CHAPTER-3

NEGOTIATIONS AND SETTLEMENT OF BORDER DISPUTE
3.1 BORDER DISPUTES IN CENTRAL ASIA: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

China had a border dispute with Russia since the late seventeenth century. During the period of rift between the former Soviet Union and China, Chinese maps showed parts of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan as far as Lake Balkash, and the Pamirs, within the borders of China. China claimed that Tsarist Russia had annexed thousands of square miles from China. Border disputes have been a thorn in Sino-Soviet relationship.

MAP 3.1


The disintegration of the former Soviet Union and the emergence of five independent Central Asian Republics, close to China’s border, considerably altered the
geopolitics of the region. Thus, China’s border dispute with the former Soviet Union, has transformed into disputes with four independent states—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. China's boundaries with Central Asia were originally drawn up under what China describes as "unequal treaties". It alleged that as a result of these treaties, Czarist Russia gained territory at its expense. It, therefore, refused, to recognize these boundaries. Although the former Soviet Union and China began negotiating a mutually acceptable border, a settlement remained elusive. With the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1990, the new Central Asian Republics - Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan - inherited the disputes with China.

It should be noted that China and the former Soviet Union shared borders of over 7,000 kilometers in length for historical reasons. There were a few areas of dispute along their borders during the cold war. When Sino-Soviet relations were tense, the two countries stationed heavily armed troops in the border areas. They even had military clashes in some areas of contention such as the Zhenbao Island. However, sporadic meetings on border issues between Chinese and Soviet officials took place during the almost 30 year period of deteriorated relations between the two countries from the early 1960s onwards, but with little concrete result.

Central Asian countries face numerous problems in the delimitation and demarcation of their borders. With the collapse of the Collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia, China, and all five Central Asian states- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan had accepted the old Soviet borders. Nevertheless, those administrative frontiers had never been clearly demarcated even during the Soviet era. Thus they instantly posed a regional security challenge to Central Asia as a region in general and to the world in particular.

In recent times, China and the former Soviet Union had resumed border talks between the two, both in the eastern and western sectors. The process of negotiation, which started in 1986, continued after the breakup of the Soviet Union. (Stobdan 1994: 13) It was Mikhail Gorbachev who radically changed the pace of Sino-Soviet relations.
Gorbachev showed concern for the border and security problems and announced the partial withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and Mongolia. It was agreed to restart border negotiations and a partial agreement was reached in 1988, in case of Mongolia. (Yasmin 1998: 231) Obstacles were lifted progressively in the following years, the final one being the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in 1989. The willingness to re-negotiate treaties considered by China as ‘unequal’ was indicated the fundamental changes in Sino-Soviet relationship.

The Beijing summit in May 1989 between Gorbachev and Deng Xiaoping, symbolized the normalization of Sino-Soviet relations. The summit also established the basis of cooperation at the regional and national levels. It guaranteed a peaceful environment allowing economic development in China and the continuation of reforms in the Soviet Union. Later on 16 May 1991, the Sino-Soviet agreement on the eastern section of their borders was signed. The Russian federation today shares only a 56 km stretch and the rest of 2805 kms include 1533 kms with Kazakhstan, 858 kms with Kyrgyzstan and 114 kms with Tajikistan.

3.2 BORDER DISPUTES AND RESOLUTION

With the demise of the Soviet Union, Russia, China, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan all accepted the old administrative Soviet borders as their state boundaries rather than opening historical territorial claims. Nonetheless, as those administrative boundaries had never been demarcated and were sometimes only general outlines, several kilometers deep, on maps, the Central Asian states have all been forced into a complex, and often interlocking, series of bilateral negotiations to resolve the limits of their territory.
With thousands of square kilometers in dispute, border issues have increased tensions and often served as a fundamental stumbling block to wider regional cooperation in economics, security and ethnic relations. Even where borders were defined, the movement of goods and people was limited by bureaucratic procedures, political mistrust, and corruption among border and customs officials. If these border issues were
not resolved, they will continue to complicate the fundamental security picture in Central Asia and provide fuel for state to-state and local conflict.

Border disputes involving China have been in many ways simpler than those involving the former Soviet Union’s inter-republic boundaries. China’s borders with Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were already demarcated for long stretches. The territories are generally sparsely populated, and borderlines fall more often along natural geographic boundaries. Nonetheless, there was still a great deal of territory where areas were in dispute, and negotiations began soon after independence.

Central Asian states have been apprehensive of perceived Chinese expansionist tendencies. Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have traditionally viewed security ties to Russia as their best insurance against any form of predatory behaviour by China. However, since independence, China has developed important trade and transportation links with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

China’s most important concern is the security of the border region as many Uyghurs live in Kazakhstan and there is also a Kazakh minority in China. This situation frightened China especially in 1990s. (Ercilasun 2004: 1-4). China’s border disputes with the former Soviet Union now became China’s disputes with the four independent states-Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Soon after their independence, China accorded recognition and established diplomatic relations with all the Central Asian Republics. In 1992, China received a pledge from the Central Asian Republics that “PRC is the sole and legitimate government of China and Taiwan is an inalienable part of China”. The Central Asian Republics not only endorsed China’s territorial integrity describing Tibet and Xinjiang as parts of China, but also supported ‘One China Policy’ committing themselves not to establish any official relations with Taiwan. They also expressed their support for China’s national policy and opposed religious extremism and separatism, at the same time undertaking not to allow the Uyghur separatists operating from within their territories.
A number of ethnic groups reside across borders in China’s Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) and Central Asian states. According to Chinese statistics, about 600,000 ethnic Chinese are now living in Central Asia. Whereas, in Xinjiang, there about than one million Kazakhs, 140,000 Kyrgyz, 33,000 Tajiks and 14,500 Uzbeks. Because of the geographical proximity, common religion and ethnicity, ethnic groups across the borders in China and Central Asia have maintained a traditional friendship and have always kept up frequent contacts.

Since 1992, the negotiations on border issues resumed with the delegations jointly sent by Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and China, although Russia preferred to solve the issues on a bilateral basis. A breakthrough was made in 1996 when these five states met in Shanghai and signed an agreement on confidence building measures along the eastern border. Following this, a demilitarized pact was signed in Moscow in April 1997, regulating their frontiers and limiting their troop deployment within 100 kms of their common borders, 3810 tanks for Russia and Central Asian states and 3,900 in China by the year 2020. (Stobdan 1998: 402)

In the Sino-Kazakh joint communiqué, issued on 28 February 1992, it was stated that “the two sides have given a positive appraisal of the results achieved during the border negotiations between China and the former Soviet Union on the present section of the Sino-Kazakh border. Based on the present treaty concerning the Sino-Kazakh border, the two sides will, in accordance with the established principles of international law and in the spirit of mutual consultation on equal footing, mutual accommodation and mutual understanding, continue to discuss the border issues so as to find a fair and reasonable solution acceptable to both sides.

The most notable progress in negotiation for the bilateral settlement of disputed borders was the Sino-Kazakh frontier agreement signed on 26 April 1994 by the Chinese Premier, LI Peng and the Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev. The agreement finalized in principle the demarcation of the 1700 kms long Sino-Kazakh borders. (Melet 1998). In September 1997, the Chinese Premier, Li Peng and the Kazakh President,
Nazarbaev signed an additional protocol to the 1994 agreement after the demarcation of the last disputed piece of common boundary— the 11 kms. line near the Hantengri Mountain, on the tri-junction of China, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. From now on, the Sino-Kazakh border is not only formally recognized but also legally demarcated along its entire length. (Raczka 1998).

China has sought more stability and tranquility in its border by promoting stronger economic and diplomatic ties with its three immediate neighbors in Central Asia. This is evident from the success of the signing of the Five-Nation Agreement. It was agreed that, the military forces stationed along the border areas would not attack each other and there would not be any military exercises aimed against each other. It also specified the limits on the scale, scope and number of military exercises on both sides of the border areas. It further stipulated that the concerned sides should inform each other of major military activities taking place in any area within 100 kms. of the boundaries. (China Daily, April 26, 1996)

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia, China, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan all accepted the old administrative Soviet borders as their state boundaries rather than opening historical territorial claims. This was an important step against a possible host of irredentist claims Kazakhstan and China faced problems in the demarcation of their borders. Like all border disputes in the region, ethnicity, resources and history played their role in border talks between China and Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan voiced some annoyance over the fact that the border with China determined by agreements both between the Russian Empire and China in the 18th and 19th Century, and between China and the newly established Soviet Union—divided ethnic Kyrgyz and Kazakh minority populations, who fled the Soviet Union during the 1920s and 1930s. As a result, there are now estimated to be some 900,000 ethnic Kazakhs in China's Xinjiang region. The border with China was sealed until 1991, but since independence, it has become an important trade and transport route for Kazakhstan.
China is mainly concerned about ethnic separatist movements on its territory among its Muslim population. China is also focused on strong border regime with easily identifiable borders, which it can use to control any links between its own ethnic minorities and the states of Central Asia. (Ibid: 17).

After the collapse of the USSR, in 1991, the Sino-Soviet border changed. The western part was divided into four sections: Kazakh-Chinese, Sino-Russian, Kyrgyz-Chinese, and Tajik-Chinese. At that time, the newly independent Central Asian states not only recognized the existence of the territorial issue, but agreed to come to the negotiating table through Russian mediation. (Liu Dexi 1996: 180) It led to the “Four plus one (Russia and three Central Asian countries, namely—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and China)” negotiation formula was created by the Sino-Russian "partnership" in due observance of the Sino-Russian border agreements. After 1993, the "Four plus One" formula led to the formation of two regular committees—for confidence-building and for joint boundary demarcation and arms reduction — which later became founding members of the so-called "Shanghai Five" (Sun Zhuangzhi 1999: 204-206).

The first fruit borne by the committee for confidence-building and arms reduction was the Shanghai Agreement on confidence building in the military field in the border area in 1996. All the concerned states agreed to stabilize their border areas by establishing demilitarized zones and by promising to exchange sensitive military information. (KrasnaiaZvezda1996) In February 1997, Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan joined in Moscow and signed the agreement on mutual reduction of armed forces in the border area.

The "Four plus One" formula advanced the progress of border demarcation on the western border. In 1994, the Kazakh-Chinese border and the 50 kilometer Sino-Russian border were agreed upon, with two small sections of the latter border undecided. In 1998, when the third "Shanghai Five" summit was held in Almaty, in Kazakhstan, they finally
resolved them in the Kazakh-Chinese supplemental agreement (Inside Central Asia Mar. 8-14, 1999).

China and Kazakhstan signed a treaty defining sovereignty over the areas - a 680-square-km territory near the Baimurz pass and a 380-square-km area near the Sary-Chardy River - and setting the 1,700-km border between the two countries. President Nazarbayev’s announced that Kazakhstan had become the first of the four countries that border northern China to have settled once and for all the territorial disputes dating from Soviet times. Moscow and Beijing briefly went to war over the Kazakh-China frontier 30 years ago.

MAP 3.3

CHINA-KAZAKHSTAN INTERNATIONAL BORDER

Source: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/126276.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/126276.stm)
3.3 SHANGHAI FIVE

The Shanghai 5 was originally established as a joint border agreement between China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan on 26 April, 1996. Its origin can be traced back to 1964 border negotiations between China and the former Soviet Union. The collapse of the Soviet Union revived some old questions concerning the western borders of China, and as Michael Clarke has pointed out, China had been focusing on that issue already at the beginning of the 1990s, whereas Kazakhstan was more interested in trade. (Clarke 2003: 212-213). Although the agreement at that time focused mainly on economic issue, it had a clause that “entrusted the members to stand against stirring up ethno-religious nationalism”. (Mishra 2001: 305-06). All the member states had their own problems with different ethnic or religious groups, although in different forms and scales.

MAP 3.4

Map: Members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

Thus the Shanghai Five came as a natural reaction to the serious threat of Central Asia becoming an area of instability following an upsurge of international terrorism, religious extremism and national separatism (Beijing Review, May 13-19, 1996: 6-8). Since its inception, the Shanghai Five, now the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has steadily increased its focus on the development of regional security situation, following violence and unrest in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

At the very first summit of Shanghai Five Forum in Shanghai April 1996, the member states had put in place their first CBMs agreement where they committed themselves not to use violence or the threat of violence for resolving their mutual differences. They had also agreed to have no military exercises aimed against each other and no military activities within 10 kms of borders. In their next summit in Moscow during 1997, President Yeltsin proposed to create a zone of peace along the 10,000 km border shared by these five countries. During their 1998 summit at Almaty (Kazakhstan), China succeeded in getting through its resolution where all the member countries agreed to reject all manifestations of national separatism and religious extremism and to ban on their territories activities harmful to sovereignty, security and public order of any of the five countries. Next summit was held at Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) during August 24-25, 1999 which came out with a proposal for a nuclear weapon free zone in the region and urged all nations to jointly fight international terrorism, ethnic separatism and religious fundamentalism. And during their fifth summit in Dushanbe (Tajikistan) during 5’July, 2000, these leaders not only reiterated their agreement on creating a nuclear weapon free zone in the region, to jointly fight international terrorism, ethnic separatism and religious fundamentalism, set up a Regional Center in Tajikistan to study these problems but also criticized Clinton’s ballistic missile defense program thus expanding their agenda beyond their immediate concerns. They have also since agreed to enlarge their organizational framework that now includes a series of annual meetings amongst their premiers, ministers, officials and experts. (Singh 2000:11).
3.4 ROLE OF SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANISATION IN BORDER DISPUTE SETTLEMENT

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was launched on June 15, 2001, Presidents of China, Russia and four Central Asian states (Uzbekistan being the latest) met in Shanghai to sign a declaration establishing the new regional body to “promote peace, stability, economic and trade ties”. They also signed the Shanghai Convention on “combating terrorism, separatism and extremism”. Then the Chinese President, Ziang Zemin put forward four point proposals: (SCO 2001: 1).

1. SCO should recognize the differences of the nations in order to find out ways and to adapt to each other’s unique characteristic,
2. An anti-terrorist center should be established as soon as possible;
3. The six countries should carry forward the ‘spirit of unity’ to solve problems through friendly consultations, and
4. The organization must adhere to the principle of ‘being open’, meaning it is not aligned and does not target any particular country.

The agreements reached by Russia, China and the Central Asian states, the Sino-Russian agreements on the creation of a 100 kms. demilitarized zone along both sides of the border, the formation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the partnership with Russia are poised to serve to guarantee the stability of China’s north and northwest, thereby enabling Beijing to concentrate on its south and southwest, with its troublesome relationship with Taiwan and the issue of sovereignty of the disputed Spartly Islands.

According to Boris Rumer, by joining the SCO, China had the following three goals; most importantly, to isolate Xinjiang from the turbulent Muslim environment, counteracting the American influence in Central Asia and lastly replace Russia as the key actor in the region. (Rumer 2000: 62-63).
Beijing is also faced with the problem of encouraging economic development and linkages without assisting ethnic separatism. China’s policy of encouraging economic development while keeping a tight lid on political activism has been implemented with the hope of resolving ethnic problems. It is also felt that a higher standard of living and more political stability in Xinjiang compared to such neighboring nations, as Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan would encourage local populations to work with the government instead of against it. (Dorian 1997: 465)

China was relieved that the governments of Central Asian states themselves were becoming hostile to the rising Islamic opposition and had taken severe measures to prevent Islamic fundamentalism from penetrating into the region. Therefore, instead of Central Asia becoming a threat, the Chinese found a commonality of interest with the new states as their weaker armed forces too were engaged in countering national chauvinism and trans-border Islamic fundamentalism. The Chinese leaders were relieved that neither Islamic fundamentalism nor Turkic nationalism is going to threaten China. (Stobdan 1998: 401)

China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan which founded the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in June 2001, adopted the Shanghai convention on combating the “three evils”, vowing to strengthen multilateral cooperation and jointly combat these three evil forces. SCO members enhanced their collaboration in suppressing the “East Turkistan” separatists, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Chechen-based terrorist forces.

Tracing the origin of Shanghai Five, Russian scholar Yevgeny Kozhokin wrote that it was the “threat of Islamic extremism in Central Asia, fuelled by the Taliban regime and Pakistan that appears to have triggered effective rapprochement and coordination between the five states”. According to him, “the region was an easy prey to Muslim extremism which made rapid advances and gained local support largely because the Central Asian countries were hit by internal dissensions and disgruntlement, stoked by
unemployment and vast income gaps between different sections of the population. (Sulaiman 2002: 83-84).

The SCO declaration of 15June, 2001 stipulated that all SCO members will strictly abide by the UN Charter, respect each other’s independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, not interfere in each other’s internal affairs, not use force or threat of force, achieve equality and mutual benefit, solve all issues through consultations and never try to gain military superiority over the neighboring countries. The declaration also said:

1. The SCO, on the basis of military treaties signed in Shanghai and Moscow, plans to expand cooperation among the member states in political, economic, trade, cultural, scientific and technological realms;

2. In pursuit of the principle of non-alignment refusal to target third countries or regions militarily and opening to the outside world, the SCO is willing to carry out various dialogues, exchanges and cooperation with any other country, or international or regional organization that expresses a desire to talk;

3. The SCO attaches special importance to ensuring regional security. All member-states will closely cooperate with each other in implementing the Shanghai treaty on the crackdown on terrorism, separatism and extremism, including establishing an SCO terrorism centre in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan;

4. To maintain a global strategic balance and stability under the international circumstances is of special significance. The SCO declaration approved the formation of ‘Council of Co-coordinators’ of member-states to coordinate the cooperation. (SCO 2001: 4).

In Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, in July 3, 1998, the parties agreed that the following basic principles must be observed in developing economic cooperation of equality and mutual benefit; (http://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/ziliao/3602/3604/t18029.htm)

- Provide internationally accepted trade terms to each other in order to expand their volumes;
• Encourage and support various forms of economic and trade cooperation with a local and border area as well as cooperation between large enterprises and large companies of the five countries.

• Improve their respective investment environment so as to create conditions for boosting investment in the economic projects in their countries.

SCO almost resolved the most challenging issues between the former Soviet Union and China, that is CBMs and demarcation in the border areas. As regards terrorism, the SCO seeks to coordinate its activities within the member states.

The concept of multilateralism that has formed and developed in the SCO experience for more than ten years, should be viewed in a more comprehensive and long-term context of the post-Cold War. However, the effectiveness of the organization is conditioned by increased role of Russia and China. As regards its enlargement, the existence of Uzbekistan within the SCO blocks rapid and flexible reaction by the SCO. Russia and China could never control great powers such as India, and then the SCO might become a nominal organization. The SCO has a goal of creating a multilateral “partnership” between formerly antagonistic countries of the post-Cold War period. One can draw some lessons from the experience of the border issue: resolve the border dispute, defuse military tension by developing confidence-building measures, and keep up an unbreakable dialogue and interaction. Such ideas have become widespread; on the eve of the SCO summit in St. Petersburg in 2002, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) was held in Almaty. Sixteen states, including not only India and Pakistan, but also Israel and Palestine, got together with ten observers including the US, Japan and South Korea. The SCO members also support the creation of nuclear arms free zones in Central Asia and emphasize their respect for Mongolia’s non-nuclear status. For the distant goal of creating a Eurasian version of the OSCE, but nowhere can be.

In addition, the “Shanghai Five” was created in 1996 -- including China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan -- to serve as a forum to facilitate border
negotiations and work at demilitarizing the frontier. In June 2001, the group expanded its areas of collaboration to include counter-terrorism and economic cooperation. Uzbekistan was admitted as a member, and the name was changed to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (Interfax News Agency 2001).

In the case of Kyrgyzstan, China has also appeared willing to “barter” military assistance, transportation links and new trade ties for land concessions and water rights.

Kazakhstan’s border extends almost 12.2 thousand km, including almost 600 km on the Caspian Sea in the West. The border length with Russia is 6,477 km; with China (in the East) it is 1,782 km; Kyrgyzstan = 1,050 km; Uzbekistan = 2,159 km; and Turkmenistan (with the latter three states in the South) = 426 km.7 Most of Kazakhstan’s borders go through plains (steppes, deserts, and semi-deserts). In the West and in the North the border stretches through semi-desert and steppe areas with few natural barriers. In the South the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan border and most of the Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan borders lie in the desert. Eastern and South-Eastern borders are situated in the mountains, as are parts of the Russian-Kazakhstan border in the Altai, parts of the borders with Uzbekistan and China, and Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan border. The greater part of the Kazakhstan-Chinese border goes through arid heights or follows rivers. This varied geography, with its stretches of border where there are no paved roads but many smaller, less clearly defined trails and only sparse populations, compounds the border control problem.

Despite the enormous territory of the country, 12 of its administrative regions and 79 of its 168 districts adjoin the country’s borders. 73 per cent of its population lives in these borders regions, with 31 percent of its people inhabiting border districts. Twelve percent of the country’s populations live in districts, bordering upon Russia, 8 percent-upon

7 There are different points of view concerning the length of Kazakhstan’s borders: for instance, the length of the Russian-Kazakhstan border (the second longest overland border in the world) is estimated even at 7,598 km, by the appraisal of the Federal Border Service of the Russian Federation. population live in districts, bordering upon Russia, 8 percent-upon Uzbekistan, 6 percent-upon Kyrgyzstan, 5.5 percent-upon China, and 0.2
Uzbekistan, 6 percent-upon Kyrgyzstan, 5.5 percent-upon China, and 0.2 percent-upon Turkmenistan. The ethnic composition of the borderlands is rather diverse. According to official statistics, in 7 of 12 border regions, the Kazakhs are evidently the dominant ethnic group; in 2 of 12 regions this group remains numerically strong.

Border disputes with contiguous states, even at the local level, can cause interstate and ethnic conflicts and/or the formation of uncontrolled territories, which can be used for illegal trans-boundary activity. The contemporary borders of Kazakhstan were formed as a result of difficult historical processes. First of all, they are the results of Soviet administrative-territorial reforms and very difficult relations between the Russian empire, later USSR, and also China. Now the process of delimitation and demarcation of Kazakhstan’s borders has come to an end. Border disputes between Kazakhstan and China could cause rather dangerous consequences. The sources of these disputes are found in the history of Russian– and Soviet–Chinese relations in the 19th and 20th Centuries, including the armed conflict of 1969 near the lake of Zhalanashkol.

After the collapse of the USSR, China presented claims for some border sections, where, according to some reporting, the demarcation signs were changed by Soviet frontier guards in the 1920s without any agreement with China. Some experts pointed to latent tensions and explained that the change of the country’s capital from Almaty to Astana, which is situated far from the Chinese border, was in response to the perceived Chinese threat. The problem was settled by the Agreement on the Kazakhstan-Chinese Border (1994), and additional agreements about the border (1997, 1998). In September 1994 the parties reached an agreement on the western section of the Sino-Russian border, where, after Sino-soviet armed border clashes in 1969, both sides had deployed troops and equipments on a huge scale. With the improvement in bilateral relations, the parties significantly reduced military forces deployed in the border regions but still required an institutional mechanism to guarantee border security. To meet this need on 26th April 1994 china, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan signed the treaty of deepening military trust in border regions, which contain following provisions.

7) Military forces deployed in border regions will not attack each other.
8) No side will conduct military exercises that are targeted against each other.

9) The scale, range and number of military activities scheduled to be conducted within 100 km of the border

10) Each side will invite the other to observe military exercises that involve the use of live ammunition.

11) Dangerous military activity are to be avoided and

12) Friendly communications between military forces and frontier guards in border regions should be promoted.

On the basis of this treaty, in 1997 the parties agreed to the reduction of military forces in the border regions;

8) Military forces deployed in border regions were to be reduced to a level compatible with the good neighbor relations and defensive in nature.

9) No side would use, or threaten to use, force against the other or unilaterally seek military superiority.

10) The military forces deployed in border regions would not attack the other side.

11) All sides would reduce the number of military personnel including army, air force, air defense forces, and frontier guards, and also reduce the quantity of the main categories of weaponry deployed with 100 kilometers of the border.

12) The upper limit after reduction, as well as the method and time limit for implementation, would be specified at a later date.

13) The parties would exchange pertinent information on military forces in border regions and

14) Implementation of treaty was to be supervised.
The Additional Agreement between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the People's Republic of China on the Kazakh-Chinese State border was signed on July 4th, 1998;

The Agreement between the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on the definition of the common point of the borders of three states was signed on May 5th, 1999;

The Agreement between the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China and Kyrgyz Republic on the common point of the borders of three states was signed on August 25th, 1999.

MAP 3.5

KAZAKHSTAN AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

http://iz.carnegiemnh.org/crayfish/images/kazakhstan_map.gif
Border security and stability have always been the central focus of China’s diplomacy in Central Asia. Resolution of border issues and border security are prerequisite for China’s goal of a favorable environment. These agreements are of fundamental significance for the border security of China, Russia, and the Central Asian States. According to these documents, the disputed lands were divided and China obtained about 43 per cent of total disputable area in forested highlands. In 2002, the border demarcation was started and in October 2003 it was finished. However not all small territorial disputes have been resolved, and consequently there is a lack of accuracy and mistakes in the description of borders, demarcation, temporary leases of the contiguous countries’ territories, and so on.

A Sino-Tajik border agreement that was ratified by Tajikistan’s parliament, resolved a 130-year-old territorial dispute, under their agreement Tajikistan ceded around 1,000 square kilometers of land in the Pamir Mountains to China. It means that China would receive roughly 3.5% of the 28,000 square kilometers of land it claimed. China’s territorial concession has been hailed by Tajik Foreign Minister Hamrokhon Zarifi as a "victory for Tajik diplomacy". Under its border agreements with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, China received 22% and 32% respectively of the land disputed with these countries.

In the 1990s, China began negotiating settlements with these countries. Border agreements with Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan were reached in 1996 and 1998 respectively. Border talks with Tajikistan were delayed by the civil war there. However, talks gathered momentum in the late 1990s and an agreement was reached in 2002. It was this agreement that was ratified recently. Analysts have drawn attention to the territorial concessions that China extended to resolve its many disputes. Of its 23 territorial disputes active since 1949, China offered "substantial compromises" in 17, usually agreeing "to accept less than half of the territory being disputed," M Taylor Fravel, associate professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, pointed out in the article "Regime

However, The territorial concessions that China is believed to have made are not quite as substantial as they appear to be. Srikanth Kondapalli, a China expert at the Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi pointed out that China's strategy of stepping up territorial claims and then settling for less has enabled it to appear to be making a major territorial concession to reach a border resolution agreement. In several disputes, "whether China actually gave up territory or made a substantial concession is a debatable question," he told Asia Times Online.

According to Fravel, "China's leaders have compromised when faced with internal threats to regime security - the revolt in Tibet, the instability following the Great Leap Forward, the legitimacy crisis after the Tiananmen upheaval, and separatist violence in Xinjiang."

The territorial concession claimed to have been made to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in order to reach border agreements with as was prompted by a sharp surge in separatist violence in Xinjiang province in the early 1990s. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the emergence of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan as independent republics stoked long-smoldering Uighur nationalism in Xinjiang and fueled Uighur aspirations for independence. This triggered an apprehension in Beijing that Xinjiang would break away. Coming close on the heels of the Tiananmen uprising of 1989, which had undermined the Chinese government's legitimacy, the separatist violence in Xinjiang compounded Chinese regime insecurity, as it posed a threat to China's territorial integrity. This made it imperative for Beijing to nip Uighur unrest in the bud.

China's strategy to deal with Uighur separatism has involved ruthless suppression of separatists and economic development of the Xinjiang region. However, the success of this strategy hinged on support from countries bordering Xinjiang-Kazakhstan,
Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Their cooperation was essential to get them to crack down on Uighur separatists taking sanctuary on their soil as well as to build robust trade ties that were needed for economic development in Xinjiang. Beijing thus traded territorial concessions for support from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in its strategy to quell Uighur separatism.

With the exception of its territorial disputes with India and Bhutan, China has settled all its other land-border disputes.

China's strategy for resolving its border disputes and the nature of its border-resolution mechanism provide useful pointers to what lies ahead. In the past, "it is when the contestant state is weak that China has moved quickly to resolve the dispute," points out Kondapalli. The way it went about handling its territorial disputes with the Soviet Union is indicative. Although China discussed the issue with the Soviet Union, it was only when the USSR disintegrated that Beijing moved quickly to achieve resolution.

Kondapalli says there are lessons for India from the Sino-Tajik border agreement. "China will claim more before settling for less," he said. "The so-called territorial concessions that it will probably extend while settling the dispute will not merit being regarded as concessions." Explaining this point, Kondapalli said that in 1960, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai had put forward a proposal under which China would recognize India's sovereignty over territory south of the McMahon Line in the eastern sector in return for India recognizing China's sovereignty over Aksai Chin in the western sector. However, China has since extended its claims to include territory south of the McMahon Line.

"It will possibly settle for parts of Tawang, dropping its larger claims on Arunachal," Kondapalli said. "But this scaling down of its claims cannot be regarded as a concession, as it will be getting territory south of the McMahon Line."
Despite some limited progress and the avoidance of any serious military conflict relating to border disputes, sorting out the remaining demarcation issues in Central Asia promises to be a long and sometimes painful process. While a direct military conflict over disputed territory seems unlikely, in large part because of the vastly varying military capabilities across the region, border tensions have the potential to fuel conflict in a number of ways and will continue to feed into the wider fragmentation of the region.

One of the most striking features of Central Asia after twenty years since the demise of the Soviet Union is that many countries have become more insular, with stricter border controls, new visa regimes, growing suspicion of ethnic minorities and often-antagonistic efforts to demarcate territory. Most of these steps have been taken in the name of national security, and there are real, pressing reasons for setting up border controls and demarcating the frontiers. The rapid increase in narcotics trafficking and the threat from insurgent groups such as the IMU and the Taliban have made increased border control a necessity in some areas. Populations in border areas have seen their access to water, grazing rights and trade curtailed or cut off as a bargaining chip in negotiations.

The sharp political divisions within Kyrgyzstan about territorial concessions offer stark testament to the potentially destabilizing impact of border issues if they are not dealt with transparently and according to law. Ignoring political opposition and overruling legitimate protests by local residents risks undermining any border agreements that are reached. “Illegitimate” agreements only store up trouble for the future.

The border demarcation issues in Central Asia have more or less been resolved. One of the most striking features of Central Asia after twenty years since the demise of the Soviet Union, is that these CARs have become more insular, with strict border controls, new visa regimes and growing suspicion of ethnic minorities. Most of these steps have been taken in the name of national security, and there are pressing reasons for setting up border controls and demarcating the frontiers. The rapid increase in narcotics
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