines. The leaders of the seven main Sunni Resistance groups, based in Pakistan, failed to agree on a common political platform and there was no room for the acceptability of Shiite groups, based in Iran. There was no effective line of communication between Shia and Sunni groups and not a single leader enjoyed over all command. Basically, they were different military groups, divided on ethnic and tribal lines. Thus, Najibullah's exit from the Afghan power corridor did not bring peace in Afghanistan.

Weaknesses of the Afghan Resistance Movement and the nature of ethnic and sectarian conflict

The answers of the third and fourth questions have been given in chapter two. After Najib's exit, Gulbadin Hekmatyar, leader of the Hezb-e-Islami, wanted to become the head of the government. He was fully backed by Pakistan, while Saudi Arabia backed Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf, the leader of Ittehad-e-Islami, in order to check the Iranian influence in the context of Shiite doctrine. Abdul Karim Khalili replaced Abdul Aziz Mazari of Hezb-e-Wahdat. Iran was behind this move.

The two strong groups Jamiat-i-Islami, led by Burhanuddin Rabbani and supported by Ahmed Shah Masud, and Hezb-e-Islami of Hekmatyar were locked in a bloody power struggle. It also shows the traditional ethno-linguistic differences with a touch of personal rivalry. The Jamiat was dominated by Tajikis, comprising thirty per cent of the Afghan population and provided the core of the Afghan intelligentsia based in Kabul and northern and western Afghanistan. Moreover, ethnic Pashtuns, comprising forty to fifty per cent of the population based in south and southern Afghanistan were dominated by Hezb. Both these groups lacked the support of small minorities like Uzbeks, Turkmen and Hazaras.

Due to these reasons the Resistance movements had not been able to create any broad-based representative government to replace the Najib's regime. The result of the Peshawar Accord of April 1992 did not yield any positive outcome because Hekmatyar had refused to accept Mujaddidi as the President of the Interim government. Moreover, when Rabbani took charge from Mujaddidi, Hekmatyar bombarded Kabul in order to show that without him peace could not be achieved.

Tracing the root cause, these personalities had strong differences since the formation of the Islamic movement for reform, which was established, in Kabul University in the late 1960's. It was essentially reborn as an Islamic resistance coalition of non-Pashtun Mujahideens dominated by Badakhshis and Panjsheris and led by Rabbani and Masud respectively. With the passage of time, these differences have been institutionalized on ethnic lines. When Rabbani took power in Kabul, he was surrounded by the armed personnel who came from Badakhshan province, whereas Masud relied on Panjsheri supporters. Thus, the period between 1992 to 1996 was locked in the power struggle of various Resistance groups.

Regional actors and Afghanistan

The answers of the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth questions have been given in chapter three. The outside interference in the Afghan turmoil is not a new phenomenon. It can be traced from 1970's when the then government of Pakistan provided shelter to a number of Opposition leaders. The April 1978 coup in Afghanistan provided an excuse to the Opposition forces to mobilize their action against the ruling regime from neighboring territory of Pakistan. But throughout these years the Afghan Opposition failed to forge the unity among its cadre. They only shared a common goal, i.e., to overthrow the Kabul regime

backed by the Soviet Union. However, the Afghan Resistance carried out guerilla operations with the assistance of Pakistan, the United States, China, Iran, Saudi Arabia and several other countries.

In this way, the regional and extra-regional powers were involved directly in the Afghan crisis. The help of the CIA, Saudi money and the assistance of ISI gave leverage to the Resistance movement over the Najib's regime. After Najib's exit from power, the regional powers openly supported their favourites on the basis of sect and ethnic composition. The purpose of the Saudi support to the Afghan Resistance was to defuse the influence of Iranian revolution as Riyadh claimed the leadership of Islamic world since late 1950's.

With the help of the US, Saudi Arabia became one of the main financiers of the Afghan Resistance movement. For both political and ideological reasons, Saudi Arabia promoted the Sunni-Shiite division in Islam¹. As far as Iran is concerned, during 1980-88, it focused on Shiite cause in Afghanistan because Iranian power structure was dominated by the hard-liner clerics. Thus, the exclusive approach adopted by the two states narrowed down the success of Resistance movements, which further divided them into different sects.

After the withdrawal of the Soviet forces, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan adopted a common approach, insisting on the military solution of the conflict. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia had aligned with the Pashtun fundamentalist groups, while Iran supported the Shia and Persian speaking groups. In Iran, major drift emerged on its foreign policy front. After the death of Khomeini, the new leadership focused mainly on the interest of the Iranian State and Persian nationalism. When Rabbani came into power, Iran outrightly supported him. But Pakistan and Saudi Arabia realized that the Northern Alliance became powerful because of the backing of some Central Asian States, which supported Hekmatyar's forces. It was reported that in 1993, Saudi Arabia spent two billion dollars in Afghanistan with Hekmatyar as a major beneficiary.²

On the contrary, the period from 1992 to 94 was the worst in the history of Afghanistan. Anarchy, power struggle and changing loyalties were institutionalized. The gap between State and Society widened, which led the country towards political chaos. Moreover, the political division deepened. Around 50,000 Afghans were killed in the senseless power struggle in the so-called civil war. In this anarchic situation, a new phenomenon emerged on the Afghan scene in the shape of Taliban, who appeared in the southern Afghanistan heavily dominated by Pashtuns. Taliban ruffled the unity of Afghanistan as a multi-ethnic state, but committed to provide peace in the war-torn state.

Religious nationalism and Taliban

Ideologically, Taliban has institutionalized religious nationalism, thus, deleted the concept of secular nationalism, enforced by the Najib's regime. The concept of religious

1. Anwar-ul-Haq Ahady, "Saudi Arabia, Iran and the conflict in Afghanistan", in William Maley (ed.) *Fundamentalism Reborn? Afghanistan and the Taliban*, (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1999), p.119.

2. *Ibid.*, p.123.

nationalism has been imported from Middle Eastern states. With the induction of the religious nationalism, the regional powers are also divided, which are supporting nationalist forces (Northern Alliance) and religious nationalists (Taliban). Thus, the Afghan crisis spills over to South and Central Asian regions. For example, Harkat-ul- Ansar, led by Fazlur Rahman Khalil, sent recruits to Kashmir, Chechenya and former Yugoslavia. They also gave training in a camp, named Badr, near Khost on the Pak-Afghan border.³

The effects of the Pashtun religious nationalism can also be seen in Kashmir. In an interview given to *BBC*, the vice-president of the Kashmir based organization, Al Burq, Daud Khan Yousufzai, stated that some five lakh Pashtuns were living in the Indian held Kashmir for the last one century and two lakhs of them still speak Pashtun language. He further stated, "We the Pashtuns along with Kashmiris and *Paharis* have formed an Organization called Al Burq. This organization has about seven thousand armed members"⁴. He also said that they had carried out successful operations in the border areas, particularly in Kupwara and Baramulla districts.

Furthermore, religious nationalism is an extension of religious fundamentalism. In the Muslim World, they are working side by side on common platform. Both want to radicalize politics, economics and cultural institutions purely on Islamic lines. In order to trace the roots, the founding fathers of Islamism were Hasan al Banna who formed the Egyptian Brotherhood and Abu Ala Maududi who created Jamat Islami in the Indian subcontinent.

Afghanistan remained engulfed by this Islamic revivalist movement in 70's and 80's. During 70's when the Afghan Islamists took refuge in Pakistan, Gulbadin Hekmatyar of Hezb-e-Islami divided it into two parts, one led by Burhanuddin Rabbani of Jamiat-e-Islami and the other by Hekmatyar. Ideologically, they were very close to their Middle Eastern ideologues. In the 80's, when they fought against the Soviet Army, they got financial support from the conservative Middle Eastern States. Moreover, Arab militants joined the Resistance movements and were trained in Afghan camps from mid 80's to early 90's.

However, the Soviet troop withdrawal and further disintegration of the Soviet Union polarized the Resistance movement and converted them into ethnic and sectarian groups. Ideology vanished and ethnic polarization destabilized the State. But the rise of Taliban again raised the slogan of Islam as an ideological factor. However, with the passage of time, it becomes obvious that Taliban is also propagating Pashtun nationalism with a touch of religion. Despite the fact, political Islam has a meaning in Afghanistan and it is still a tool of legitimization for any power. Though at present all parties are based on ethnic constituency, none of them promise to create an ethnic state, or even to promote the interests of a specific ethnic group.⁵

3. Ahmed Rashid, "Pakistan and the Taliban", *ibid.*, p.16.

4. *The Pakistan Times* (Karachi), 20 February 1993.

5. Oliver Roy, "Has Islam a future in Afghanistan?" *op.cit.*, *Fundamentalism Reborn?* p.200.

Middle Eastern influence in Afghanistan

Afghan Islamism has its own dynamics. The ideology of the Afghan Islamists has been borrowed from the two mainstream organizations, namely Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and Pakistan's Jamat-e-Islami. Burhanuddin Rabbani was trained in Al- Azhar University in Cairo, while Gulbaddin Hekmatyar was very close to Jamiat-e-Islami (The Amir of Jamat is a Pashtun and was also the incharge of the Afghan Affairs in 70's).

Strategically, the close connection with the Middle Eastern movements was developed in the 80's with the help of the American CIA, Saudi Intelligence and Pakistan's ISI. An international network was created, which imported Arab militants to fight along with Afghan militants. These militants brought their own view of Islam and also carrying back home their combat experience in the name of *Jihad*. The centre of these informal networks was established in Peshawar through the "Office of Services", *Mektab-al-Khadmat*, headed by a Jordanian Muslim of Palestinian origin, Abdullah Azzam, in close conjunction with the Saudi activist Ossama bin Laden who also founded the "House of Auxiliaries", *Bayt al-Ansar*, a foundation incharge of recruiting and financing the volunteers.⁶

These Arab militants have broken the traditional ideology of Sunni fundamentalism, which has been influenced by the Sufis. First, they divided the Afghan society on Sunni-Shiite lines. Second, they propagated Wahabism, which is just contrary to the Sufism. Finally, they preached anti-West and liberal culture. They were against all types of enlightenment in the Society. The drastic changes in early 90's have altered the alignment of these forces.

The most significant event for these radicals was the Gulf crisis. All these radical Islamist groups took hard-line position against the US and its allies. The conservative Middle Eastern States, which were the main supporters of these Islamist groups, had changed their policies and withdrew their support. In this scenario, the Taliban factor emerged on the Afghan political scene. It is very important to see Taliban in above mentioned perspective. The question is whether Taliban will follow the pro-West policy like Saudi Arabia and Pakistan or they will raise slogan of anti-West. The answer of this question can be seen in the broader context that they would follow the pro-West policy because of the following reasons.

First, Jamiat-Ulama-Islam of Pakistan, which is the ideologue of Taliban, is directly, supported by Saudi Arabia. Second, Jamiat is never labeled as anti-West, though it was critical during the rule of Zia's martial law. Finally, Jamiat is very much anti-Shia and follows the ideology of Wahabism. The Jamiat and Saudi Arabia have influenced the policy of Taliban regime. Thus, Taliban does not take any step, which alienate it from its close allies.

6. *Ibid.*, p.202.

Taliban and contemporary Afghanistan

Presently, Taliban is trying to project its image as mature regime in the eyes of the World. The international community criticizes Taliban for providing the shelter to Bin Laden who is considered a terrorist in the West. But the manner in which they handled the hostage crisis of the Indian aircraft on their soil has earned admiration from the UN and other diplomatic circles.

On 24 December 1999, the so-called Kashmiri militants hijacked the Indian Airline Flight IC-814 from Katmandu to New Delhi. The Indian government accepted the demands of the militants and the drama ended on 31 December 1999. The most significant aspect of the hijacking was the role played by Taliban. The mature attitude of Taliban showed that the Taliban administration has learned the art of government. The hijacking of the plane put them on the international horizon. The Indian Foreign Minister, Jaswant Singh, expressed his gratitude to the Taliban administration and said, "I am grateful to Mr. Mutawakkil for his cooperation and handling the situation"⁷. In the same tone, Mutawakkil stated that the Taliban administration issued one directive, "no innocent blood should be shed on the Afghan soil"⁸.

Though Taliban support the Kashmir struggle, they condemned the hijacking and allowed the plane to land at Kandhar airport at the request of the Indian government. Moreover, Mutawakkil stated, "We helped the Indians because it was a humanitarian issue, but there is no question of giving asylum to the hijackers"⁹. Jaswant Singh stated that Delhi had not authorized anyone to play a mediator or negotiator role, thus, it automatically paved the way for the UN to intervene. The UN representative Eric de Mul arrived in Kandhar and established contact with the hijackers in an attempt to negotiate a settlement. The Indian position regarding hijacking gave an opportunity to Taliban to come out as a responsible government that could look after itself and take correct decision. The need of the hour is that Taliban must accept the other forces within the country, end civil war and build a consensus among various forces.

Afghanistan shares borders with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Iran, and Pakistan. Thus, Afghan crisis has a direct impact on the Central and South Asian regions. These regional states have failed to provide any viable option for the solution of the Afghan crisis. Basically, Afghanistan is divided into various ethnic and sectarian zones and internal division of the Afghan society is further exacerbated by regional powers.

Presently, Iran, Russia, Central Asian States, Turkey and India are supporting Northern Alliance. Whereas, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the UAE support Taliban. The direct involvement of regional powers to secure their interests has far reaching implications on South and Central Asian regions.

7. Mutahir Ahmed, "Taliban government and the post-hijacking scenario", *South Asia*, 29 February 2000.

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*

The political rivalries among regional states have provided fuel to the on-going civil war in Afghanistan. The direct competition between Pakistan and Iran to capture the trade route for the Central Asian States do not allow any serious work in this direction. With the advancement of Taliban towards north of Afghanistan, the feeling of insecurity has emerged among the members of the CIS, because they consider Tajiks and Uzbeks as their natural allies. Regarding the security of Central Asia, Russia formulated "Near Abroad Policy". The purpose is to protect the borders of the CIS including Tajikistan and claimed that the external border of the CIS was also the border of Russia. At present, Russia has deployed more than 15,000 troops and has stationed the 201 Mortyef Rifle Division along Tajik-Afghan border.

Small arms proliferation and drug smuggling

The small arms proliferation and drug smuggling are increasingly threatening the South and Central Asian Societies. Today, there is a clear linkage between opium-heroin production and weapons, which are used both to protect the drugs and bring drug profits and become a source of income for the Mujahiddeen. Furthermore, the availability of small arms, accessed through different routes and sources, has changed the nature of conflicts in South Asia; whereas Kashmir conflict has escalated, involving India and Pakistan militarily. In this way, the regional actors have failed to maintain peace in Afghanistan. They involved themselves in the internal conflict and, thus, became the party to the conflict.

Role of extra-regional powers

The answer of tenth question has been given in chapter four which deals with extra-regional powers, the UN, the US, the EU and the members of ECO who tried to formulate a mechanism for the establishment of a broad-based government, the most popular terminology in the context of the Afghan crisis, involving all the sections of the Afghan society.

Since the Soviets entered Afghanistan, the UN tried to play an active role in resolving the Afghan crisis. But the direct involvement of the UN began in 1982 and concluded in the shape of Geneva Accords. The first round of Geneva process began in June 1982 and ended in May 1988 when Geneva Accords were signed. Though the Accords widely failed, the Afghan crisis did not end here. The UN had proposed several options, i.e., the return of King Zahir Shah, formation of Loya Jirga and broad based government, but none of them worked. Finally, when Najibullah decided to step down in order to make way for an interim transitional government proposed by the UN, it appeared that a long lasting solution would produce. But the Resistance leaders did not agree to accept each other. From 1992 onward, Afghanistan is facing total anarchy, civil war and ethnic hatred. The UN officials faced hurdles to overcome the crisis, but they failed to achieve the desired results.

The outlook and the political models of the member states are totally different from one another, which leads towards a competition among them. The EU policy

towards Afghanistan is very limited. They focus on technical assistance in order to develop infrastructure, aid and assistance on humanitarian grounds. Moreover, they want to contain religious extremism and support for a broad-based government and peaceful political solution of the Afghan crisis.

Finally, the US played the major role in Afghan crisis. But after the Soviet troop withdrawal, the US lost its interest in Afghan affairs. In 90's the US did not show any interest in resolving the Afghan conflict. After assuming office, Clinton did not send envoy to Afghanistan even to take glimpse of the situation in a country that was pivotal to the US cold war strategy for more than a decade. It was in November 1995, when the US Assistant Secretary of State visited Afghanistan. Despite that visit, Afghanistan remained in low profile in the US foreign policy agenda. There are five important factors, which prompted the US policy makers to review their policy towards Afghanistan. First, to control small arms to proliferate; second, to control drug trafficking; third, oil factor; fourth, growing Iranian influence in Afghanistan and finally, to contain religious fundamentalism.

When Taliban captured Kabul in September 1996, Washington gave a positive response to the Taliban's advancement hoping that they would bring stability and peace in the region. The US support to Taliban was due to several reasons. First, Taliban would serve as a bulwark against Russia and Iran. Second, they would restore order to all of Afghanistan as they did in Kandhar and other areas of the South. Third, they would get rid of terrorist training camps. Fourth, they would pave the way for the return of the former King Zahir Shah. Fifth, they would provide Pakistan, a US ally, an overland link to the immense profits to be made from trade with the new Central Asian States. Finally, the US wanted Taliban to open doors for the construction of giant gas and oil pipelines from Central Asia down through Afghanistan to Pakistan.¹⁰ However, Washington's expectations were short lived. Taliban disappointed their Western supporters. There are four factors, which contributed the shift of the US policy regarding Taliban. First, Taliban massacred their opponents, established a police state and committed ethnic cleansing in the north. Second, the hope that Taliban would put an end to the cultivation of the opium poppy in Afghanistan proved to be an illusion. Ninety per cent of poppy crop originates in areas over which Taliban claimed control. Third, Taliban does not seriously take the US political interests. For example, they have given shelter to Osama bin Laden who is suspected by the US agencies of having financed anti-American outrages, such as, the bombing of barracks in Saudi Arabia in which the US military personnel were killed. Bin Laden is listed in the State Department's report on *Patterns of Global Terrorism* as terrorist. Moreover, he was allegedly involved in the bombings on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Finally, Taliban's treatment of women is widely condemned in the US. Women groups, which previously had not been involved in the Afghan issue, voiced their solidarity with Afghan women. Keeping all these factors in mind, it seems that the role of the US is continuously changing vis-à-vis Afghanistan. In the Cold War era, Afghanistan was on the forefront of the then superpowers' politics. When the Soviet forces withdrew from Afghanistan, the US kept its policy on a very low profile. After Taliban came into power, they initially supported them and then withdrew that support.

10. Richard Mackenzie, "The United States and the Taliban", *op.cit.*, *Fundamentalism Reborn?* p. 96.

Presently, the US policy is to support the UN efforts. However, the US took strong action against terrorism and the attack on Taliban controlled areas is a part of its policy towards terrorism. It seems that the US will continue the same policy vis-a-vis Taliban in future.

Hypothetical judgement

The hypothesis of dissertation is: "The struggle for power among various Afghan factions and the interests of regional and extra-regional powers will continue to threaten peace and stability in the South Central and West Asian regions". The hypothesis has been proved in the dissertation, which covers each and every aspect of contemporary Afghanistan in regional and international scenario.

Expert's opinion

Chapter five deals with the comments and observations of the renowned academics on the Afghan conflict. The majority of these experts find common ground on all basic issues. There is a majority consensus on all the fundamental issues. The comments and observations are in the line of the hypothesis of the thesis.

Possible predictions

Keeping all these developments in view, one can predict the future of Afghanistan on following lines: -

1. The ethnic and sectarian conflicts will further escalate and destroy the fabrics of South and Central Asian Societies.
2. The struggle for power will increase with the passage of time.
3. There is remote hope for a "broad-based government".
4. Small arms proliferation has direct impact on other conflicting areas of the world.
5. Opium cultivation will create regional and international problems.
6. The role of the UN will be very limited.
7. Regional powers will try to influence their policies in Afghanistan, which further exacerbate to civil war and anarchy.
8. The EU and the ECO will play a very limited role.
9. The US can play a very vital role in Afghanistan because of two reasons: terrorism and drugs, as their suppression is the part of its global policy.
10. There is a possibility of the disintegration of Afghanistan on ethnic and sectarian lines.

Concluding analysis

The ideological world of bipolar power structure had collapsed with the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The physical presence of the Soviet troops in Afghanistan changed the dynamics of the whole region. The Soviet disunion put a political, ideological and strategic impact on Afghanistan. Politically, the PDPA was fractured and its cadre left the country and the rest of the others found refuge in various

Resistance groups. Thus, Najibullah's exit from the Afghan power corridor had depoliticized Afghanistan. Ideologically, the Resistance movement had nothing to offer, except ethnicity and sectarianism. The whole Afghan Society has been divided on these lines. Religious nationalism has been institutionalized and spills over to regional and extra regional states (Kashmir and Chechnya).

Strategically, the regional actors have tried to promote and secure their interests. Instead of finding political and logical solution of the conflict, they have added fuel and accelerated the pace of civil war. Furthermore, the civil war has destabilized South and the Central Asian regions.

Moreover, the UN has tried to find out a solution acceptable for Afghanistan and neighboring states. From Geneva Accords to the formation of Six-plus-Two group, the UN put sanctions on Afghanistan in November 1999. But the history shows that more isolation leads towards more destabilization. Small arms proliferation has directly affected the Afghan Society and its impact on other conflicting areas of regional and extra-regional states. Furthermore, illicit narcotics production has also created regional and international problems. The Executive Director of the UN International Drug Control Program (UNDCP), Pino Arlacchi stated that the problem of illicit narcotics production in Afghanistan had reached at an alarming proportion. Addressing a high level meeting of the Six-plus-Two group, Arlacchi said, " Last year Afghanistan produced 4,600 metric tons of opium-75 per cent of the world illicit production. This is enough to meet the annual demand for opium and heroin twice over"¹¹. Moreover, he added that the heightened level of trafficking by criminals' syndicates had challenged the security, stability and even the sovereignty of these governments, which did not have the resources to counter the traffickers. In order to counter this phenomenon he said that the UN's drug control programme had implemented a " security belt" along the borders of Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

Though the UN has seriously tried to tackle the Afghan issues, political commitment and will is a prerequisite for the UN stand on drug issue. As far as the role of the US is concerned, one has to analyze its global agenda, which focuses on liberalization, containment of terrorism, human rights and pluralistic democracy. The US wants to implement these policies in Afghanistan. In conclusion, one must say that the multi-ethnic societies in the developing world have a tendency to disintegrate easily. The process of disintegration spills over to other weak and fragile states. As far as Afghanistan is concerned, the only viable option is to form a consensus among the warring factions of the Afghan Society through available political process. Any other option is disastrous not only for Afghanistan, but also for the entire South and Central Asian regions.

11. *Dawn*, 2 March 2000.

Appendix

Here attempt has been made to involve the experts and the renowned academics from Pakistan, India, Egypt and the United States. The purpose is to get their insight, comments and enlightened views on the subject. They have provided an indepth view of the Afghan crisis. However, I have interviewed them in the shape of questions, which are fundamental in nature and related to the various aspects of the Afghan issue. Furthermore, majority of these experts has agreed on all the basic and important facets of the Afghan problem. These issues are as following:

First, majority of the academics opined that the major cause of the Afghan imbroglio is the division of the **Resistance** movements on ethnic and sectarian lines. All these Resistance groups have used religion in order to achieve their ulterior motives, which caused major breakdown and civil war in the war torn country. Second, on Taliban phenomenon, majority of the academics supported the argument that Taliban has institutionalized religious revivalism and has far reaching implications for South and Central Asian regions. Moreover, proliferation of small arms has destabilized the hot spots of two regions (Kashmir and Tajikistan). Third, the academics have built a consensus on the role of regional and extra-regional powers who have not taken any serious measure to resolve the crisis for the sake of their own political and economic interests.

Finally, they showed concern that if Afghanistan disintegrates on sectarian and ethnic lines, it will have a devastating effect on the South and the Central Asian regions. In addition, they agreed on a broad-based government with the help of the United Nations, regional and extra-regional powers as the only viable option for the solution of the Afghan crisis.

QUESTIONER*

Q1. Do you agree that the Afghan Resistance movement is divided on ethnic and sectarian lines and religion has been used by these forces?

No \ Yes \ Don't know

Q2. Do you think that Najibullah's exit from power was a miscalculated move?

No \ Yes \ Don't know

Q3. Do you agree with the perception that civil war in Afghanistan will destabilize the regions of Central, West and South Asia?

No \ Yes \ Don't know

Q4. Do you think that the UN is capable of solving the Afghanistan crisis?

No \ Yes \ Don't know

Q5. Do you think that the Islamic revivalism has been institutionalized in Afghanistan by Taliban?

No \ Yes \ Don't know

Q6. Do you think that small arms transformation from Afghanistan has a direct impact on the Kashmir dispute and other conflicting areas?

No \ Yes \ Don't know

Q7. Do you think that the drug problem could destroy the very fabric of Central, West and South Asian societies?

No \ Yes \ Don't know

Q8. Do you think that the policies of regional and extra-regional powers will destabilize Afghanistan?

No \ Yes \ Don't know

Q9. Do you think that the disintegration of Afghanistan will change the map of Central, West and South Asian regions?

No \ Yes \ Don't know

Q10. Do you think that the formation of broad-based government is the only solution of the Afghan crisis?

No \ Yes \ Don't know

***Answers underlined reflect the response of the experts' interviewed.**

Table of Questioner

Q.1	Q.2	Q.3	Q.4	Q.5	Q.6	Q.7	Q.8	Q.9	Q.10
Afghan Resistance Divided on ethnic and sectarian lines. Religion has been used.	Najib's exit from power/ a miscalculated move.	Civil war will destabilize the region	UN has a potential to solve the Afghan crisis	Islamic revivalism has been institutionalized by Taliban	Small arms transformation from Afghanistan has a direct impact on Kashmir and other conflicting areas	Drugs destroy the fabrics of South and Central Asian Societies	Regional and extra-regional powers will destroy Afghanistan	Disintegration of Afghanistan will change the map of South and Central Asian regions	Broad-based government is the only solution of the Afghan crisis
No/Yes/I don't know	No/Yes/I don't know	No/Yes/I don't know	No/Yes/I don't know	No/Yes/I don't know	No/Yes/I don't know	No/Yes/I don't know	No/Yes/I don't know	No/Yes/I don't know	No/Yes/I don't know
No: 1	No: 9	No: 3	No: 5	No: 5	No: 2	No: 3	No: 2	No: 1	No: 1
Yes: 16	Yes:	Yes: 15	Yes: 12	Yes: 9	Yes: 13	Yes: 12	Yes: 14	Yes: 15	Yes: 16
I don't know: 2	I don't know: 4	I don't know: 1	I don't know: 2	I don't know: 5	I don't know: 4	I don't know: 1	I don't know: 3	I don't know: 3	I don't know: 2
Result Majority consensus	Result Partial consensus	Result Majority consensus	Result Majority consensus	Result Partial consensus	Result Majority consensus	Result Majority consensus	Result Majority consensus	Result Majority consensus	Result Majority consensus

Analysis

The majority of these experts find common ground on all fundamental issues of the Afghan crisis. There is a "majority consensus " on all the basic issues.

- (1) Division in the ranks of the Resistance movement on ethnic and sectarian lines.
- (2) Institutionalization of religious revivalism.
- (3) Proliferation of small arms in South and Central Asian regions.
- (4) The role of regional and extra-regional powers.
- (5) The prospects for the formation of a broad-based government in Afghanistan.

While analyzing all these opinions in depth, it is clear that these comments and observations are in the line with the hypothesis of the thesis, which focuses on the power struggle. All the Resistance groups want to grab the state apparatus by using various slogans like religion, sect, ethnicity and the so-called democracy. However, the main purpose is to control the state's sovereignty.

Names of the experts and renowned academics from US, Egypt, India and Pakistan who have been interviewed:

Name: Ameen Jan

Designation: Senior Associate

Organization: International Peace Academy, New York, US.

Name: Larry P. Gordon

Designation: Assistant Professor

Organization: American University, Cairo, Egypt.

Name: Mohamed El- Sayed Selim

Designation: Professor

Organization: Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University, Egypt.

Name: Hassan Abou Taleb

Designation: Chairman

Organization: International Political and Strategic Studies, Cairo University, Egypt.

Name: Ali Hegazi

Designation: Former Deputy Minister, Government of Egypt.

Name: Ola Abou Zeid

Designation: Associate Professor, Department of Political Science

Organization: Cairo University Egypt.

Name: Dr. Gaber Awad

Designation: Associate Professor, Department of Political Science

Organization: University of Cairo Egypt.

Name: Ibrahim Arafat

Designation: Assistant Professor

Organization: Faculty of Economics and Political Science, University of Cairo Egypt.

Name: Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema

Designation: Iqbal Fellow

Organization: South Asia Institute Heidelberg University, Germany and Professor at the Department of International Relations, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad.

Name: Marvin G. Weinbaum

Designation: Professor Emeritus

Organization: University of Illinois, US.

Name: Kanti Bajpai
Designation: Associate Professor
Organization: School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.

Name: P.R. Chari
Designation: Director
Organization: Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi, India.

Name: Sumit Ganguly
Designation: Professor
Organization: Hunter College, Visiting Fellow, Stanford University and Professor, City University, New York, US.

Name: Sikander Mehdi
Designation: Professor
Organization: Department of International Relations, University of Karachi, Pakistan.

Name: Riazul Islam
Designation: Professor Emeritus
Organization: University of Karachi, Pakistan.

Name: Talat A. Wizarat
Designation: Professor
Organization: Department of International Relations, University of Karachi, Pakistan.

Name: Rasool B. Rais
Designation: Director
Organization: Area Study Centre for Africa, North and South American Studies Quaid Azam University Islamabad, Pakistan.

Name: Lt. Gen. (retd) Kamal Matinuddin
Designation: Retired Army Officer
Organization: Pakistan Army.

Name: Brigadier (retd) A.R. SIDDIQI
Designation: Editor
Organization: Regional Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies, Karachi, Pakistan.

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Appendix II. Text of the bilateral agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the voluntary return of Refugees, April 14, 1988.

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Appendix IX. Text of the Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub Khan's statement issued on the occasion of recognition of Taliban government, Islamabad, May 27, 1998.

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Appendix XIII. Text of the European Union common position on Afghanistan, January 24, 2000.

APPENDIX 1

Text of Geneva Accords, April 14, 1988.

Bilateral agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the principles of mutual relations, in particular on non-interference and non-intervention.

The Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, hereinafter referred to as the high contracting parties.

Desiring to normalize relations and promote good-neighbor lines and cooperation, as well as to strengthen international peace and security in the region.

Considering that full observance of the principle of non-interference and non-intervention in the internal and external affairs of states is of the greatest importance for the maintenance of international peace and security and for the fulfillment of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Reaffirming the inalienable right of states freely to determine their own political, economic, cultural and social systems in accordance with the will of their peoples, without outside intervention, interference, subversion, coercion or threat in any form whatsoever, mindful of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations as well as the resolutions adopted by the United Nations on the principle of non-interference and non-intervention, in particular the declaration on principles of international law concerning friendly relations and cooperation among states in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the declaration on the inadmissibility of intervention and interference in the internal affairs of states, of December 9 1981, have agreed as follows:

Article I

Relations between the high contracting parties shall be conducted in strict compliance with the principle of non-interference and non-intervention by States in the affairs of other States.

Article II

For the purpose of implementing the principle of non-interference and non-intervention each high contracting party undertakes to comply with the following obligations:

(1) To respect the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity, national unity, security and non-alignment of the other high contracting party, as well as the national identity and cultural heritage of its people;

(2) To respect the sovereign and inalienable right of the other high contracting party freely to determine its own political, economic, cultural and social systems, to develop its international relations and to exercise permanent sovereignty over its natural resources, in accordance with the will of its people, and without outside intervention, interference, subversion, coercion or threat in any form whatsoever.

(3) To refrain from the threat or use of force in any form whatsoever so as not to violate the boundaries of each other, to disrupt the political, social or economic order of the other high contracting party, to overthrow or change the political system of the other high contracting party or its government, or to cause tension between the high contracting parties.

(4) To ensure that its territory is not used in any manner which would violate the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and national unity or disrupt the political, economic and social stability of the other high contracting party;

(5) To refrain from armed intervention, subversion, military occupation or any other form of intervention and interference, overt or covert, directed at the other high contracting party, or any act of military, political or economic interference in the internal affairs of the other high contracting party, including acts of reprisal involving the use of force;

(6) To refrain from any action or attempt in whatever form or under whatever pretext to destabilize or to undermine the stability of the other high contracting party or any of its institutions;

(7) To refrain from the promotion, encouragement or support, direct or indirect, of rebellious or secessionist activities against the other high contracting party, under any pretext whatsoever, or from any other action which seeks to disrupt the unity or to undermine or subvert the political order of the other high contracting party;

(8) To prevent within its territory the training, equipping, financing and recruitment of mercenaries from whatever origin for the purpose of hostile activities against the other high contracting party, or the sending of such mercenaries into the territory of the other high contracting party and accordingly to deny facilities, including financing for the training, equipping and transit of such mercenaries;

(9) To refrain from making any agreements or arrangements with other states designed to intervene or interfere in the internal and external affairs of the other high contracting party;

(10) To abstain from any defamatory campaign, vilification or hostile propaganda for the purpose of intervening or interfering in the internal affairs of the other high contracting party;

(11) To prevent any assistance to or use of or tolerance of terrorist groups, saboteurs or subversive agents against the other high contracting party;

(12) To prevent within its territory the presence, harboring, in camps and bases or otherwise, organizing, training, financing, equipping and arming of individuals and political, ethnic and any other groups for the purpose of creating subversion, disorder or unrest in the territory of the other high contracting party and accordingly also to prevent the use of mass media and the transportation of arms, ammunition and equipment by such individuals and groups;

(13) Not to resort to or to allow any other action that could be considered as interference or intervention.

Article III

The present agreement shall enter into force on May 15, 1988.

Article IV

Any steps that may be required in order to enable the high contracting parties to comply with the provisions of Article 11 of this agreement shall be completed by the date on which this agreement enters into force.

Article V

This agreement is drawn up in the English, Pashtu and Urdu languages, all texts being equally authentic, in case of any divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

Done in five original copies at Geneva this fourteenth day of April 1998.

(Signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan).

APPENDIX II

Text of the bilateral agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the voluntary return of refugees, 14 April 1988.

The Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, herein after referred to as the high contracting parties,

Desiring to normalize relations and promote good neighborliness and cooperation as well as to strengthen international peace and security in the region,

Convinced that voluntary unimpeded repatriation constitutes the most appropriate solution for the problem of Afghan refugees present in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and having ascertained that the arrangements for the return of the Afghan refugees are satisfactory to them, have agreed as follows:

Article I

All Afghan refugees temporarily present in the territory of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan shall be given the opportunity to return voluntarily to their homeland in accordance with the arrangements and conditions set out in the present agreement.

Article II

The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan shall take all necessary measures to ensure the following conditions for the voluntary return of Afghan refugees to their homeland:

- (A) All refugees shall be allowed to return in freedom to their homeland.
- (B) All returnees shall enjoy the free choice of domicile and freedom of movement within the republic of Afghanistan.
- (C) All returnees shall enjoy the right to participate on an equal basis in the civic affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan. They shall be ensured equal benefits from the solution of the land question on the basis of the land and water reform.
- (D) All returnees shall enjoy the same rights and privileges, including freedom of religion, and have the same obligations and responsibilities as any other citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan without discrimination.

The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan undertakes to implement these measures and to provide, within its possibilities, all necessary assistance in the process of repatriation.

Article III

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan shall facilitate the voluntary, orderly and peaceful repatriation of all Afghan refugees staying within its territory and undertakes to provide, within its possibilities, all necessary assistance in the process of repatriation.

Article IV

For the purpose of organizing, coordinating and supervising the operations which should affect the voluntary, orderly and peaceful repatriation of Afghan refugees, there shall be set up mixed commissions in accordance with the established international practice. For the performance of their functions the members of the commissions and their staff shall be accorded the necessary facilities, and have access to the relevant areas within the territories of the high contracting parties.

Article V

With a view to the orderly movement of the returnees, the commissions shall determine frontier-crossing points and establish necessary transit centres. They shall also establish all other modalities for the phased return of refugees, including registration and communication to the country of return of the names of refugees who express the wish to return.

At the request of the Government concerned, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees will cooperate and provide assistance in the process of voluntary repatriation of refugees in accordance with the present agreement. Special agreement may be concluded for this purpose between UNHCR and the high contracting parties.

Article VII

The present agreement shall enter into force on May 15 1983. At that time the mixed commission provided in Article IV shall be established and the operations for the voluntary return of refugees under this agreement shall commence.

The arrangements set out in Article IV and V above shall remain in effect for a period of 18 months. After that period the high contracting parties shall review the results of the repatriation and, if necessary, consider any further arrangements that may be called for.

Article VIII

This agreement is drawn up in the English, Pashtu, and Urdu languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

Done in five original copies at Geneva this fourteenth day of April 1988.

(Signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan)

APPENDIX III

Text of an Agreement on the interrelationships for the settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan, April 14, 1988.

1. The diplomatic process initiated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations with the support of all governments concerned and aimed at achieving, through negotiations, a political settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan, has been successfully brought to an end.
2. Having agreed to work towards a comprehensive settlement designed to resolve the various issues involved and to establish a framework for good-neighborliness and cooperation, the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan entered into negotiations through the intermediary of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General at Geneva from 16 to 24 June 1982. Following consultations held by the personal representative in Islamabad, Kabul and Tehran from Jan 21 to Feb 7, 1983, the negotiations continued at Geneva from April 11 to 22 and from June 1983. The Personal representative again visited the area for high-level discussions from 3 to 15 April 1984. It was then agreed to change the format of the negotiations and, in pursuance thereof, proximity talks through the intermediary of the Personal Representative were held at Geneva from 24 to 30 August 1984. Further rounds of proximity talks held at Geneva from 20 to 25 June, from 27 to 30 August and from 16 to 19 December 1985. The Personal Representative paid an additional visit to the area from 8 to 18 March 1986, for consultations. The final round of negotiations began as proximity talks at Geneva on 5 May, 1986, was suspended on 23 May, 1986, and was resumed from 31 July to 8 August, 1986. The Personal Representative visited the area from 20 November to 3 December, 1986, for further consultations and the talks at Geneva were resumed again from 25 February to 9 March 1987, and from 7 to 11 September, 1987. The Personal Representatives again visited the area from 18 January to 9 February 1988, and the talks resumed at Geneva from 2 March to 8 April 1988. The format of the negotiations was changed on 14 April 1988, when the instruments comprising the settlement were finalized, and accordingly, direct talks were held at that stage. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran was kept informed of the progress of the negotiations throughout the diplomatic process.
3. The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan took part in the negotiations with the expressed conviction that they were acting in accordance with their rights and obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and agreed that the political settlement should be based on the following principles of international law:

- ◆ The principle that states shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations:
- ◆ The principle that states shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered:
- ◆ The duty not to intervene in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any state, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations:
- ◆ The duty of states to cooperate with one another in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations:
- ◆ The principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples:
- ◆ The principle of sovereign equality of states:
- ◆ The principle that states shall fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed by them in accordance with the charter of the United Nations.

The two governments further affirmed the right of the Afghan refugees to return to their homeland in a voluntary and unimpeded manner.

4. The following instruments were concluded on this date as component parts of the political settlement:

A bilateral agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the principles of mutual relations, in particular on non-interference and non-intervention.

APPENDIX IV

Declaration on International Guarantees

The Government of the United States of America and of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, May 15, 1988.

Expressing support that the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan have concluded a negotiated political settlement designed to normalize relations and promote good-neighborliness between the two countries as well as to strengthen international peace and security in the region;

Wishing in turn to contribute to the achievement of the objectives that the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan have set themselves, and with a view to ensuring respect for their sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment;

Undertake to invariably refrain from any form of interference and intervention in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and to respect, the commitments contained in the bilateral agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the principles of mutual relations, in particular on non-interference and non-intervention;

Urge all States to act likewise.

The present Declaration shall enter into force on May 15, 1988. Done at Geneva, this fourteenth day of April 1988, in five original copies, each in the English and Russian languages, both texts being equally authentic.

(Signed by the USSR and the USA).

APPENDIX V

Text of the joint statement by the United States and the Soviet Union on Afghanistan, Moscow, 13 September, 1991.

The United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, consistent with the United Nations General Assembly resolutions adopted at the forty-third, forty-fourth and forty-fifth sessions and with their commitment to the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan, recognize the fundamental right of the Afghan people to determine their own destiny free from outside interference. In this regard, they support the statement of the United Nations Secretary-General dated 21 May 1991, and reaffirm the need for a political settlement in Afghanistan that ensures an independent and non-aligned Afghanistan at peace with its neighbours and that establishes a new, broad-based government through an electoral process that respects Afghan political and Islamic traditions. The United States and the USSR agree that a transition period is required to reach these goals.

To this end, they call for and pledge to support a democratic and free electoral process that is no subject to manipulation or interference by anyone. The results of the electoral process must be respected and fully implemented by all.

They request the United Nations, with the support of concerned governments, including those of Islamic countries, to work with the Afghans to convene a credible and impartial transition mechanism whose functions would include directing and managing a credible electoral process fully consistent with these principles. This transition mechanism, working closely with the United Nations and others as necessary, would have independent authority with all powers required to prepare for, conduct and implement the results of this electoral process leading to the establishment of a new government that will have the broad support of the Afghan people. The details of these and other powers and functions would be decided through an intra-Afghan dialogue.

The United States and the USSR agree that a cessation of hostilities is essential for the peaceful conduct of elections during the transition period and for a lasting political settlement. To facilitate this cessation, they agree to discontinue their weapons deliveries to all Afghan sides. They also agree that a cease-fire and a cut-off of weapons deliveries from all other sources should follow this step. They agree further to work towards withdrawal of major weapons systems from Afghanistan.

The United States and the USSR also reiterate their commitment to support an international humanitarian assistance effort to promote the prompt repatriation of refugees and reconstruction of Afghanistan.

To these ends, they reaffirm their willingness to promote in every way possible the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General to contribute in practical ways to the early settlement of this conflict.

APPENDIX VI

Text of Peshawar Accords, April 14, 1992.

Agreement on power transfer plan

With the collapse of the Najibullah regime, Pakistan initiated efforts to broker a plan for a peaceful transfer of power. Pakistani officials, including Prime Minister Iqbal Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, organized meetings in Peshawar between the various *mujaheddin* groups and other regional powers. Initial discussions were fruitless, but on April 24 a majority of the *mujaheddin* groups agreed to a three-stage plan.

The plan called for the creation of a 51-member Islamic *Jihad* Council (IJC) to take power in Kabul for a two-month period. It would then be replaced by an interim government, which would in turn be replaced by a permanent government after four months. Seglbatullah Mujjadedi, secretary-general of the moderate *Jebha-i-Nejat-i-Melli Afghanistan* group, was elected as leader of the IJC, which also included 30 *mujaheddin* field commanders, 10 clergymen and 10 intellectuals. The interim government, which would replace the IJC, was to be headed by Rabbani and a number of portfolios were allocated to various groups, including the premiership to Hekmatyar and the Defence portfolio to Masud. Hekmatyar, However, refused to approve the plan. The Iranian-based Shi'ite factions also withheld their support.

Establishment of Islamic State

Power was passed from the Republic of Afghanistan government to the IJC at a ceremony on April 28 at the Foreign Ministry building in Kabul. Mujjadedi, who had traveled overland from Peshawar along with 20 other IJC members, was formally appointed as head of state of the new Islamic State of Afghanistan. The reins of power were transferred by Abdol Wahed Sorabi, one of the former Vice-Presidents.

One of the first acts of the new government was to announce an amnesty for all members of the old regime, except Najibullah.

APPENDIX VII

Text of Afghan Peace Accord¹, Islamabad, March 7, 1993.

Given our submission to the will of Allah Almighty and commitment to seeking guidance from the Holy Quran and Sunnah;

Recalling the glorious success of the epic Jihad waged by the, valiant Afghan people against foreign occupation;

Desirous ensuring that the fruits of this glorious Jihad bring peace, progress and prosperity for the Afghan people;

Having agreed to bring armed hostilities to an end;

Recognising the need for a broad-based Islamic government in which all parties and groups representing all segments of Muslim Afghan society are represented so that the process of political transition can be advanced in an atmosphere of peace, harmony and stability;

Committed to the preservation of unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan;

Recognizing the urgency of rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan and of facilitating the return of all Afghan refugees;

Committed to promoting peace and security in the region;

Responding to the call of Khadim Al-Harmain Al-Sharifain His Majesty King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz to resolve the differences among Afghan brothers through a peaceful dialogue;

Appreciating the constructive role of good offices of Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan and his sincere efforts to promote peace and conciliation in Afghanistan;

Recognizing the positive support for these efforts extended by the governments of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran who have sent their Special Envoys for the conciliation talks in Islamabad;

Having undertaken intensive intra-Afghan consultations separately and jointly to consolidate the gains of the glorious Jihad;

All the Parties and Groups concerned have agreed as follows:

- i) Formation of a government for a period of 18 months in which President Burhanuddin Rabbani would remain President and Eng. Gulbadin Hikmatyar or his nominee would assume the office of Prime Minister. The powers of the President and Prime Minister and his Cabinet, which have been formulated through mutual consultations, will form part of this Accord and is annexed;
- ii) The Cabinet shall be formed by the Prime Minister in consultations with the President, and leaders of Mujahideen Parties within two weeks of the signing of this Accord.
- ii) The following electoral process is agreed for implementation in a period of not more than 18 months with effect from December 29, 1992:
 - a) The immediate formation of an independent Election Commission by all parties with full powers;
 - b) The Election Commission shall be mandated to hold elections for a Grand Constituent Assembly within 8 months from the date of signature of this Accord;
 - c) The duly elected Grand Constituent Assembly shall formulate a Constitution under which general elections for the President and the Parliament shall be held within the prescribed period of 18 months mentioned above.
- iii) A Defence Council comprising two members from each party will be set up to, inter alia,
 - a) enable the formation of a national Army;
 - b) take possession of heavy weapons from all parties and sources which may be removed from Kabul and other cities and kept out of range to ensure the security of the Capital;
 - c) ensure that all roads in Afghanistan are kept open for normal use.
 - d) ensure that State funds shall not be used to finance private armies or armed retainers.
 - e) ensure that operational control of the armed forces shall be with the Defence Council.
 - v) There shall be immediate and unconditional release of all Afghan detainees held by the government and different parties during the armed hostilities.
- vi) All public and private buildings, residential areas and properties occupied by

different armed groups during the hostilities shall be returned to their original owners. Effective steps shall be taken to facilitate the return of displaced persons to their respective homes and locations.

vii) An All-Party Committee shall be constituted to supervise control over the monetary system and currency regulations to keep it in conformity with existing Afghan banking laws and regulations.

viii) A Committee shall be constituted to supervise the distribution of food, fuel and essential commodities in Kabul City.

ix) A cease-fire shall come into force with immediate effect. After the formation of the Cabinet, there shall be permanent cessation of hostilities.

x) A Joint Commission comprising representatives of the OIC and of all Afghan Parties shall be formed to monitor the cease-fire and cessation of hostilities.

In confirmation of the above accord, the following have affixed their signatures hereunder, on Sunday the 7 March 1993 in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Prof. Burhan-ud-Din Rabbani
Jamiat-e-Islami
President of the Islamic State of
Afghanistan

Engr. Gulbadin Hikmatyar
Hizb-e-Islami

Moulvi Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi
Harkat-e-Inqilab-e-Islami

Prof. Sibghatullah Mujjadidi
Jabha-e-Nijat-e-Milli

Pir Syed Ahmed Gaillani
Mahaz-e-Milli

Engineer Ahmed Shah
Ahmadzai
Ittehad-e-Islami

Sheikh Asif Mohseni
Harkat-e-Islami

Ayatullah Fazil
Hizb-e-Wahdat-e-Islami

Division of Powers

Preamble

The President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan is the Head of the State and symbol of unity and solidarity of the country and shall guide the affairs of the state in accordance with Islamic laws and the principles laid down in the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

1. The Prime Minister shall form the Cabinet in consultation with the President and present the same to the President who shall formally announce the Cabinet and take its oath. The Cabinet shall operate as a team under the leadership of the Prime Minister and shall work on the principle of collective responsibility.
11. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet shall regularly act in close consultation with the President on all-important issues.
111. The President and the Prime Minister shall act in consultation with each other and shall try to resolve differences, if any, through mutual discussion. In case any issue remains unresolved it should be decided by a reference to a joint meeting of the President and the Cabinet.

IV. All major policy decisions shall be made in the Cabinet, to be presided over by the Prime Minister. Ministers, Deputy Ministers, and Ministers of State would be individually and collectively responsible for the decisions of the government.

V. The formal appointment of the Chiefs of the Armed Forces shall be made in accordance with the existing practice and after mutual consultation.

Powers of the President

VI. The President shall have the following powers and duties:

- a) Appointment of the Vice-President of Islamic State of Afghanistan.
- b) Appointment and retirement of judges of the Supreme Court, the Chief Justices, in consultation with the Prime Minister and in accordance with the provisions of the laws.
- c) Supreme Command of the Armed Forces of the country in the light of the objectives and structure of the Armed Forces of Afghanistan.
- d) Declaring war and peace on the advice of the Cabinet or the Parliament.

- e) Convening and inaugurating the Parliament according to Rules.
- f) Consolidating national unity and upholding the independence, neutrality and the Islamic character of Afghanistan and the interests of all its citizens.
- g) Commuting and pardoning of sentences according to the Shariah and the provisions of law.
- h) Accrediting heads of Afghanistan's diplomatic missions in foreign states, appointing Afghanistan's permanent representatives to international organizations according to the normal diplomatic procedures and accepting the letters of credence of foreign diplomatic representatives.
- i) Signing laws and ordinances, and granting credentials for the conclusion and signing of international treaties in accordance with the provisions of the law.
- j) The President may at his discretion, delegate any of his powers to the Vice President, or to the Prime Minister.
- k) In the event of the death or resignation of the President, the presidential functions shall be automatically entrusted to the Vice President, who shall deputize until the new President is elected under the Constitution.
- l) Granting formal permission to print money.
- m) The President may call an extraordinary meeting of the Cabinet on issues of vital national significance, which do not fall in the routine governance of the country.

Powers of the Prime Minister

VII. The Prime Minister and his Cabinet shall have the following duties and powers:

- a) Formulation and implementation of the country's domestic and foreign policies in accordance with the provisions and spirit of this Accord and the provisions of law.
- b) Administering, coordinating and supervising the affairs of the ministries, and other departments and public bodies and institutions.
- c) Rendering executive and administrative decisions in accordance with

laws and supervising their implementation.

- d) Drafting of laws and formulating rules and regulations.
- e) Preparing and controlling the state budget and adopting measures to mobilize resources to reconstruct the economy and establish a viable and stable monetary, financial and fiscal system.
- f) Drafting and supervising implementation of the socio-economic and educational plans of the country with a view to establishing a self-reliant Islamic welfare state.
- g) Protecting and promoting the objectives and interests of Afghanistan in the world community and discussing and negotiating foreign treaties, protocols, international agreements and financial arrangements.
- h) Adopting measures to ensure public order, peace, security and Islamic morality and to ensure administration of justice through an independent and impartial judiciary.

In confirmation of the above Accord, the following have affixed their signatures hereunder, on Sunday the 7 March 1993 in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Prof. Burhan-ud-Din Rabbani
Jamiat-e-Islami
President of the Islamic State of
Afghanistan

Engr. Gulbadin Hikmatyar
Hizb-e-Islami

Moulvi Muhammad Nabi Muhammad
Harkat-e-Inqilab-e-Islami

Prof. Sibghatullah. Mujjadidi
Jabha-e-Nijat-e-Milli

Pir Syed Ahmed Gaillani
Mahaz-e-Milli

Engineer Ahmed Shah
Ahmadzai
Ittehad-e-Islami

Sheikh Asif Mohseni
Harkat-e-Islami

Ayatullah Fazi
Hizb-e-Wahdat-e-Islami

APPENDIX VIII

Text of the Tehran Declaration issued at the conclusion of the Regional Conference on Afghanistan, Tehran, October 29-30, 1996.

Following the escalation of internal hostilities in Afghanistan, and on the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a regional Conference on Afghanistan was held in Tehran on 29-30 October 1996. The foreign ministers, ministers and special envoys of India, Islamic Republic of Iran, People's Republic of China, Republic of Kazakhstan, Republic of Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Turkey, Russian Federation and Turkmenistan, as well as the special representatives of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference and observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union participated in the Conference.

In two days of meetings, the participants carried out extensive consultation on the various aspects of the situation in Afghanistan, particularly in light of the recent developments.

The Conference expressed concern at the escalation of armed hostilities in Afghanistan, which has resulted in immense human losses and irreparable damage to the country in the economic, social, and cultural spheres, and endangered regional peace, stability, and security.

The Conference deplored recent flagrant violations of human rights in Afghanistan, particularly the rights of women, and called for an immediate end to such practices in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Conference underlined the imperative of respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan, and emphasized the necessity of cessation of foreign interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

The Conference reiterated the urgency of cessation of violence armed hostilities, and called upon conflicting Afghan parties to refrain from resorting to force and to settle their differences by peaceful means through inter-Afghan negotiations for a durable political solution and the establishment of a broad-based government. In this context, the Conference endorsed the recent relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, especially Security Council Resolution 1076 (1996).

The Conference underlined its support for the commendable efforts of the United Nations and its Special Mission to Afghanistan, and those of other international organizations, particularly the Organization of the Islamic Conference, for the restoration of peace and tranquillity in Afghanistan. The participants declared their readiness to contribute effectively to these efforts aimed at arresting the internal conflicts and

commencing inter-Afghan dialogue for national conciliation and the establishment of a broad-based government.

The Conference supported the decision of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene an international conference of states with interest and influence in Afghanistan, aimed at a concerted and joint search for a political settlement in Afghanistan.

The Conference called upon all states and international organizations to extend all possible humanitarian assistance to the civilian population of Afghanistan and Afghan refugees.

The Conference decided to take appropriate follow-up measures at the regional level within the framework of the United Nations, with a view to actively pursue ways and means of bringing about cessation of internal hostilities, and facilitating the on-going peacemaking efforts, in contact and collaboration with various Afghan groups, pertinent international organizations, and other states with interest and influence.

The Conference expressed its readiness to hold another meeting to review the latest developments in Afghanistan, assess the progress made in the implementation of the Declaration and consider ways and means of implementing, on the regional level, the decisions of the international conference to be held under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

APPENDIX IX

Text of the Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub Khan's statement issued on the occasion of recognition of the Taliban government, Islamabad. May 27, 1997.

For eighteen long years, the people of Afghanistan have been through immense sufferings and have seen their country ravaged in war. As neighbour and well wisher, Pakistan has also been directly affected by the conflict in Afghanistan.

Our policy has been consistently aimed at the restoration and durable peace in Afghanistan. Towards this end, we have lent support to all efforts at promoting an intra-Afghan dialogue leading to the establishment of a broad-based government. Our policy always been and continues to be one of strict non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

Like most countries, the government of Pakistan has been with various regimes in Afghanistan by virtue of their control Kabul. Despite the fact that the Rabbani regime has long had legitimacy and has been ousted from Kabul, it is a matter of fact that it continues to be recognized by the international community. The situation now needs to be remedied.

The Government of Pakistan has appreciated the landmark decision taken by the OIC during the Islamic Conference of foreign ministers in Jakarta in December 1996 when the representative of the Rabbani regime was ousted and the seat of Afghanistan kept vacant.

The recent developments in Northern Afghanistan have shown that the Uzbek and Tajik commanders have risen in revolt against their leadership in favour of the Taliban. According to report after the fall of Shiberghan, the joint forces of Taliban and General Malik were able to enter Mazar-i-Sharif with little resistance or bloodshed. The Afghan Government now controls 26 provinces and genuinely comprises various ethnic groups in Afghanistan. We have seen that Taliban advances since their emergence in 1994 have been popularly acclaimed by the Afghan people who have made no secret of their desire to get rid of the tyrannical rule of the war lords in which the lives, honour and property of the innocent citizens was not safe.

The Government of Pakistan has also noted with interest the statement of Taliban leadership in which they have clearly stated that they would adhere strictly to a policy of neutrality and non-interference in internal affairs of the other countries and would not allow any country to interfere in their internal affairs. The Taliban leadership also attached high priority to restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan and has sought the assistance of the international community for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Pakistan had so far withheld recognition of the new government in order to give time for the promotion of a broad based government through peaceful negotiation. I am happy to announce that the Government of Pakistan has now decided to accord formal recognition of the new government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan. We feel that the new government fulfils all criteria for de jure recognition. It is now in effective control of most of the territory of Afghanistan and is representative of all ethnic groups in that country.

We look forward to a meaningful and cooperative relationship with the government and the people of the Islamic state of Afghanistan the interest of peace and security of the region.

I would like to take this opportunity to express the hope that following the recent developments in Afghanistan, the United Nations, the OIC and other international organizations would also take the just decision of recognizing the new government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

We hope that international community will fulfill its responsibility for the reconstruction and economic development of the brotherly state of Afghanistan.

APPENDIX X

Text of the Peace Formula between the Taliban Administration and the Northern Alliance, April 27, 1998.

The Taliban delegation included Mullah Wakil Ahmad Mutawakal, Mannan Niazi, Abdul Hakim Mujahid (ambassador in Pakistan), Mullah Abdul Raqueeb and Mullah Nur Jalal. The Northern Alliance, or United Front as it called by its chief negotiator, included Fazi Hadi Shinwari, Ataur Rehman, Rasool Talib, Muhammad Sharif Nasirzadeh, Abdulhassain Yasir, Syed Moahhad Hashmi, Maulvi Sirajuddin Khan, Wakil Abdul Wahab and Maulvi Muhammad Shah.

Pakistan's special envoy to Afghanistan Iftikhar Murshid, ambassador in Kabul, Aziz Khan and Consul General in Mazar-i-Sharif Ayaz Wazir also attended the opening session.

Following is the text of the peace formula, Taliban circulated at the inaugural meeting:
In the Name of Allah, the most merciful, the most affectionate!

PEACE FORMULA

Proposed by the leadership of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan

Since many years, political dialogue is going on aimed at finding a solution to the Afghan conflict, but so far, it has not brought about any positive result. Afghanistan is the land of Muslim people, and therefore, nothing else can bring about such a result, except the decision adopted in accordance with the law of Allah Almighty.

We are fighting not for power, but for the implementation of the Islamic order. If our opponents do not accept our this claim, then, they should reject it in the light of the Islamic laws, and we will relinquish every thing, and will immediately hand over the government and the power to them.

We have suggested the Islamic decision by the Ulema, we reaffirm the same and do not have any other formula, because we consider the decision of Ulema as sufficient for solving all the problems.

We are insisting on the Islamic principles for reasons that today some people have ignored them.

APP, meanwhile, adds that Taliban and Northern Alliance, arrived at five-point agreement, as how they will proceed to resolve their differences for seeking ultimate objective of establishing peace in Afghanistan. Soon after the ceremonial session the two sides entered into first working session, lasted for about one hour. The acting head of the UN mission on Afghanistan in Islamabad, James Gobi told newsmen after the meeting

that the rival factions have arrived at an agreement of procedural nature for substantial discussion.

The agreed points are:

UN and OIC will be co-chair-person of the meeting, to preside and conduct the working sessions.

Pashto and Dari (Persian) will be two official languages for the meeting. Translations could be in English and Arabic.

Statement of the proceeding of the each session for the press will be made only by the co-chairperson, after approval of the statement's text by the negotiators.

The decisions of the meeting will be taken with consensus, not by voting, and if there will be lack of consensus, disagreement on any point, it would be referred to the respective leadership, or to be postponed till the next meeting of the steering committee.

The meeting will be continued at least for three days, but not more than five days.

Gobi said the two sides are working hard to proceed forward with positive outcome. He said at the second session of the steering committee, scheduled to start at 3 p.m. would decide agenda of the meeting, he added.

It emerged from the inaugural session, and the statements read out at the outset of the talks, indicated that the two sides are serious and agreed to sit face-to-face settle their differences.

APPENDIX XI

Ashkhabad Agreement, March 14, 1999.

On March 10 peace talks between Taliban officials and representatives of the anti-Taliban coalition (the United Islamic Front for Salvation of Afghanistan-UIFSA) opened in Ashkhabad, the capital of Turkmenistan. On March 14 both sides agreed in principle to establish a broad-based government with a shared Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. Andrew Tesoriere the acting head of the UN Special Mission to Afghanistan, described the agreement as "a major step forward on a fundamental issue".

The two sides also agreed to hold further talks in Afghanistan at a later date and to exchange 20 prisoners as a demonstration of goodwill. Although the peace negotiations did not result in a cease-fire, most analysis agreed that the decision by the Taliban to share power with the UIFSA was a significant development.

APPENDIX XII

Text of "Shanghai Five" Summit, August 25, 1999.

A summit meeting between the heads of state of the so-called "Shanghai Five" (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, China, Russia and Tajikistan) was held on August 25 in Bishkek, the Kyrgyz capital. It was the fourth such summit since the five countries had first met in Shanghai, China, in April 1996.

The issues raised at the summit included the need for stable borders, co-operation to combat separatism and religious extremism, the promotion of economic co-operation and development in the region, and the hastening of the revival of the ancient Silk Road trade route. An agreement on the common China-Kyrgyzstan-Kazakhstan border was signed by the leaders of the three countries.

In a speech delivered at the summit, Chinese President Jiang Zemin warned that although the Cold War had ended, the world was not more peaceful because of some countries' policy of "New interventionism". He stressed the need for "South-South development" to counter this trend.

APPENDIX XIII

Text of the Council of the European Union common position on Afghanistan, January 24, 2000.

The Council of the European Union,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union and in particular Article 15 thereof, whereas:

1. The conflict in Afghanistan has caused untold suffering for the Afghan people, and threatens the stability of the region and its economic development;
2. The war's exports of terrorism and illegal drugs cause serious damage to Member States of the Union, and more widely;
3. The Union continues to receive considerable numbers of refugees from war-battered Afghanistan;
4. The Union is determined to play an effective role in efforts to stop the fighting, and to restore peace, stability and respect for international law, including human rights, in Afghanistan;
5. The Union reminds the warring parties that they bear the ultimate responsibility for finding a political solution to the conflict which can bring about a lasting peace to Afghanistan and enable the establishment of a broad-based and representative government;
6. The Union considers it imperative that all countries with an influence on the parties should exercise it in support of and in close coordination with the United Nations' peace efforts, and that the supply of weapons, munitions and other material for military use to the warring factions from outside Afghanistan as well as the involvement of foreign military, paramilitary and secret service personnel, should cease;
7. The Union attaches the highest importance to respect for international law and human rights, including the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, and denounces continuing gender discrimination in Afghanistan;
8. The Union is deeply concerned by reports of massacres and forced expulsions of innocent civilians, the execution of prisoners of war, ethnic based persecutions and executions, and the intimidation and assassination of Afghan émigrés;

9. The Union is also concerned by reports from the Shomali Plain of house and crop burning and the deliberate destruction of the agricultural infrastructure;
10. The Union has adopted, on 15 November 1999, Common Position 1999 1727/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the Taliban 'in order to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1267/199 of 15 October 1999;
11. This Common Position is intended to replace Common Position 99/73/CFSP of 25 January 1999 on Afghanistan 2; the latter should therefore be repealed, has adopted this common position;

Article 1

The objectives of the Union in Afghanistan, put an end to foreign intervention, and encourage intra-Afghan dialogue through support for the central role of the United Nations;

- (a) to bring about a sustainable peace in Afghan dialogue through support for the central role of the United Nations;
- (b) to promote the stability and development of the whole region through peace in Afghanistan;
- (c) to promote respect for international humanitarian law and human rights, including the rights of women and children;
- (d) to provide effective humanitarian aid and ensure that the international coordination of aid allows for its provision in accordance with international humanitarian principles and an impartial needs assessment;
- (e) to reinforce the fight against illegal drugs and terrorism;
- (f) to assist in peace-building activities and, once a durable peace settlement is in place, the reconstruction of the country after years of civil war.

Article 2

In order to support the United Nations peace efforts, reaffirmed by UN General Assembly Resolution 203 A and B of 18 December 1998, the Union shall continue to:

- (a) support and strengthen the work of the UN Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMIA), including civil affairs unit;

- (b) support the comprehensive efforts of the UN Secretary-General and his Special Envoy for Afghanistan, and in particular the reactivation of the Special Envoy's mission as soon as circumstances permit;
- (c) Urge other countries with influence on the parties to exercise it constructively in support of and in close coordination with UN peace efforts;
- (d) Call upon the warring parties to honour their obligations as stated in the Tashkent Declaration on the fundamental principles for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Afghanistan which was signed by both parties on 20 July 1999;
- (e) demand from the Taliban their commitment to the implementation of the Agreements signed with the UN on the safety and security of UN personnel;
- (f) take into consideration the report of the UN Credentials Committee on the representation of Afghanistan at the United Nations;
- (g) maintain its embargo on the export of arms, munitions and military equipment to Afghanistan provided for in its Common Position 96/746/CFSP, and urge other countries to adopt a similar policy of restraint;
- (h) urge countries concerned to stop the involvement of their military, paramilitary and secret service personnel in Afghanistan and cease all other military support provided to parties in the Afghan conflict, including the use of their own territories for such purposes.

The Union shall also:

- (i) continue contacts with the Afghan parties and prominent Afghan individuals to point to the futility and grave and unacceptable humanitarian consequences of the continued fighting, and urge an immediate cease – fire and the negotiation of a political settlement under UN auspices, including the establishment of a fully representative, broad-based government;
- (j) follow closely and encourage efforts by influential Afghan individuals and organizations, such as the so-called Frankfurt Process and the Rome based Loya Jirga Process of former King Zahir Shah, to contribute to an intra-Afghan dialogue;
- (k) continue to impress upon all those countries with influence in Afghanistan the importance the Union attaches to the early settlement of the conflict under UN auspices, and urging them to lend the UN every support.

Article 3

In order to promote respect for all human rights, fundamental freedom and international humanitarian law the Union shall:

- (a) call on all parties to recognise, protect and promote all human rights and fundamental freedoms including the right to life, liberty and security of persons and also to respect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which Afghanistan has subscribed;
- (b) urge Afghan factions to end discriminatory policies and recognise, protect and promote the equal rights and dignity of men and women, including access to education and health facilities, employment, personal security and freedom from intimidation and harassment, and will point to the negative implications of discriminatory policies for the effective supply of aid;
- (c) support the UN Secretary General's proposals for the early deployment of civilian human rights monitors in the Civil Affairs Unit of UNSMA;
- (d) attach special importance to human rights aspects in the international coordination of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan;
- (e) support aid programmes in Afghanistan which integrate gender concerns and actively attempt to promote the equitable participation of both men and women, and which promote peace and human rights;
- (f) urge all factions to respect and protect the cultural heritage of Afghanistan.

Article 4

In order to help the suffering civilian population of Afghanistan, the Union shall:

- (a) continue to provide humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, conditions permitting;
- (b) urge the warring factions to ensure freedom of movement as well as free and safe access of national and international humanitarian personnel to all those in need, without restrictions based on gender, race, religion or nationality, and to cooperate fully and sincerely with humanitarian organizations to respond to the humanitarian needs of the Afghan people;
- (c) continue to support national and international efforts in mine action as an important precondition for sustainable development;
- (d) urge the warring factions not to lay any more landmines, while at the same time emphasising its standing policy not to fund demining in regions where mine-laying is continued;

- (e) improve the effectiveness of aid by closer international donor coordination, in particular by working through the "Afghanistan Support Group and the Afghanistan Programming Body;
- (f) ensure close coordination and complementarity between the UN peace efforts and the aid effort, as envisaged in the Strategic Framework common to the international donor community and UN organizations;
- (g) ensure that its aid is provided in accordance with the common Strategic Framework adopted by the donor community and UN organizations and, thereby, to encourage the implementation of a more effective Common Programming in Afghanistan.

Article 5

In order to promote the fight against drugs, the Union, shall:

- (a) use contacts with the factions and those countries with influence on them to underline the Union's concern at the sharp rise in the illicit production and trafficking of drugs in Afghanistan which threatens regional stability and damages the health and well-being of the populations of Afghanistan, neighboring States and elsewhere, and also to stress that the Union will take account of drugs control objectives when considering contributions to development aid to reconstruct Afghanistan once a durable peace settlement is in place;
- (b) urge aid agencies to take account of drug control objectives in the planning and implementation of projects by taking into consideration their impact on drug cultivation, production, trafficking and abuse;
- (c) support sustainable alternative development as an important component of a balanced and comprehensive drug control strategy. Alternative development programmes should be adapted to the specific conditions in Afghanistan, should respect human rights and incorporate the gender dimension enabling women and men to participate equally in the development process. Law enforcement measures are a necessary complement to such programmes.
- (d) Support all consistent efforts, including those of the United Nations Drugs Control Programme (UNDCP), aimed at reducing substantially the production, trafficking and abuse of drugs in Afghanistan and notes the importance of implementation of the Community's projects in support of the Unions Central Asia Drugs Initiative.

Article 6

The Union condemns terrorism in all its forms, whenever and wherever it occurs. To advance the fight against terrorism, the Union shall:

- (a) demand that all Afghan parties refrain from financing, providing training or shelter for terrorist organizations or otherwise supporting terrorist activities;
- (b) urge all Afghan authorities to close down training camps for foreign terrorists inside Afghanistan and to take necessary steps to ensure that those responsible for terrorist acts are brought to justice.
- (c) Urge the Taliban to comply fully and urgently with UN Security Council Resolution 1267/99 of 15 October 1999.

Article 7

The Council notes that the Commission intends to direct its action towards achieving the objectives and the priorities of this Common Position, where appropriate, by pertinent Community Measures.

Article 8

Common Position 99/73/CFSP shall be repealed.

Article 9

This Common Position shall take effect on the date of its adoption. It shall be reviewed at the latest twelve months after its adoption.

Article 10

This Common Position shall be published in the Official Journal.

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