

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

The term 'region' may be defined as a cluster of states sharing a common space on the globe based on group identity, territorial affinities, or some Common identifiable patterns of behavior.<sup>1</sup>

The term regionalism has a very wide context and is considered ambiguous in world politics because of its very changing nature. The term regionalism and region have some similar features but these can be interpreted according to the understanding and with its changing nature. The paramount international body the united nations charter had given space for its interpretation of regionalism and freedom to choose multiple modes of partnership among the nations partnerships<sup>2</sup>. *“Joseph Nye’s older (and tighter) definition of a region as a limited number of states linked by geography and interdependence and of regionalism as the formation of and policies pursued by inter-state groups based around regions has stood the test of time”<sup>3</sup>* the old regionalism was defined by the sharing of borders, homogenous culture, ethnicity or language but as the international scenario changed and the viability and connectivity changed the features of regional cooperation also changed.

The thesis tries to evaluate the common challenges faced by the Central Asian region and the implications and barriers in tackling the issues. It also tries to find ways in which

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<sup>1</sup> Kalevi J. Holsti, *The State War and the State of War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p.142-43.

<sup>2</sup> (Danesh Sarooshi, *The United Nations and the Development of Collective Security: The Delegation by the UN Security Council of its Chapter VII Powers* (Oxford, 1999) 1-2, 142-146

<sup>3</sup> (Joseph Nye (ed.) *International Regionalism* (Boston: Little Brown and Co. 1968)

uniformity in the execution of policies and an effect of institutionalization in implementation for common goals in the region. the thesis also tries to focus on the fears and demands of the region which consists of developing or underdeveloped countries that are trying to advance in globalized but also tries to defend their sovereignty from major powers of the world and more specifically America, China and Russia after the decline of the Soviet Union and the emergence of China in the world scenario.

The analytical framework of this study is based on the concepts of regionalism and localization. Regionalism has been understood as the expansion of rules and collective institutions which has been accepted by the governments of a region; In general, these may extend to areas other than formal trade and financial integration agreements. *“On the other hand, regionalization refers to the development of relations beyond the governmental level including trade, FDI/joint ventures between businesses; and links between other elements of society” (Brisling and Piggott, 2000).*

## **1.1 Theories of Regionalism:**

### **Neorealism**

To get the idea behind the formation of regional cooperation in the Eurasian region, we have to first look at the implications that had been faced by the region after the disintegration of the USSR which led to the security dilemma and suspicion that the region could be hijacked by any great power. As the realist stressed upon the fact that the whole international system is anarchic so if the state wants to exercise its political power free from foreign intervention it has to use its power to secure its boundary.

“Structural or Neo-realism is essentially a form of what Michael Oakeshott termed ‘Scientific Knowledge’ or Scientia”. Kenneth Waltz’s great achievement was in developing a parsimonious and deductive theory that established neo-realism as a distinctive research paradigm able to generate cumulative knowledge. The neo-realists have some basic assumptions like international politics is anarchic in nature that

no super-government exists in the world, and the states, not the group are the main actors in it. This assumption had deviated from classic thinkers like Marx, Niebuhr, and Gilpin. In the hierarchical system, the states become functional in a controlled manner but in the anarchical system, they become similar in functional in nature.

The neo-realist approach is somewhat different from the realist. The neo-realists proposed that only bilateral relations among the nations would halt the development and prosperity of the people and the peace in the world. The neo-realists focus much on opportunity rather than focusing on states. They had never suggested surrendering state sovereignty but to take advantage of the international system, but it has not denied the basic assumptions taken by the realist, thinkers and it has modified its convictions. As the classical realist thinks that the state is a unitary, rational actor. World politics is anarchic in nature and the distribution of power among the states is the prime actor of state behaviour. The neo-realist says that all states want their self-preservation which has contrast with classical realists like Han's Morgenthau who depicts that the states always strive to maximize their power. Fareed Zakaria<sup>4</sup> quotes "states always want to maximize their influence, not power". The neo-realists always focused on resource-based power which is the instrument for power but not the end in itself. The relative material power provides enormous strength to influence the anarchic world order which can help to preserve itself and exercise its influence in world politics. They have to work within the constraints imposed, and demands made, by the international structures of power. Second, it holds that economic resources are not merely meaning to the end of power; they are an effective basis for exercising power by themselves.

### **Neo-liberalism**

After The end of Cold War in 1989, which led to the vanishing of the Bi-poles in world, politics demanded the resurgence of the liberal perspective in the world politics. The

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<sup>4</sup> Zakaria, F. (1997). The rise of illiberal democracy. *Foreign Aff.*, 76, 22.

neoliberalism, the refined form of classical liberalism one can say has aroused in the later phase of history and somewhat deviates from earlier liberalism. Neo-liberalism can be traced in every current event of the world politics. It takes into account “the new unconventional threats to security, new problems, new challenges, conflicts, and emerging conflicts in the context of economic globalization and the spread of plural democracy. Neo-liberalism provides an overall consistent argument for more peaceful and cooperative international relations.”

Neo-liberalism which gained relevance to tackle the genuine issues is also known as plural. Neo-liberalism focused and acknowledged the complexity of several key players in the world political system. The neo-liberalists were endowed with solving the complex nature of world politics which contains major threats from non-state actors.

The core area of neo-liberalism is to tackle security concern of the states. Followers of neo-liberalism demonstrate a new understanding of security, not just a state in the international scene, but sometimes a major actor. The neo-liberals negate the concept of idealism which has been the core assumption of traditional liberalism, but they agree with the concept of progression and change in world affairs. According to neo-liberals, “the expansion of border operations helped to create common values and identities among the people of different states and paved the way for peaceful, cooperative relations by making war more expensive and therefore less likely”. As the nations would become more interdependent, they would enhance cooperation and establish international institutions for the betterment of all.

Neoliberals views that the peace and stability in the world can only be attained through the establishment of cooperative security organizations for international problems. they view the cooperative organization as the arbitrator and channel for tackling the problems. Regimes and institutions help govern the competitive and anarchic international system and they promote multilateralism and cooperation as a means of gaining the national advantage. Neo-liberals always state that in the economy their must always be the minimal role that must be played by the states and the actors in market must be allowed

to play freely without any hinderance or obstacle. According to neoliberals the free competition in market will help in the efficient utilization of resources and manpower.

From a practical point of view, India also believes in regional cooperation, India itself is a member of so many regional cooperation like BRICS, IBSA, WTO, SAARC, etc. India is among one of the members of CICA and with greatest zeal, wants to be a member of the SCO, as it is the regional organization include China and Central Asian countries and a direct gateway to interact with the Central Asian countries

As all the countries always tries to establish their relations and cooperate with other regional organizations and nation for enhancing their security, peace and stability. India has also been striving for the above-mentioned goals.

The approach of India towards CA with respect to its objectives in the region is of neo liberal perspective. The two major issue for India which could be solved in CA are firstly it will enhance the economic interest of the country and secondly it would also benefit in tackling security issues. India also views that the region has been continuously and regularly facing several threats which have been common in nature for example the problem of terrorism and the human trafficking and drug are one of them. from the above evaluation on practical as well as theoretical basis we can conclude that the main focus of India in context to its policy related to CA region is to get and several economic benefits and tackling security issues which had their origin in the region. The other factor for cooperation with the region is to democratize the region which has its roots in neoliberalism hence we can understand the viewpoint of Indian policy towards central Asia from neoliberal perspective.

### **Hegemonic Theory**

After the end of imperialism in the 1940s, international politics took some substantial changes but the very nature of international politics was the same as every state lacked. Before understanding the hegemonic theory, we have to focus on what the word

hegemony means. It can be described as the dominance of a single entity in various aspects such as militarily, economically, technically, and socially at the world or regional level. The hegemonic power has the potential to implement or judge and to solve international disputes by its military or economic power. Robert Keohane states that the hegemony would enhance the cooperation and he concluded that the states which are subordinate to hegemon would also get benefits from it. The theory suggests that the hegemony of a state in international politics can lead to stability in international politics. According to Gilpin, the hegemony stability theory states that the powerful must take the decisions at the regional or international level while others must follow it. This will help the dominant and followers to maintain status-quo which would help everyone to maintain peace and security of investment in the economic sphere. but the hegemonic theory does not prove itself on empirical bases as the hegemon try's to maintain the status-quo he may have to invest or upgrade itself technically which results ultimately in the erosion or decay of the hegemon which results in instability or power struggle among the rivals which may result in war and can take a much longer period to stabilize the international system. The decline of the hegemon USSR in the Eurasian plateau had led to instability and power crises in the region. This provided an opportunity for the rising power of china to use this opportunity to become regional power though china was superior in the economic sphere Russia dominated in the military sphere.

### **Functionalism and Neo-functionalism**

the theory of neo-functionalism can be stated as, “concentration of energy”. The very concept of neo functionalism firstly originated in Europe where it was demanded a “new power center” which can fascinate the political and economic interests of all the groups. The unity of Europe was based on two factor one was territory and other was identity. the concept of united states of European union took ground after the integration project of steel and coal industry throughout the Europe had taken place. It was predicted that the integration project would further enhance the chance of uniform policy throughout the

union in other areas such as taxation and this interdependence would further lead to the integration of goals of every nation where everyone would get several benefits from it. The structure so formed would be of supranational character. Thus, although European integration is in some respects connected with functionalist ideas, 'neo' conveys a very important distinction in neo-functionalism. This state-like, "energy-focused trend of the EU is also reflected in its external relations based on the gravitational pull of its internal market". The neo-functionalists tries to increase economic reliance among them. Hence this type of structure could be approached in the SCO where there would be integrated project among them which could benefit each and every country throughout the region

## **1.2 CENTRAL ASIAN REGION:**

### **Historical background**

In ancient times there was no concept of the Central Asian region as it had been intermingled with the Eurasian plateau. The region was earlier ruled by the Turkish and Persian empires and therefore the population of the region consists mostly of Muslims which are generally Turkish speaking .the imprints of the Turkish and Persian empire can be traced even today and the people speak the Persian language in the southern region of central Asia i.e. Afghanistan and Tajikistan there is no clear cut difference among the central Asian states as they have same culture and language. there has been always disagreement among scholars for the central Asian region as in the region Tajikistan has been included but Afghanistan has been cornered though both the states have the same linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and historically. The whole of the central region was underdeveloped and the people used to live nomadic life. though some parts of the region came under direct rule and tax had been levied by Russia but mostly it had been underdeveloped till modern times.

The concept of central Asia arises in the middle of the nineteenth century when the "THE GREAT GAME" arrives into play where there had been a power struggle between Russia and Britain. Russia tried to gain access to the Indian ocean region contrary to it Britain

was more concerned and had a sense of distrust with Russia so it tried to secure its economic corridor to the Ottoman empire and the Persian Gulf by making Afghanistan as buffer state by demarcating Durand line between Britain and Russian empire for their separate sphere of influence.

During the time of “THE GREAT GAME” Russia continuously invaded Kazakhstan and till the end of nineteenth century Russia had almost merged the central Asian region with itself .there were several protests and rebellions but Russia managed to suppress most of them and started a movement of its peasants and workers to central Asian region by providing some incentives and privileges for cotton cultivation in the fertile regions of central Asia. Russia in the early 19th century Russia had overthrown the rulers of the central Asian region who were against it. In 1917 during the Bolshevik Revolution, Russia installed its provisional government in different parts of the Central Asian region. till 1921 all the regions came under the communist regime of the USSR and the regional parties got sidelined.

### **Formation of Central Asian States:**

In the 1920s the USSR brought some substantive changes in the central Asian region due to the fear that most of central Asia was under the Turkish empire and they had a sense of pan-Turkish unity, Russia feared this unity and perceived it as a challenge to their security hence they started fragmenting the small region in small parts which would diversify the region into smaller ethnic groups with a blend of a small amount of ethnic minority in every territory to make their national identity dominant rather than pan-Turkish collectiveness. So, that they would not be able to collectively challenge the soviet rule the USSR brought a new economic policy to increase its cotton cultivation in the central Asian fertile region. In 1924 the USSR communist regime made Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as a socialist republic and Tajikistan as the autonomous region .in 1925 the Kazakhstan autonomous region got bifurcated from Kyrgyzstan autonomous soviet socialist republic region .in 1929 the autonomous region of Tajikistan got converted into the socialist republic of USSR by adding some northern territory of that region .from



1929 to 1934 the central Asian region witnessed famine due to the changes made by Russia in the region .in 1936 the Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan autonomous soviet socialist region were given the full republic status .in the same year the Karakalpak stan region was given to the Republic of Uzbekistan .during this time of disturbance the communist regime had successfully executed several regional leaders to impose its rule over the region and it got succeeded in to install its puppets on the top governmental position.

During Second World War USSR was under huge security threat and fear of invasion from axis alliance from Germany in the east Europe and western part of USSR so they started moving their industries and strategic equipment's to the central Asian region. as Nazis surrendered to the western alliance in 1945 but the economic and military loss of USSR during war was acknowledged by western allies hence several territories and financial aid was given to it through Post dam conference (1945) , Moscow conference (1941-47) , Tehran conference (1943) and Yalta conference (1945) and but as the cooperation between the western allies became skeptical after world war regarding USSR due to its expansionist policies and friction over annexed countries like Germany, Austria and Korea and the increasing control of USSR in Hungary ,Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania resulted in tension between the allies mainly USA and the USSR which resulted in cold war. The skepticism of world war II could be seen by the act that the soldiers and ethnic minorities who had come in contact with western allies and Germans were sent to Siberia and the Central Asian region.

After the end of World War II, the USSR focused primarily on its industrial development and the agricultural aspect, which suffered from a drought in 1946, but the Soviet Union continued to focus on achieving nuclear power status and began rapidly expanding its military technology development projects and the Soviet Union In 1949 the first atomic bomb was detonated. In USSR times the relation between states were conducted under the supervision of Moscow. However, before the disintegration, the last decade witnessed

several agreement between the states—chiefly “the Water Treaty (14 July 1981 and 22 August 1989) and the 1990 Economic, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Co-operation”.

### **Disintegration of USSR:**

In 1989 after the humiliating defeat in the Afghanistan war (1979-1989) and the fall of the Berlin wall which led to the end of ideologies in the world. Russia went through a series of events from 1989 to 1991, which caused instability and panic in the USSR and its neighboring countries. The socio-political crises inside USSR were the main cause of the collapse. The several people dying due to political and social violence which was earlier very low in the early decades had grown to a considerable amount in the 1980s which demonstrated the distrust in soviet union leadership and the “parade of sovereignties” by the republican where they gave more importance to their laws rather than execution or implementation of the central directions which resulted in the “war of laws” between the soviet union and central Asian autonomous regions. The use of the military in the domestic affair was also detrimental and a cause of dispute among the USSR military thinkers who always proposed that the real function of the military is to prevent the external threat and it should not intervene in the internal matters of the union but several other thinkers argued that it must be used to preserve the sovereignty and integrity of the nation. The real catastrophic event took place in the form of an “august coup”, the top government officials try to siege the whole USSR by imposing emergency rule in the country where the military units were moved to Moscow. State committee on emergency was formed to impose an emergency but the resistance developed within the Military and the august coup failed. So that the sovereignty of the Soviet Union can be saved officially it had been stated that the then president of the USSR Gorbachev who was on vacation in Crimea.

Several events took place from 1989 to 1991 that caused resentment and suspicion on the USSR central leadership this led to a dilemma in the functioning of the military where

they used the military to suppress the agitation in the Baltic region but remained at bay during the USSR used its military for suppressing domestic protests.

Initially, the Baltic states like Moldova, Azerbaijan, and Georgia were the first to revolt against the USSR government the legitimacy of the USSR was in great danger so the then president of the USSR had become a reluctant power though it took active participation in the After the collapse of the USSR in the Eurasian region and formation of new states which had no clear boundaries among them and their other neighboring countries made a deep concern to the regional stability .there was a perceived conflict among the states and its neighbor because there was no clear demarcation of borders among newly formed states and other regional states which were not part of the USSR. The region became a security vacuum in international politics as the flag bearer of communism had fallen and every regional and international community was ambiguous and suspicious about the future of the central Asian region.

### **1.3 Development of Shanghai Five**

After the collapse of the USSR in 1991 the major problem aroused among the newly formed states as there had not been a clear-cut boundary among the states and the neighboring countries that had been having border disputes with the erstwhile USSR especially China which shares the largest land boundary. China always claimed that the Russian Tsarist regime had captured a large portion of its territory hence it had always tried to get back this portion. Earlier several treaties were signed but china refused to acknowledge them as it suspected that still a large portion of its territory had been annexed by the Soviet Union. Before disintegration, the china and soviet borders were heavily militarily packed from the 1960s to the 1980s. After the breakup of the Soviet Union earlier, the border dispute which had been between the Soviet Union and China had expanded to four states- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan through the newly formed states acknowledged the earlier Soviet Union and china border but these borders were never clearly demarcated so it became an area of security threat. The new states were suspicious about the Chinese expansionist tendencies in the region.

During this time the china was also struggling with Uyghur separatism which had been at a peak in the 1990s. The withdrawal of the USSR from Afghanistan showed the victory of Islamic extremist forces and the collapse of the USSR in which the newly formed states were mostly Muslim. These events concerned china and it feared that the demand for separate Uyghur stan by Xinjiang will get support from the region due to their ethnic ties, cultural ties, and Turkic descent.

In 1992 after becoming independent states the “*Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan also inherited disputable segments on the outer boundaries, particularly on the border with China. Before the USSR's disintegration, there were 25 disputable segments*”<sup>5</sup>. Out of these 25 segments, the 19 disputed territories came under newly formed states. Clear demarcation in between the states also resulted in border disputes. This was the major concern for central Asian states, as they had no expertise or knowledge regarding foreign policy or international affairs as earlier all the decisions had been taken by Moscow.

The CIS and china faced a common problem of Islamic extremism regarding the Taliban that had been challenging the internal security of states by illegal trafficking, drug supplies, and terrorism. The activation of the Taliban in Uzbekistan and raiding in other central Asian countries demanded a firm step to secure its transparent boundaries that had become the gateway for Islamic radicalization of the region.

From 1992 to 1996 all the central Asian countries signed several treaties to solve their border disputes. In 1996 and 1997 the heads of respective five states met in Shanghai and Moscow signed "Agreement on deepening military trust in border regions" and "Agreement on the reduction of military forces in border regions", which became an important historical event and resulted in execution of the mechanism called "Shanghai Five"<sup>6</sup>. The main focus of the “shanghai five” was to deescalate the tension on border regions and its main aspect was to strengthen mutual trust and tranquility in the region.

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<sup>5</sup> On the Sino-Soviet border issue, see Tai-Sung An, *The Sino-Soviet Territorial Dispute*

<sup>6</sup> Xinhua, history of development of SCO, china daily 12-06-2006

All the parties agreed that their forces would be stationed beyond 10km from the border areas and any military activity within 100km of the border area should be informed to the concerned country. All the states agreed that no military exercise will be done focusing on each other.

“In 1998 with the Almaty Declaration in 1998 it was agreed that the Shanghai Five would extend cooperation into combating ethnic separatism, religious fundamentalism, international terrorism, arms smuggling, narcotics, and other cross-border criminal activities<sup>7</sup>”.

Kazakhstan and China solved their border disputes completely and became the leading nations to solve them. The reason for this agreement can be traced that Kazakhstan was more interested in economic aspects as it wanted to improve its financial condition that had been deteriorating day by day.

In 1999 all the states met in Bishkek where they focused on making the region a nuclear-free zone and fighting three evils that had been the major threat to the region—ethnic separatism, international terrorism which had its roots in Afghanistan, and religious fundamentalism. all the countries had been suffering from all these issues and tried to save the region from more fragmentation or destabilization.

The major event of 2000 in which all the “shanghai five” nations criticized the ballistic missile program was done by the USA. This a firm proof to the western world regarding the hidden agenda of SCO that had been earlier suspected as Anti- NATO or Anti-Western front.

#### **1.4 Formation of SCO:**

Till 2001 after signing several bilateral treaties on territorial disputes and confidence-building on military reduction on borders but the shanghai five was being loosely tied

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<sup>7</sup> Norling, N., & Swanström, N. (2007). The Shanghai cooperation organization, trade, and the roles of Iran, India and Pakistan. *Central Asian Survey*, 26(3), 429-444.

discussion form and the Russian and Chinese regimes tried to stabilize and fill the security vacuum which had been created after the collapse of Soviet Union. China and Russia perceived that if they would not take the regional control it would ultimately result in the intervention and gateway for NATO countries, which would threaten the sovereignty and can lead to a new round of conflict.

On 15 June 2001, the Shanghai Cooperation came into existence which included all the “Shanghai Five” members and Uzbekistan. All the SCO members agreed to fight against the three evils which were separatism, extremism, and terrorism. After the demilitarization of borders and strengthening of mutual trust and friendship gave impetus and strength to the development of SCO. The SCO had no clear intention to fight against any particular “enemy” that had been described in political theories but to maintain regional peace and tranquility by eliminating the fringe elements from the region. The SCO had always clarified that its focus is to boost political and economic cooperation. The military ties among states are to fight against regional security and it has always denied the allegation that it has a cluster to fight against NATO or any other military alliance.

Since its inception in 2001, the regional leaders started meeting frequently as had been earlier met on annual basis.

In 2002 the China and Kazakhstan held a military exercise bilaterally under SCO sponsored norms on China Kazakhstan borders to counter anti-terror activities in the region. In 2003 the next phase of joint military exercise all the then SCO members except Uzbekistan participated though earlier China and Kazakhstan had participated under SCO norms it was not formally acknowledged exercise. The exercise against terrorism in 2003 was the first formal exercise under the SCO banner.

“The year 2004 then saw the completion of the institutional phase of the SCO. Two permanent organs were established: A Secretariat in Beijing and a Regional Anti-

Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Furthermore, Mongolia joined as the first SCO observer<sup>8</sup>”

After solving several issues which gave a big boost to the organization like arms control in the region and the members acknowledge some other issues such as communication, transportation, energy, economy and the ongoing war in Afghanistan .the above-mentioned issues were not only crucial for central Asian countries but for all the Asian region hence several countries which were not part of that region showed their interest to join hands. the diversifying agenda of SCO showed that it does not only want to be an organization for the region but to play a vital role in international politics which had been seen during 2004 when SCO was given an observer member status in UNO and in 2005 the SCO general secretary invited to UNO for speech. The SCO started widening its influence and significance by signing “a memorandum of understanding with the commonwealth of independent states (CIS) and the association of southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)”.

The major turn in the stance of SCO was noticed in 2005, Astana summit where the organization took a proactive role in its regional affairs by condemning the military bases in the central Asian countries of NATO and demanded a deadline from NATO forces to withdraw from Afghanistan .the regime change in Georgia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan and installation of the pro-western regime by NATO countries gave a big jolt to the autocratic regimes of the region. As earlier Russia had been fragmented and it feared that, it would loosen its grip over the central Asian countries. In the same year the inter-bank association for the economic development of the region. The SCO started its expansion in 2004 by inviting Mongolia as an observer state and India, Pakistan, and Iran in 2005.

### **SCO and Anti- US Front**

In The Astana summit of declared, that the world order ought and must be based on rationality and it must be based on the idea of better and friendly neighborly relations

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<sup>8</sup> General, S., & General, D. S. (2011). Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

among the states and should have mutual trust upon each other, “upon the establishment of true partnership with no pretense to monopoly and domination in international affairs<sup>9</sup>”. The invitation to Iran by the SCO that had been considered a ‘rough nation’ by the western countries irked them and the western countries started calling it the ‘NATO of the East’.

In 2006, the leader met and agreed to focus on long-term goals for SCO and fifth anniversary agreed to cooperate on major tasks of the region. The initiatives regarding counter-terrorism and international security gained momentum during this summit and the member states stood firm in strengthening the regional ties that resulted in the loosening grip of NATO in the region.

In Bishkek 2007 several Memorandum of cooperation was signed between CSTO and SCO in defense where it was reported by media as anti-NATO or western front however the SCO and CSTO officials denied these allegations by stating that this cooperation is in its early stages and mainly focused on regional stability and the cooperation between CSTO and SCO had no intention of blocking or opposing any other organization. Some new dynamics took place in this summit where a first-time military exercise was conducted with the political meeting. In this summit, all members agreed on increasing security cooperation and developing energy resources through SCO. *“in the summit it was agreed on signing of a treaty among member-states on “good-neighborly relations, friendship, and cooperation”.*

In the summit a new SCO university was also proposed to be formed and strengthening information security among nations was also considered in this summit. President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan stressed on forming an energy resource roadmap, stating that “a mechanism of meetings of energy ministers of the SCO member and observer states should function in the context of the idea of an energy club, and that this might become one of the main elements of an Asian energy strategy.” The members of SCO agreed on

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<sup>9</sup> Bailes, A. J., Dunay, P., Guang, P., & Troitskiy, M. (2007). *The Shanghai cooperation organization*. SIPRI.



forming “unified energy market” so that it would be feasible and trouble free in supplying oil and gas to the respective members of the organization. During 2007 summit which held in Bishkek, all the members which constituted of the producing states of natural gas and oil , the consumer states and in between them the transporter states will held dialogue for cooperation.

The SCO summit in 2008 took place in Tajikistan where everyone was eyeing the response of SCO on the Georgia crises in which Russia had taken military action in Georgia. The SCO did not exclusively oppose or supported but indicated their support towards Russia by endorsing its six-point resolution to solve the crises. However, bilaterally Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan supported military intervention by Russia. Uzbekistan stood neutral on this issue while china proposed that relevant parties must solve the issue peacefully. The variance in the opinion of states showed the rift and division of opinion among the nations which highlighted that organizations should not be allowed to enter in internal affairs of any nation. The relevance of regional organization with UN in tackling its regional issue was also highlighted

In 2008, the SCO members also emphasized the reconstruction of war turned Afghanistan and demilitarizing it and providing financial assistance. Moscow demanded a special session on Afghanistan's problems to tackle challenges faced by CAR and assisting Afghanistan in its narcotic supply, which had been a big concern for CAR. The special session of SCO took place in March 2009.

All the CAR’s nations were also interested in the financial aspects of SCO to provide economic aid in the development of the region and to promote a common energy strategy for the region. In this regard, the Kyrgyzstan president demanded the establishment of an SCO development fund for the development of SCO economic cooperation.

### **Financial Crises of 2008 and SCO**

In the 2009 SCO summit held in Yekaterinburg where the world was under severe economic crises and every nation was under great pressure to mitigate the impact of

crises and was eager to find alternatives to commute its impact in their nations and increasing regional trade and rapid increase in the investment under SCO. All the members of the organization agreed in taking multilateral initiatives and projects. All the SCO welcomed the initiative taken by Russia, which stressed on common currency for the members and dealing in mutual currencies.

All the members of SCO stressed the need for regional cooperation in the economic sphere. All the countries agreed to trade in their mutual currencies. China and Russia demanded global currency reforms and fair financial world order was demanded in the summit. The focus on intra-regional trade and commerce was also a key feature of the summit where increasing trade and connectivity with Europe was also discussed. During the event, china agreed to provide \$10 billion US dollars on joint financial projects under the SCO.

The member states also discussed transnational organized crime, narcotics, and counter-terrorism. the summit was also crucial as during this point of time several key events were happening simultaneously as on Georgian crises US and Russia were at loggerheads and Kyrgyzstan demanded the withdrawal of US troops from its Manas base.

In the summit, the special expert group was commanded to frame a draft document for including new members of SCO. In the same summit, Sri Lanka and Belarus were given dialogue partners status. *“The Russian and Kazakh leaders suggested the establishment of a unified, supra-national settlement unit within the SCO framework. The summit adopted a declaration urging a fair global financial order. (Meena Singh Roy, June 2009)”*

The event had been happening after the 26/11 Mumbai attack where the Indian president gave a clear message to Pakistan to stop providing its territory for anti-India policies. This summit could be seen as the increasing influence of SCO at the regional as well as at the international level. The assertive role played by SCO in a regional issue. This summit gave some new dynamics to the world. As SCO challenged the hegemony of the US

dollar in trade and exchange and Kyrgyzstan's order to vacate its Manas airbase by the US provided the true significance of SCO in regional affairs.

### **Kyrgyzstan Crises and Expansion of SCO**

In the 2010 summit, the core issue for SCO was the Kyrgyzstan crisis that is also known as the 'second Kyrgyz revolution' in which ethnic tension rose and torture on the Uzbek minority grew. Several thousands of Uzbek people were killed, and millions left the country. The situation had been grave for the stability of the region. The political unrest had caused instability in the country however the SCO declaration was silent on actively participating in resolving the crises but agreed to provide political and diplomatic assistance but refrained from taking direct action in Kyrgyzstan referring. The crisis is an internal issue. SCO had declared that it would not enter in the internal matters of any member states. SCO advised Kyrgyzstan to solve the problem by negotiation and dialogue among the concerned parties.

The 2010-11 summit witnessed the expansion of SCO where criteria for inclusion of new members was drafted and admission was approved in 2011. This time saw the advancement in military and security cooperation where 'peace mission 2010' was conducted in which Russia, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan participated however; Uzbekistan distanced itself from this exercise. The information security sharing among the member states was also highlighted where it had been seen as a great concern for regional security.

### **Belt and Road Initiative and Syrian Crises**

The 2012-13 summit witnessed several changes in international politics and the core of it was the 'Syrian crises' where the demand for democracy was raised. However, the pro-democrats had been supported by western countries. Russia and China supported the then regime and its impact was obvious in the 2012 summit where SCO collectively condemned the western interference in Syria and SCO declaration of 2012 criticized the armed intervention or "regime change" and condemned the sanctions that had been

imposed unilaterally. China perceived it as a direct effect on its Xinjiang province where the problem would lead to the high morale of extremist forces in the Xinjiang province as well as separatist and extremist forces of the central Asian region.

China's intention and dream of becoming an economic giant was also a key feature of 2013 where it introduced an economic belt initiative with central Asian countries through 'silk road economic belt'. It was also proposed to connect the Baltic Sea and the Pacific Ocean through road. The china agenda was to gain access to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean through this project. It was seen as a direct threat to Russia's dominance in the Asian region and a challenge to India in the Indian Ocean region by setting up ports in Indian Ocean countries. China stated that "This new approach proposes the construction of international road transport corridors connecting the Baltic Sea and the Pacific Ocean, connecting Central Asia with the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf; Increasing financial support; Strengthening cooperation in the financial sector; Establishing an SCO development bank with a separate account for SCO and setting up an energy club; And establishing a food security cooperation mechanism, cooperating in agricultural production, working for the Agro-products trade and food security and other sectors".

### **SCOs concern over Afghanistan and Developments in SCO**

After the declaration made by the US in 2013 that it would withdraw its troops from Afghanistan gave serious concern to the neighboring countries which all were parts of SCO except Turkmenistan. The SCO stated that it has no intention in involving in the Afghanistan issue directly but it is ready to assist in the rebuilding process. The SCO clearly stated that the reconciliation process must be Afghan-led and Afghan-owned.

In 2015 the SCO was directly criticized. The dominant orientation of the contemporary phase of international relations underscores the demand of the US and the multi-polar world by stating that the multipolar world should be based on the mutual benefits among states in cooperation and must have common acknowledgment of the threats and

challenges. The SCO also showed its concern over the increase in instability in the world which has been hampering the new reframing of the geopolitical order (Joint Statement of High-Level Conference Security and Stability in the SCO Region (Moscow, June 4, 2015)) Drugs, Trafficking and Terrorism The summit called for comprehensive efforts to address domestic threats. The summit also applauded the efforts of Iran and six international mediators in the settlement of the nuclear program of Iran. As Iran is an SCO's observer members had great potential to fulfill the aspiration of SCO members Hence, it was beneficial for regional stability.

The Bishkek summit which was held in 2016 was mainly directed to the heads of government stressed that “their priority goal is to enhance the prosperity and living standards of their people through the further strengthening of cooperation in trade, production, transport, energy, finance, investment, agriculture, customs, telecommunications and other spheres of mutual interest”. (Joint Communique the Fifteenth Meeting of the SCO Heads of Government (Prime Ministers Council). The meeting was mainly focused on connectivity between Europe and Asia and diversification and avoiding dependence on resources. The 2017 SCO summit witnessed the inclusion of India and Pakistan as permanent members that indicated the growing influence of SCO. The inclusion also refuted the perception of SCO as a mere central Asian regional organization by including nuclear power states India and Pakistan. The SCO members praised the action taken by G20 nations in quota agreements and IMF's management reforms. All the members demanded an open, unbiased, non-discriminatory, and rule-based World trade organization. The SCO also raised the demand that WTO must work to prevent the breakup of trade relations among nations.

The SCO members also jointly stressed the *“importance of extensive equitable international cooperation to boost the world economy's recovery, ensure economic and financial stability, and support sustainable, dynamic, balanced, and inclusive growth. They expressed a common understanding of the fact that all participants of international economic relations must have equal opportunities and participate in global trade and*

*economic activities on a fair basis. Moreover, they noted the negative effect of unilateral restrictive measures that contradict international law and distort the competitive environment” (JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ following the 16th Meeting of the SCO Heads of Government Council).*

Figure 1: SCO Member States



In 2018 the SCO was in favor of promoting spiritual as well as moral education of children which can prevent their involvement in terrorist and extremist activities. However, this summit was more focused on the economic perspective where they were seeking to eliminate the trade barriers among the states and providing incentives to e-commerce and service sector industries. The SCO also raised the issue of environmental protection and sustainable development. The member states also agreed to collectively form a program on food security. Tajikistan’s initiatives on “the International Decade of Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028 and the high-level international conference on this subject was appreciated by SCO”. The member states except India praised the belt and road initiative of china and expressed cooperation in the

implementation of the initiative through the Eurasian economic union. The organization showed its commitment in increasing trust and friendly relations between the nations and there must be people-to-people connection among peoples, the Member States also stressed upon the need of developing multidirectional relations between members through- “culture, education, science and technology, healthcare, tourism, and sport”.

They noted that in 2019 the UN Security Council’s Counter-Terrorism Committee signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the Executive Directorate and the SCO’s Regional Cooperation. March 2019 State Council Meeting on Counter-Terrorism (RATS), as well as international and regional cooperation in counter-terrorism and its financing (Press release on Shanghai Cooperation Organization heads) on drug trafficking and organized crime).

### **1.5 The objective of the study:**

- To study the concept of regional organizations in the world
- To study the origin and implications of SCO in a globalized world
- To study the role of SCO in solving the regional dispute in the Asian region.
- To study the impact of the withdrawal of the NATO forces & the role of SCO in building war-torn Afghanistan.
- To study the role of SCO in the quest for the energy security of its member states.

### **1.6 Hypothesis:**

- H1:** SCO members can solely decide the challenges and implications of the Eurasian region.
- H2:** The SCO could play a vital role in bringing peace and stability in the region with the help of other unilateral/multilateral global players.
- H3:** The SCO’s energy policy will not only ensure the sustainable growth of the member states but also of the global economy.

## **1.7 Review of Literature:**

**S. Myasnikov, V. (2003)** has depicted in their study that Russia-China-India: Cooperation in the Twenty-first Century. China Report. In discussing the possibilities of relations between the three countries in the twenty-first century, we precisely point to the coordinated measures taken in response to the challenges of the new century. Why coordinate our actions? Because with the advent of the new century, the international climate in which our states play the role of sovereign actors has become more and more complex. The September 11 attacks took a turn, provoking problems and dramatic changes in the richness of international relations. Subsequent events in the international arena have reiterated that the national interests of each state can be equated if they coordinate their actions with partners who have similar national interests. Russia, China, and India are responsible for such stages of the historical development-periods of reforms aimed at the radical and comprehensive transformation of social structures in the vital interests of the people of each country.

**Oldberg (2007)** this report focuses on the aims and objectives of the SCO regarding the Russian foreign Defense Security and Defense policy and development of the Asian region at the global level. The SCO feared that there may be some political instability in the Asian region as had happened in the west so to secure the stability of the more or less authoritarian regimes from Western-type democratic upheavals all the SCO nations come together to fight against such types of problems. The article also highlights the constraints in the implementation of the objective and its failure in containing the US in making its airbases in SCO countries for countering terrorism in Afghanistan.

**Norling & Swanstrom (2007)** explored the origin of SCO and its effect in the regional politics and what was the roadmap of development of organization. The article also explains the grounds on which it was alleged that it was perceived it as the anti-NATO front. The article also tracked the development of organization merely from ‘border dispute solving mechanism’ to the full-grown mature and influential organization at



international level. The article also examines the possibility and extent of the impact on trade and regional security after the inclusion of new members to the organization. It is argued here whether “the trade, infrastructure, and energy sectors are of particular importance and that substantial potential gains could be realized if coordination is improved”. Nevertheless, it is also analyzed the democratization in the nations which are major powers of the region.

**Stephen Aris (2012)** the article evaluates the role of its members in tackling the “three evils” which are the main issues for the region. The article describes the structure and mechanism in tackling regional challenges .it evaluates the role of regional anti-terrorist structure and mechanism in dealing with the evils. It also evaluates about the non-intervention in member states though they has been going under crises. it also discusses about the peace missions conducted by the organization and the possibility of formation of peacekeeping forces under the organization. The article also reviews about the possibility of formation of supranational structure.

**Naarajarvi (2012)** the focus was to study the Russian and Chinese cooperation over conflict the impact of SCO on the other overlapping organization such as the OPEC, ASEAN, CSTO. Russia and china's cooperation seem to be relevant as both countries face the same problems of terrorism, separatism, drug trafficking, etc. China and Russia differ on several issues though same bodies functioning under SCO do not show any active participation in regional issues it provides only a platform to raise their issues. SCO was formed mainly focusing on the central Asian region but now it has expanded its reach from the southern Asian region to the western region by including India, Pakistan, and Iran as an observer state. The SCO also provides international visibility and stature to small members and the interests of the EU in the cooperation among regional powers.

**Joshi Nirmala (2012)** in her edited book “attempts to form an evolving overview and further enhances relations between India and Central Asia in the political and economic spheres. The stability and security of Central Asia are of paramount importance to India

Part of its expansive surroundings. Is associated with Indian concerns Afghanistan, where it is actively involved in reconstruction efforts. So far, so has India. The region is mainly active in infrastructure, commerce, education, health, and technology. India will help improve capacity in areas such as better economic engagement and agriculture. Information Technology, Service Industries, Science & Technology, and Media. On the contrary, Energy-rich Central Asian countries can address India's growing energy needs; improved transportation networks are conducive to intercontinental trade. The interlinking of Asia under the organization would provide key benefits in economic as well as in security field to all the members of the organization.

**Grainger (2014)** explained that the SCO faces the challenges of eliminating religious extremism, ethnic separatism, and international terrorism; improving trust and cohesion among members; better managing relations with external parties; developing an enlargement policy; improving policy implementation; facilitating greater economic interaction; and improving their slow pace of decision making. To consolidate its growing status the organization must continue to improve communications and relationships between all stakeholders; develop deeper trust between members; better address legal economic and security issues, and generate stronger leadership from its two largest members Russia and China.

**Roy (2014)** examined the role and importance that the SCO has been gaining in Eurasian region and the significance of organization for regional players in exercising their power in the region. It also reviews about the trajectory followed by the organization since its inception to the full-grown entity. It also describes the challenges that have been faced by the members in dealing with each other on economic basis and defines the benefits that could be gained through SCO economic forum. The article also shows the implication and problems generated on the issue of the enlargement of the organization and the reasons that are of utmost importance for expansion. It also provides the in-depth knowledge about the role that SCO can play for India and challenges which can be sorted

out through the organization. it provides an in-depth knowledge about the role of SCO in economic and political importance for India

**Koacmaz (2017)** described the concept of 'soft balancing' the US hegemony in world political system .it describes about the conditions after the collapse of USSR and rise of US hegemony in world politics. It also stressed upon the reasons that led to 'soft balancing' rather focusing on hard balancing. it also provides the problems faced in using 'hard power'. The article also describes the motives of Russia which it wanted to attain in central Asia through SCO and how the nexus of china and Russia had put the west at bay in central Asian region. the article also provides the role of china in the economic sphere of the central Asian region.it also discussed about the interest of Russia in political sphere and Chinese interest in economic sphere. It also critically examines the reasons that led to the convergence of interests of Russia and china in SCO.

**Zurich (2018)** the paper talks about the flexible nature of the SCO as it can accommodate several agenda where consensus could be met and also explains about the minimal structure which does have some specific orientation .it also describes and evaluates the relationship between Russia and china . it also explains the very changing nature of the organization where china and Russia have been striving to maximize their interests in the region. It also provides the understanding of cooperation and conflict of interests between the two giants. It provides a study of involvement of Switzerland with SCO and talks about the risks and benefits that it will face while dealing with SCO. It also provides in-depth view on engagement of Switzerland with SCO on formal and informal basis.

**Bailes, A. J., Dunay, P., Guang, P., & Troitskiy, M. (2007):** the article reviews the historical background of the formation of central Asian states and the development of shanghai five to SCO. It examines the influence of Russia in the internal affairs of Central Asian states and penetration of china in central Asian trade and commerce and the role of Russia in the containment of Chinese expansionist economic policy in central

Asian states. It also provides an in-depth study of the reasons that inspired the central Asian states to join SCO and the role of guiding principle in strengthening mutual trust among the member states. The article also provided the interests which inspired Russia and China to cooperate over the competition in the Central Asian region. It also elaborated the military, political and economic interests of Russia and China. It also explained the reasons for suspicion among the member states regarding taking a collective stance in international politics. It also examines the difference between SCO and other regional organizations like CSTO, CIS, EU, etc.

**Rab, A., & Zhilong, H. (2019):** the paper shows the trajectory of development of SCO and its significance from the Chinese perspective. It further provides the in-depth approach of China from its Belt and Road Initiative and how the BRI had led to several opportunities for China. It also covers the geopolitical impact of BRI in the region and how the initiative has led to stability in Chinese border areas. The paper also encompasses the role of SCO in banning ETIM that has been a separatist movement. The paper also provides a comprehensive impact of BRI in Chinese regional politics. It further provides the view of Chinese energy security through BRI in the Central Asian region.

### **1.8 Research Methodology:**

Methodology referred as “systematically structured or codified ways to test theories. The methodology is thus critical in facilitating the evaluation of theory and the evolution of research”. The proposed study would use international relations theories like Neo-realism, Neo-liberalism. All these theories provide insights into the nature of world politics and offer various possible explanations as to what course of action states would choose to undertake in the search of a solution in India’s Central Asia Policy.

The study is based on historical, comparative, descriptive, and as well as analytical methods. Data is collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources

such as Publication of MEA, reports of ministry of external affairs of Central Asia countries, discussion and speeches of various leaders of C.A and secondary sources such as books, articles published in academic journals, newspapers, and newsletters will also be used for further updates.