Chapter VII

SUMMATION
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In the preceding chapters, an attempt has been made to examine the theory of intervention with particular reference to the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan.

In the realm of international relations, intervention has been the most controversial form of state behaviour and has in recent times become a serious issue to contend with. Understood as the hostile encroachment of one political community upon the affairs of another, it is manifestly at odds with contemporary international order, which strives to limit state sovereignty within the area it legally commands. Intervention refers to organized and systematic activities. The act of intervention in international relations occurs when a state interferes in the relations of other states without their consent. It also takes place when it interferes in the domestic affairs of another state, in utter disregard to its sovereign character, purely with the intention of either maintaining or altering the actual condition of things within it. Prime facie it is a hostile act because it constitutes an attack upon the independence of the state subjected to it.

Interventions result from a convergence of factors, some of which are located in the intervening and others in the intervened nation. Thus while interventions can be constrained or fostered by domestic factors, it is largely based on both the operative internal and external variables.
with sometimes the former being more potent than the latter.

Interventions have an empirical existence, as well as an evaluative one. Policy makers plan it nations sustain them; citizens ponder them. Though interventions may be conceptualized differently, it does refer to empirical phenomena and these constitute the central problem of international relations.

The study of intervention is the study of the unconventional in international relations. Since un-conventionality becomes conventional the longer it persists, it is also the study of the finite or the temporary phenomena. In general, interventions are the product of perceptions, calculations and decisions that occur within the decision making organizations and their leadership. More than any other foreign policy action, an act of intervention is a consequence of a decision taken at the highest level. Further, the assessment of the need for and probable outcome of the interventionary behaviour are more subject to the whims of individual leaders and the dynamics of domestic bureaucratic structures, than the diplomatic, economic, military and political policies through which nations relate themselves - conventionally - to the international system.

Every act of intervention presupposes the identification of the target. The broad notion of domestic
affairs is relied upon to identify the target of intervention; it excludes from its purview, the entry of a state into a war between other states and includes the participation of a state in a conflict taking place within another state.

Each intervention in international relations has a particular purpose inherent in it. The purpose of intervention is the end to which it is directed and the objective, it is designed to achieve.

Every intervention, has a cause, the outbreak of a civil war, has always been the major cause of intervention. Most interventions, in a civil war, are claimed to be by invitation of the feuding parties. The law governing international relations does not give an external power, the right to judge upon the justice or merit of domestic issues in another state.

The doctrine of intervention by invitation is extremely dangerous because if an intervention is directed against rebels, the fact that it has been necessary to seek external assistance is enough to prove that the issue of the conflict would ultimately establish itself as the legal representative of the state. If an intervention is based upon an opinion as to the merits of the question involved, the intervening state takes upon itself the responsibility to pass judgement on a matter which having
nothing to do with the relations of states must be reckoned legally beyond its purview and vision.

**Types of Intervention**

**Military Intervention**

Intervention into the affairs of another state by military force is evidently the most drastic as well as the legally most vulnerable forms of intervention. It takes place when troops are despatched to maintain order or support a revolution in another state. The following acts in support of an external government or the insurgent group would be reckoned as military intervention:

(a) Arms sales or grants;
(b) Military training at home and abroad;
(c) Provision of military advisers, aircraft, transportation of troops engaged in military operations;
(d) Support for military operations by artillery, air or navy;
(e) Participation by combat units both regular troops and volunteers in military operations.

Although the traditional military means still figure prominently among the instruments of intervention, the major weight of it lies in the field of non-military and informal measures. Thus in contemporary international relations, the concept of intervention enmeshes with the exercise of influence and interference and thereby also
with the normal pursuance of national goals. Interference into the affairs of a state is almost built into today's international system. The unilateral or mutual interference of states in each other's internal or external affairs has become a constitutive part of certain structures of multinational politics which have increased in importance. Three distinct forms or structures of multinational politics leading to increased political interference among states can be identified i.e. integration, transnational politics and penetrated systems. Besides, rapid advances in science, technology and communication, an open pluralistic society and increased permeability of the nation state has led to an increase in political intervention. The common type of political intervention is the interference by one state on behalf of either party involved in a constitutional dispute in another state.

Bloc intervention is a type which is most dramatic. However, intervention within one's bloc clearly is less inhibited than in the opposing bloc or in uncommitted states.

Economic intervention is a very old form of involvement by one state in the affairs of another. Thus any form of private, public or fixed investment in another
country is in a general sense, a type of intervention. So is developmental aid given in the form of grants, loans at low interest or commercial rates for general budgetary support or specific projects. All forms of developmental aid raise the problem of the legality of economic assistance, because all grants, loans or intermediate forms of assistance are subject to conditions which curtail the freedom of action of a recipient country, thereby rendering it vulnerable to external intervention.

Humanitarian intervention is another type of an action when there is a threat or use of armed forces by a state, a belligerent community or an international organization, with the object of protecting human rights. In diplomatic usage, the term humanitarian intervention has been used widely to describe diplomatic intervention on behalf of non-nationals or nationals in matters which are legally within the domestic jurisdiction of the state of their residence or sojourn.

The United Nations and Intervention

The United Nations has been bestowed with powers to maintain international peace and security. Although the Charter forbids the UN to intervene in matters essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of a state, it expressly authorizes the UN to make recommendations in
a wide variety of economic, social, human rights and self determination matters, on disputes or situations endangering international peace and security and on conditions which are likely to impair general welfare or friendly ties among states. The Charter also authorizes the UN to make decisions enforceable by collective measures to maintain or restore international peace and security in case of threat to peace, breach of it, an act of aggression or to enforce decisions of the International Court of Justice.

Counter intervention, to correct the situation as a result of intervention and indirect imperialist intervention, through indirect imperialist rule are other types of intervention.

Intervention is therefore, a major feature of international relations as also of the existent international system. In this light there is reason to presume that this situation will persist. Therefore there is a clear need to come to grips with the problem of regulating it. Today the international system is susceptible to rapid change. Therefore, there is room and need to initiate measures which will alter the characteristics of the system which give rise to acts, characterised as intervention.

The Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan, December 1979, was not a spontaneous phenomena. Soviet
interest and stakes in Afghanistan has a history. Russian interest in Afghanistan goes back to the Tsarist times. The small land-locked and backward country was then a buffer between the two empires and it was keenly aware of its powerful northern neighbour. By virtue of its size and common border, the Soviet Union has held an important place in Afghan foreign policy, though the intensity of Moscow's relations with Kabul has varied. Afghanistan occupies an anomalous position, historically and geographically in the third world. Historically, it was one of the very few countries not to be subject to colonial rule. Its geographical position has enabled it to divest itself from any of the conventional regional divisions of Asia. However, its position in Central Asia made it the object of British-Russian rivalry. The history of Russo-Afghan relations reveals a pattern of persistent Russian expansion in Central Asia and the fear from the Nineteenth century onward of Russian expansion into Afghanistan. Though the history of Soviet interest in Afghanistan is a long one, it was the decision of the Afghan ruler Zahir Shah in 1936 to purchase arms from the Soviet Union that gave a new dimension to Soviet-Afghan relations.

The Soviet interest in Afghanistan's armed forces began shortly after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and very soon resulted in the Soviet-Afghan Treaty of 1921.
Thus as early as 1924, when Ahmed Khan organized the Royal Afghan Air Force, Soviet instructors were brought in to train the Afghan armed forces. In 1927, the Soviets and Afghans signed an agreement that envisaged the construction of a series of airfields. At that juncture, Kabul began to purchase Soviet built aircraft which were manned by Soviet pilots and serviced by Soviet ground staff. Because of Afghanistan's caution during the next two decades, Moscow's influence waned but the United States's rejection of Kabul's request for military aid between 1953 and 1955 resulted in a $25 million arms agreement between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan in August 1956. In fact, Afghanistan's dependence on the Soviet Union for arms and ammunition which began in the Zahir era has been the major factor which has led Afghanistan into the Soviet orbit.

The Pre-Intervention Scenario

Soviet political stakes in Afghanistan became deep-rooted with the emergence of the left parties in Afghanistan in the 1960s. The launching of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, on 1 January 1965, has become a watershed in the history of Afghanistan. It was during the latter part of the 1960s and the early 1970s that the major left parties, especially Parcham and Khalq, the two wings of the PDPA gained in strength. The Khalqs concentrated mainly on the military and civil service and the Parchamites among the urban middle class, the intellectuals
professionals and students. The end of the short lived
democratic experiment of the mid 1960s and the re-
emergence of Mohammed Daud to power led to an anti-left
stance by the Government. This was the spur to the reuni-
fication of the PDPA and the major cause of the 1978 coup.
With this the leftists captured power and the Democratic
Republic of Afghanistan was proclaimed. Initially the
two factions of the PDPA Khalq and Parcham worked together
in the Government but soon strains developed and the two
wings parted company in 1979. In fact the hostilities
that developed between the two wings of the PDPA from
1966-67 were too fundamental to be reconciled in a year
of cooperation in Government and so the party split in
October 1979 and the Parchamites removed from positions
of authority in Government.

With the removal of the Parchamites from the Govern-
ment, the Khalq leadership initiated measures which alie-
nated the Afghan masses from the Government. Initially
the opposition was minimal but gradually it intensified
and spread, more so in the rural areas. The first province
to proclaim freedom was Nuristan in March 1979. As the
resistance mounted, Hafizullah Amin was appointed Prime
Minister by President Nur Mohammed Taraki. Amin's new
authority was presumed to herald firm measures – against
the insurgency – and closer links with Moscow. On 5
December 1978, the Afghans entered into a Treaty of
Friendship with the Soviet Union at Moscow. This very Treaty has been cited by the Soviets as a justification of its intervention. The Soviets moved into Afghanistan in late December 1979, two months after Amin overthrew and killed Taraki and took over power. It was the worsening security situation in Afghanistan and the distrust of Amin which prompted the Soviets to move in. The Soviets justify their action as a mere response to an invitation by the Afghan Government. In fact the 'existence' of an invitation has become a matter of debate both inside and outside Afghanistan.

whereas several reasons have been listed for the Soviet intervention, perhaps two factors which might have had a bearing on the decision makers to send troops to Afghanistan are (i) geopolitical/strategic consideration and (ii) the need for protecting and sustaining the leftist Government in Afghanistan. Besides, the apprehension of the spread of Islamic fundamentalism in Asia, infesting the 40 million Muslims of the Soviet Union could also be a major cause for the Soviet intervention.

Pattern of Intervention
Pre-Intervention Patterns:

The beginnings of the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan, can be traced to the rise of the Communist movement in that country. The April 1978 coup was the outcome of the simmering discontent among the leftist
forces against Daoud's policies; the armed forces also played a major role. Though there is no direct evidence of the Soviet involvement, one cannot discount the fact that the Soviets did have a fore-knowledge. The initial months of the new regime witnessed a certain amount of influence by the Soviets which increased over time. The Afghan Communists being unable to run the country smoothly on their own and with the lurking fear of following the Daoud precedent, the dependence on the Soviets increased. This led to a sharp increase in the number of Soviet civilian and military advisers in Afghanistan. These advisers, besides performing advisory functions, exercised considerable power in the decision making process of the Government. On the advice and directive of the advisers, the DRA initiated several measures at agrarian and social reforms. The reforms envisaged were commendable but they neither evoked appreciation nor gratitude. On the contrary it aroused widespread resentment; more so because the DRA government was wholly identified with the Soviet Union. This resentment gradually increased and took the form of insurgency which gradually engulfed the entire nation.

With the ousting of Taraki by Amin, the Soviets - despite their dislike for Amin - had to support him and sent many more military advisers. Thus in the late 1979 Soviet personnel, about 4,000 men proceeded to assume
command and control responsibilities in the army. They also operated jets and helicopter gunships in support of the Afghan army. The Soviets deployed their first combat unit in July 1979. This military assistance was insufficient to halt the tide of insurgency; instead it augmented it. In these circumstances, the Soviets viewed the unfolding events in Afghanistan as volatile. The debate in the Kremlin over the course of action to be taken in Afghanistan attained its crescendo by November 1979. The shift within the Politburo - to invade - came in late November 1979, specially because of the pessimistic reports emanating from Afghanistan and Iran. From the Soviet perspective, the intervention had to take place and could not be delayed to protect their interests in the region. The Soviets visualised that with the deployment of their troops in Afghanistan their strategic position vis-à-vis US and China would improve. It is in this background that the Soviets intervened militarily in Afghanistan.

For the act, as in the case of Czechoslovakia, there was Soviet tactical strategy. A few days prior to the intervention, Soviet advisers disarmed two armoured divisions of the Afghan army, feigning the need to take an inventory of the arms and ammunition. They also succeeded in moving the ruler Amin to an isolated spot outside Kabul.

The Intervention-Pattern

The intervention as such began with the massive Soviet airlift of men and matériel into Kabul from 24-26 December 1979. This was backed up by the concentration
of five divisions of the Soviet army alongside the Soviet-Afghan border. The airlift into Kabul was executed by 200 flights of AN-12 Transports which brought in troops and field equipment. With the entry of the troops Amin was executed in a shoot out at his palace and the Soviets—after the coup—erected a defense perimeter around Kabul. They also took up positions in other areas and cities of the country. By 30 December 1979 they took up position in Jalalabad and within 55 kilometres of the Khyber Pass. The Soviet troops also moved into the towns of Herat, Kandahar, Ghazni, Mazar-i-Sharif and Gardez. Thus by December 1979, there were about 25,000 Soviet troops with scores of armoured vehicles. A major section of the armed forces were stationed at camps near the Kabul airport and city. About 6,000 Soviet soldiers with tanks patrolled the streets and MIG jet aircraft flew over providing the required air cover. With Amin's ouster Babrak Karmal took over the reins of the DRA Government; he had the full backing of the Soviet Union to restore stability in the country. To this end, the Soviets initiated steps and measures to restructure Afghanistan's internal security apparatus—the Afghan police—on the Soviet pattern. Soviet advisers were placed in all ministries and at all levels of Government. No policy decision could be taken without consulting them. Military advisers were attached to all the battalion sized units and all operations were under their directives; they also led combat missions against the rebels. After the March 1979 Herat rebellion, the Soviets began a
massive supply of arms which included heavy armaments including T-62 Tanks. Further, within a month of Karmal's takeover, there were about 70,000 Soviet soldiers in Afghanistan.

**The Post-Intervention Pattern**

In its post intervention strategy, the Soviets initiated the following measures:

(a) The emphasis on Islam to secure the support and sympathy of the Afghan people.

(b) Propaganda against the US and China on the Afghan issue.

(c) Maintenance of unity in the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan.

(d) Efforts at moderation of unpopular economic policies.

(e) Attempts to build a loyal Afghan armed force.

(f) Use of over 80,000 Soviet troops against a variety of religious, ideological, regional and tribal opposition.

(g) Persistent intimidation of neighbouring countries to prevent them from providing the Afghan opposition, support and sanctuary.

Besides these measures, the Soviets in their effort to secure a firm grip over the country, have established a separate military headquarters and constructed permanent underground storage facilities for fuel and ammunition. The construction of a permanent bridge over the Amu Darya, permanent communication facilities, upgradation of the Afghan airfields and construction of new airports and
above all the signing of a status force agreement with the then Karmal Government, was indicative of the long term plans of the Soviets in Afghanistan. This strategy is more apparent in the economic sector where a great emphasis is being laid upon developing the mining and energy sectors. The emphasis on the development of Afghanistan's natural resources - for apparent export to the Soviet Union - resembles the colonial model. Further, most of the developmental schemes are being executed in areas closer to the Soviet border because of practical, logistic reasons and also the long term Soviet economic and strategic goals.

Domestic Consequences of the Intervention

The consequences of the Soviet intervention have been serious. Since 1979 the country has been bedevilled by a disparate Resistance movement which has engulfed the country in a warlike situation.

The resistance to the Soviet presence in Afghanistan began immediately after the Communist takeover of the reins of Government in 1978 which intensified after the Soviet move into Afghanistan. The various Resistance groups operating both inside and outside Afghanistan are a divided lot, the divisions being based on regional, ethnic and sectarian lines. The lack of unity and the paucity of sophisticated weapons are the two major reasons for the
weakness of the Resistance. However, local groups have coordinated their activities only within the limits of distinct regional or linguistic communities. Most prominent in this respect have been the Nuristanis, Badakhshanis, Hazaras, and the numerous Pashtun tribes. The struggle against the Kabul Government and the Soviet forces have been carried out largely by country people, little touched by modern experience or education. Educated urbanites have been slower to join the resistance.

The main Islamic groups leading the resistance from Pakistan are seven:

a) Hizb-e-Islami (Islamic Party) led by Gulbuddin Hikmatyar.
c) Jamiat-e-Islami (Islamic Society) headed by Burhanuddin Rabbani.
d) Ittihadia (Islamic Unity) led by Abdul Rasool Sayyaf.
e) Harakat-e-Ingilabi (Revolutionary Islamic Movement of Afghanistan) led by Mohammed Nabi Mohammadi.
g) Mahaz-e-Milli (National Front of Islamic Revolution of Afghanistan) led by S.A. Gilani.

Besides these, the other prominent groups resisting the DRA Government and the Soviet forces are the Shool-e-Jawid a Maoist splinter group, Sazma-e-Azadibaksh-e-Mardom-e-Afghanistan (SAMA), Jabhaya Mobarigin Mujahid-e-
Afghanistan (National Front of Militant Combatants),
Grohe Inquilabi Khalqi-e-Afghanistan (Revolutionary Group of Afghanistan) and Milliat (Nation).

Though most of these groups are engaged in resisting the Soviet forces all over Afghanistan, the Soviets have been confronted by a very strong and defiant Resistance movement led by the now legendary figure Ahmed Shah Massoud of the Panjshir Valley. Massoud's exploits and limited successes against the Soviets has made him the rallying point for the waning Resistance in Afghanistan. Even after seven successive offensives in the Panjshir, the Soviet forces have to date been unable to totally subdue or suppress the band of guerrilla warriors led by Massoud. In fact the Panjshir has become an Achilles heel for the Soviet Union.

Whereas, the Western and anti-DRA forces eulogise the leaders of the various Resistance groups operating from both within and outside Afghanistan, the DRA and the Soviets together brand them as the leaders of the counter-revolutionary groups, who according to them are responsible for all the crimes against the people of Afghanistan. Notwithstanding the claims and counter-claims of the rival groups, the conflict in Afghanistan has resulted in a war-like situation in the country, with the destruction and killing all over. The desperate Resistance resorts to hit
and run tactics, sabotage, etc., the Soviet forces counter it with massive show of gun power and devastating counter measures. Paradoxically caught between the cross fire are the people of Afghanistan who neither can deny support to the Resistance nor are in a position to accept the reality of the Soviet predominance in the country.

The predominance of the Soviet and DRA forces is apparent more in the cities and the urban areas while most of the countryside is by far not in their grip. It is said that even the cities pass into the hands of the Resistance after dusk. But since the past year, the Soviet and DRA forces have been successful in consolidating their position all over the country. Another domestic consequence of the intervention has been the internal migration of Afghans from the rural areas to the cities. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees by 1986 there were about 1.5 million refugees in the cities of Kabul, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat and Jalalabad.

**Consequences of the Intervention**

**Refugees in Pakistan and Iran**

A major offshoot of the crisis in Afghanistan is the exodus of a large number of Afghan refugees to Pakistan and Iran. While the number of refugees in Pakistan has reached more than 3 million in Iran it is around 1.5
million. The presence of a large section of the Afghan populace in those countries is serious problem. The return of these refugees is a major condition for a political settlement in Afghanistan.

International Consequences

The Soviet presence in Afghanistan is a major factor leading to regional destabilization. The countries close to Afghanistan have been the most affected. Pakistan with its mounting refugee burden is now faced with a super power at its doorstep. This has been used by it as a pretext to arm itself with sophisticated weapons from the US and friendly Islamic states. The arming of Pakistan has led to serious concern in India because hitherto all the arms received from the west by it have been used against India. The Soviet presence in Afghanistan, has triggered an arms race in the region. Although, India has close ties with the Soviet Union, the prospect of Pakistan becoming the buffer between the two has been the major factor which has prompted the Indian Government to seek a withdrawal of all external forces operating directly or indirectly in Afghanistan.

A Soviet controlled Afghanistan is also of great consequence to China, specially in the light of the pro-Soviet, Vietnamese hold on Kampuchea and the tensions in
ASEAN countries as a result of the Vietnamese action. The Soviet Union and China have clashed numerous times along their 4,500 mile border. With the Soviets now perched on the Sino-Afghan border, Beijing reckons the Soviet move into Afghanistan as a military step ultimately aimed at itself. It is for this apprehension that China has accelerated its efforts to nurture closer ties with the US. Perhaps its attempts at a thaw in its strained ties with India can also be attributed to the transformed geostrategic situation in South West Asia.

The transformed geostrategic position of South West Asia is a matter of concern for the US, which has compelled it to review and restructure its defence priorities in the region, more so to safeguard its interests in the region. The continuing presence in Afghanistan has affected the Soviets also. No doubt, the Soviets can dictate terms in Afghanistan, but the drain of resources, the loss of its men and more so its credibility as the champion of the third world can be a compelling reason to make the Soviet leadership to have a rethink on their strategy and goals in Afghanistan. It is in fact the negative impact of the conflict in Afghanistan on the Soviets and Pakistanis which provides a ray of hope for an eventual negotiated settlement in Afghanistan.

The intervention in Afghanistan has revealed several dimensions. The military occupation of a non-aligned
Islamic country hitherto neutral in East-West conflicts and which was situated close to the Gulf again showed both the limits of a policy of detente and the extent of Soviet confidence in pursuing ideologically founded goals that were attainable by force. At the same time this action gave evidence of a hitherto unsuspected accumulation of Soviet miscalculations with reference to reactions in the West and the Third World as well as the consequences of occupying Afghanistan itself.

**International Reaction**

International reaction to the Soviet intervention was spontaneous, pronounced yet varied. The issue was debated in the UN Security Council; it was discussed and voted upon in an emergency session of the UN General Assembly, it has been the subject of deliberation several times in the Islamic Conference, the Non-aligned Meets, the European Community Conferences and the several legislatures of the democratic world.

The majority of the Western nations led by the US were forthright in condemning the Soviet action in Afghanistan. President Carter enunciated the Carter Doctrine to forestall any further moves by the Soviets affecting US and Western interests in the Persian Gulf. He also urged the world community to boycott the 1980 Olympics at Moscow and imposed an embargo on grains sales to the
Soviet Union. While most of the allies of the US, especially the UK, towed the US line, a majority of the Western nations called for an early end to the crisis in Afghanistan, eschewing military and taking recourse to political measures.

The reaction in the Communist world was near unanimous. Led by the Soviets, most of the Communist states, barring China, Albania, and to an extent Romania, justified the Soviet action and questioned the right of the UN and the international community to raise an issue which is purely within the domestic jurisdiction of Afghanistan.

Whereas China and Albania adopted a rigid stance against the Soviet intervention, terming it as a brazen provocation against the peoples of the world, Romania adopted a softer line and urged the withdrawal of forces from Afghanistan.

The reaction in the Third/Non-aligned World was to an extent uniform. A majority of these nations expressed concern and apprehension over the events in Afghanistan and sought an immediate end to the crisis by securing the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan. Expressing solidarity with the people of Afghanistan they urged the UN to initiate steps to restore the independent and non-aligned status of Afghanistan.
In the South Asian sub-continent, whereas Pakistan condemned the Soviet action and called for the withdrawal of the Soviet forces, India adopted an equivocal approach and while not justifying the Soviet action called for an immediate end to all types of intervention into the internal affairs of Afghanistan, to secure its independent, non-aligned status.

The Quest for a Political Solution

The restoration of the independent, non-aligned status of Afghanistan has been the major concern of the international community. To this end several proposals for a permanent political solution have been made, prominent among them are:

I. The United Nations efforts to bring about a permanent settlement in Afghanistan on the basis of the several Resolutions of the UN General Assembly and the Security Council. The principles enshrined in the Resolutions call for

1) The immediate withdrawal of foreign troops;
2) The preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan;
3) The right of the Afghans to determine their form of Government and the economic, political and social system, free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind;
4) The creation of necessary conditions to enable the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homes in safety and honour.
II. (a) The Neutrality proposals of the European Community - February 1981, initiated by the UK which inter alia envisaged:

i) A declaration by Afghanistan of its Neutrality and Non-alignment;

ii) The recognition of its neutrality by the surrounding countries, who also were to give an undertaking of non-interference;

iii) The preceding of the above measures by a withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan.

(b) The European Community's plan for a Two stage international conference on Afghanistan - July 1981.

i) The first stage being a conference of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, along with India, Pakistan, Iran together with the representatives of the UN Secretary General and the Secretary General of Islamic Conference. Its purpose was to work out international arrangements designed to bring about the cessation of external intervention and the establishment of safeguards to prevent such intervention in future ensuring Afghanistan's independence and non-alignment;

ii) Stage two was to secure the implementation of the agreement arrived at in stage one by seeking the involvement of all the concerned parties including the representatives of the Afghan people.

III The Organization Islamic Conference (OIC) peace proposals. The OIC at its Foreign Ministers meet in May 1980, urged a settlement by securing:

i) Withdrawal of the Soviet troops;

ii) Respect for the political independence, sovereignty, non-aligned status and Islamic identity of Afghanistan;

iii) The inalienable right of the Afghan people to choose their political and economic system without coercion and interference.
iv) A congenial atmosphere to enable the Afghan refugees to return in safety and honour.

v) A settlement by consulting all the concerned parties i.e. the Soviet Union, the Afghan Government and the Resistance.

IV. The Five Point Iranian Peace Plan November 1981 envisaged:

1) The withdrawal of Soviet forces;

2) Repatriation of Refugees;

3) Formation of a 30 member Council of clergy and officials of the Islamic world;

4) Formation of a Constituent Assembly elected by the Council from independent Afghan clergy and experts;

5) Formation of a peace keeping force comprising troops from Pakistan, Iran and a third Islamic country opposed to an international imperialistic force.

V. The peace proposals of the Government of Afghanistan - May 1980 which inter alia included:

1) Holding bilateral talks for normalising the relations of Afghanistan with Iran and Pakistan;

2) Grant of freedom and immunity to all returning Afghan refugees;

3) Ensuring practical measures to secure the termination of armed and other types of interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan;

4) Securing of necessary international guarantees to attain a political settlement in Afghanistan, with an obligation by the guarantors not to resort to subversive measures against Afghanistan;
v) The implementation of bilateral accords together with necessary guarantees was to be the precursor to the withdrawal of Soviet troops;

vi) As part of the political settlement, the Government of Afghanistan's support to turn the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf into a zone of peace to lessen tension and strengthen the security of the Littoral states.

The desire of the Government of Afghanistan to arrive at a political settlement was reiterated by both President Karmal and President Leonid Brezhnev who in a statement - October 1981 - however, pointed out that no plans affecting the sovereignty of the people of Afghanistan or disregarding its legitimate government would be successful and Soviet troop withdrawal could be considered in the light of a political settlement, with adequate guarantees of non-resumption of subversive activities from abroad against the people and Government of Afghanistan.

VI. The Non-aligned community at its various meets since 1980, has called for a political settlement based on the following principles:

1) Withdrawal of foreign troops;
2) Respect for the independence, sovereign territorial integrity and non-aligned status of Afghanistan;
3) Strict observance of the principles of non-intervention and non-interference.
Besides these, a formula for a political settlement was also put forth by a scholar from the Third World who suggested:

1. The convening of a regional conference of countries affected by the situation in Afghanistan (i.e., Pakistan, Iran, India, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman) to credibly affirm their opposition to the permanent presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan and endorse the objectives of restoring Afghanistan's non-aligned status.

Unlike a Conference under UN auspices, an assembly of countries from the region, it was pointed out, could operate outside the competitive manoeuvres of the super powers. At least initially the conference was not to focus the domestic problems of Afghanistan thus precluding Kabul's participation. The meet was to create a climate of mutual interest in regional stability. Specifically, it would seek an agreement by which all countries reaffirm their neutrality and detachment from military blocs, in effect Swedenization of the region. This declaration was to be the precursor to the ultimate goal of securing a Finland type status for Afghanistan. The participants were to meet periodically to sustain the region's new status and promote regional cooperation as in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

2. Widening the compass of the regional grouping by the addition of select non-aligned countries, to enhance its international standing. The function of this larger body was to choose an observer group of five countries to perform a peace keeping role.
in Afghanistan. This group was to comprise countries both from within and outside the region, its major role being to provide personnel and support facilities for a protracted peace keeping commitment in Afghanistan.

(3) After installation, the group's task would be to defuse the insurgency, restore internal confidence, facilitate return of refugees and create conditions for convening of a Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) - traditional gathering of Afghan tribal representatives - to draw up a new constitution for Afghanistan.

(4) Organizing and assisting elections on the basis of the new constitution. The observer group would be expected to supervise the election and could negotiate the thinning and grouping of Soviet forces before the election.

(5) The new government installed was to enter into a new treaty with the Soviets, ensuring Afghan neutrality and non-alignment. This treaty was to be endorsed by the UN so that in the final instance all major powers would be bound to respect the non-aligned status of Afghanistan.

None of the above mentioned proposals for peace have come to fruition. This is because of the rigid stance and intrasigent positions adopted by the different parties involved, especially on the question of the withdrawal of Soviet troops and on the end to all types of interference. The only hopeful sign for an eventual settlement rests on the UN Secretary General's mediatory indirect talks - now well known as the Geneva talks - on Afghanistan. It is
termed indirect talks, because to date Pakistan has refused to negotiate face to face with the Afghan delegation, since it refuses to recognize the DRA Government in Kabul. Eight major rounds of talks: one in June 1982, two in 1983 and one each in August 1984, June 1985, August 1985, December 1985 and May 1986 have already been held. These talks commenced with a four point agenda:

1) Withdrawal of foreign troops;
2) Non-interference in the internal affairs of states;
3) International guarantees of non-interference;
4) Voluntary return of refugees to their homes.

Although there has been no major breakthrough, there has been some progress on the following lines:

1) There has been an understanding that one of the underlying elements for a settlement should be the principle of self-determination;
2) Inter-relation was defined between the withdrawal of troops and other measures to be provided in the agreement, including the return of refugees and non-interference.
3) An understanding was reached for a consultative arrangement with the Afghan refugees to ascertain the conditions acceptable to them for their voluntary return to Afghanistan.

The issue which is yet to be resolved is the question of adequate guarantees against non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

Notwithstanding the lack of a breakthrough at Geneva, the talks themselves are a positive development. It does signify that both Pakistan and Afghanistan are
Keen to attain a political end to the crisis. The spur to the resolution of the Afghan tangle is the realization of its dangers to regional and global security. Moscow's attitude to a settlement and the withdrawal from Afghanistan will depend on its perception of a secure and stable neighbourhood. It also depends on whether Pakistan becomes a heavily armed pro-Western ally or a neutral state between the super powers. America's anti-Soviet strategic consensus rests on the assumption that the Soviet Union intends to use Afghanistan as a spring board for a thrust into Pakistan and the Persian Gulf. As a result, the US has sought to enlist countries as Pakistan in a strategy of military containment of the Soviet Union. Yet any kind of military arrangement or alliance with the West will eliminate all chances of Soviet evacuation from Afghanistan. On the contrary it will justify the continued Soviet presence there.

For Pakistan, the compulsions to arrive at a settlement are becoming heavier. Pakistan has been getting considerable economic and military benefits in the wake of the Afghan events. It is now feeling the strains of a large number of Afghans on its territory. The presence of a large number of armed Afghan refugees is posing a serious threat to the domestic tranquility and stability of Pakistan. It is visualized that these armed Afghans one day may lead a civil war with the other ethnic groups in Pakistan. Further,
with Pakistan's overseas remittances being reduced, due to global recession and the anticipated return of Pakistan's working abroad, the continued stay of the Afghans is fraught with multifarious problems. Hence the primacy of a settlement leading to the refugees return. Facing these harsh realities, together with the fear of a super power looming on its borders, Pakistan has changed its stance and is now no longer insisting on the restoration of an Islamic government in Afghanistan, including rebels as a precondition for a settlement.

Even the Chinese appear to have mellowed down in their stance over the Afghan crisis. There was a time when the Chinese were more strident than the US in condemning the Soviet intervention. China had, in fact, declared that it would not talk to the Soviet Union until it withdrew from Afghanistan. While Sino-US relations have strained, the Sino-Soviet talks have brought them closer. Sharp statements from China against the military presence in Afghanistan have almost ended. This has also led China to advise Pakistan to adopt a softer line on the Afghan issue.

As regards Iran, the strains of the Iran-Iraq war and the burden of sustaining a large number of refugees have been compelling Tehran to soften its rigid and hawkish posture on Afghanistan. India, notwithstanding its position in the nonaligned community, is anxious for a just and equitable settlement in Afghanistan because the stability
of the region and more so the stability of Pakistan is viewed as vital for its own national interest and security. Notwithstanding the close ties of India with the Soviet Union, the prospect of a super power nearer her borders is a cause of concern to India.

The key to a permanent end to the crisis in Afghanistan, ultimately rests with the super powers. The US does not appear to be keen to end the crisis. This is evident from the recent increase in allocation of US funds - about 300 million dollars (1986) for the Resistance in Afghanistan. A recent report states that the Reagan administration has for the first time directed the CIA to provide the Resistance forces in Afghanistan with bazookas, mortars, grenade launchers, mines, recoiless guns and shoulder fired anti-aircraft missiles. This proves that the US is not sincere about a political settlement in Afghanistan. The Afghan war which does not cost a single American life and the US exchequer no more than half a billion dollars a year was proving to be the most effective and cheapest way of keeping about 120,000 Soviet troops pinned down to the rugged and merciless mountains of the Karakoram, to bleed the Soviet economy, increase the human and social costs of the war for Moscow and save the generals in Pakistan from the wrath of the armed Mujahideen. Having the Soviets bogged down in Afghanistan is to US advantage militarily and politically the world over.
Though the Soviet Union may desire to withdraw—there has been some indication in this regard in Chairman Gorbachev's address to the 27th CPSU Congress—the reality of the persisting Resistance and the need and urge to secure the system they have aided to establish in Afghanistan, makes the non-aligned goal of the restoration of Afghanistan's independent and non-aligned status of a difficult proposition. However, to alleviate the dangers of a festering crisis, it is imperative that sincere efforts have to be initiated and implemented by all concerned more so by the US and the Soviet Union to bring about a lasting political settlement in Afghanistan without further delay.

The hopes for a political settlement have brightened with the announcement of a Unilateral Ceasefire—to be valid for six months from 15 January 1987—and the offer to form a Government of National Reconciliation, by the DRA leader Najibullah on 1 January 1987. Further the statement made by the Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze, after his visit to Kabul 5-6 January 1987, that the Soviets were prepared to discuss a Time Table for the withdrawal of their troops at the February 1987 Geneva talks on Afghanistan augurs well for a political settlement.

However, with the hardcore of the Afghan Resistance groups, the Seven Party alliance led by Nabi Mohammadi denouncing the cease fire offer and their continued refusal
to deal or cooperate with the ruling PDPA Government in Kabul, once again makes it imperative for all the parties involved in the Geneva negotiations to reckon with the genuine grievances and aspirations of all the people of Afghanistan. The super powers, also, should desist from aiding a settlement - amenable to them - ignoring this fact.

With the negotiations for a comprehensive political settlement of the Afghan issue having reached a critical stage, it is opportune for India to attempt a useful diplomatic move. With the present state of amiable relations with the US, the Indian Prime Minister must impress upon the US President the dangers involved in following a policy of escalation in Afghanistan. Any type of escalation is bound to jeopardise Pakistan's survival as a sovereign state and put an end to South Asian regional cooperation. It would also mean competitive, even mutually antagonistic super-power military rivalry and intervention in South Asia which goes against the basics of India's foreign policy. If the Soviets offer to pull out within a stipulated time frame, the US must do everything in its capacity to make it a reality.