

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

After the formation of Central Asian states in 1991, 'the shanghai five' played a key role in solving regional disputes between the newly formed states. The shanghai five which consists of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, China, and Russia the mechanism of solving between the central Asian through the shanghai five has provided the stability to some extent. the shanghai five mechanisms strengthened the ties between the Central Asian states and also helped in confidence-building between the states. The mechanism of solving border disputes between the states also provides key ingredients for eliminating the trust deficit, which had been aroused after the disintegration of the USSR that had created fears among the newly formed states. It also provided a platform for the newly formed states in formulating their foreign policy. The 'shanghai five' created a cooperative atmosphere in the region. It played a crucial role in negating the conflict between regional powers, which were Russia and China and provided an opportunity for cooperation in the region. The cooperation superimposed the conflict of regional powers in the region. It also provided sovereignty to the central states, which had been fearing that after formation they might face threats to their security. The steps are taken in reducing military tension between the states by stating that no country would conduct any military exercise while targeting other countries showed the neo-liberal perspective of the organization where they had been focusing mainly on confidence-building and mutual peaceful coexistence. The agreement that no country will deploy military in 10km of border area showed the seriousness of the participating countries that all were willing to cooperate under the mechanism. The disarmament process clearly showed the intention that the mechanism was solely based on solving the regional issue rather than focusing on any alliance or organization. The initiatives taken by the shanghai five as controlling narcotic drugs, Islamic extremism, and international terrorism showed that it had been

working in the formation of a liberalized world. The declaration stating that all the countries would work in disarmament and forming a nuclear-free zone which was following the principle of the UN charter signaled that the organization would further cooperate with other international organizations in tackling these trans-border threats.

The inclusion of Uzbekistan in 2001 and the transformation of 'shanghai five' to the shanghai cooperation organization gave a new direction to regional politics. As the objectives defined by SCO were extremism, terrorism and separatism have clearly shown that the organization will fight collectively to combat all these problems. The 'Shanghai Spirit' clearly states that the organization would never intervene in other countries. It described that the organization does not have any intention to form a supranational structure, as it wanted to be all the countries to be treated equally while dealing with each other. The best feature of the SCO initiative was that it allowed all its members that they could form bilateral or multilateral relations with any other organization that has clearly shown the neo-liberal perspective of the organization. The organization in its initial years was considered as just a 'talking shop' or 'paper tiger'. However, it was fair to some extent in its initial years as no such initiative was taken until 2003. The formation of the regional anti-terrorist structure showed that it has not merely a 'paper tiger' rather the organization is in its initial state.

The other feature of the organization clearly shows, while conducting 'peace mission exercise' and gave stern message to the west that the regional powers can maintain peace and tranquility in the region without the presence of western countries. The SCO also provided in the stabilization of regimes in the region as several civil wars had erupted in the region but the role of SCO while abstaining from intervening in the states indicated that the SCO will respect the sovereignty of the states and it would never intervene in any member states on any grounds either it is suppression or on humanitarian ground or human rights violation. The role of SCO in the western world was also considered as savior of authoritarian regimes in the region. The inclusion of Mongolia in 2004 and Iran, India, and Pakistan in 2005 as observer states also indicated that the organization is not merely a central Asian organization but had some serious approach to the whole Asian

region. The inclusion of two hostile countries, which are India and Pakistan, showed that it can provide a platform for the melting ice in relations of both the countries. The stance of SCO alleging the US and western countries for organizing color revolutions in the Central Asian region and the demand for a deadline of withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan indicated the 'Anti-NATO' sentiment of the SCO. The SCO also demanded the vacation of airbases of NATO in central Asian states, which were Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, indicated that the organization has the potential in molding the foreign policy of its member states.

The shifting of Uzbekistan from pro-west to pro-Russia also showed its importance in the region. While declining the proposal of the US to take part in the activities of SCO in 2006, it also showed that the organization was not formed against any hostile or enemy state but in its subconscious. The SCO has some serious concerns regarding the US and NATO. This approach can be well understood that all SCO members except china and Russia were either underdeveloped or developing nations and hence both china and Russia feared that if the US would enter in central Asian region it could drastically impact the influence of China and Russia in the region. Hence, China and Russia never wanted that the US should intervene in the Central Asian region. The other threat which Russia and china had feared was that due to financial assistance the other member states might shift towards the US for help. Initially, Russia tried to dominate the region, but the scenario has changed due to the deteriorating economic condition of Russia and the rise of China as an economic giant in the region. It was not feasible for Russia to dominate the region unilaterally and focused on cooperating with china and containing western countries in the region. The financially powerful china had also benefited from cooperation and signed several multilateral deals with the central Asian state.

The focus of central Asian region US had started gaining momentum after the 9/11 attack after which NATO intervened in Afghanistan and due to its proximity to the central Asian region and closer ties of afghan terrorist outfits in the central Asian region and for logistics support the NATO established two airbases which were manas and Karachikhana bad however initially China and Russia supported the establishment as both the

countries showed their incompetence to tackle the Afghanistan crises but as the NATO started initiating (alleged by china and Russia) color revolution in central Asian region both the regional powers feared that they might also be facing this kind of revolution in Xinjiang and the North Caucasus. hence, they demanded immediate withdrawal of NATO from central Asian states. The 2009 summit, where the special session of SCO on Afghanistan took place showed the seriousness of SCO in tackling the Afghanistan crises in which it was decided that Afghanistan should be given space in SCO to provide a platform to raise its concerns regarding the crises.

The role of SCO during the Syrian crisis showed its intention in forming a multipolar world, where it condemned the action taken by the US and warned that further escalation on Syria could result in further tension among the nations. The event showed the expanding area of influence of SCO. The most noticeable thing, which can be seen, is the inclusion of Iran due to its international picture framed by the US. The stand of SCO on Iran indicated that it will never tolerate the hegemony or dictatorship of the US and will take decisions according to its judgment. The other factor, which is being noticeable, was that the SCO never supported the Iranian nuclear program but tried to pursue Iran for peaceful disposal of its program. The event showed the confidence of SCO in tackling regional disputes of the region that had been the only platform that brought all the concerned parties on the Afghanistan issue on a single platform. The SCO brought the US and Iran on the same platform for dealing with the Afghanistan issue. The other major feature could be seen that it was the only platform where India and Pakistan had collectively participated in military exercises. Under SCO joint terrorism exercise in Russia was conducted where India and Pakistan collectively performed an anti-terrorism exercise. This had been the first event after 1947 that both the countries have performed a military exercise. The collective initiatives taken by Russia and China have played a crucial role in the peace and tranquility of the region. The SCO had played a significant role in driving out the western countries from the region and providing several channels in dealing with regional issues.

The formation of SCO was done when the region had been facing several problems regarding their future and all the SCO countries had their interests in joining the SCO. In the second chapter, the research states the different perspectives of states and the role of SCO in regional security. Since it had been clear from the inception of SCO that china and Russia were willing to cooperate in the region. Russia which was the sole dominant and hegemon of the region before disintegration tried to sustain its dominance but also feared that china might takeover it in this race, hence it always tried to provide only some relevant channels for solving the regional problem. The problem with Russia is the fact that Russia had tied with the central Asian states through other channels too like CIS, CSTO, and EEU; hence, it has been insecure regarding the approach of china related to the region. Russia wants that the organization must work to tackle the ‘three evils’ rather than focusing on economic aspects, as it fears that china has the potential to take over Russian control, hence it always tries to make the more military block kind rather than a comprehensive organization. The economic perspective regarding SCO is not much enthusiastic. Since it wants to use it as a tool against NATO and the EU. This is very much clear from the fact that it was eager from the inception of SCO to form an ‘energy club’ but has always opposed the formation of FTA under SCO as Russia has other platforms for economic relations with Central Asian states. The other factor which has been the crucial issue has been the perspective of china related to SCO. First of all, it has been the only organization which has been formed by China hence it always tries to make the most out of it. China wants to focus more on an economic basis rather focusing on a military basis the core reason for the issue has been the principal of ‘peaceful rise’, Where they never wanted to have tussle or constraint in relations with the west. The main objective of China is to use the natural resource-rich area of central Asia for its development. China also wants to get its access to Europe through the central Asian region by its ambitious project of ‘new silk road’. China also wants its stable relations with the west, Due to its huge amount of trade and commerce in Europe and the American region. The perception of forming military blocks varies where Russia demanded some changes in the functioning from the formation of SCO. China initially

never wanted to involve in controversy however as after 20 years of SCO. The SCO has now become a mature organization and the influence of China has drastically increased in international politics hence now it has been trying to show its potential through SCO.

The central Asian states perceive the SCO as an organization that can help them in dealing and bargaining with the west. The other factor for central Asian states has been the fact that most of the countries are landlocked and they have to rely majorly on Russia for their transportation of oil and natural gas; hence they tried to diversify their trade routes through china. The SCO played a crucial role in the stabilization of the region. First of all, the SCO always stands against the regime change revolutions like color revolutions or some civil wars erupted in any country. It provided legitimacy and support to authoritarian regimes in the region. Hence, it always failed the attempts of western led revolutions in the region. The other biggest concern for the region was extremism, terrorism, and separatism. The SCO led RATS has stopped several terrorist attacks in the region and political assassinations. The other benefit for central Asian states was that they have modern and sophisticated weapons and technology from China and Russia. The central Asian states have benefitted from SCO against terrorist activities in the Fergana valley, which provided some relief to the concerned authorities. The central Asian states have also been able to tackle the trans-border organized crimes, drug trafficking, and illegal trade to some extent. However, there had been some problems aroused due to heavy investment in the region in current years and the flooding of Chinese goods and services have made an anti-china sentiment as the local people are losing their job, and it will have led to several riots and protests. Hence for SCO, it has been a big task for developing the organization in the comprehensive development of all the countries.

The SCO had established contact groups with Afghanistan in 2002 for solving the Afghanistan problem. The main issue with the Afghanistan problem was the Taliban which has fertile ground for terrorism in the world, hence the problem was not only regional rather international. Every country has been concerned about the problem of Afghanistan. The main blunder, which has been faced by these crises, is the central Asian region. Since it has cultural and ethnic ties with central Asian states. Which has

dramatically influenced the security of these states hence they have been ready to assist any organization working in Afghanistan. Not only central Asian states but Russia, China, India, and Pakistan are also the victims of this terrorism, hence everyone wants to stabilize Afghanistan. Afghanistan has some other benefits for SCO as well as has the potential to become an economic hub for trade and connectivity to other regions of the world. The concern for China is its belt and road initiative though it has not been passing through Afghanistan.

The terrorist outfits of the region have been challenging the BRI project by promoting other terrorist outfits in the region. China is very much concerned, as the Taliban has been training the extremist Uyghur Muslims who had been constantly demanded independence from china. The Afghanistan issue is also critical for India as stabilization in Afghanistan can provide India access, which is safe to connect central Asian states. The relation in the ancient period was very friendly with Afghanistan. Hence, it wants to take leverage through SCO. Russia has its implication with Afghanistan as it has provided as Russia wants to counter the terrorism in Afghanistan as they had been done several attacks in Russia and trained the Chechnya rebels but conversely, Russia never want that the Afghanistan issue must be solved through NATO as the message of this victory would be that NATO. It has the potential to solve the issue in the proximity of Russia which would be a setback for their international stature. hence Russia wants to solve the Afghanistan issue but on its terms. The role of Pakistan in the Afghanistan issue has been crucial but of rough nature, as it wants to take leverage of its geostrategic location but also plays the victim card in international politics. Pakistan wants to stabilize Afghanistan but it also wants to install a pro-Pakistani regime in the region. Pakistan has also provided aid and assistance to the Taliban. The intelligence agency of Pakistan has also used the Taliban in propagating terrorism in India. Hence, Pakistan cannot be trusted in solving the Afghanistan problem. The SCO cannot solely tackle the issue of Afghanistan, but it needs a comprehensive approach from international organizations to counter the Afghanistan problem. The SCO must cooperate with NATO to tackle the issue and joint operations must be conducted to counter-terrorism in the region. The

major international players must not involve their ideological differences and personal rivalry in dealing with the Afghanistan issue.

Energy security is the biggest concern for every country in today's world and hence it plays a key role in the development and bilateral ties between the countries. The SCO consists of three categories of countries –producer, transit, and consumer. the producers are Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Iran while the transit nations are Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan and the consumers are India, Pakistan, and China. Since the organization has complete demand and supply it can become a potent driver in channelizing the energy supply to every country.

The ‘energy club’ which has been formed in 2013 can play a key role in enhancing trade and connectivity in the region. The energy club will also help in stabilizing the fluctuation of oil and gas prices in the world. It will also speed up the process of oil extraction in the central Asian region and provide modern techniques in the process of oil and gas extraction. The club will also increase the development as the energy-producing countries will get investment for extraction while the transit nations will get an opportunity in logistics and transportation of these resources. The other aspect of the energy club is the fact that Russia will get another market for its energy resources and in the future, it will not have to majorly dependent on the European region for supply. However, there have been some issues which is a major concern for the initiative of the organization. firstly, there has been a rivalry between Russia and China in connectivity as in some regions the connectivity and pipelines laid by Russia, but china has been laying parallel project to the same region which shows that no collection efforts had been taken by these member states. The other factor is the fact that Russia tries to monopolize the whole energy market, where it never wants to the diversification of trade routes out of its territory the recent example of TAPI where Russia never wanted that these projects should be started without its involvement. The other factor for the energy club is the fact that Russia wants an anti-OPEC but due to globalization, its dream would not be fulfilled as all the countries are interdependent. The energy club has also made serious concern for Russia to Iran as it will play a major role in connectivity to central Asia. However, it can



be concluded that after the formation of the 'energy club' if genuine efforts will be taken then it will play a crucial role in the member states' quest for energy security.

The SCO would be the most influential organization, if cooperation will prevail over the commission and if all the member states will work collectively then the SCO will be successful in eradicating the three evils from the region. The energy club of SCO will provide security, connectivity, and trade to all its member states and will be the biggest and safest energy group in the world. The SCO might not be a relevant mechanism in solving regional border disputes due to the expansionist tendencies of some countries the Afghanistan problem would never be solved unless and until some member states do not stop using terrorism and extremism as their strategic weapon against other countries.