Chapter-V

UZBEKISTAN-UNITED STATES SECURITY COOPERATION
Uzbekistan's strategic location and rich resources make the Republic a strategically significant country. Moreover, among the five Central Asian Republics (CARs) Uzbekistan has the largest population and a commendable defence force, which makes the Republic more attractive. Uzbekistan was the first country in the region to establish an Academy of Armed Forces in 1994 to "provide education for senior officers" (Rahmani 2003: 125). In October 2000, Uzbekistan for the first time appointed a civilian Defence Minister, Kadir Gulomov. Uzbekistan after independence has taken several steps to modernize its defence system, which included "a better distribution of the military units on the territory of the country, professionalization of the military and progressive move away from the strategic and material dependence on Moscow" (ibid).

An important component of the Uzbekistan-U.S. bilateral relationship has been security cooperation, especially after 9/11. The establishment of 'Strategic partnership' between the two in 2002 further intensified the relationship. Post 9/11 support to the U.S. led to increased U.S. economic and security assistance to Uzbekistan. Nevertheless, security cooperation that developed after September 11 had its genesis in the bilateral military and political cooperation of the nineties.

The overall U.S. security policy towards Central Asia would help to better understand the dynamics of Uzbek-U.S. security cooperation. Security cooperation between the U.S. and the CARs has been developing much before 9/11, though in smaller scale. The Freedom Support Act of 1992 identified the areas of U.S. interest in the region, which included safety of nuclear weapons, non-proliferation, provision for humanitarian aid, promotion of democracy and free markets. The U.S. security policy objectives before September 11 mainly centred on the following as highlighted by the former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defence, J.D. Crouch II (2002):

- Eliminating the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction;
- Strengthening these states' sovereignty and independence;
• Supporting defence reform, namely, helping these states to reform their militaries to transition from the Soviet-era legacy of top-heavy, bloated militaries, to smaller, more professional forces capable of supporting legitimate defence needs;
• Encouraging participation in NATO’s Partnership for Peace;
• Promoting regional peacekeeping capabilities; and,
• Fostering greater regional cooperation.

In October 1999, Central Asia was included in the USCENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR). USCENTCOM thus assumed responsibility of all military engagement activities, planning and operations of the CARs and was responsible for peacetime engagement planning and progress execution for the Central Asian region (Globalsecurity.org 2009d). The former Commander in Chief of USCENTCOM, General Anthony Zinni, pointed out that the U.S. interest in the region were to reduce transnational threats: drugs, terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Blank 2000: 31). The U.S. engagement with the CARs thus involved “strengthening ties with regional militaries by conducting bilateral military interactions, interpersonal relationship, security assistance, tailored training, and humanitarian assistance operations” (ibid).

After the onset of the U.S. led ‘war on terror’ in Afghanistan, the strategic importance of the region increased manifold. The CARs became the frontline states for the U.S. war efforts in Afghanistan, especially Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, both of whom allowed the U.S. to open bases in their territory. Uzbekistan was the first country to allow the U.S. to build a military base in its territory and later on signed a Strategic Partnership with the U.S. Other CARs too cooperated with the coalition force fighting in Afghanistan in various ways. The U.S. and France used the Dushanbe airport in Tajikistan as “gas-and-go” refuelling base, Kyrgyzstan allowed the U.S. to open its second base in the region at Manas and Kazakhstan allowed limited landing rights at three airfields (Olcott 2005: 5). Turkmenistan in spite of its principle of “positive neutrality” also provided transit for humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan (ibid). Stability in Afghanistan is crucial for the regional peace and security. The Central Asian leader feared that fundamentalism and instability in Afghanistan would have spill-over effect on the Central Asian region, which had already witnessed the spread of radical forces like IMU and
The regional leaders were thus eager to see the fall of Taliban regime and so supported the U.S. led operation in Afghanistan. In addition, the CARs received increased assistance from the U.S.

William J. Burns, the Under Secretary of Political Affairs in his remark at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in 2009 stressed that “a stable future for Afghanistan depends on the continued assistance to our Central Asian partners-just, as a stable future for Central Asia depends upon success against violent extremists in Afghanistan” (Burns 2009: 1). In addition to maintaining stability in Afghanistan, cooperation of the CARs is also required to tackle present day global challenges like drug trafficking, non-proliferation and energy security” (ibid).

Uzbekistan was a key ally of the U.S. in the region for its Afghan operation. The bilateral relation saw a dramatic downturn after 2005. However, there are signs of rapprochement in recent times. The chapter discusses the various dynamics of Uzbekistan-U.S. security cooperation, which is one of the main pillars of the bilateral ties. The chapter first discusses the military engagement between the two sides in the 1990s, which later (post 9/11) helped the two to enhance their cooperation. The next section throws light on the post-September 11 developments. The chapter also gives a detailed overview of the U.S. security assistance to Uzbekistan, which increased manifold after Uzbekistan extended support to the coalition forces after September 11. It also compares the security assistance provided to all the CARs by the U.S. (in some major areas) to have a better picture of the various phases of the bilateral ties. The thaw in the bilateral relation since 2005 seems to be improving gradually, which is reflected in the U.S. renewed interest in Uzbekistan, whose cooperation is essential for the success of the Northern Distribution Network to maintain unhindered supply of non-military goods to coalition forces stationed in Afghanistan.
SECURITY COOPERATION PRIOR TO 9/11

Security cooperation between Uzbekistan and U.S. has been growing since the nineties, which later facilitated the two countries to further strengthen their bilateral security ties. Crouch II in the 2002 address to the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations pointed out that the U.S. bilateral engagement with the CARs prior to September 11 “laid the groundwork both politically and militarily for coalition operations in Central Asia in support of the Global War on Terrorism”. Prior to 9/11 security engagement with Uzbekistan prior to 9/11 was on a smaller scale consisting of mainly eliminating Soviet times WMD materiel, training of Uzbek Defence personnel and military engagement within the scope of NATO’s PfP programme. During this phase Uzbekistan took U.S. help to revamp its defence force. Uzbekistan in its efforts to reorganise its defence force had asked U.S. assistance for training its military personnel (Rahmani 2003: 125). From time to time Uzbek defence personnel has attended several training courses, seminars and exercises supported by the U.S.

However, at this time Uzbekistan did not figure as an important country for the U.S. in the region. Starr (2006:6) wrote that the-

“Department of State never really focussed on Uzbekistan. During the 1990s the stress was on region-wide initiatives rather than on identifying and addressing the specific needs of individual countries. Deputy Secretary of State Talbott’s 1997 statement of U.S. policy in the region did not even mention the country”.

Nevertheless, some cooperation existed between the two sides on a low scale before 2001, which was significant. Prior to 9/11, the U.S. as part of its overall policy to assist the CARs to eliminate Soviet era WMD materiel had also supported Uzbekistan in its endeavour. As part of Soviet legacy, Uzbekistan like other republics in the region hosted WMD materiel. The Comprehensive Threat Reduction Programme (CTR Programme is discussed in details below) under the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) has helped the Republic to eliminate its Soviet era WMD materiel. Uzbekistan with the U.S. assistance decontaminated the Vorozhdeniye Island from stored biological agents and destroyed the testing facility. The testing facility of chemical weapons at Nukus was also destroyed with the U.S. help. With assistance from the U.S. physical protection and material accounting systems have been upgraded at nuclear research reactors in
Uzbekistan and the 90 percent HEU fuel at a research reactor in Uzbekistan was reduced to 36 percent in 1997 (Butler 2002).

In February 1998, US-Uzbekistan Joint Commission was established to facilitate regular high level contacts and to institutionalize the bilateral relation. The Commission is divided into four committees-Political; Military; Trade, Investment and Energy; and Economic Reform (NTI 2010). The Political Committee looks after non-proliferation. The Political Committee's Non-proliferation Subcommittee agreed that the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (NPT) should remain the "cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime" (ibid). The subcommittee was also in favour of improving export control measures to prevent the spread of WMD and encouraged the U.S. DoD training initiatives, including those under the CTR (ibid). In May 1999, the U.S. DoD and Uzbekistan's Defence Ministry signed two cooperative agreements (Olcott 2005: 72).

Another development in this period was the starting of the new Central Asian Border Security Initiative (CASI) in April 2000, which "encompasses several U.S. Government-funded programs that focus on combating terrorism and stopping the illicit-trafficking of weapons of mass destruction, conventional arms and narcotics" (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2001) The U.S. Government under the CASI project provided training and technical assistance. It provided US$ 3 million as assistance to each of the Central Asian states (ibid)

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been an important instrument of U.S. security engagement in the region, especially through its Partnership for Peace Programme (PfP). Bilateral and multilateral military exercises have contributed for the growth of military to military cooperation by providing training to defence personnel of these republics.
**Uzbekistan and NATO**

NATO formed in 1949 by the Washington Treaty of 1949 has been engaged with the CARs since their independence. Collective Defence is the basic principle of the NATO, which is enshrined in Article 5 of the Treaty. According to the Article, “if a NATO ally is the victim of an armed attack, each and every other member of the Alliance will consider this act of violence as an armed attack against all members and will take the actions it deems necessary to assist the Ally attacked” (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). However, with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, NATO too had to redefine its role to face new challenges. Expressing the new role of the Alliance post 1991, the US Joint Chief of Staff, General Hugh Shelton stated-(Liebig 1999: 23).

“narrow view of collective defence is however, insufficient to counter the more sophisticated and subtle dangers we face today. NATO must broaden its strategic perspective to protect all of our interest from a myriad of complex, asymmetric threats that span the conflict continuum.--- NATO must place new emphasis on the unpredictable and multidirectional nature of threats such as regional conflict, weapons of mass destruction and terrorism”

Echoing similar sentiment, former Secretary of State Waren Christopher and former Secretary of Defence William Perry said (Christopher and Perry 1997)

“the alliance needs to adapt its military strategy to today’s reality: the danger to the security of its members is not primarily potential aggression to their collective territory but threats to their collective interests beyond their territory. Shifting the alliances’ emphasis from defence of members’ territory to defence of common interests is the strategic imperatives. These threats include the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, disruption of the flow of oil, terrorism, genocidal violence and wars of aggression in other region that threaten to cause great disruption. To deal with such threats, alliance members need to have a way to rapidly form military coalition that can accomplish goals beyond NATO territory------For NATO to succeed, it must develop the ability to respond to today’s security needs”.

NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP) Programme introduced in the NATO’s Brussels Summit in January 1994 was an initiative to enhance political and military cooperation between NATO and the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union and the interested members of the OSCE (Bhatty and Bronson 2000: 131). Except Tajikistan, all the other four CARs joined the PfP Programme in 1994 itself. Tajikistan joined the Programme in 2002. The PfP programme—(ibid).
"promotes civilian control of the military, enables joint operation with NATO led peacekeeping and humanitarian missions encourage transparency in defence planning and budgeting; and open communication among PfP countries"

The engagement with the PfP programme is based on the needs and abilities of the individual partner countries, which makes it attractive for the partner countries. Each country has to choose from a list of activities two-year programmes of cooperation according to its requirements, known as Individual Partnership Programmes (NATO Backgrounder 2007: 3). The Warsaw Initiative Fund established in 1994 finances the U.S. component of the PfP programme (Moroney 2003: 172).

PfP Programmes covers wide range of activities like defence-related work, defence reform, defence policy and planning, civil-military relations, education and training, military-to-military cooperation and exercise, civil emergency planning and disaster-response, and cooperation on science and environmental issues (NATO Backgrounder 2007: 3). To join the PfP programme, a partner country has to sign the PfP Framework Document, which calls for partner country's commitment to (ibid).

"respect international law, the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Helsinki Final Act and international disarmament and arms control agreements; to refrain from threat or use of force against other states; to respect existing borders; and to settle disputes peacefully.------ The purpose of these commitments and of the PfP programme as a whole is to build confidence and transparency, diminish threats to peace, and build stronger security relationships with the Allies and with other Partner countries".

The CARs became part of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council formed in December 1991, which was replaced by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997. Some scholars are of the opinion that “relations with NATO hold the greatest importance for the Central Asian states’ strategic relations with the U.S. Apart from bilateral security and strategic assistance programmes; the U.S. government has also initiated a series of military exchanges and joint exercises within the framework of NATO’s PfP programme” (Monir 2005: 159). The CARs also welcomed NATO’s presence in the region as reflected in the words of the Kazakh President Nazarbayev (ibid).

“The North Atlantic Treaty has a suitable goal for our rapprochement to assist the democratic development of the states of Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS,
and to prevent regional conflicts as far as possible---. NATO member-states for the purposes of cooperation with these states have committed themselves to providing their accumulated experience and considerable expert potential in defence policy. Considering all this, we will broaden contacts with NATO, provided their sphere and limits are strictly determined and they are not damaging for military cooperation with the CIS framework or bilateral military ties.

The June 2004 Istanbul Summit of NATO described Central Asia and Caucasus as “priority” region for NATO, highlighting the importance NATO assign to the region. For the first time a Special Representative to the Caucasus and Central Asia was appointed at the Istanbul Summit whose task was to “maintain high-level working contacts with regional leaders in order to promote regional security and assist Partners in making the best possible use of partnership tools” (NATO Backgrounder 2007). NATO Secretary General Jaap De Hoop Scheffer visited Central Asia in October 2004 and he said, “NATO and Central Asia share vital interests and the Alliance is committed to expanding cooperation with its Central Asian partners” (NATO Update 2004). NATO called for further support from the CARs in the NATO-led ISAF mission in Afghanistan as a stable Afghanistan is of “vital interest to both NATO and Central Asian partners” (ibid).

Below are the major highlights of cooperation between NATO and CARs since independence-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Milestones</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Five CARs join the North Atlantic Cooperation Council</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan signed the PfP Framework Document</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>In the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks, Central Asian Partners join fellow members of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in condemning the attacks and pledging to combat terrorism. Soon after, over-flight rights, bases and other assets in Central Asia are made available for the U.S. led coalition operation in Afghanistan.</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>Tajikistan joins PfP Programme. Kazakhstan starts participating in the PfP Planning and Review Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Uzbekistan hosts a disaster-response exercise, “Ferghana 2003”. CARs support NATO’s mission in Afghanistan after it takes charge of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. The Virtual Silk Highway project is completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>NATO’s Istanbul Summit places special focus on Central Asia and Caucasus Tajikistan signs a transit agreement with NATO for operations in Afghanistan</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Kazakhstan develops its first Individual Partnership Action Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Kyrgyzstan decides to participate in the PfP Planning and Review Process</td>
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Immediately after independence Uzbekistan in 1992 joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and later on joined the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997. On 13 July 1994, Uzbekistan signed the PfP Framework Document and signed the Security Agreement with NATO in August 1995. Uzbekistan in June 1996 agreed on IPP and in July 1996 Uzbekistan signed the PfP SOFA and its additional protocol. Uzbekistan was a key partner of NATO until 2005. Post Andijan incident Uzbekistan’s engagement with NATO slowed down after NATO asked for an independent probe of the Andijan event. The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) provides the framework for dialogue between NATO and Uzbekistan. Officials from NATO regularly visit Uzbekistan to review the cooperation level and to hold discussions with Uzbek government officials (North Atlantic Treaty Organization 2009). Under the PfP programme, NATO and Uzbekistan are “developing practical cooperation in a number of areas through the country’s Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) and the Planning and Review Process (PARP)” (ibid).
The PARP of the PfP “helps identify, develop and evaluate forces and capabilities, which might be made available for NATO-led peace support operations. It also provides a framework for Partners to develop effective, affordable and sustainable armed forces, as well as promote wider defence reform efforts” (NATO Backgrounder 2007:6). NATO has long supported the democratic and institutional reform processes in Uzbekistan, especially in defence and security sector reform. Uzbekistan joined PARP in 2002, which looks after the “interoperability between elements of its armed forces and those of NATO Allies” (North Atlantic Treaty Organization 2009). NATO and Uzbekistan are working together to develop a peacekeeping battalion to work alongside NATO Allies. Other fields of cooperation under the defence and security reform efforts include Uzbekistan’s participation in seminars and workshops on defence policy and strategy within the PfP framework, as well as military education of Uzbek officers, with an emphasis on English language training (ibid). Uzbekistan remained in PARP till 2005.

The Uzbek-U.S. Strategic Partnership Document also mentions NATO’s PfP Programme. Article 2.4 of the Declaration on the Strategic Partnership outlines cooperation under the Partnership for Peace Programme. Both sides agreed to cooperate on both bilateral and multilateral basis for the purpose of (U.S. Department of State (2002)-

“i) Training of peacekeeping units of the Republic of Uzbekistan, conducting bilateral and multilateral exercises within the framework of NATO Partnership for Peace and plans for bilateral contacts;
ii) Establishment of a NATO Partnership for Peace Training Centre in the Republic of Uzbekistan, and organization of its activities; assistance by the U.S. side in strengthening the center’s methodological and logistical base and in providing appropriate assistance for its activities;
iii) Assistance in the study and phased introduction of NATO standards in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Uzbekistan, to include equipping them with appropriate types of weapons and military hardware, as well as training military personnel within the NATO Partnership for Peace framework”.

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Table 5.2
Uzbekistan and NATO at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Key Milestones</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Uzbekistan joins Partnership for Peace Programme. Uzbekistan signs a security agreement with NATO.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Uzbekistan and NATO agree on the country’s first IPP. Uzbekistan signs the PfP SOFA agreement with the allies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Uzbekistan is connected to the Virtual Silk Highway. Uzbekistan joins the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>NATO and partner countries complete a major disaster response exercise in Uzbekistan</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>NATO’s Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, calls for an independent investigation into the events at Andijan in May; the NATO Parliamentary Assembly adopts a Declaration also recommending an independent investigation into these events.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Uzbekistan signs an agreement to carry out a Science for Peace and Security project aimed at the destruction of the country’s stocks of melange, a very toxic substance.</td>
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The four main areas of cooperation are –Security Cooperation, Defence and Security Sector Reform, Civil Emergency Planning and Science and Environment (North Atlantic Treaty Organization 2009). As part of the civil emergency planning and disaster-relief coordination efforts, Uzbekistan hosted “Ferghana 2003”, a disaster-response (simulation of an international response to a major earthquake) exercise. It was the first EAPC exercise held in Central Asia (North Atlantic Treaty Organization 2009). Uzbekistan received grants for about fifty projects for scientific and environmental collaboration under the Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme, which included studies into radiological risks in Central Asia, solar water supply and desalination for the Aral Sea region population, and a modelling project to assess environmental security in Khorezm (ibid).

In 2004, eight Uzbek journalists and prominent academicians sponsored by the U.S. Embassy and USNATO, visited NATO Headquarters in Brussels to learn about the role of NATO and Uzbekistan’s participation in the PfP programme. Following the visit,
the participating Uzbek journalists wrote a series of articles about NATO and what they learned during their visit, improving Uzbek public understanding of the important coordination between Uzbekistan and NATO (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2005).

The U.S. DoD Warsaw Initiative programme supports Uzbekistan's and participation in NATO’s PfP exercises, 80 percent of which is funded by NATO and 20 percent by the U.S. Government (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2001). In the fiscal year 2001-2002, a small amount under Warsaw Initiative was also budgeted for Uzbekistan by the U.S. Department of State.

In 2000, Uzbekistan received $102,000 under the Warsaw Initiative (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2001). In 2001, DoD allocated $456,250 in Warsaw Initiative funding for Uzbekistan, of which $220,000 was used to support Uzbekistan’s participation in PfP exercises (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2002). In 2002, Uzbekistan was allocated $139,600 under this programme, out of which $45,719 was used to support participation in PfP exercises (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2003). The Warsaw Initiative Fund helped more than 150 Uzbek service members to participate in various exercises, seminars and other PfP events (ibid). Under the Warsaw Initiative funds, more than 111 and sixty two Uzbek service members participated in various exercises, seminars and other PfP events in 2004 and 2005 respectively (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2005 and 2006).

The Virtual Silk Highway project conducted under NATO’s “Security through Science Programme” is an effort to improve internet facilities in the Caucasus and Central Asian region through a satellite-based network. Uzbekistan is also a participant in the Virtual Silk Highway project. Another significant development to enhance cooperation in scientific and environmental issues was an agreement between NATO and Uzbekistan in 2008 to destroy toxic “melange”† rocket fuel found near Samarkand and

† Melange is a highly toxic substance used during the Soviet days as rocket fuel oxidizer.
reconverts them into environment friendly substance (North Atlantic Treaty Organization 2009).

NATO’s relationship with Uzbekistan suffered a blow after the Andijan incident in 2005. According to news reports, NATO’s Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, Robert Simmons in August 2006 said “the military crackdown in Andijon in May 2005 obviously put a chill on Uzbek-NATO ties” but he expressed hope that the relation would improve (RadioFree Europe Radio Liberty 2006a). NATO at this time was apprehensive of certain developments in the Republic. Uzbekistan rejoined CIS Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) in 2006, which made NATO uneasy as it signalled re-emergence of Russian influence in Uzbekistan. But at the same time NATO was cautious not to make the fear apparent. Robert Simmon stated that Uzbekistan’s readmission in the CSTO “should not affect its future collaboration with NATO” (ibid). At present, there are regular dialogues with Uzbekistan through the EAPC, and NATO is engaged in developing cooperation in a number of specific fields with Uzbekistan (North Atlantic Treaty Organization 2009).

**Joint Military Exercises**

Bilateral and multilateral military exercises conducted from time to time have helped the U.S. to forge better military contacts with the CARs. Some scholars view that the U.S. influence in the region has increased with the number of bilateral and multilateral military exercises it has conducted with CARs of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan from the middle of nineties (Moroney 2003: 169). The U.S. conducted series of bilateral Balance exercises with Uzbekistan Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, which included Balances Ultra, Umbra, Umpire and Unity, dealing with small-unit tactical operations in urban, desert and mountain environments (ibid: 175). These exercises were conducted each year with the U.S. Special Forces (Moroney 2003: 175). In June 1997, Uzbekistan and the U.S. concluded their Ultra balance military exercises in Ferghana Valley (Pannier 2005).

Several other military exercises took place between the U.S. and Uzbekistan. Since 1996, Uzbekistan is participating in various joint exercises under the “Spirit of PfP

In August 1995, exercise Cooperative Nugget was conducted at Fort Polk, Louisiana Joint Readiness Training Centre in the U.S., first time that such an exercise was held in the U.S. (Globalsecurity.org 2009b). The participants were soldiers from fourteen PfP countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan) and three NATO (Canada, the U.S. and U.K) nations. More than 4000 soldiers participated in the exercise, which was hosted by the U.S. Atlantic Command on behalf of the U.S. (ibid). The exercise was conducted under the ‘Spirit of PfP programme’ and sixth exercise under NATO’s PfP programme. It was “designed to expose the countries’ soldiers to interoperability issues at the company and platoon level” (ibid). Kazakhstan joined the exercise in June-July 1997.

Cooperative Osprey exercises were conducted to “improve the interoperability of participating nations and to train military personnel in peace support operations” (Butler 2001). In August 1996, the United States, the Netherlands, and Canada along with sixteen PfP nations, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan participated in training exercises in North Carolina, which included amphibious operations in a coastal area, and tactics and procedures (ibid).

A major initiative by the CARs to maintain regional stability is the creation of the Central Asian Battalion (CENTRASBAT) in December 1995. The founding members are Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. CENTRASBAT is a “peacekeeping unit under
the aegis of the United Nations to provide peace and stability in Central Asia” (ibid). It conducted series of exercises to “improve interaction with the Central Asian States by focusing on peacekeeping/humanitarian operations and exercising command, control, and logistics within a multinational framework” (Globalsecurity.org 2009a). CENTRASBAT would prevent deployment of other U.N. peace-keeping forces in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in case of military operations (Uzland.Info 1998).

The first exercises under CENTRASBAT were held in 1997 in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, which involved troops from the United States, Russia, Turkey, Georgia, the Baltic States, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In 1998, the Baltic States were replaced by Azerbaijan (ibid). On 14 September 1997, 500 US and forty Central Asian troops boarded planes at North Carolina’s Pope Air Force Base for 7,700 mile non-stop flight to Uzbekistan, which were the longest distance airborne operation in history and the largest airborne operation since Second World War” (Globalsecurity.org 2009a). The main purpose of the operation was to “teach the three countries how to work with other nations’ militaries, including standard North Atlantic Treaty Organization commands” (ibid).

In 1998, Uzbek Army participated in military exercises conducted in the spirit of NATO’s Partnership for Peace program in Chirchik, eighty kilometers to the east of Tashkent city and at Osh in Kyrgyzstan (Uzland.Info 1998). The first part of the CENTRASBAT ninety eight operation participated by the U.S., Russia, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Georgia, was held on 22-23 September 1998 in Chirchik and the second phase was held at Osh on 26-28 September (Globalsecurity.org 2009a)

About 700 soldiers participated in the exercise at Chirchik (Uzland.Info 1998). The participants included about 259 U.S. personnel (10th Mountain Division), 272 from CENTRASBAT and about 200 from the other participating nations (Globalsecurity.org 2009a). The U.S. Army’s 10th Mountain Division under the U.S. Atlantic Command sent 250 soldiers to participate in the exercises. The exercises were mainly to promote
regional cooperation and demonstrate the U.S. growing cooperative relationship with the CARs and to introduce partner participants to NATO doctrine (Uzland.Info 1998). The total expenses for the exercises were five million dollars, a substantial portion covered by NATO (ibid). The exercise was initially sponsored by US Atlantic Command, which later shifted to the U.S. Central Command after Central Asia was shifted to CENTCOM’s area of responsibility (Globalsecurity.org 2009a).

The CENTRASBAT exercise for the first time was held in United States on 13-19 May 1999 (ibid). The U.S. Central Command hosted a training seminar at Tampa as part of the CENTRASBAT exercise. The participants were representatives from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Ukraine, Turkey and the United States and Turkmenistan, France, United Kingdom, Mongolia and Germany participated as observers (ibid). The CENTRASBAT 1997 held at Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan and CENTRASBAT 1998 held at Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan were field exercises. For the first time in 1999, the annual multi-national exercise of CENTRASBAT was held in a seminar format, which gave an opportunity to the participants to freely exchange ideas, methods and techniques used in peacekeeping/humanitarian operations (ibid).

CENTRASBAT 2000 was held on 10-18 September 2000 in Kazakhstan. Personnel from U.S. Central Command, FL, 82nd Airborne Division from Ft. Bragg, NC, and 5th Special Forces Group, Ft. Campbell, KY participated in the annual peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance field exercise (ibid). Other participants in the exercise included Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Mongolia, Russia and the United Kingdom and France and Ukraine participated as observers (ibid). Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan citing the IMU incursion in their territory stated their reluctance to participate in the exercise but eventually took part in CENTRASBAT 2000 exercises (ibid). CENTRASBAT 2000 exercises consisted of four phases: deployment and opening ceremonies, unit planning process and preparations, a tactical field training exercise, and the closing ceremonies and redeployment (ibid). In 2000, the size of the exercise was increased to enable each country to have its own peacekeeping battalion (Butler 2001). According to General Anthony Zinni, Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Central Command, “the change allows
countries that might decide to participate in peacekeeping operations, such as UN operations, to have a full capability to contribute” (ibid).

CENTRASBAT 2001 exercise was a Headquarters Command Post Exercise (CPX) held at Ramstein in Germany (Globalsecurity.org 2009a). The field training exercise resumed in 2002.

SECURITY COOPERATION POST 9/11

The U.S. interest in the region before 9/11 was mainly focussed on the Caspian energy resources and in this respect Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan were the countries of primary interest for the U.S. However, with the beginning of ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’ in Afghanistan, there was a change in the U.S. policy towards the region. Countries close to Afghanistan and which could contribute to the U.S. war efforts in Afghanistan like Uzbekistan, Tajikistan (both sharing border with Afghanistan) and Kyrgyzstan (does not share a border with Afghanistan) became frontline states.

Uzbekistan’s proximity to Afghanistan and its willingness to support the U.S. made it a key player in the U.S. led war in Afghanistan. Of the five CARs, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan shares direct border with Afghanistan. Uzbekistan shares its border with Afghanistan at a place called Termez. During 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Termez was used by the erstwhile USSR for its operation in Afghanistan. Germany, at present has a base at Termez.

Uzbekistan was the first country in the region to “reply to Washington’s call for assistance” after the attack on the U.S. (Daly 2006: 71). The Uzbek Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdulaziz Komilov announced in the days following the attack- “we’re prepared to discuss any issue that would be conducive to eliminating terrorism in our region and strengthening stability” (ibid: 72). Some analysts are of the opinion that the earlier engagement with Uzbekistan has helped the U.S. to get the desired support from the Uzbek Government. Also, security cooperation like military and intelligence efforts started “two or three years’ before 9/11 took place, which helped to enhance cooperation after 9/11 (ibid: 74). Earlier visits by top officials from both sides had paved the way for
better understanding between the two countries, which also facilitated the new level of cooperation that emerged after 9/11.

The security cooperation between the CARs and the U.S. that started after the independence of these republics certainly helped the U.S. to gain access to these countries but there were also other factors that made these republics give access to the U.S. to use their territory (Oliker and Shlapak 2005: 11). In Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan for example, past military contacts helped the U.S. to identify the “right interlocutors” (ibid). At the same time CARs like Tajikistan and Turkmenistan with whom military contacts were “nonexistent” before 2001 also allowed the U.S. to use their facilities (ibid). Prior to 9/11 contacts helped the U.S. as the decision makers in the U.S. knew well “whom to ask for help” (ibid: 12).

The opening of the U.S. base at Karshi-Khanabad intensified the bilateral relationship, which culminated in the signing of the Strategic Partnership in 2002. The U.S. assistance to the Republic was significantly stepped up, with Uzbekistan getting the maximum share of assistance among the five republics. Uzbekistan became a key ally in the region for the U.S. President Karimov “saw the ‘war of terror’ as an opportunity to win favour with the United States and consolidate bilateral relations” (Akbarzadeh 2005: 82).
Uzbekistan allowed the U.S. led coalition forces to use its base at Karshi-Khanabad, also known as K2, which became a symbol of Uzbek-U.S. friendship. The Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) was the initial agreement that guaranteed the U.S. use of the K2 base (Meppen 2006: 21). Khanabad is situated in Qashqadaryo province of Uzbekistan, close to Uzbek-Tajik border and is 90 miles north of the Afghan border (Globalsecurity.org 2009c). K2 is a Soviet time airbase and hosted the Camp Stronghold Freedom, an Army logistics base in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (ibid). Three layers of security were maintained for five kilometres around Khanabad, the outer two layers were guarded by Uzbek forces and the inner layer guarded by US troops (ibid). About 1,000 members of the Army’s 10th Mountain Division were based at the base by mid October 2001 (ibid). The U.S. Air Force personnel constituted the majority force in the base while the U.S. Army provided the “support function, giving Airman everything they need to survive on a daily basis” (ibid). The Units involved were 416th Air Expeditionary Wing (USAF) and 507th Logistics Task Force and 164th Transportation Contract Supervision Detachment (US Army). The Military Traf
fic Management Command (MTM) surface shipments from K2 Base were taken to Afghanistan by contracted private trucks of the 164th Transportation Contract Supervision Detachment to the U.S. and allied troops in Afghanistan (ibid).

U.S. Base at K2

![U.S. Base at K2](image)


**Declaration on the Strategic Partnership and Cooperation Framework**

The Uzbek-U.S. bilateral ties got further impetus with the signing of the Declaration on the Strategic Partnership and Cooperation Framework between the United States of America and the Republic of Uzbekistan in March 2002, which included various areas of mutual interests. The Declaration (2002) was signed during President Karimov’s visit to the U.S. in March 2002. The Declaration stated that both sides seek to “establish qualitatively new and mutually beneficial relations in the political, economic, military, military-technical, humanitarian and other areas”. The Declaration was a “longer-term
political agreement and proved to be much more comprehensive than the SOFA” (Meppen 2006: 22).

The signing of the Strategic partnership was hailed as “opening of ‘new chapter’ in U.S-Uzbekistan relations” by President George Bush (Akbarzadeh 2005: 75). The same sentiment was reflected in Uzbekistan too. According to an Uzbek Army newspaper (Watanparvar) the Declaration provided (ibid)

“unlimited opportunities and inexhaustible potential-----The partnership raises economic, political, social, cultural, military and technical cooperation to a new, unprecedented height, strengthening Uzbekistan’s international stance for the promotion of peace and stability in the region, guaranteeing peaceful life, wellbeing and prosperity of our nation”

Article 2 of the Declaration highlights cooperation in the military and military-technical field between the two sides. Though it states that U.S. would take serious note of any external threat to Uzbekistan but the Document failed short of any security commitments from the U.S. to Uzbekistan. The Declaration states (U.S. Department of State 2002) -

“the United States affirms that it would regard with grave concern any external threat to the security and territorial integrity of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Were this to occur, the United States will consult with the Republic of Uzbekistan on an urgent basis to develop and implement an appropriate response in accordance with U.S. Constitutional procedures. For its part, the Republic of Uzbekistan recognizes the critical importance of developing close, cooperative ties with its neighbors and promoting efforts at regional cooperation”.

The major areas of security cooperation identified in the Article are-Combating Transnational Threats to Security, Bilateral Military and Military-Technical Cooperation, Cooperation under the Partnership for Peace Programme and Disaster and Emergence Prevention and Response. The Agreement also mentions cooperation in other fields like- Democratization, implementation of market reforms, provision of priority and long-term assistance in implementing economic reforms, development of trade and investment cooperation, expansion of regional cooperation in Central Asia, cooperation in specialized training, education, public health and environmental protection, cooperation in science and technology, human dimension, information, improvement of legislation and Law-Enforcement Agencies. The Agreement was however, silent on Khanabad
Lieutenant Colonel Meppen argues that (ibid: 23).

"The Agreement was a comprehensive document which signalled sweeping reforms and modernization for Uzbekistan and pledged significant good faith efforts by the U.S. to assist the process with specialists and money as available. It did not include a *quid pro quo* to Uzbekistan for U.S. basing at Khanabad, nor did it specify Uzbek levels of support to the U.S. in the War on Terror. It did not stipulate any monetary amounts, to include any rental or leasing agreements for Uzbek facilities, nor did it promise any specific amounts of aid, either military or economic. However, those involved in the decision-making process assumed the U.S. assistance package to Uzbekistan would grow substantially, which it did."

The bilateral ties reached its zenith post September 11. For the U.S., cooperation of the CARs was crucial for its war efforts in Afghanistan. The military base at K2 gave the U.S. its required access to Afghanistan from the region. Uzbekistan in return enjoyed several benefits. Uzbekistan’s support to the U.S. resulted in greater U.S assistance, both economic and security to Uzbekistan. During this period, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan supported the U.S. operation in Afghanistan in some form or the other and in return enjoyed greater assistance. Since the cooperation with Uzbekistan was the strongest in the region, the Republic got the lion’s share of the U.S. assistance to the region. Olcott (2005: 2) argues that post September 11 “security environment created an unexpected second chance for the Central Asian states”, as the U.S. assistance to the region increased manifold. Among other U.S. assistances (discussed below in details) Uzbekistan after allowing access to its facilities to the U.S. received two armoured cutters (for patrolling the Amu Darya River), radios, helicopter upgrades, language training, non-commissioned officer (NCO) training support, a military modelling and simulation centre, psychological operations training, airport navigation system upgrades (Oliker and Shlapak 2005: 12). There were also reports indicating that Uzbekistan and the U.S. are jointly constructing the II-114 aircraft (ibid). Another benefit that the Republic gained was the up gradation of facilities like constructing houses, other structures and improved runways (ibid: 13). However, in case of Manas, in addition to the up gradation of the base, the U.S. also paid rent for the use of the base, which was not much to the liking of Uzbekistan who later also demanded payment for the use of the K2 base.

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Another benefit of the cooperation with the U.S. was the destruction of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) bases in Afghanistan. Both the U.S. and Uzbekistan from time to time have stated that both of them share a common enemy-terrorism. Since 1999, Uzbekistan has been facing the brunt of radical forces. IMU forces was said to have been behind the February 1999 bombing in Tashkent. IMU also led armed incursion into the Uzbek-Kyrgyz border. President Karimov has been uncomfortable with IMU activities for long as it has been trying to topple his government. In 2000, after several diplomatic efforts, the U.S. included the IMU in the list of terrorist organization, a diplomatic victory for Uzbekistan. Top IMU leaders were believed to be killed in Afghanistan during the ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’, which was welcome news for Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan closeness with the U.S. after September 11 was also a message to Russia. Uzbekistan since its independence has shown its displeasure with Russian dominance and wanted to reduce Russian influence in the Republic. Uzbekistan had often complained of Russia still “entertaining colonial ambitions and not recognising the sovereignty of the Central Asian States beyond formalities” (Akbarzadeh 2005: 83). Post September 11 developments gave Uzbekistan the desired opportunity to develop close cooperation with the U.S. and counter Russian influence in the country. Earlier, Uzbekistan had hoped that the Shanghai Forum, in which both Russia and China are members, would provide it an alternative (ibid). Uzbekistan saw the Forum as an opportunity to play the two big players one against the other to serve its interest (ibid). However, Uzbekistan failed to get the desired result as “the two great power had very similar views on the region and left Tashkent little room for manoeuvre” (ibid). The signing of the Strategic Partnership –“offered Tashkent an opportunity to make a long-sought readjustment in its relations with Moscow. ------- the arrival of the United States on the scene and the subsequent relationship that evolved between Tashkent and Washington have emboldened the Uzbek leadership” (ibid: 78-79).

Uzbekistan’s proximity with the U.S. especially their security cooperation helped Uzbekistan in many ways. Olcott (2005: 177) pointed out-
"The United States would bring both military might and moral rectitude to bear in crushing the terrorist groups in Afghanistan. Tashkent believed that the presence of U.S. bases would make it easier for Uzbekistan to manage its relationship with Russia and believed that a U.S. military presence would put Moscow on better behaviour in the region more generally. Tashkent also hoped it would help balance China’s exercise of influence as well. Most important, the Uzbeks hoped that the enhanced security partnership with Washington would lead to funds to speed the pace of military reform and result in Uzbekistan’s ability to manage regional security challenges”.

Moreover, the new friendship with the U.S. gave Uzbekistan an opportunity to establish itself as a regional power, which both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have been competing to achieve. Uzbekistan received the highest assistance in the region after September 11. Uzbekistan in spite of its lack of development in political and economic reforms and poor record of human rights situation was able to garner the maximum assistance till 2003. The Republic was recognized by Washington “as a reliable partner against Islamic terrorism and, more importantly, as a leading power in Central Asia (Akbarzadeh 2005: 82). These developments helped to assert itself as a regional power.

The U.S. military presence in Central Asia, a strategic backyard for Russia raised concern among Russian policy makers- “the arrival of every American soldier in Uzbekistan chips away at Russian influence in the region” (ibid: 79). Russia even expressed its displeasure with Uzbekistan for allowing the U.S. to use Uzbek territory without consulting Russia, which naturally did not go well with the Uzbek authority. President Karimov had remarked that the Russian leaders “do not like the fact that Uzbekistan is carrying out its own independent policy----But let me say once again that when the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan in 1979, starting a big war, no one asked for our approval” (ibid). The decision by Uzbekistan to allow the U.S. to open base without prior consultation with Russia reflect Uzbekistan’s strong desire to move out of Russian influence and take independent foreign policy decision. Uzbekistan wanted to chart out its own policy priorities according to its national interest.

As a part of broader U.S-Russia understanding, Russia eventually agreed to the U.S. presence in the region. Russia too wanted stability in Afghanistan and wanted the fall of the fundamentalist Taliban regime but lacked resources to do so. Russia thus
supported the U.S. operation in Afghanistan but remained critical of U.S. long term military presence in the region. Though the Russian government accepted the U.S. presence in the region, there was still a strong opposition on the U.S. presence in the region among a section of Russian policy makers. At the time when the ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’ was in full swing, the Russian Duma placed a motion vote condemning the U.S. presence in Uzbekistan. Though the motion was defeated at Duma, it got 136 votes from 38 percent Duma deputies, which reflected the uneasiness that prevailed among the Russian leaders (Akbarzadeh 2005: 79).

From time to time various U.S. officials have stated that the U.S. have no plan for permanent military presence in the region, however, Russian leaders and scholars remained sceptic of the U.S. intention. According to a Russian scholar-(ibid:80)

“Despite repeated statements by Washington that American military presence in Central Asia will be limited to anti-terrorist operations in Afghanistan, it seems clear that the United States will stay [in the region] for a long time—there is no time frame for their departure----Uzbekistan will remain in America’s main strategic partner”.

The U.S. military bases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan remained a cause of concern to Russia, which reacted by opening its own base at Kant, twenty km from Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan, not far away from the U.S. base at Manas in 2003. Russia claimed that the base was established within the framework of the CSTO. The development was, however, seen by analysts as a result of geo-political competition between Russia and the U.S. to establish their sphere of influence in the region. Kyrgyzstan is the only country in the world where both the U.S. and Russia has a military base.
Another development strengthening the bilateral security cooperation during this phase was the conclusion of the Joint Security Cooperation Consultations held on 14-15 April 2003. The joint statement mentions improvement in economic and democratic reforms and respect for human rights for better bilateral ties (Reeker 2003). Though Uzbekistan committed to work on these issues but in practice never took any concrete measures to improve the condition. It also highlighted cooperation in promotion of security in Central Asia and contemporary international problems (ibid). In the statement the U.S. expressed intention to expand its defence and military cooperation with Republic. Uzbekistan also showed its support for the U.S. position on disarmament of Iraq and the post-war reconstruction of Iraq for stability of the entire region.

Uzbek-U.S. relation got an unprecedented boost after 9/11 but as time passed on differences within the U.S. policy makers, especially between the State Department and the Defense Department became apparent. The U.S. State Department and the Defense Department view on the course of the U.S. policy towards the Republic clashed each other. The U.S. State Department remain critical of the worsening human rights situation in the Republic as well as for the lack of progress in democratic and economic reforms.
The Defense Department on the other hand turned away from acknowledging these issues as cooperation from Uzbekistan was essential for the operation in Afghanistan. In January 2004, Uzbek new laws put severe curbs on the activities of the western media and foreign NGOs working in the Republic, making it difficult for them to function in Uzbekistan (Rashid 2008: 342). The response of the two U.S. Departments after the incident also reflected their differences in approach towards the Republic. As noted scholar on Central Asia, Ahmed Rashid wrote (ibid)-

"The silence from Washington was deafening. The State Department, which was eager to take public position against the measures, was once again overwhelmed by the Pentagon and the CIA when it came to policymaking for Uzbekistan. Rumsfeld continued to heap praise on Karimov".

The Uzbek-U.S. security cooperation that saw its peak after September 11 crumbled down after 2005, a development, which nobody expected despite of uneasiness on both sides.

**U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE**

The U.S. has been providing assistance to the CARs ever since their independence under various security programmes, which included improving border security, combating terrorism, non-proliferation etc. From time to time the U.S. has been providing training through military exercises, seminars and conferences to the defence personnel from the CARs. During 1992-2000, the U.S. Government budgeted over $4.8 billion for the Newly Independent States (NIS) under security programme (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2001). The assistance amount was mainly to help these countries to get rid off their Soviet Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), prevent weapon proliferation and promote regional stability. Security related assistance to NIS was increased under the Expanded Threat Reduction Initiative (ETRI) and accounted for about half of the U.S. Government assistance to the NIS in 2000 (ibid).

Though the U.S. has been assisting the CARs to improve their defence capabilities, some scholars view that the U.S. supported only those programmes that the served the U.S. interest in the region. Olcott (2005: 178) argued that the U.S. military assistance involved mainly border security, increasing counter-terrorism capability and
interoperability, which would later on facilitate Uzbekistan to become "a reliable regional partner for the United States". She further argued that the assistance for judicial or prison reform is less than the amount spend on training in general military or border security, indicating the U.S. interest in the region (ibid). Others have also pointed out that the "Pentagon directed 80 percent of U.S. aid to the Uzbek military rather than to economic development" (Rashid 2008: 347).

Uzbekistan has been a regular recipient of the U.S. assistance through a variety of cooperative programmes. The U.S. assistance under the security and regional stability programmes are mainly to "foster democracy, civilian control of the military, the rule of law and human rights, as well as promoting stability and strengthening security cooperation among the Central Asian countries (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2001). For Uzbekistan, the assistance primarily focussed on non-proliferation, border security, regional security and peace keeping (ibid). The U.S. Government’s 2001 Annual Report stated that the primary purpose of the U.S. assistance under security programmes to Uzbekistan are (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2002):

“promoting stability, strengthening and expanding regional security cooperation, preventing nuclear, chemical, biological and other weapons proliferation, promoting effective cooperation of the Uzbeks in the war against terrorism, enhancing civilian control of the military and promoting democracy, rule of law and human rights”.

In 1995, thirty three Uzbek students received in-country training by the U.S. Customs Service, and nine others participated in the Customs Service and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) conferences dealing with drug interdiction (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 1996). In addition, five Uzbek students participated in the U.S. DoD International Military Education and Training (IMET) programme, and nine attended courses at the U.S. Defense Department’s George C. Marshall Centre in Germany (ibid). Uzbekistan and seven other NIS countries became eligible for Foreign Military Financing (FMF) under the NATO’s PfP programme in 1997 (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 1998). In 1998, Uzbekistan was involved in number of PfP activities and among them a defence resource management study focused on defence budgeting and procurement issues (Office of the
Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 1999). Uzbekistan in 1998 was formally included to the Science and Technology Centre in Ukraine (ibid).

In 1999, the CTR program allocated US$ 6 million to demilitarize the former chemical weapons facility in Nukus and US$ 1.39 million to the CTR Defence and Military Contacts Programme, which sponsored a total forty nine events for Uzbekistan thirty five outside Uzbekistan and fourteen inside the Republic. The U.S. Department of State provided US$ 1.65 million in FMF and $526,000 in IMET programme to Uzbekistan in 1999 (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2000). In addition, Uzbekistan received $485,000 under DoD Warsaw Initiative to facilitate Uzbekistan’s participation in NATO PfP exercises (ibid).

In 1999, Uzbek Enforcement Agencies, mainly the Customs Committee, Border Guards and the Ministry of Foreign Economic Affairs actively participated in various U.S. Government-funded counter-proliferation programmes. This year the Customs Committee and the Border Guards attended a two-week training session in large port operations and Uzbekistan received fibre-optic scopes, laser range-finders and nuclear detection pagers (ibid). The Customs Committee also received a portable x-ray van to inspect cargo and large packages (ibid). The U.S. Department of Commerce led an interagency effort to develop Uzbekistan’s import and export controls in 1999.

The U.S. government has provided training and technical assistance to Uzbekistan’s Border Guards and State Customs Committee under the CASI programme. In 2000, Uzbekistan’s State Customs Committee received sixty radiation detecting pagers (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2001). As in 2001, radiation detection equipment provided by the U.S. has helped Uzbekistan to intercept three shipments of radioactive material bound for third countries (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2002). Uzbekistan also detected and interdicted radioactive contraband at Uzbekistan-Kazakhstan border and the pagers received in 2001 helped Uzbekistan to detect radioactive contraband materials and thus prevented it from reaching to third countries (ibid). Assistance to Uzbekistan saw a quantum jump after September 11 in return of its support to the U.S. war efforts in Afghanistan. Uzbekistan
was able to get the maximum U.S. assistance after the beginning of the operation in Afghanistan despite its poor human rights records and lack of development in political and economic reforms. However, as time moved on and Uzbekistan showed no signs of development, the U.S. could no longer ignore these issues. Since 2004, the U.S. assistance to Uzbekistan was cut down because of the U.S. dissatisfaction with the lack of progress in reforms. Post Andijan, the U.S. assistance to the Republic was drastically reduced, reflecting the thaw in the bilateral relationship. Below are the details of the U.S. security assistance to Uzbekistan from 2000-2005.

The souring of the Uzbekistan-U.S. bilateral ties after 2005 was also visible on the level of U.S. assistance to the Republic. In 2005, some cooperation did take place under various programmes, though in much lesser intensity as discussed above. Similarly, in 2006, the U.S. assistance to Uzbekistan under Security and Law Enforcement Cooperation Programme was reduced significantly. Some actions on part of the Uzbek government also affected the level of bilateral security cooperation. For example, Uzbekistan unilaterally terminated counterterrorism cooperation; military-to-military contacts were dramatically reduced; counternarcotics cooperation and efforts to reform Uzbek legal system also received a set back in 2006 (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2007). However, law enforcement and non-proliferation assistance programmes continued with “limited progress” (ibid). The U.S. security-related assistance in 2006 primarily stressed on “supporting efforts to improve the GOU’s [Government of Uzbekistan] counter-proliferation capabilities, fostering of regional cooperation, improving border security in order to reduce trafficking of illegal narcotics and other hazardous, illicit items, and combating trafficking in persons” (ibid). Uzbekistan accepted some training conducted inside the Republic and equipment donations but did not participate in activities held outside the country, or “non-operational” activities like programmes on legal and judicial reforms, efforts to increase adherence to international standards and norms, or to fight official corruption (ibid).

Uzbekistan like the previous two years was again not eligible for FMF and IMET funding in 2006 (ibid). Uzbekistan also did not receive the Department of Defense Central Command Counternarcotics Programme funds in 2006 (ibid). However, some
progress took place between the two sides on enhancing Uzbek counter-proliferation measures. The U.S. counter-proliferation programmes in 2006 assisted Uzbekistan to further eliminate the remnants of Soviet WMD and missile programmes, placed WMD portal monitoring systems at selected international ports of entry within Uzbekistan, and provided communications upgrades to enhance the capability of timely reporting on possible WMD incidents (ibid). The U.S. also assisted Uzbekistan to “identify, secure, and dispose of nuclear and radioactive materials and equipment of proliferation concern, as well as to convert its primary nuclear research reactor to low-enriched uranium fuel” (ibid). In 2006, renovation of Laboratory was completed at six facilities; eight ports of entry received equipment upgrades; and work began at an additional eleven locations (ibid). Assistance was provided to upgrade communications capable of alerting and reporting on WMD alerts and to facilitate the transfer of sixty three kilograms of highly enriched uranium in spent fuel from Uzbekistan to Russia for storing them safely (ibid).

Cooperation with Uzbekistan on counter-narcotics and anti-trafficking programmes continued in 2006. The U.S. assistance programme supported the Sensitive Investigative Unit (SIU) consisting of twenty five officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Uzbekistan to conduct counternarcotics operations and to increase regional coordination on counternarcotics efforts (ibid). As a result of SIU counternarcotics investigations sixty nine persons were arrested and 679 kilograms of narcotics, US$ 170,000 in cash, nine vehicles, and US$ 70,000 in other assets were seized in 2006 (ibid). Uzbekistan also received 2,000 drug test kits and sixteen specialized border inspection tool kits. along with associated training (ibid). Twenty eight Uzbek Customs officers of the Tashkent International Airport received specialized contraband enforcement training (ibid). Uzbekistan also received various types of equipment from the U.S. under this programme like maintenance of x-ray equipment, which were earlier given to the airport and passport control-related computer equipment for the airport, spare parts for previously donated communications equipment, and infrastructure upgrades to four remote border posts (ibid).

Moreover, cooperation continued between the two sides in form of supply of small number of equipment and training on securing the Republic’s borders and
controlling illegal movement of people and goods, such as narcotics and dual use equipment and materials across borders (ibid). The U.S. government also supported Uzbekistan to step up its public awareness campaigns against trafficking and for rehabilitating trafficked victims. A new shelter to rehabilitate victims was opened at Bukhara; a similar shelter already existed in Tashkent (ibid). The shelters at Tashkent and Bukhara provided support to eighty seven repatriated trafficking victims (ibid). Overall more than 300 victims have received assistance (ibid).

Uzbekistan’s participation in the U.S. military cooperation programmes went down drastically in 2006. Representatives from the Uzbek Ministry of Defence participated in only two planning seminars and for only once four officers visited the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy in 2006 (ibid). A bilateral licensing procedures and practices workshop was held in Tashkent in November 2006 for ten officials from the Customs Service, Border Guards, and the Ministry for Foreign Economic Relations, Investments, and Trade (ibid). Only four Uzbek defence and security specialists participated in one seminar at the Marshall Centre in Germany as against thirty four, forty two and twenty three in 2003, 2004 and 2005, respectively. Many Uzbek personnel who attended the U.S. military education and training programmes were even penalized for taking part in U.S. supported programmes, indicating the severe strain in the bilateral relation (ibid).

Uzbekistan in 2006 only executed four of the forty seven agreed-upon military-to-military events (ibid). It refused to take part in twenty five of the events, and failed to respond in time for nine other events, for which the events had to be cancelled (ibid). It also refused $300,000 in HIV/AIDS prevention programme laboratory equipment, US$ 150,000 in computer modeling and simulation equipment, training and software, and US$ 450,000 in material for crime scene investigation work (ibid). Uzbekistan also did not nominate candidates for full-scholarships in the U.S. military academies (ibid). Uzbekistan also refused to take part in several other training programmes in the year 2006.
In 2007, the U.S. under the Peace and Security Programme to Uzbekistan focused on (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2008).

“Improving Uzbekistan’s ability to monitor and interdict the transit of terrorists, WMD materiel and narcotics across its borders and working with Uzbek law enforcement and security structures to foster reform and facilitate necessary interactions in support of NATO operations in Afghanistan. Other objectives included assisting the GOU in the destruction and proper management of dangerous special weapons stockpiles; and supporting the GOU to creating policies and infrastructure to discourage youth drug use and trafficking-in-persons”.

In 2007, eight international ports of entry received WMD radiation portal monitoring systems and associated communications upgrades installations. As result of these assistances for a long period, Uzbekistan today possesses high quality sophisticated network of portal monitors (ibid). Four border crossing points in remote places of Uzbekistan was revamped with the U.S. assistance (ibid). In 2007, the bio-threat reduction program completed renovation of two biological laboratories in Uzbekistan and began work on a combined human and veterinary facility (ibid).

Cooperation in military sphere till the spring of 2007 remained low. Uzbekistan denied visas to key U.S. visitors for joint projects between the U.S. Department of Defense and the Uzbek Ministry of Defence, also cancelled several military-to-military events. However, after August 2007, bilateral military cooperation showed signs of improvements. Two previously unscheduled military-to-military events were held after August (ibid). The year also saw the Uzbek MOD hosting a delegation from the U.S. Central Command and giving them access to two military facilities (ibid). The government of Uzbekistan also approved a protocol for commercial military over-flight in support of operations in Afghanistan (ibid). In late 2007, Uzbekistan also “extended the over flight protocol in support of NATO efforts in Afghanistan for another year without renegotiating the terms” (ibid).

A team of U.S. Customs Officers visited the Republic to train more than forty Uzbek Custom officers in railroad and river operations and the team also gained access to the Uzbek Customs Institute (ibid). In the first six months of 2007, the Uzbek law enforcement officials seized 1,104 kilograms of illegal narcotics, an eight percent
increase from the 2006 figures for the same period (ibid). The U.S. provided training and equipment has helped Uzbekistan to improve its capabilities of counter-narcotics measures (ibid).

The U.S also funded a drug demand reduction project from November 2006 to May 2007 to provide awareness training to 2,376 schoolchildren and 1,000 parents and neighbourhood leaders (ibid). The U.N. Office of Drugs and Crime estimated that a 7.3 percent increase in drug and HIV/AIDS awareness in participating schools as well as a decrease in drug use among fifth through ninth grade students from 0.42 percent in 2006 to 0.008 percent in 2007 in Uzbekistan (ibid).

Uzbekistan cooperation with the U.S. on anti-trafficking assistance programmes continued well in 2007 (ibid). In 2007, the U.S. assisted 556 victims of human trafficking in Uzbekistan (ibid). The U.S. supported ten NGOs working on counter trafficking activities in Uzbekistan (ibid). Ten training programmes and seminars were held from March-September 2007, with more than 200 law enforcement officials from several agencies in Uzbekistan participating in these anti-trafficking programmes.

In 2008, too the security cooperation was on a low scale, especially military to military cooperation. In 2008, out of total US$ 9.50 million given as Foreign Appropriation Assistance to Uzbekistan, US$ 0.76 million (8 percent) was allocated for Peace and Security programme (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2009). The U.S. government assistance provided the following (ibid):

- Developed materials to raise awareness of Uzbekistan’s growing human trafficking problem and provided direct support to victims. USG-supported anti-trafficking hotlines averaged 4,200 calls a quarter that led to legal assistance and shelter referrals for hundreds of victims.
- Supported three competitively selected joint U.S.-Uzbek research projects that engaged five former weapons scientists. One particularly noteworthy project supports research into the link between intravenous drug use and HIV/AIDS. This program also provided additional skill-building measures, training, and feedback on technical and financial reports from grantees, to prepare researchers to compete successfully for funding from other sources.
- Reduced proliferation threats through cooperative engagement of scientists, technicians, and engineers with WMD and applicable expertise through USG assistance to the US Civilian Research and Development Foundation (CRDF) and the Science and Technology Centre in Ukraine (STCU).
Similar pattern was followed in 2009 too. Out of total US$ 8.56 million Foreign Appropriation Assistance for Uzbekistan, US$ 0.53 million (6 percent of the total) was for Peace and Security Programme in the fiscal year 2009 (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2010). This year also saw a low level of military to military cooperation between the two sides. The Assistance included the following (ibid)-

- “Provided commodity identification training to prevent proliferation of sensitive commodities through both computer based instruction and examination of dual-use products to Customs, Interior Ministry and Border Guard personnel.
- Helped the Government of Uzbekistan’s Customs Service establish a canine training center for drug interdiction, and funded participation by Uzbek Customs officers in a conference in Kazakhstan on the use of canines by customs officials. This was the first event of its kind in Central Asia and helped to establish working level contacts among customs officials in the region.
- Funded three competitive U.S.-Uzbek research projects, which engaged former weapons scientists in civilian research.
- Facilitated greater cooperation between NGOs and local officials as called for by the new anti-trafficking law and the National Trafficking in Persons Action Plan. Assistance also facilitated NGO cooperation with Regional Women’s Committees, Makhalla Committees and law enforcement bodies in forming inter-agency working groups to combat trafficking. Increased the Uzbek public’s awareness of trafficking related issues through a series of informational announcements on TV, radio, in newspapers and even in the form of a theater play. Through ten NGO partners in nine regions conducted over 630 awareness events (trainings, workshops and seminars) reaching nearly 50,000 people. Projects also assisted 763 trafficking victims and provided information and support to 14,617 callers on USG-funded trafficking hotlines.
- Trained 12 heads of Counter-Trafficking Units in the regions, who are now able to conduct their own trainings for their staff members, thus ensuring project sustainability independent of foreign assistance.
- Trained 1,300 law enforcement officers, and strengthened their capacity in the field of investigating and prosecuting trafficking cases and also providing assistance to trafficking victims. They also were trained how to use referral
mechanisms when dealing with trafficking victims and how to carry out prevention work among the population.

- Provided a seminar on forensic medicine in which the Government of Uzbekistan invited 72 professionals from across the country, which included investigators, judges and forensic personnel. For the first time, representatives of the Ministry of Health forensic laboratories, the Office of the General Prosecutor, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Supreme Court met in one conference room. All attendees began to have a common understanding of the utility of forensic pathology and other forensic evidence in various types of criminal cases”.

**U.S. ASSISTANCE UNDER VARIOUS PROGRAMMES**

**Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS)**

The EXBS programme, which is funded by the U.S. Department of State, is the largest of the six assistance programme under the CASI. It provides equipment, training and infrastructure support to develop and strengthen detection, interdiction and enforcement capabilities of customs, border guards and other border security and law enforcement organizations. In 2000, the U.S. Government budgeted US$ 1.85 million for EXBS assistance to Uzbekistan (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2001). In 2001, the U.S. allocated US$ 2.83 million for EXBS assistance to Uzbekistan (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2002). In February 2001, the U.S. and the Uzbek Security and Law Enforcement Agencies identified the priority areas for assistance under the EXBS Programme. Communications equipment topped the list while other areas for assistance identified were surveillance and detection equipment, maritime border guard assistance, border control and export control training, protective and medical equipment and transportation/patrol assets (ibid). In September 2001, sixteen Uzbek Border Guards and Customs officials participated in International Border Interdiction Training in Hidalgo, Texas, USA (ibid). The U.S. Coast Guard also provided boat engines and spare parts to Uzbekistan’s Border Guard’s Marine Division (ibid).

Post 9/11, an additional US$ 18 million was given under the Emergency Response Fund Supplemental Appropriation to enhance Uzbekistan’s border security, which included US$ 4 million in Non-proliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related
Activities (NDAR) funds and US$ 14 million in FSA funds (ibid). The US$ 4 million in supplemental NADR funds was used for EXBS assistance activities (ibid). The US$ 14 million in supplemental FSA funds was utilised for EXBS-Aviation/Interdiction Project (EXBS-AIP) to increase air patrol and interdiction capabilities of Uzbekistan’s Ministry of Defence and Border Guards to prevent weapons proliferation and complement counter-terrorism assistance (ibid). In 2002, an additional US$ 5 million was provided under the 2002 Supplemental for Further Recovery for EXBS-AIP to enhance Uzbekistan’s maritime border patrol/interdiction capabilities on the Amu Darya River (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2003).

In March 2001, with U.S. assistance the Uzbek node of the Central Asia Regional Communications link (CACL) was installed, which enhanced regional communications radios (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2002) . In 2002, the EXBS assistance was US$ 3.3 million (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2003). The Annual Reports of 2003, 2004 and 2005 of the U.S. Government has pointed out that “EXBS-provided equipment is being widely distributed by Uzbek officials and has played a key role in many recent interdictions of illicit materials”. Equipment, engines and materials for refitting marine craft provided under EXBS programme helped the Uzbek Maritime Service to redeploy twenty nine patrol vessels on the Amu Darya River in 2004 (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2005). The U.S. hailed the passage of the law “On Export Control”, which reflected Uzbekistan’s commitment to “observe their international obligations for the control of the proliferation of WMD weapons and materials” (ibid). In 2004, EXBS and the Department of Commerce provided training programmes on munitions and dual-use materials covered under Uzbekistan’s Export Control Laws (ibid).

In 2005, the bilateral assistance under security programmes went down significantly. Nevertheless, some progress did take place. The U.S. provided fifteen Customs officers intensive training on Product Acoustic Signature Systems who later joined the State Customs Committee of Uzbekistan (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2006). Thirty Border Guard and Customs Officers
received maintenance training on night vision goggles provided in 2004 and sixteen Customs and Border Guard Officers were trained on border interdiction and radiation safety in Hidalgo, Texas in April 2005 (ibid). In 2005, the U.S. government continued with limited exchange programmes on border control issues. As part of this programme, fourteen Uzbek Customs officials visited El Paso, Texas to observe operations on the U.S.-Mexico border (ibid).

Back in 2002, the U.S. had agreed to give two Gyurza-Riverine Armored patrol boats worth US$ 5.6 million to Uzbekistan to patrol the Amu Darya River bordering Uzbekistan and Afghanistan (ibid). The first of the boat was received by Uzbekistan in October 2004 (ibid). Uzbekistan received the second boat in January 2005 (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2006). The EXBS Programme and the Centre for International Trade and Security at the University of Georgia conducted a U.S.-Uzbekistan Legislative Exchange-Briefing in September 2005 (ibid). However, in the same year Uzbekistan refused to take part in the Anti-Corruption and Integrity Awareness training, which was a Department of Commerce-sponsored Export Control Workshop and Commodity Identification Training (ibid).

Cooperative Threat Reduction Programme (CTR)

CTR has been one of the primary components of the U.S. security-related assistance to Uzbekistan, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Defense. Since 1997-2002, the U.S. total funding to Uzbekistan under the CTR programme was US$ 8.5 million (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2003). The U.S. allocated US$ 4 million to Uzbekistan in 2000 under the CTR programme for further demilitarizing the former chemical- weapons facility at Nukus (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2001). Under the CTR Defence and Military Contacts Programme, Uzbekistan received US$ 307,700 in 2000 (ibid). The CTR programme in 2000 sponsored twenty five events in Uzbekistan, fourteen outside Uzbekistan and eleven within the Republic. The Annual Report of 2000 (ibid) indicated that the cooperation from the Uzbek side with regard to the implementation of the CTR programme has been “excellent”.

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In 2001, Uzbekistan received US$ 8.5 million under the CTR programme (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2002). In June 2001, the U.S. and Uzbekistan signed an agreement to cooperate in the area of the Promotion of Defence Relations and the Prevention of Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (ibid). In October 2001, both sides signed the implementing agreement of these projects and the U.S. allocated US$ 6 million to Uzbekistan (ibid). Following the June 2001 agreement, the DoD cleaned up the biological weapons facility at Vozrozhdeniye Island, eliminated the infrastructure of the test facility on the island and improved the security of dangerous pathogen collections stored at scientific institutes throughout Uzbekistan (ibid). Uzbekistan under the Dismantlement of Chemical Weapon Research Institute project in 2001 was able to dismantle, decontaminate and remove all pilot plant reactors, vessels and piping (ibid). The Republic also decontaminated and removed to a sanitary landfill laboratory equipment, filtration systems, ducting from seventy laboratories/rooms and 9,360 linear feet ventilation ductwork (ibid). Under the Biological Weapon (BW) Proliferation prevention project, Uzbekistan completed an assessment of the former BW test facility at Vozrozhdeniye Island for future dismantlement and pathogen elimination efforts (ibid). In 2001, 174 CTR Defence and Military Contact events were conducted as a result of DoD's goal to expand contacts between defence establishments and promote counter proliferation, demilitarization and democratic reform in Eurasia (ibid). In 2001 and 2002, there were eleven and ten CTR funded defence and military contacts respectively (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2003).

The 2002 Annual Report indicated that due to 'Operation Enduring Freedom' some CTR funded events were cancelled in the first quarter of the year 2002. Some of the major events that took place under this programme in 2002 were Special Operations exercises with Uzbek Special Forces unites; Commander, USCNTCOM visited Uzbekistan to discuss defence cooperation and reform; NCO Corps development; information exchanges at U.S. Air Force bases and discussions on furthering military contacts between the U.S. and Uzbekistan (ibid).

In 2003, the U.S. Government further assisted Uzbekistan to eliminate stores of anthrax and provided security upgrades to the Institute of Virology and the Centre for
Prophylaxis and Quarantine of the Most Hazardous Infections (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2004). CTR funds sponsored about 103 Uzbek military officers and non-commissioned officers to participate in various expert exchanges and training exercises in the U.S. (ibid). Moreover, funding from the U.S. Government Iraqi Freedom Fund provided specific counter-terrorism training and equipment to more than 300 Uzbek Special Operation Service Members (ibid). In 2005, CTR funds supported forty one Uzbek military officers and non-commissioned officers to take part in various subject matter expert exchanges and training exercises in the U.S. (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2006).

In 2005, in spite of the deteriorating bilateral ties, some cooperation took place under CTR programme. The U.S. Government conducted numerous policy assessment and training events including: WMD Counter-Proliferation Awareness Training, International WMD Investigations training and WMD Incidents at the Border training (ibid). Uzbekistan received equipment for these training events from the U.S., which included radiation pagers, intrusion detection devices, chemical and radiation detection and measurement devices, individual protective gear, decontamination equipment and evidence collection kits (ibid). The U.S. Government also provided equipment to various institutes in Tashkent and Samarkand including incinerators, generators, bio-safety vent hoods and numerous other expendable items to assist safe and secure research of hazardous diseases under the Biological Weapons Proliferation programme (ibid). By 2005, laboratory renovation work was completed at four epidemiological monitoring stations (EMS) facilities in Tashkent (ibid). In 2005, under the Weapons of Mass Destruction–Proliferation Prevention Programme, eleven Increment-1-POE (Port of Entry) locations in Uzbekistan received WMD Portal Monitoring (PM) equipment upgrades and the year also saw the beginning of work on an additional eight Increment-2POE’s (ibid).

*Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and International Military Education and training (IMET)*

FMF assistance helped Uzbekistan to acquire defence articles and services that facilitates interaction with the U.S. and Coalition forces in the region, as well as NATO, particularly
in conducting peace-keeping activities (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2002). IMET deals with training and it focuses on English-language, international staff officer and defence-management capabilities, as well as operational subjects that promotes interoperability in both operations and tactics (ibid). As part of the training programme, Uzbek defence and security specialists take part in courses and seminars at U.S. Defence Department’s George C. Marshall Centre in Germany. These representatives later on hold high government posts in Uzbekistan, capable of influencing government decisions, which highlights the importance of these training programmes. For example, the Chief of Americas Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commander of Tashkent Military District participated in this programme. Similarly, the Deputy Minister of Defence for International Cooperation, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Uzbek Embassy in Washington also attended this programme.

In 2000, the U.S. Department of State provided US$ 1.75 million in FMF to Uzbekistan and US$ 547,000 for training under the IMET Programme (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2001). In 2001, Uzbekistan was initially allocated US$ 2.5 million in FMF and an additional US$ 25 million in FMF assistance was allocated under the Emergency Response Fund supplemental appropriation (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2002). In 2001, under IMET Programme, Uzbekistan was allocated US$ 456,250, of which US$ 437,000 was spent (ibid). In 2002, Uzbekistan received US$ 0.2 million in FMF, in addition it also got US$ 36 million in Emergency Response Funds and funds from the Emergency Supplemental (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia (2003). Uzbekistan under IMET programme received US$ 1,000,000, of which US$ 720,000 was spent in 2002 (ibid).

In 2003, Uzbekistan utilised FMF fund to build a world-class modelling and simulation centre to incorporate exercise simulations into the National Defence Academy’s curriculum, conduct staff training exercises to improve overall military interoperability and provide opportunities for participation in other internationally distributed simulation training activities (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2004). Thirty four Uzbek defence and security specialists participated
in various resident and non-resident professional development courses and seminars at the U.S. Defense Department's George C. Marshall Centre in Germany. They also took part in a leadership course and conference on topics such as counter-terrorism strategy, economic war on terrorism, and force reduction/defence conversion in 2003 (ibid).

In 2004 and 2005, Uzbekistan was debarred from FMF and IMET funding because Secretary of State did not certify Uzbekistan eligible for assistance due to lack of progress made by the Republic required under the Foreign Assistance Act (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2005 and 2006). However, in 2004 two Uzbek military officers were sent for military professional development training courses using US$ 300,000 fund of the 2003 CTR programme (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2005). Moreover, to strengthen border security and combat narcotics smuggling, US$ 500,000 was given to Uzbekistan in counter narcotics programme to conduct patrol boat command and control technology demonstration with the Uzbek Border Guard Riverine forces in 2004 (ibid). In 2004, forty two Uzbek defence and security specialists participated in different resident and non-resident professional development courses and seminars at George Marshall Centre in Germany, including conferences on topics such as cyber security and economic dimensions of defence institution building (ibid).

In 2005, the U.S. DoD Counter Terrorism Fellowship (CTF) funds worth US$ 200,000 were used to sent two Uzbek military officers in military professional development training courses (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2006). Earlier funds were used to send one Uzbek Air Force officer to attend a pilot training under the United States Air Force's Aviation Leadership Programme (ALP), fourth officer to receive this scholarship since 1998 (ibid). In addition, two Uzbek military representatives attended the Civil Military Strategy for Internal Development courses using CTF (ibid). In 2005, twenty three Uzbek defence and security specialists participated in various resident and non-resident professional development courses and seminar at George Marshall Centre (ibid).
Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA)

Uzbekistan was included for ATA assistance in 1999 and since then has actively participated in the annual Regional Counter-Terrorism Conference hosted in Washington. In 2000, seventy officials from Uzbekistan’s Ministry of Internal Affairs, National Security Service, Committee for State Border Protection and other Law Enforcement Agencies received training in post-blast investigation, officer safety and survival, and rural border-patrol operations (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2001). In 2001, the estimated amount allocated under the ATA funding programme was US$ 1.25 million (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2002). In 2001, several Uzbek officials from different Ministries attended training in counter terrorism activities. In 2000, four Uzbek government officials under the ATA programme visited the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) training site for bomb-sniffing dogs, with the goal of assessing the prospects for Uzbekistan’s participation in the programme (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2001). Similarly, in 2001 also four Uzbek official visited the ATA training site (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2002).

Security infrastructure in Uzbekistan improved as a result of these trainings. For example, training programme like the Vital Installation Security of 2001 helped Uzbekistan to improve its security at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs building, including the installation of suggested technical equipment, as well in a training programme authorized and implemented by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2002).

The Annual Report of 2001 reported that- (ibid)

“as a result of the skills acquired through ATA training in explosive-incident counter-measures, the Uzbek Government’s Explosive ordinance Device (EOD) team was very well prepared when it responded to a bomb threat at the U.S. Embassy. The Embassy’s Regional Security Officer characterized the EOD team’s response as comparable to that of the EOD’s U.S. counterparts”.

More than 200 Uzbek officials from various Ministries received training in 2002 in seven courses-post blast investigation, crisis response team, explosive incident
countermeasures, Rural Border Operations, Terrorist Crime Scene Investigation, WMD Awareness and Consultation/Information Management in case Investigation (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2003). In 2004, the Department of State’s Diplomatic Security Service held several courses in association with the ATA programme. One such course was the ILEA Budapest course on the “Role of Police in Combating Terrorism”, which was attended by representatives from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. Other such courses were “Crisis Response Team”, “Bomb Technician Exchange”, “Protective Operations Management” and “Consultation-Protective Operations Management” (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2004 and 2005). In 2005, too the Department of State’s Diplomatic Security Service together with the ATA programme conducted courses in “Combating Transnational Terrorism” and “Police Executive Roles in Combating Terrorism”, in which Uzbekistan along with other CARs (except Turkmenistan) took part (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2006). ATA programme also provided training to Uzbek representatives in the U.S. on post-blast investigations (ibid).

**Counter–Proliferation Programme**

Another security related U.S. assistance programme for the Eurasian region is the DoD Counter–Proliferation Programme, which is also supported by the U.S. DoD. In 2000, under the DoD/U.S. Customs Service (USCS) Counter-Proliferation programme, Uzbekistan’s Border Guards attended two sessions of advanced training in cross-country tracking (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to the NIS 2001). The sessions were conducted by Native American members of the unique “Shadow Wolves” patrol division of USCS (ibid). In addition, the U.S. officials also held two evaluation visits to inspect equipment previously donated, including a mobile x-ray van, fibre-optic scopes, density metres, radiation pagers and other equipment (ibid). Under the DoD/FBI Counter-Proliferation Programme, specialists from the U.S. Department of Commerce, FBI, DoD and USCS conducted two consultations on export control legislation and enforcement for Uzbekistan’s Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, State Customs Committee, National Security Service and other relevant agencies (ibid).
In 2001, estimated fund allocated for this programme was US$ 410,000, which was used to provide training and technical assistance to Uzbekistan’s border guards and customs officials (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia 2002). This year also saw funding of two consultation sessions in export control legislation and enforcement for various government bodies of Uzbekistan under this programme, which was conducted by various U.S. agencies.

Other programmes under which the U.S. provide security related assistance to Uzbekistan are- Science Centres Programme, Support for the Civilian Research and Development Foundation (CRDF), Agricultural Research Service (ARS)-Collaborative Research, Reduced Enrichment for Research and Test Reactors (RERTR), Anti-Crime Training and Technical Assistance (ACTTA) Programme, Criminal Justice Programmes, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Fund (NDF), Nuclear Material Protection, Control and Accounting (MPC&A), Russian Research Reactor Fuel Return Initiative (RRRFRI), Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance and Training (OPDAT).

**U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO CARs: A COMPARISON**

All the five CARs have been receiving the U.S. assistance in various security related programmes since independence. Among the various security related programmes with the U.S., the EXBS has been an important area of cooperation. It is the largest of the of all the CASI programmes. The U.S. assistance under the EXBS programme to the five CARs facilitates these countries to prevent, deter and detect potential weapons proliferation. The table below gives the total amount budgeted to all the five CARs by the U.S. under the EXBS programme since independence.
Table 5.3
Budgeted Amount for EXBS (FSA+ Other U.S. Government Funds)
(Value: US million $)

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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>12.30</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>10.50</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*An additional US$ 0.51 (Kazakhstan), US$ 0.22 (Kyrgyzstan), US$ 0.58 (Turkmenistan), and US$ 0.45 (Uzbekistan) million was budgeted under DoD Customs Border Security Counter-proliferation.

**EXBS-FSA (not including direct transfer to U.S. Customs Service).


Figure 5.1
Budgeted Amount for EXBS (FSA+ Other U.S. Government Funds)
(Value: US million $)
The cumulative amount allocated from 1992-2000 for EXBS programme to Uzbekistan was only US$ 1.85 million, which for the year 2002 alone was US$ 12.30 million. In 2002, Uzbekistan was allocated the highest amount (US$ 12.30 million), followed by Kyrgyzstan (US$ 10.50 million). In 2002, the budgeted amount for Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in general was increased compared to the previous years. After 2002, the budgeted amount for Uzbekistan dropped significantly, which in 2007 was only US$ 0.49 million. In 2003 and 2004, the highest amount was allocated to Kazakhstan (US$ 3.65 million and US$ 3 million, respectively), followed by Kyrgyzstan (US$ 3.50 million and US$ 2.50 million, respectively). The difference in the allocated amount for the two countries was marginal. In 2005, Tajikistan received the highest amount, followed by Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan and this year too the difference in allocated amount was marginal. From US$ 2 million in 2005, the amount allocated to Tajikistan in 2006 and 2007 dropped to only US$ 0.60 million (both years received the same amount). Kyrgyzstan received the highest amount in 2006 while in 2007, Kazakhstan got the largest share.

Military to military cooperation between CARs and the U.S. has been developing ever since independence, which increased after these republics agreed to help the U.S. in its war efforts in Afghanistan. Military to military cooperation with Uzbekistan, however, suffered a severe set back after the bilateral relation deteriorated following the Andijan incident and the subsequent closure of the K2 base.

The U.S. military assistance comes in various forms, which includes the following-
Table 5.4
Types of U.S. Military Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Types of Assistance</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>1. Foreign Military Sales</td>
<td>Sales from U.S. government to foreign governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Direct Commercial Sales</td>
<td>Sales from U.S. companies to foreign governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing</td>
<td>Foreign Military Financing</td>
<td>Congressionally appropriated grants and loans given to foreign governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to help finance sales (above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Grants</td>
<td>1. Excess Defence Articles</td>
<td>Older surplus equipment that the Pentagon gives away at little or no costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Draw downs</td>
<td>Grants of current (often nonlethal) defence stock given by the U.S. government in emergency situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>International Military Education and Training</td>
<td>U.S. training of foreign military personnel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


IMET includes training of foreign military personnel by the U.S. Providing training to the defence personnel of the CARs is an important component of the U.S. military assistance to these republics. The CARs have been receiving training from the U.S. since 1992, which includes English language training, military exercises and participation in various seminars, conferences and courses on various security related topics. Training activities with the U.S. introduced Central Asian military personnel “to national security functions and military roles and responsibilities in a democratic society. They are instructed in the rule of law, the role of the armed forces within a constitutional framework, and rational decision-making models based on accepted human rights norms”, said the former U.S Assistant Secretary of Defence J.D. Crouch II (2002).

Table 5.5
Budgeted Amount for IMET
(Value: US million $)

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<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>2.68</td>
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<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<td>1.68</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>1.07</td>
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<td>1.04</td>
<td>0.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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Figure 5.2
Budgeted Amount for IMET
(Value: US million $)

![Budgeted Amount for IMET](image-url)
From 1992-2000, the cumulative funds budgeted for Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan was only US$ 2.20 million and US$ 2.68 million respectively. Post 9/11 the amount budgeted for these republics showed a quantum jump because of their help extended to the U.S. for its operation in Afghanistan, which reflected the growing proximity with the U.S., especially in case of Uzbekistan. In 2002, Uzbekistan alone received US$ 1 million under IMET programme, highest in the region. In 2003, also the budgeted amount allocated for Uzbekistan was highest in the region, followed by Kyrgyzstan. Both Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan received more or less the same amount this year, US$ 1.10 million and US$ 1.07 million, respectively. The cumulative fund budgeted for Kyrgyzstan from 1992-2000 was US$ 1.68 million, while in 2003 and 2007 Kyrgyzstan received US$ 1.07 million and US$ 1.16 million, respectively, which clearly indicates the significant jump in U.S. assistance to Kyrgyzstan.

However, since 2004, the amount budgeted for Uzbekistan went down substantially to US$ 0.48 million only, while Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan received US$ 1.23 million and US$ 1.05 million, respectively. Kazakhstan received the largest share among the five countries in 2004, followed by Kyrgyzstan. Since 2005, Uzbekistan has not received any amount under IMET programme as the Secretary of State did not certify Uzbekistan eligible for assistance because of lack of progress in political and economic reforms. IMET assistance has increased for other CARS since 2005, especially for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In 2005, Kyrgyzstan received the highest share, followed by Kazakhstan. Kyrgyzstan received US$ 1.04 million while Kazakhstan received US$ 1 million, the difference being marginal. In 2006 and 2007, the budgeted amount under IMET programmes was highest for Kazakhstan, followed by Kyrgyzstan in the region.

Foreign Military Financing (FMF) assistance deals with grants appropriated by Congress and loans provided to foreign governments to help finance sales of Foreign Military Sales and Direct Commercial Sales. The table below shows the U.S. Government budgeted amount to CARs under FMF programme from 2001-2007.
The total budgeted amount allocated under FMF to Uzbekistan was US$ 2.45 million in 2001, which was drastically increased to US$ 36.21 million in 2002. Uzbekistan received the highest share in 2001 and 2002. Although, in 2003 also the
The bilateral relation that deteriorated after 2005 is in recent times showing signs of improvement. Two of the recent developments signal the rapprochement in the bilateral relationship. One of them is Uzbekistan’s decision in 2009 to allow NATO forces to use the airport at Navoi to supply non-military goods to the coalition forces in Afghanistan. The other is the opening of the Northern Distribution Network, in which Uzbekistan is an essential component.

**Base at Navoi**

In May 2009, there were reports stating that the NATO forces were using the cargo airport at Navoi in Uzbekistan to supply non-military goods to coalition forces in Afghanistan. The interesting thing about the new base was that the deal for the base was done indirectly through South Korea, who was entrusted to renovate the airport. Hence, the U.S. could avoid signing a direct agreement with Uzbekistan and yet managed to re-establish its presence in the Republic. Korean Air looks after the cargo centre at Navoi. It provides Uzbekistan a way out to deny to Russia that it has again “cut a deal with the United States” (Tynan 2009). Moreover, Russia “technically has no grounds to complain about the Navoi operation, since the Americans won’t nominally be in charge, even if they are calling the shots at a distance” (ibid). This arrangement helps Uzbekistan to
maintain a healthy relationship with Russia and yet develop ties with the west. The deal gives the U.S. a base in the Republic essential for its Afghan mission with the help of South Korean mediation.

Back in 2008, U.S. Transportation Command did a ‘market survey’ for the opening of the northern supply route, in which it was stated that “Navoi hub would offer an integrated commercial-based solution to meet US forces’ transportation requirements to Afghanistan” (ibid). This survey highlights that the U.S. military played a role in the deal, though apparently the deal was brokered between Uzbek and South Korean officials and business executives (ibid). According to some analysts, South Korea has agreed for the deal ‘on the recommendations of the U.S. and other western countries (Eurasian Transition Group 2009).

**Northern Distribution Network (NDN)**

The U.S. operation in Afghanistan is still far from over. Resurgence of Taliban and the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan has made security precarious in the region. With threat always looming high on the coalition’s main supply line through Pakistan because of frequent attacks by the Taliban, an alternative supply route became essential. Moreover, with the announcement of the AfPak strategy by Obama administration and the increase in number of troops to Afghanistan, secure supply of materials, which would also significantly increase with the rise in troops, became a daunting task for the coalition forces. The U.S. in 2009 opened the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) as an alternative route to transport materials to the coalition forces stationed in Afghanistan. The new overland route is a “commercially based logistical corridor connecting Baltic and the Black Sea ports with Afghanistan via Russia, Central Asia and Caucasus” (Kuchins et al, 2010). The route would transport non lethal goods from Latvia through Russia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan to northern Afghanistan.

Robert O Blake Jr., the U.S. Assistant Secretary, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs pointed out that the route has many benefits for the region—“there is great
potential for the Northern Distribution Network to improve transportation infrastructure and stimulate trade routes connecting Central to the growing markets of South Asia, which will have a lasting economic impact” (Blake 2009). The U.S. expected to transport about hundred containers per day through the route to Afghanistan (Eurasianet.org 2009). However, in actual practice the route did not deliver as expected. During June 5–July 14 2009, only 250 containers were shipped (Tynan 2009). Moreover, the route involves crossing too many borders and each transit country wants to get the maximum financial benefits, increasing the complexity of the route (ibid).

However, the opening of the NDN once again brings CARs close to the U.S. and highlights their importance in the U.S. led war efforts in Afghanistan. Analysts argue that the new route is “the first major push to expand U.S. engagement in the region since the immediate aftermath of 9/11 in the context of a policy priority for the Obama administration” (Kuchins et al. 2010). What benefits the CARs get in facilitating the NDN? Indeed there is commercial gain as the republics get financial benefits as transit countries. These countries hope to receive greater assistance as result of their cooperation—“Central Asian participants in the NDN can be expected to view their assistance in the natural context of quid pro quo, with actors at the lower levels motivated primarily by mercenary concerns, while higher-level figures seek a combination of financial and geopolitical dividends” (ibid). Moreover, a stable and peaceful Afghanistan, which is the region’s southern neighbour, is vital for the security of the CARs. Fundamentalist Islamic forces supported by radical elements from Afghanistan are a threat feared by all the Central Asian leaders. These republics are also paying the brunt as transit corridor for drugs originating in Afghanistan. The CARs for their own security want peace and stability to return as soon as possible in Afghanistan.

Uzbekistan remains an important country for the success of the NDN. Analysts have called the Republic as the “key country in the establishment of the northern supply route” (ibid). Uzbekistan’s support to the U.S. for the new route raises questions, especially after the four years of thaw in the bilateral relation. Uzbekistan’s relation with Russia has never been a smooth ride, with suspicion prevailing on both sides. Moreover, intra-regional bickering is too many. The change in Uzbek attitude is a result of greater
geo-politics in the region like Uzbekistan’s desire to get “international legitimacy for its much-pilloried regime”, to keep Russia from gaining too much influence, to establish its predominance in the region, especially with regard to the growing influence of Kazakhstan (ibid).

The NDN route raises hope for U.S. reengagement with Uzbekistan. With the deteriorating Afghan situation, the U.S. is looking for allies in the region as reflected in the opening of the NDN. Uzbekistan will remain a significant country in the region mainly because of its strategic location for addressing the deteriorating Afghan situation.

**CONCLUSION**

Uzbekistan-U.S. security cooperation has been the hallmark of the bilateral relations after September 11. Before 9/11 security cooperation was on a smaller scale mainly revolving on destruction of Soviet period WMD material, training of defence personnel and cooperation within the NATO’s Partnership for Peace Programme (PfP) programme. Uzbekistan has been actively participating in NATO’s PfP programmes since it joined the Programme in 1994. With Uzbekistan extending support to the U.S. for its war efforts in Afghanistan, the bilateral security relation reached its peak. Uzbekistan allowed the U.S. to use the base at Karshi-Khanabad. In March 2002, both sides signed the Declaration on Strategic Partnership. Though the Agreement dealt with cooperation on various issues it did not refer to any long-term security commitments from the U.S. side. The U.S. security assistance to the Republic was also stepped up. Uzbekistan received the maximum share of the assistances earmarked for the region. As part of FMF assistance, Uzbekistan’s share increased from US$ 2.45 million in 2001 to US$ 36 million in 2002. Among the five republics, Uzbekistan was allocated the highest amount under the IMET funds too.

The bilateral relation got severely damaged after the U.S. demanded an independent probe of the Andijan incident followed by the closure of the K2 base. After September 11, the U.S. assistance to Uzbekistan was stepped up in spite of its poor human rights records and lack of political and economic reforms in the Republic. Before September 11 incident took place, these were major glitches in developing closer bilateral
ties with Uzbekistan. The U.S. was criticised for not making human rights and reform issues a condition for U.S. assistance. At this time, for the U.S., security needs overruled other issues. However, since 2004, the U.S. Government became critical of continued lack of progress in the Republic, which was reflected in the reduction of assistance amount to Uzbekistan. The final blow in the bilateral relation came with the Andijan incident. FMF funds were stopped for Uzbekistan since 2004 as the Secretary of State did not certify Uzbekistan eligible for the assistance. Citing same reason, the IMET funds were also stopped since 2005. With the thaw in the bilateral ties, assistance in other programmes was also cut down.

The turn out of the events after 2005 was least expected in the days following September 2001 when the bilateral relation was at its height. President Karimov knew well the benefits Uzbekistan would receive by developing closer relation with the U.S. Uzbekistan was able to garner the best deal following its cooperation with the U.S. The signing of the Strategic Partnership intensified the bilateral relation; Uzbekistan received the highest assistance, both economic and security. It was able to satisfy its regional ambition of portraying itself as a key regional player. Moreover, President Karimov since independence was trying to keep Russia at a distance and the proximity with the U.S. after September 11 gave it the desired opportunity. The ‘war against terror’ also helped Uzbekistan to destroy IMU forces, a constant threat to the Karimov regime and to the peace and stability of the region.

The opening of the U.S. military base in the region also intensified the regional geo-political competition. Despite the U.S. assurances that it has no interest in maintaining long term military presence in the region, Russia remained sceptic of U.S. military presence in the region. Though Russia was initially reluctant, it eventually agreed for the bases as it was essential for the Afghan mission; stability and end of Taliban rule was in Russian interest too. However, Russia remained uncomfortable with the U.S. bases in its backyard. Russia reacted by opening its own base at Kant in Kyrgyzstan in 2003.
The souring of the Uzbek-U.S. bilateral relation after 2005 again brought about a regional geo-political realignment. Russia did not criticize the Karimov regime for the way it handled the Andijan event. The silence of Russia on lack of progress in reforms and continuing poor human rights situation brought Uzbekistan closer to Russia; these issues have been the main irritants for developing strong ties with the west. Uzbekistan and Russia signed the Treaty of Alliance Relations in November 2005, giving the bilateral relation a major boost.

However, in recent times Uzbekistan-U.S. bilateral relations have shown signs of improvement. The deteriorating Afghan situation offers a common ground for cooperation. The U.S.'s efforts for an alternative route to Pakistan once again make the Central Asian region important. Uzbekistan in 2009 has allowed the U.S. to use it cargo airport at Navoi to transport non-lethal materials to Afghanistan, though it was done indirectly with help from South Korea. Moreover, the success of the Northern Distribution Network depends on Uzbek support.

Uzbekistan-U.S. security relation has gone through various ups and downs, reaching its height post-September 11 and coming down at its lowest after 2005. The recent developments like the Navoi base and Uzbekistan's support to the NDN reflect the changing mood on both sides. However, with the past baggages, the U.S. reengagement with Uzbekistan will not be so smooth.