CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION
Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

In the recent past, International Peacekeeping Operations (IPO) has undergone profound changes. There has been a significant alteration in the size, functions and strategies of these missions during the post Cold War period. Originally, peacekeeping involved simply the deployment of an unarmed or lightly armed multinational military forces to observe, monitor, facilitate or oversee a ceasefire or peace accord usually by taking up positions along a ceasefire line or by establishing a buffer zone. Under this ‘traditional peacekeeping’ operation, the number of the military personnel used to be less then 10,000. However, after the end of the Cold War, international peacekeeping has witnessed a tremendous expansion not only in the number of operations but also in the number of the civilian personnel (police and other civilian staff). For instance, military and civilian personnel numbering 30,000 in Cambodia and 60,000 in Bosnia (in 1993 it reached 80,000) have been operating in peacekeeping missions (Diehl, Paul F. et al: 1998). Since 1991, peacekeeping operation has become a multi-dimensional mission with the inclusion of political and humanitarian tasks besides the traditional military functions. Moreover, the Peacekeeping operation (PKOs) is no longer carried out exclusively by the UN. Regional Organizations and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) have also emerged as partners to peacekeeping operations. Mention may be made of the increasing role in peacekeeping operations by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the Organisation of the Security Council of Europe (OSCE) and the Russia led Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in post Cold War conflict zones. In few of the recent missions, peace operations have highlighted that the previously separate measures like Preventive interventions, Peacemaking and Peacebuilding could all be simultaneously present and might even overlap as parts of the same Peacekeeping Operation.

The emergence of new definitions, such as ‘peace enforcement’ in An Agenda for Peace and in the Brahimi Report on UN Peace Operations has reflected the important evolution of international peace operations after the Cold
War, from passive monitoring to more active engagement (Boutros Ghali 1995: 5-72). But it tends to include under the same denomination of peacekeeping a variety of post Cold War missions that are very different one from another. Furthermore, the change in the nature of the conflict from inter-state conflicts to intra-state conflicts has highlighted the growing complexity of the conflicts in post Cold War period. In addition, most of the intra-state conflicts of the post Cold War period are based on ethnic disputes. Due to this complex nature of the new international conflicts, peacekeeping operations in intra-state conflicts has sometimes been found to have drifted into peace-enforcement, viz. peacekeeping operations in Somalia and Bosnia.

Till recently, peacekeeping operations in general have served a useful tool in the hands of major powers for the pursuit of their national interests. In fact, since the very beginning peacekeeping operation in practice has reflected the value and interests of those major powers rather than general international interests. Thus, the current peacekeeping missions both under the UN and the regional organisations have been subjected to severe criticism while on the other hand, there is an increase in the demand for operations in post Cold War intra-states conflicts situations. Moreover, the three traditional principles of the peacekeeping operations (consent, impartiality and use of forces) has become a subject of debate and concern to third World Countries.

This thesis examines Russia's approaches to the CIS ethnic conflicts through peacekeeping operations. The disintegration of the USSR at the end of 1991 created multiple focal points of instability, disturbed the geopolitical balance and gave rise to many new and dangerous contradictions in what was once the Soviet Space. Armed conflicts arising on grounds of aggressive nationalism and re-emergence of the second wave of Islamisation in Central Asia continues to present a special danger to the multi-pluralist society of the CIS including the Russian Federation. Today, there is a growing interest among various regional players and other international powers to increase their involvement in peacekeeping missions in the CIS. In this background, the present thesis proposes to study the role of Russian peacekeeping operations in the CIS conflicts. It also intends to explain the
nature of the conflicts in order to understand the volume of the threat it poses to the region as well as to its neighbouring states.

In the changed scenario of the post Cold War international politics which has seen a paradigm change from a bi-polar to a unipolar world, wherein conflicts have become more complex due to their intra-state dimensions, the role of Russia in peacekeeping operations, as a sole successor state of former Soviet Union, assumes high significance. In this background, this thesis seeks to contribute in the field of research for understanding the politics of peacekeeping in general through an examination of the strategic rationale, the vision of the world order and philosophy as embodied in the practice and development of the Russian Federation’s peacekeeping operations.

1. BACKGROUND: The CIS Conflicts

The space of the former Soviet Union, which had been characterised by a long period of stability, has been rendered by a series of upheavals as a zone of instability, wherein conflict resolution measures have become increasingly necessary. The emerging conflicts in the post Soviet environment have put the whole region in a turmoil thereby affecting the smooth functioning of administration in the multi-ethnic societies of the newly independents states of the CIS. Most of these conflicts of the former Soviet republics are intra-state conflicts with the exception of the conflicts in Armenia and Azerbaijan. Any attempt at a better understanding of the nature of these conflicts calls for an analysis of the origin of these conflicts. The present work takes a special focus on four important conflicts areas in three CIS independent states i.e. Tajikistan in Central Asia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia and Moldova respectively.

1.1. Origin of the Conflicts

The civil war in Tajikistan along with rise of Islamic fundamentalism has posed a threat to the multi-nationalist society of the Central Asia. Rivalry for power has stayed as one of the main root causes of the conflicts which already proliferated at all levels. Though, the origin of the conflicts lies in history since the Soviet era.
The power struggle has started soon after the implementation of the Michael Gorbachev’s *Perestroika* and between the Leninabadis, the Kulyabis and eventually the Hissaris on the one hand ('the communists' reorganised in a new People's Front), and the Gharmis and the Gorno-Badakhshanis on the other ('the opposition party'). Since liberal intellectuals and Muslim elders made up the leadership of the opposition party, the latter camp has often referred to as an alliance of democrats and Islamists. The spill of the conflicts into the Tajik-Afghan borders transformed the civil war into a full flag dispute.

Georgia has a legacy of the statehood with the deep rooted identity (Naumkin 1997: 30-31). It was under the Tsarist government’s policies of the Russification that made the inclusion of the Georgian ruling population into the Russian gentry. As well as under its nationalist policies Tsar encouraged the settlement of the various ethnic groups within the Georgia which made the change in ethno-demographic structure of the state. By mid 1980, tension had widened between the various ethnic which divided the whole population and thus weaken the state. The Georgia- Abkhazia ethnic conflict was emerged in 1989 with small clashed between the Abkhazian student and Georgian authority over the issue of the Tbilisi announcement to establish a branch of the Georgian State University in Sukhumi.

The adoption of the Georgian languages as the state language in 1989 by Georgian parliament exposed the discriminatory policy of the Gamsakhurdia’s government against non Georgian ethnics group. Though, it was the Zviad Gamsakhurdia and his party effort to create a unitary government under the slogan of the “Georgia for the Georgians” that led the suspicion or tension between the ethnic Georgian and Ossetian in autumn 1990. The real clash was originated in early 1991, when the Georgian national government refused to respect the autonomy of the Ossetian region. The newly-elected, ultra-nationalist, president of Georgia, Zviad Gamsakhurdia’ designed to create an ethnically-pure Georgian state. These actions prompted fear and an even greater demand for Ossetian autonomy, or possible union with their kin in the adjoining Northern Ossetian region of Russia. Serious fighting began in the spring of 1991, when elements of the Georgian Mkhedrioni (an undisciplined national guard of dubious legal status)
attempted to crush the Ossetian independence movement. For over a year, guerrilla battles raged throughout Southern Ossetia. Georgian forces blockaded and shelled the main Ossetian city of Tskhinvali, with casualties mounting into the thousands.

The ethnic conflict in Moldova was nothing new in comparison to the above two conflicts except that it was different in form. Since 1980's, direct clashes had been taking place between two warring factions. On 7 November in Kishinev, several thousand protesting demonstrators had stopped the Communist Party celebrations of the anniversary of the 1917 Revolution by climbing onto tanks and forcing the Communist Party leaders of the Republic to leave the review stand. Besides, a Moldova Peoples Front (MPF) rally held on 10 November 1989 ended in rioting. After the rally, 10,000-15,000 demonstrators approximately demanded immediate dismissal of the Moldovan Communist Party leadership and attacked several official buildings at the heart of Kishinev. During this violent clash both the government and anti-communist protestors suffered casualties. By early 1990, Moldova underwent a second wave of socio-political changes that were brought about by a major shift in the power structure of the Republic. Since then, Moldavian nationalist-democratic forces had become much stronger and they won the democratic elections in February 1990 and proclaimed the political sovereignty of Moldova within the USSR. However, remarkable political transformations in Moldova took place soon after its declaration of full independence in August 1991 from the USSR by the Moldovan Supreme Soviet. The unresolved problem of the "nationality question" within the former Soviet Union as come to serve as the common origin of all ethnic clashes in CIS in the post Soviet environment.

1.2. Coverage

The post Cold War conflicts in the former Soviet republics have affected not only the particular conflicts zone but also the neighbouring states either directly or indirectly. These conflicts have brought into being a new geo-economic situation as well as a new geo-political environment in whole CIS. Moreover, these conflicts have impacted not only on the politics of the state but also on the society and economy at large. The present work attempts to analyse the complex web of inter-relationships arising out of the criss-crossing of different national interests of
various regional powers. While a number of factors have been responsible for the rise of this complex politics, the new geo-political environment arising thereof has largely provided an opportunity for other regional actors to influence the internal politics of these states. It has created a peculiar situation whereby the number of regional actors may be said to have witnessed an increase.

1.3. Nature of the Conflicts

The international system in the post cold war era has been characterised by the emergence of new conflicts in the form of intra-state conflicts in which different ethnic groups take part as the warring factions. Besides the African continent, the CIS has witnessed maximum intra-state ethnic conflicts during the post-cold war era. The mixed demography and the multi-ethnic nature of the population of the region as well as proximity of the states to one another have contributed to the complexity of the conflicts in CIS. Further, the conflicts came to be a generating house of refugees and massive displacements in the region. Many of these refugees were already scattered in the neighbouring countries including Russia. Such a development became a major concern to the Russian leaders since a large number of refugees who fled into the southern part of the Russian Federation further worsened economy of the country which was already in a crisis.

2. RUSSIAN INTERESTS IN THE CIS

History reveals that the Russian Federation has, since long, had interests in the other parts of the CIS. Starting from the Tsar’s period, Central Asia played a significant role in the development of Russia both economically and politically. The strategic location of Central Asia led Moscow to keep the region as buffer zone. This geo-strategic importance as well as its geo-economic significance in the post Cold War international system still makes the region occupy primacy in the calculations of the Russian national interest. Similarly, the Caucasus region too attracted Russian attention since the 19th century due to its geo-strategic location as well as natural gas resources. It is one of the Russian Federation’s primary aim to establish a dominant position in this part of the CIS in order to regain its great power status in international politics.
3. RUSSIAN PEACEKEEPING

Russia has had a long history of peacekeeping since its first participation in the UN peacekeeping mission in Cairo in 1973 in the capacity of a military observer mission in the Egypt-Israel conflicts. After the end of Cold War, Russia's participation in these operations have increased. In 1991, after the war in the Persian Gulf, the Russian Federation sent its troops as military observers to the Iraq-Kuwait borders and in September to the Western Sahara as a part of the UN peacekeeping mission. By the beginning of 1992, the participation of Russian military observers expanded to the former Yugoslavia and also in Cambodia. In the ethnic conflicts in the CIS, Russia, just like every other regional power, is concerned with maintaining peace in the region. This desire is reflected in their new constitution, the Military Doctrine (both 1993 and 2000) and the National Security Concept, in which Russia asserts that it is her responsibility to maintain order within the confines of the CIS. Russia conducted its first CIS peacekeeping operation in Southern Ossetia, an autonomous region in the Republic of Georgia. Perhaps the most controversial Russian peacekeeping mission is in the Republic of Moldova. Russian involvements (as a peacekeeper) in the Tajik civil war turned out to be the most difficult and expensive operation in terms of casualties. In fact, Russia's peacekeeping operations have been launched with several bilateral and multi-lateral agreements. The 1992 treaty on CIS Collective Security formed the base line of all Russia led CIS Collective peacekeeping operations in former Soviet republics.

3.1. Compulsions

The CIS have become a main priority area in Russia's foreign policy after an initial diversion toward the West for a while. It is the realisation of the continued relevance of the geo-politics and strategic significance of the CIS in international politic that has brought the former Soviet republics within the main areas of concern of the Russian Federation. The increasing conflicts in the region present several compulsions to Moscow to launch its peacekeeping operation in the region. For instance, the increasing presence of the other regional powers into the region, marked by a political vacuum left by the sudden disintegration of the USSR, poses
a threat to the national security and national interests of Moscow. Moreover, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism along with terror activities in Central Asia has accelerated the conflicts in the region and has directly or indirectly spilled throughout the CIS. This development has worsened the internal political situation in the southern part of the Russian Federation where the Muslims form the dominant ethnic group. Moreover, a separatist movement has already begun there. Hence, from the Russian perspective, it became imperative to initiate peacekeeping operations in order to stop the conflicts from spilling over in the CIS. Furthermore, it is reported that several Islamic fundamentalist mercenaries have been involved in Chechnya's separatist movement and were fighting against the Russian government.

A new geo-politics has emerged in the CIS soon after September 11. The USA has sought to increase its influence particularly in Central Asia and Caucasus and has already made an entry there in the form of an anti-terrorist campaign in Afghanistan with the ambition of a long term presence. This increasing influence of the USA and its presence has compelled Russia to ignore the 1999 agreement signed in Istanbul for the withdrawal of its troops from the region. Above all, Russia considers the protection of the 25 million ethnic Russian and Russian speaking population in the other parts of the CIS as one of its main priorities in the post Cold War Soviet environment.

3.2. Problems Areas in Peacekeeping Operations

Russia's peacekeeping operations in the CIS have been accused by the Western scholars and leaders as a neo-imperialist plan of the Russian government in the post Soviet environment. Besides, several other CIS member states are suspicious that Russian peacekeeping operations are part of its efforts to re-integrate the breakaway Soviet republics into a new form of union. One of the major problems of the Russian peacekeeping operation in CIS is the question of the mandate and consent of the conflicting parties. The other problem concerns the structure of the peacekeeping forces as well as the methods that are employed. Moreover, the lack of specially trained soldiers for the operations poses yet another obstacle to the smooth functioning of the missions. Many of the Russian forces have been accused
of direct involvement in the conflicts in favour of one particular warring faction. For instance, the 14\textsuperscript{th} Army in Transdniestria and 201\textsuperscript{st} MRD in Tajikistan were known to have supplied arms and ammunition to one of the warring groups. Even the selection of the troops for tasks of peacekeeping became a major issue in the years following 2000.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There exist several important works on Russia’s peacekeeping operations from different perspectives since mid 1990’s. Few of the significant contributions that bear relevance for the purposes of the present work are discussed in this section.

Dov Lynch’s book ‘Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS: The case of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan, (Royal Institute of International Affairs, Macmillan/London: 2000) is a well documented analysis of the Russian Peacekeeping Operation (RPKO) in the former Soviet Union republics. The first part deals with the formation of Russian foreign policy, viewing peacekeeping as a policy strategy to intervene into the conflict. It provides an in depth analysis of Russia’s peculiar definition of peacekeeping. Pointing out that most of the RPKO in the CIS used troops which were already present in the conflict zone, Lynch argues that it lies at the root of the partial nature of the peacekeepers. The second part of the book is focussed on the case studies of Russian strategy toward Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan. However, the author skips a detailed analysis of Russia’s peacekeeping operation in South Ossetia.

John Mackinlay and Peter Cross edited book ‘Regional Peacekeeper: The Paradox of Russian peacekeeping (published by United Nations University Press in 2003), is a compilation of various article by various authors. The book is documented on rise of Russia as a regional peacekeeper in CIS. Further the volume includes first hand accounts of the CIS peacekeeping efforts in South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Moldova, and Tajikistan. The authors examine the Russia’s longstanding obligations and strategic interests and its continuity. Further, the authors investigates on Russian military presence in its former Soviet territory as a regional peacekeeper, to determine whether these forces have been genuinely peacekeeping
or are in fact a post-imperial presence that seeks to maintain former strategic interests. The authors conclude that although the Russian strategic intent may have been hegemonic, in real terms the manifestation of the "peacekeepers" on the ground is now benign and probably not militarily capable of furthering Russian strategic aims. However, the authors didn’t mention the post Soviet problems within the Russian troops.

Even after the end of Cold War the concept of peacekeeping remains valid and became the centre of interest for many countries. A research paper ‘Russian Approaches to Peacekeeping Operations’ by A. Raevsky and I.N. Vorob’ev, published by United Nation Publications in 1994 is a well documented work on this subject. The paper evaluates the possible methods and means used for Russia in future peacekeeping operations. For better understanding of Russian peacekeeping operations the authors focussed on the problems inherent to peacekeeping operations. The authors opine that proximity to the conflicts zone is one of the issues where Russia and the Western countries have frequently conflicting over the philosophies of peacekeeping. The paper further examines the causes of the emergence of conflicts in CIS and its threat to neighbouring countries including Russia. However, the details assessment on cause of conflicts and it potential threats to Russia is not discussed clearly.

Russian peacekeeping operation in Tajikistan is considered as one of the most expensive both in term of casualties and funding. For better understanding the nature of the conflict and its problem areas for successful peacekeeping operation, The Tajikistan Conflict (Published by Russian Centre for Strategic Research and International Studies in 1997) by Irina Zviagelskaya is considered to be one of good document. The author gives a clear picture on origin and effects of the Tajikistan conflict in Central Asia. The author states that the post Cold War Tajik conflict lays its genesis in Soviet era. It was the contradictions between clans inside Tajikistan as well as inter-ethnic and quasi-ethnic tensions together generated post Cold War conflict. Moreover it was the emergences of Islamic fundamentalism through Afghanistan which worsened the Tajik conflict.
Ethnic Conflict in the Former Soviet Union is another research paper by Vitaly V. Naumkin which was published by Russian Centre for Strategic Research and International Studies in 1997 give a further comprehensive documentation on the rise of the post Cold War or civil war in the Former Soviet Union republics.

An Agenda for Peace (second edition) by Boutros Boutros Ghali (former Secretary General of the United Nations) published in 1995 in New York is a well acknowledged text which is divided into two main sections. This is a kind of reports in response to post Cold War ongoing debates on nature of peace operation to emerging complexity of intra-states disputes. The first section of the book is focussed on the approaches to peace operations for the realisations of the goals of the UN while the second section is basically a additional documents which reflects the debates. The author gives a clear definition on peacekeeping, peace-building, peacemaking and preventive diplomacy with its measures and method for its implementations.

In post Cold War period peacekeeping and peace enforcement are two of the key methods of peace operations. Sometimes peacekeeping operations drifted into peace enforcements e.g. peacekeeping operations in Somalia and Bosnia. Prof. Dr. Trevor Findlay in his article “Peacekeeping and Peace Enforcement,” highlighted these two methods as well as its problem areas. The author further focussed on the future prospects of these two methods in international system.

Maxim Shashenkov well documented article on “Russian Peacekeeping in the ‘Near Abroad’,” examines the unique nature of Russia’s peacekeeping. The author argues that Russian peacekeeping operations in CIS were conducted without the UN mandate. But the author further argues that it was operated under the bilateral as well as regional agreements with parties to the conflicts. The article provided some of the well documented facts on tries that was signed between the Russia and other CIS members states.
5. THE OBJECTIVES OF THESIS

The end of the Cold War was expected to mark the beginning of a new era in international relations as well as to bring about changes in the foreign policy of every nation in order to adapt to the new international environment. Under this expectation Russia initially directed its policy towards the West by neglecting former Soviet republics. However, with the realisation of the strategic significance of the region, Russia started directing its policies towards the CIS. In this larger context, the present work undertakes an examination of the post Cold War developments within the former Soviet space. It also proposes to study Russia’s foreign policy towards the ‘near abroad’ in that connection. Further, it aims at exploring the nature of their relationships and the extent to which their interests are mutually at stake and inter-linked.

The main objective is to analyse the development of Russia’s peacekeeping operation in the CIS with regard to the changes in its foreign policy. Another objective of the present work is to examine Russia’s military capabilities to actually maintain peace in the CIS.

For bringing a concrete conclusion as well as better understanding of the nature and role of the Russian peacekeeping operation in the CIS conflicts, the thesis examines the following hypotheses: Since late 1991, peacekeeping has become an areas of interest for Russian leaders. The growing conflicts in the CIS, which carries potential for affecting Russia’s geo-strategic compulsions, is the main factor for the emergence of this new interest. Thus, Russia’s peacekeeping interest emanates mainly from its national interests.

In addition to the national security interests, the peacekeeping role of Russia is also dictated by the concern to protect the rights, freedoms, dignity and welfare of the ethnic Russians, and interests of the Russian minorities in the CIS. Russia has used the peacekeeping operations in these conflicts as an opportunity to maintain her presence in the region. In this way, she could re-establish her position in the erstwhile Soviet Republics. Russia’s Military intervention in this region has also been seen as a counter move to protect her interests against the military entry
of other big powers. Big powers, such as the USA, have already made an incursion into the region under the expansion of the NATO and its fight against terrorism.

The present work also attempts to answer other related questions such as: Was there any instance of transgressions or violations by Russian troops in performing their duties in the Central Asia? Is there any link between Russian peacekeeping efforts and an imperialist ambition? What are the major characteristics of Russia's foreign policy and how crucial are they for peacekeeping? How is the role of Russian peacekeeping perceived by the CIS countries?

6. THE PLAN OF THE PRESENT WORK

The present work is divided into seven chapters including the conclusion chapter. The First Chapter is the general introduction to the work. The Second chapter "Introduction: International peacekeeping and Russian Federation: A Politico-Historical examination" is focused on the changing nature of the UN peacekeeping. Furthermore, the chapter examine development of new form of peacekeeping operations with rise of regional organisation as regional peacekeepers. In this context, the Russia's approach to peacekeeping operations is discussed. For better understanding post Cold War peacekeeping operations as conflict resolution /management, the chapter examine feature of the conflicts resolution/management theory. The chapter further examines the evolution of the Russian peacekeeping and of its post Soviet peacekeeping force structure. Since the post Cold War peacekeeping operations were frequently drifted to peace-enforcement as well as its overlapping with other peace operations measures the chapter examine a conceptual clarifications on this subjects.

The third chapter "Russian Foreign Policy towards the CIS" attempts to evaluate Boris Yeltsin's foreign policy toward the former Soviet republics and the changing nature of Vladimir Putin's foreign policy in the 21st century. The chapter further discussed the Russian national interest areas in CIS which actually ambitious its foreign policy as well as peacekeeping operations as a part of it.
The fourth chapter "Russia's Peacekeeping Operation in Central Asia: A case study of Tajikistan," deal with the case study of Russia's peacekeeping operation in Tajikistan's civil war. The chapter begin with explanations of root cause of conflict and it complicated nature. It further analysed those factors which compelled Russia to conduct its peacekeeping operations since 1992. In order to understand the sources of the mandate over the Russian peacekeeping operation focussed is made on several treaties which were concluded since 1992 between Tajikistan and other CIS members' states. The chapter also examine the role of the international peacekeepers. Whereas, the chapter five "Russia's Peacekeeping Operation in Moldova and Georgia" is focus on Moldova and Georgia conflicts.

The chapter six "Russia's Peacekeeping Operation under Putin," focus on the Vladimir Putin's approach to the CIS conflicts. The chapter also examines the increasing Russian contribution to UN peacekeeping operations as well as the future Russian peacekeeping forces.

The last Chapter (chapter seven), after thorough analysis of the Russia's peacekeeping operation role in the CIS conflicts zone along with its interests and foreign policy this chapter made a critical assessment on it. It further explains the problem areas and possible solution to the matter. At last but the least the chapter will discussed the question of Is Russia peacekeeping operation in the CIS a neo-imperialist plan?