CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND: THE ERSTWHILE SOVIET UNION AND
THE ISSUE OF KASHMIR
The Kashmir issue surfaced in the wake of the independence of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 from the British colonialism. After the invasion of Kashmir by the mercenaries and the tribal forces, aided and supported by Pakistan, in 1947, the ruler of the then princely state decided to accede to the Indian federation. The Soviet perception towards the Kashmir issue was non-committal at that time. The Soviet Union under the leadership of Stalin was under the impression that the whole Indian subcontinent was an offshoot of capitalism; hence it had no role to play in the region. At that time it was the cold war, moulded with ideological rivalry between the power blocs that influenced Soviet policy towards the Kashmir issue. Stalin was of the view that India, like Pakistan, leaned towards Anglo-American bloc. Hence, he maintained equidistance from both the countries. In the pursuit of such a policy the Soviet representative remained absent during voting when the Kashmir question came up for a discussion in the United Nations Security Council in 1948.

The policy of the Soviet Union towards the South Asian region witnessed a shift afterwards. The then Pakistani Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan was invited by Moscow in 1948 after he expressed his desire to maintain diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. But this evolving relationship between Moscow and Islamabad was short-lived, even less than a year. Following reason could be ascribed to this short-lived relationship. Israel became an independent state in 1948 much to the dislike of Pakistan, but hailed by the Soviet Union. This dislike was reflected in demonstration by thousands of Pakistanis outside the consulate of Moscow in Karachi, which

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annoyed the Soviet leadership. As a consequence, the Soviet Union called off its proposed participation in the International Economic Conference to be held in Karachi same year. Hence, starting with a posture of good relationship, Soviet-Pakistan relationship cooled off abruptly.\(^3\)

The later years witnessed dramatic changes in the international political scenario. The US-Pak axis grew to a new height. In 1948, Pakistan offered a base to the US in Gilgit area of Pak-occupied Kashmir. For Soviet Union the US' presence in the South Asian region was to call its superpower rival near its border, threatening its security. In 1949, Pakistani Prime Minister visited the US, where he was offered military and economic support. The US policy towards Kashmir at that time was favorable to Pakistan and "unsympathetic and even hostile" towards India.\(^4\) Pakistan joined Baghdad pact in 1955 and South East Atlantic Treaty Organisation (SEATO), sponsored by the US, 1954. These steps of Pakistan created grave concern in the minds of both the Soviet and Indian leaders. These developments led to reorientation in their foreign policy, as a result of which both moved closer to each other. India's leadership of non-aligned movement propelled this reorientation.

The above factors were responsible in changing the Soviet approach towards the South Asian region. It took four long years for the Soviet Union, since the inception of the Kashmir issue, to take any stand on the issue. When the United Nations Security Council met on 17 January 1952 to discuss the Kashmir issue in its 570\(^{th}\) meeting, the Soviet delegate, Jacob Malik, spoke at length on the problem. He said, referring to various plans put forward by London and Washington, that those


plans “instead of speaking a real settlement, were aimed at prolonging the dispute and at converting Kashmir into a trust territory of the US and the UK under the pretext of giving it assistance through the United Nations”.\(^5\) In support of his argument, he quoted Pakistan and the US newspapers. On 9 August 1952 Pravda published a Tass report on the proceedings of Indian Parliament and supported the proposal made by CPI members, A.K. Gopalan and Prof. H. Mukerjee in their debate on 7 August 1952 to withdraw the Kashmir question from the United Nations (UN).\(^6\)

During the last phase of the Stalin period, the Soviet Union tried to develop trade relations with India. At the International Trade Fair held in Bombay in January 1952 the Soviet Union participated in a large scale. M.V. Nesterov, President of the USSR Chamber of Commerce, who led the Soviet delegation to the fair, said in Bombay on 10 January 1952 that the Soviets were prepared to supply various machine tools, generations, electric equipments, agricultural machineries and such other things as fertilizers and food grains. But Indian government did not respond to the Soviet offer favorably.\(^7\)

The initial response of India to the Soviet offer of close relationship was lukewarm. The Soviet support to India on the Kashmir issue in the UN Security Council 1952 was not taken seriously by the Indian leadership. It seemed that India did not want Kashmir to be a factor in bloc politics between two super powers. The Hindu’s correspondent K.S. Shelvanker, attributed somewhat similar reasons to the then Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru’s position: “I understand that this is precisely the sort of development Indian diplomacy had been endeavoring to avoid

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from the beginning - involvement of the Kashmir dispute in the conflict between the rival power blocs and the propaganda and passions of the cold war".\(^8\) India wanted an early settlement of the issue. *New York Times*, on 21 January 1952 wrote under the caption, "Indians fear Malik statement on Kashmir may complicate settlement of the dispute", that the "general feeling here is that India wants an early settlement of the long-standing issue before the UN and that the manner in which the Soviet delegate delivered his frontal attack against the West has hardly contributed towards that end. It is feared in informed circles the Mr. Malik's speech, although it reflects Indian sentiment, might pose new problems and further complicate the dispute".\(^9\)

But later events such as growing US-Pak axis, Pakistan's being the member of Baghdad pact and SEATO altered the scenario. Besides the factor of growing US-Pak axis, India's spearheading of non-aligned movement attracted the Soviet leadership. India was against any sort of military alliance or any sort of hegemonic action of any state. According to T.N. Kaul, the former ambassador to the Soviet Union, "the essence of non-alignment is independence of non-aligned countries to judge each issue on its merits, without any previous commitment to one side or the other, as it affects the national interest of each non-aligned country, the legitimate interest of other non-aligned countries and the larger interest of peace, security and development throughout the world".\(^10\) This policy of India, to a large extent, brought her and the Soviet Union closer. There were also many common factors in their foreign policy

\(^7\) Ibid, p. 249.
\(^8\) *The Hindu* (Madras), 19 January 1952.
\(^9\) Quoted in n. 6, p. 251.
approaches such as disarmament, anti-colonialism, anti-racism and the concept of peaceful coexistence between different social and political systems.\textsuperscript{11}

The first major statement by the then Soviet Premier Malenkov, which indicated that the USSR had become more appreciative of India's non-aligned foreign policy, was contained in an August 1953 address to the Supreme Soviet. Malenkov said, "in the efforts of the peace-loving countries directed towards ending the Korean War, India made a significant contribution. Our relations with India are becoming stronger and our cultural ties are growing. We hope that in future, relations between India and the USSR will grow stronger and develop in a spirit of friendly cooperation".\textsuperscript{12} It was believed in Moscow that the development of friendly ties with India would help the communist world's efforts to break out of its diplomatic isolation and to obtain a foothold among the emerging nations.

According to some writers, Moscow regarded non-alignment as an integral component of the competitive struggle between East and West, rather than a disengaged influence on this struggle.\textsuperscript{13} According to this view, as the prominence of non-aligned movement grew in international politics, the Soviet leaders began to consider its long-term strategic goals. They encouraged the non-aligned countries to adopt a political programme, which would conform to Soviet strategic interests in the Third World.\textsuperscript{14} However, it would be unfair to assume that the non-alignment


\textsuperscript{14} Ibid, p. 36.
movement was formed to serve the Soviet interests. On the other hand, "while pursuing its friendship with Moscow, India has continued to defend its independence and the principles of non-alignment".\(^{15}\) Perhaps the key to India's conception of non-alignment is not only its refusal to join any military alliance, but also its denial to any foreign power of military or naval bases. It would like to keep superpowers and China out of South Asia and out of the Indian Ocean. Besides these arguments, one thing was obvious; it the non-aligned policy of India that brought both the Soviet Union and India came closer. This earned India the Soviet Union's support on Kashmir in United Nations Security Council meetings. Later years saw the high level visits, which strengthened relationship between the two countries.

In June 1955, Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru visited the Soviet Union. During the visit, a joint communiqué was issued by both the sides, which emphasized on international peace, security of small states, etc. Both the Prime Ministers of India and the Soviet Union felt that, "it is essential to dispel fear in all possible ways. Here again the best remedy is to adhere unflinchingly to the principles of coexistence".\(^{16}\) It could be noted here that Nehru was a proponent of the principles of co-existence.

The visit of the Soviet leaders, Khrushchev and Bulganin to India in November-December 1955 laid the foundation of a new era in Indo- Soviet relationship. This was the first major visit of the top Soviet leaders to India after its independence. Besides New Delhi, the Soviet leaders visited some of the major cities of India including Calcutta, Madras, Agra, Coimbatore and Srinagar. Their visits were


\(^{16}\) Ibid, p. 67.
greeted with thunderous applause from the crowd. During this period of their visit, five top Soviet oil experts arrived in Delhi on 24 November 1955 to assist and advise the government of India on prospecting for oil. They also agreed to provide technical assistance for drilling oil.\textsuperscript{17} During the stay of the Soviet leaders in India, representatives of the USSR Academy of Sciences came to Delhi on 29 November 1955 to attend Indian Industries Fair to be held at the Centenary Hall of the Central Telegraph Office on 30 November 1955. The Soviet scientists offered to give any information to India for peaceful uses of atomic energy.\textsuperscript{18}

During their visit, the Soviet leaders assured India that though India and the Soviet Union had different political and social structures, they had many common stakes in international politics. Speaking at the banquet held in his honour and Khrushchev by Prime Minister Nehru on 20 November 1955, Bulganin said, "...the word 'peace' was equally sacred for both. This desire for peace brings us closer, unites us and allows to participate more actively in the peaceful settlement of complicated international problems".\textsuperscript{19} He further said, "our relations are based on the well-known five principles. These principles were declared by us together with Mr. Nehru in the month of June this year... the Soviet Union will strongly support these principles in its relations with India and with other peace-loving countries which have already proclaimed these principles or who are ready to subscribe these principles".\textsuperscript{20}

Khrushchev assured Indian leadership that the Soviet Union would ever come forward to help India at times of difficulties. Speaking at a luncheon given in the honour of the Soviet leaders at the Agra Circuit House by the Governor of Uttar

\textsuperscript{17} *The Hindu* (Madras), 25 November 1955.
\textsuperscript{18} *The Hindu* (Madras), 30 November 1955.
\textsuperscript{19} *The Hindu* (Madras), 21 November 1955.
\textsuperscript{20} *The Hindu* (Madras), 21 November 1955.
Pradesh, K.M. Munshi on 20 November 1955, he stressed that “the Soviet people were not just fair weather friends of India but their friendship would last for ever even when the weather frowns or the storm blows strong”. “Let it be known to the world”, he added, “that the friendship between the two people would continue to grow even at times of difficulties and crises”. Bulganin echoed the same rhetoric in his reply to the civic address given by Coimbatore Municipal Council on 27 November 1955. He concluded his speech with “long live the great republic of India. Long live the people of India. Long live the friendship between the people of India and the Soviet Union, Hind-Russi Bhai Bhai and Hind-Russia Sahodare, which was greeted with thunderous applause from the crowd.

So, it was clear that the visit of the Soviet leaders to India witnessed the beginning of an era of friendship between the two countries. This gave enough indication that the Soviet Union was tilting in favour of India’s policies towards various issues including Kashmir. The Soviet leaders expressed the support to the Indian stand on the Kashmir issue explicitly during the course of talks and speeches. Speaking at the reception given by G.M. Bakshi, Prime Minister of Kashmir, in honour of visiting Soviet dignitaries on 10 December 1955, Khrushchev expressed the unequivocal support to the Indian stand on the Kashmir issue. He said, “Kashmir is one of the states of the Republic of India that has been decided by the people of Kashmir. It is a question that the people themselves have decided”. He viewed the

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20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
22 The Hindu (Madras), 28 November 1955.
23 For the details of the documents of the visit see, Visit to India of N.A. Bulganin, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, and N.S. Khrushchev, Member of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Speeches and Official Documents, November 18-December 1 and December 7-14, 1955 (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1956).
24 Ibid, p. 132.
Kashmir problem as an imperialist design and severely criticized “divide and rule” policy of the imperialist powers. He held the view that the Kashmir problem emerged because some states tried to take advantage of the situation to foment animosity between India and Pakistan- countries recently emancipated from colonial oppression.

Khrushchev criticized Pakistan as its policy “is not guided by the vital interests of their people, of their state, but is dictated by monopoly circles of other countries”. The closeness of Pakistan with the US and its membership of the ‘notorious’ Baghdad Pact, ‘the aim of which is anything but peace’, and its sanctioning of its territory for establishing American military bases, were considered by the Soviet leadership as detrimental to its security interests. This factor, in a way, provided impetus for growing Indo-Soviet friendship. Again on 14 December 1955 during their press conference in Delhi, the Soviet leaders reiterated their stand on Kashmir. Bulganin said, “As for Kashmir during our visit there we saw how greatly the Kshmirians rejoice in their national liberation, regarding their territory as an integral part of India”.

The Soviet leaders returned back to Moscow in the last week of December 1955 after completing their visit to India, Burma and Afghanistan. They submitted their reports on the visit to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. In his report Bulganin argued that, “on the pretext of supporting Pakistan on the Kashmir question certain countries are trying to entrench themselves in this part of India in order to threaten and exert pressure on areas in the vicinity of Kashmir. The attempt was made to severe Kashmir from India artificially and convert it into a foreign military base.” But, Bulganin said, the people of Kashmir are emphatically opposed to this imperialist

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25 Ibid, p. 133.
policy. "The issue has been settled by the Kashmiris themselves; they regarded themselves as an integral part of India. We became profoundly convinced of this during our meetings with the people in Srinagar, and in our conversations with the Prime Minister of Kashmir, Mr. G. M. Bakshi, and his colleagues". Further he said, "The Soviet government supports India's policy in relations to the Kashmir issue, because it fully accords with the interests of peace in this part of Asia. We declared this when we were in Kashmir, we reaffirmed our declaration at a press conference in Delhi on December 14, and we declare it today".27 Khrushchev in his speech said, "in Kashmir we were convinced that its people regarded its territory as an inalienable part of the Republic of India. This question has been irrevocably decided by the people of Kashmir".28

Hence, it can be pointed out that the Soviet Union supported Indian stand on the Kashmir issue at that point of time. It seemed to be true that the Soviet Union was not, as Khrushchev said during his visit, just fair weather friend of India but it would come ahead to help India even at times of difficulties and crises. In pursuit of this policy, the Soviet Union opposed the draft resolution co-sponsored by Great Britain, the US, Australia and Cuba on 14 February 1957. The resolution was unacceptable to India. The resolution noted the importance the Security Council "attached to the demilitarization of the state of Jammu and Kashmir preparatory to the holding of a plebiscite", and "Pakistan's proposal for the use of a temporary United Nations force in connection with demilitarization". The Security Council held "that the use of such a

26 Ibid, pp. 155-156.  
force deserved consideration". The Security Council authorized its president, Gunnar Jarring to visit India and Pakistan to bring about demilitarization or further the settlement of the dispute.

On 18 February 1957 the Soviet delegate, Sobolev, proposed amendments to the above mentioned resolution. He argued "the situation in Kashmir has changed considerably since 1948 when the Security Council had first called for a plebiscite. The people of Kashmir had settled the question themselves and now considered their territory an integral part of India". In his resolution the Soviet delegate deleted reference to "the use of a temporary UN force in connection with demilitarization" in Kashmir. After his amendments were rejected by the other Security Council members on 20 February 1957, Sobolev vetoed the Western-sponsored resolution. He justified the veto by alleging that the resolution, as it stood, favoured Pakistan. The Soviet representative told the Security Council that in his government's opinion the Kashmir question had in fact already been settled by the people of Kashmir.

In March 1959, a Soviet delegation led by A. Andrew visited Kashmir to demonstrate that the Soviet Union regarded Kashmir as an Indian state. Shortly after his arrival in Srinagar, Andrew described Kashmir as "the most beautiful place of the world" and reiterated that Soviet Union regarded "Jammu and Kashmir as an Integral part of the Indian Republic". Pointing out that Kashmir "is not far from the Southern frontier of the Soviet Union" he declared that, "in your struggle we are your comrades". Next month Indian leader Karan Singh visited the Soviet Union. He was

30 UN Security Council Official Records, 12th session, 768th meeting, 14 February 1957, quoted in, n. 12, p. 99.
32 n. 3, p. 46.
received by leading Soviet leaders including Khrushchev. At a reception, Khrushchev welcomed the guest from "friendly India" and reiterated the Soviet support to the Indian Policy in Kashmir. In his reply Karan Singh thanked the Soviet leader for his unequivocal support to India and said that the Soviet policy towards Kashmir was well known.\(^{33}\)

When the United Nations Security Council met on 27 April 1962 to discuss the Kashmir Issue, the Soviet delegate, Platon Morozov, gave India total and unequivocal support. In his speech Morozov declared, "the question of Kashmir, which is one of the states of the Republic of India and forms an integral part of India, has been decided by the people of Kashmir themselves. The people of Kashmir have decided this matter in accordance with the principle of democracy and in the interest of strengthening relations between the people of this region." When the Security Council met again on 21 June 1962, the representative of Ireland, supported by the British representative, introduced a resolution. It was quite clear, according to Morozov, the 'principal aim' of the draft resolution was the holding of plebiscite and this would be nothing but 'flagrant interference' in the domestic affairs of India.\(^{34}\) Morozov urged the Council to reject the Irish resolution and said that the resolution was basically in line with the dictates of the United States. When the Irish resolution was put to vote on 23 June 1962, the Soviet representative vetoed it. He declared that the question of holding plebiscite in Kashmir was 'dead and outdated' and the Kashmir question had been solved 'once for all'.

\(^{33}\) Ibid.

During the Chinese aggression in 1962 the Soviet Union adopted a restrained attitude towards India and China. The Soviet Union did not put pressure on India to succumb to Chinese demands because, as Nehru said, "we have had their goodwill and their good wishes all along ...and this is the consolation to us and we certainly hope to have that in future".35 However, later, with the aggravation of the Sino-Soviet dispute, Moscow even renounced her posture of neutrality and began to openly criticize China for her attitude towards India. At the Italian Communist Party Congress held in December 1962, the Soviet leaders, F. Kozlov criticized the Chinese party of what he called 'adventuristic position' on the Sino-Indian border conflict. In this context he cautioned the Chinese leadership, "those who are certain of their historic position have no need to play with fire and endanger all the achievements of civilization".36

On 15 February 1964, the Soviet leader Suslov in his report to the plenary session of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party also criticized Chinese policy towards India and viewed it as having "rendered a great service to imperialism and done grave harm to the national liberation movement, the progressive forces of India and the entire front of the anti-imperialist struggle".37 Suslov was of the view that the Chinese actions might lead to strengthening of the imperialist forces, thus, further complicating the situation in the world. At the same time the Soviet Union stepped up aid to India and concluded a number of agreements covering

37 Pravda, 3 April 1964, quoted in, Ibid.
specific industrial projects. The most important economic agreement was the Soviet accord in January 1965 to construct the Bokaro steel plant.

As a whole, the Khrushchev period witnessed a very close relationship between India and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union supported Indian stand on Kashmir at various fora. It also supported Nehru's decision to withdraw the special status to Jammu and Kashmir and to integrate the state into the Indian Union. At a reception at Rumanian embassy in Moscow, Khrushchev declared that the Soviet Union extends its 'full support' to the integration of Kashmir to the Indian Republic. He also said that his attitude towards Kashmir had not changed since his visits to India in 1955 and 1960.38 When the Kashmir question came before the Security Council in February 1964, the Soviet representative, Federenko, reiterated his country's view that the question of Kashmir had already been settled 'once for all'. He also supported the Indian contention that a Security Council resolution would aggravate the situation and thought that the Indian proposal for a ministerial meeting to discuss the communal question and no-war treaty constituted a 'realistic approach' in the interests of peace in Asia and the whole world.39

After the unexpected departure of Khrushchev from the Soviet political scene, it appeared that the Soviet attitude towards the Kashmir issue underwent change. However, the Soviet envoy to India, Benediktov assured New Delhi in October 1964 that the Soviet attitude towards Kashmir had remained unchanged. "Our policy towards Kashmir remain the same",40 he said. During her visit to Moscow, Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi was assured by the new Soviet Prime Minister Alexi

38 n. 3, p. 5.
Kosygin that the Soviet support for India’s policy in Kashmir had remained unchanged and that Moscow regarded “Kashmir as an integral part of India”.41

But the later years were marked with uncertainty regarding Soviet policy towards Kashmir. One of the reasons of this shift could be the Indian defeat in the Sino-India war of 1962. There appeared to have developed a general trend in Soviet diplomacy to extricate her from an immoderate involvement in intricate problems which were of no direct concern to vital Soviet interests. By adopting such a policy the Soviet Union succeeded in disengaging herself from the Indo-Pakistan conflict in which she had embroiled herself. It took a neutral attitude towards Kashmir issue, as it was interested to develop closer relationship with both India and Pakistan.

Leonid Brezhnev, unlike his predecessor, decided to adopt a different policy approach towards the Kashmir issue. He envisaged the Kashmir issue as an opportunity to bring India and Pakistan closer and to turn the subcontinent into a peaceful arena under the aegis of the Soviet Union. He thought that the Soviet interests could be advanced if India and Pakistan could be developed as an independent counter-force free of American and Chinese influence. If Pakistan could be reconciled with the Soviet Union, Brezhnev thought, it would help in improving Indo-Pak relations and would fulfill the Soviet dream of India-Pakistan-Soviet alliance. Such a triangular alliance, if it could be forged, would be a great bulwark against American and Chinese intervention in the subcontinent.42

The Soviet leaders in the initial years of the Brezhnev period believed that by encouraging Pakistan to establish closer economic and political relations with

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40 Patriot (New Delhi), 24 October 1964, quoted in, n. 3, p. 57.
41 Ibid.
42 The Hindu (Madras), 31 October 1964.
Moscow, they could easily eliminate the American influence there and at the same time prevent Pakistan from moving closer to China. It was in this context that the Soviet leaders inaugurated their new policy to use Kashmir as a device for furtherance of Soviet foreign policy objectives and invited Pakistan’s President Ayub Khan for a visit to Moscow. On 3 April 1965, Ayub Khan arrived in Moscow and met Brezhnev, Kosygin and other Soviet leaders. Ayub’s visit was concluded with a joint communiqué containing a formula on national liberation movements, ambiguous enough to be applicable to Kashmir and, indeed, was so interpreted by Pakistan government and its controlled press.43

From the position of negative neutrality, that is to say, simply limiting the Soviet action to the development of relations with the two rivals, the Soviet leaders began to display concern over the manner in which the relations between the two countries continued to deteriorate. Following the outbreak of war between India and Pakistan early in August 1965, Kosygin sent several letters to the leaders of India and Pakistan, appealing for immediate cessation of hostilities and offered his country’s ‘good offices’ in negotiating for a peaceful settlement. The Soviet Union also came up with a timely warning to all, especially in an indirect reference to the Western countries that: “no government has any right to pour oil in the flames”44. At the United Nations Security Council, where this matter was raised several times, the Soviet delegate attempted to maintain a non-partisan view of the issue, though he referred to the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir.45 He blamed the current conflict

43 Dawn, 11 April 1965; Pakistan Times, 12 April 1965, quoted in, n. 3, p. 76.


45 n. 3, p. 276.
on those 'forces which are trying to disunite and set against each other the states that have liberated themselves from the colonial yoke' and those 'which are pursuing the criminal policy of dividing peoples so as to achieve their imperialist and expansionist aims'. The friendship with the Soviet Union nevertheless stood in good stead when it came to the support of India on points of objection that India raised. On 25 October 1965, the Indian delegation led by Foreign Minister, Swaran Singh objected to Pakistan Foreign Minister, Z.A. Bhutto's reference to internal situation in Kashmir and held that it was India's internal affairs. He held that the opposite view was a deviation from the agreed agenda and thus walked out in protest. The Soviet Union had shown support to the Indian interpretation that the Council's deliberations should be only on "questions directly connected with the settlement of the armed conflict, i.e. complete ceasefire and withdrawal of armed personnel. It had also abstained from voting on the resolution adopted by the Council on 5 November 1965.\textsuperscript{46} The Security Council resolutions failed to resolve the crisis.

On 17 September 1965, in an identical message to Indian Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Pakistan President, Ayub Khan, the Soviet Premier Kosygin reiterated the Soviet offer for a meeting in Tashkent to reach an agreement on the restoration of peace. But the Soviet leaders did not put pressure on either side to accept the Soviet peace offer but offered it "if both parties so desire".\textsuperscript{47} The Soviet Union was not interested to mediate in the conflict between the two sides but to facilitate to cease hostility and having peace. The Soviet offer of good offices was accepted by both India and Pakistan.

\textsuperscript{47} n. 3, p. 90.
Even during the Tashkent peace process, the Soviet Union on many issues came ahead to support the Indian stand. Indian Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, addressing a public meeting on 5 December 1965, reiterated his readiness to go to Tashkent and to accept the good offices of the Soviet Prime Minister to bring about understanding and good neighbourly relations with Pakistan. But he made it clear that the question of Kashmir could not be discussed there. The Soviet Union had earlier expressed similar view and advised both India and Pakistan to avoid discussing major issues at Tashkent and to regard the meeting as the first of a series of bilateral discussions. Shastri and Ayub agreed to meet at Tashkant on 4 January 1966. At the request of both the parties Kosygin attended the meeting. In his speech at the formal opening of the Tashkent summit, Kogygin said, “in proposing this meeting, the government of the Soviet Union was guided by feelings of friendship towards the people of Pakistan and India, by a desire to help them to find a way to peace and to prevent sacrifices and hardships brought by the disaster of war”. After a weeklong (4-10 January 1966) hectic parleys between the two sides, in which Kosygin took active part to break the deadlocks in arriving at a mutually suitable agreement, Shastri and Ayub signed Tashkent Declaration on 10 January 1966. The important points in the Declaration were: withdrawal of armed forces of both sides not later than 25 February 1966 to former positions (held on 5 August 1965); observance of conditions of ceasefire in Kashmir; stoppage of hostile propaganda; resumption of diplomatic relations and renewal of normal diplomatic functions, etc. Kosygin hailed the

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48 Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 6 December 1965.
49 Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 3 December 1965.
50 Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 5 January 1966.
Tashkent Declaration as “an important political document and... a new stage in the development of relations between India and Pakistan”.\footnote{Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 11 January 1966.} Shastri, replying to questions by the Soviet newsmen on 10 January 1966 praised Kosygin for the ‘great and noble role’\footnote{Times of India (New Delhi), 11 January 1966.} he played in the holding of the talks.

Thus it was the shift in the Soviet foreign policy approach; especially the emphasis on diminishing the US and the Chinese influence in the South Asian region that shaped its policy towards the Kashmir issues. For the achievement of that objective it was necessary, the Soviet leadership might have thought, to give equal weightage to Pakistan alongside India. Moreover, it happened on the idea that the Kashmir problem was created neither by India nor Pakistan, but thrust upon them by the colonial powers. That was implied when Kosygin said during the Tashkent summit, “that it should be recalled that the discord between India and Pakistan is the heritage of long dominations of colonialists who set enslaved peoples against each other”.\footnote{Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 10 January 1966.} The Soviet leadership maintained a balanced attitude towards the Kashmir problem in the period though its strategic policy considerations were changing under the new leadership in the region. This was evident from the report of the PTI’s correspondent in Tashkent during summit discussions. He wrote, “Russia considers Jammu and Kashmir as an integral part of India, it is learnt from the highest authority here. The Soviet stand on Kashmir remains as before according to the sources. The sources said that Tashkent Declaration would improve relations between India and

\footnote{Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 11 January 1966.}
\footnote{Times of India (New Delhi), 11 January 1966.}
\footnote{Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 10 January 1966.}
Pakistan on the one hand and further strengthen India’s relationship with Russia on
the other".  

However, despite the assurances of the Soviet leadership that its policies
would not negate India’s interests, there were overtures from its side which were
likely to hamper India’s interests. In June 1966 a high-level Pakistani military mission
went to Moscow to explore the possibilities of Soviet arms supply to Pakistan. New
Delhi warned that Soviet arms to Pakistan would weaken Indo-Soviet relations. To
allay India’s fear, the Soviet Union assured India that their policy in regard to
Kashmir had not been changed and they regarded Kashmir as an integral part of the
Indian Republic.  

And further to demonstrate Moscow’s sincerity, the Soviet political
New Times published a map of India showing the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir
as a part of the Indian Union. Despite all these pious assurances, in March 1968 a
group of Soviet senior naval officers led by Vice-Admiral Smirnov arrived in Pakistan
to explore the possibility of cooperation between the two navies. In April 1968,
Kosygin came to Pakistan in a steady effort to develop Soviet relations with
Islamabad. On 6 June 1968, a Pakistani military mission led by General Yahya Khan
arrived in Moscow to negotiate the first soviet-Pakistani arms agreement. On the next
day, it was announced that the Soviet Union had agreed to supply arms to Pakistan.
Immediately, thereafter Moscow began deliveries of tanks, artillery and armed
personnel carriers. Protests from India were ignored. President of India, Zakir Hussain
during his visit to Moscow from 8-10 July 1968, informed the Soviet leaders of
India’s concern regarding the arms supply to Pakistan, but the Soviet Union did not

55 Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 11 January 1966.
56 n. 3, p. 102.
57 Ibid.
pay, it seemed, attention to the Indian objection. On 9 April 1969, the Defence Minister, Swaran Singh, in a statement to Parliament, said, “we have … to admit that we have not been able to convince USSR of the greater danger implicit in the supply of arms to Pakistan. The Soviet policy continues to be to supply arms to Pakistan”.\(^{58}\)

It was only in late 1970 that the change, i.e. reviving back of the old policy of supporting Indian stand on the Kashmir issue was perceived in Soviet policy. The Pakistani refusal to endorse the Soviet proposals for South Asian Regional Trade and Transit treaty and an Asian Collective security system dissatisfied the Soviet leaders. The disillusionment finally led to a reappraisal of Moscow’s policy towards Pakistan and an abrupt end to the arm supplies.\(^{59}\) The government of India expressed happiness over the withdrawal of the Soviet arms supply to Pakistan. In a statement made to the Lok Sabha on 9 November 1970 Defence Minister, Swaran Singh stated, “we are glad that the Soviet government have given consideration to our representations and have informed us that they have not supplied – and do not intend to supply – any military hardware to Pakistan in addition to that already supplied in the past”.\(^{60}\)

Thereafter, the reestablishment of amicable relations with India became the focal point of Soviet politics in the subcontinent. It was therefore not unexpected that an appreciation of the Indian point of view became evident as events in East Pakistan unfolded. Addressing a letter to Pakistan President Yahya Khan on 2 April 1971, President Podgorny appealed for “the most urgent measures to stop the bloodshed and repression against the population of East Pakistan” and to seek a “peaceful political

\(^{58}\) n. 35, p. 297.
\(^{59}\) n. 3, p. 103.
\(^{60}\) n. 35, p. 279.
settlement.” Between 6-8 June 1971, the Indian External Affairs Minister, Swaran Singh paid an official visit to Moscow and met Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko and other leaders. The crucial talk took place against the disquieting background of the Pakistan war threats, the growing discord between India and the US and the obvious Chinese bid to exploit the East Pakistan crisis to its advantage. These factors provided the urgency and immediacy for India and the Soviet Union to enter in the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation on 9 August 1971.

The Treaty, consisting of 12 Articles, dealt with, in the main, the promotion of friendship, peace and security both at bilateral and international levels and it was based on mutual respect from each other’s sovereign entity, despite ideological differences. The Treaty also provided for the expansion of economic, scientific and technological cooperation which would be mutually advantageous. It was signed for a period of twenty years as a legal and political basis of Soviet – India cooperation. It was the only Soviet Third World Treaty which included ‘peace’ in the title. The treaty declared, “the further development of friendship and cooperation meets the basic national interests of both the states as well as the interests of lasting peace in Asia and the world....” Article IX of the treaty provided that the contracting parties would consult each other in case of attack on threat thereof to remove such threat and to take appropriate effective measures to ensure peace and security of their countries. The Treaty offered credible assurances to India of Soviet assistance in the event of an attack by China or Pakistan.

61 n. 35, p. 281.
63 The Hindu (Madras), 10 August 1971.
As the situation in East Pakistan became worse with millions of refugees pouring into India, the latter’s relations with Pakistan became increasingly strained. In this context, the Treaty was an immediate source of strength. On 18 August 1971, on which the treaty came into force, the Soviet Ambassador in Islamabad, A.A. Rodinov in a message to Pakistani President, Yahya Khan warned the dangerous consequences of a war with India. According to diplomatic sources the message took strong objection to Yahya Khan’s repeated utterances of a threat of war with India and categorically told Pakistan that it would be embarking on a suicidal course if tension in the subcontinent was escalated. Against this background Prime Minister Indira Gandhi visited the Soviet Union in 27-29 September 1971 and discussed the developments in East Pakistan and their impact on India with Soviet leaders. A Joint Statement issued at the end of the visit testified to the mutual understanding on many issues. There was full accord in the assessment of the East Pakistan situation, which demanded urgent measures to reach a political solution, paying regard to the “unbelievable rights and lawful interests of the people of East Bengal”. It was agreed to keep in continuous touch and exchange of views of the issues.

The escalation of events led to outbreak of war between India and Pakistan on 3 December 1971. The Soviet Union came out clearly to the defence of India. A TASS statement issued on 5 December 1971 warned Pakistan, declaring that, “the Soviet Union cannot remain indifferent to the developments, considering also the circumstances that they are taking place in direct proximity of the USSR’s borders and, therefore involve the interests of its security... the Soviet government finds it necessary to state to the Pakistan leaders with all clarity about the grave responsibility

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64 n. 35, p.223.
that they assume following this dangerous course". It also warned the other world powers to stay clear of the India-Pakistan conflict.

On 5 December 1971, the Soviet Union vetoed a US resolution calling for cease-fire, withdrawal of Indian and Pakistani forces to their own side of borders, posting of UN observers and for exercise of UN Security General’s good offices. The Soviet delegate said that the situation in East Pakistan was a result of the actions of the Pakistani military authorities... The Security Council should deal with the root case of the crisis. During the UN Security Council debate on Indo-Pakistan conflict, the rivalry between Soviet Union and China also came to the forefront. During the debate on 5 December 1971, the Chinese Ambassador, Huang Hua said, aiming at the Soviet Union, that, “India’s aggression has been launched under the support of social-imperialism” – an ideological crime the Chinese attributed to the Soviet Communists. The Soviet Ambassador at the UN, Jacob Malik refuted it as “chatter, prattle and demagogy” that defended imperialism and its policy of aggression, including the establishment of aggressive military blocs which drew into themselves numerous countries, including Pakistan. The Soviet Union used the veto on 6 December 1971 for the second time in twenty four hours to block a UN cease-fire appeal. At this time, tension was also heightened by the decision of the US to send a taskforce of its Seventh Fleet, headed by the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, USS Enterprise, from the Gulf of Tonkin to the Bay of Bengal. A counter move made by the Soviet Fleet in the Indian Ocean area, however, immediately acted as an effective

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65 *The Hindu* (Madras), 6 December 1971.
deterrent to the US designs. With the surrender of the Pakistani forces in Bangladesh on 16 December 1971, the Indo-Pakistan conflict came to a halt.

The Soviet commentators welcomed the Simla Agreement, signed by India and Pakistan on 2 July 1972 as “an important instrument for the relaxation of tension in Asia and for peaceful co-existence”. The agreement to resolve the Kashmir issue through bilateral discussions without outside interference, according to the Soviet leaders, manifested “their sincere starving for normalization of relations and preservation of peace in the subcontinent”.69 The Simla agreement, the Soviet leadership hailed, had been “approved by all those, who have at heart peace and stability in the area. It should become the cornerstone of peace and cooperation between India and Pakistan.70

After the defeat of the Congress government in general elections in 1977, Indo-Soviet relationship appeared to be not so enthusiastic. It was apparent that the relations in early 1981 did not occupy the same lofty status as was earlier. The events of the intervening period had caused a certain loss of enthusiasm in Moscow: Indira Gandhi’s defeat in 1977 by the ‘pro-Western’ Morarji Desai and Janata Party government, the general increase in instability within India, increased Indian attempts to improve relations with China and the Soviet Union and then India’s somewhat disappointing stance on the Afghan issue.71

In April 1977, the Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko arrived in New Delhi and met Prime Minister, Morarji Desai and his Foreign Minister, A.B. Vajpayee.

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69 n. 3, p. 106.
70 Ibid.
Gromyko expressed the desire to promote friendship and cooperation with India. Vajpayee responded by saying that “the bonds of friendship between the two countries were strong enough to survive the demands of divergent systems...”. 72 In order to strengthen the bilateral relationship, Morarji Desai made two visits to Moscow during his brief tenure in office. A joint communique was issued during his visit in October 1977, which noted, the “Soviet-Indian friendship has survived the test of time”, and added that it was “an important factor in the cause of peace and stability in Asian and the whole world”. 73 Despite the orientation to develop closer relations with the US and China by the Desai government, fundamentals of the Indo-Soviet relations were unaltered. Hence, the Soviet policy towards the Kashmir issue remained same as was before.

The second phase of the Indira government witnessed a number of high level visits between the two countries, thus strengthening bilateral relationship. In December 1980 Brezhnev came to New Delhi with nearly 300 people including Foreign Minister Gromyko and the first Deputy Premier, Arkhipov. This visit, like his previous one in 1973, was highlighted in the Soviet press, which loudly praised the Indo-soviet relationship. Though there were certain irritants like the Afghan issue, both the sides could be able to moderate those and embark on strengthening relationship. During her visit to Moscow in September 1981, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi expressed the Indian view for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, but this was omitted from both the TASS report and the joint communique. The Soviet Prime Minister, Nikolai Tikhonov, offered to build a 1,000 MW nuclear power plant, as well as a thermal power plant and to expand the
Visakhapatnam steel plant. On the question of China, both New Delhi and Moscow were interested to develop closer relationship with Beijing.

The period of Andropov and Chernenko were short in Soviet politics (1982-85). Andropov had a reformist bent of mind as he pursued a friendly policy towards Pakistan, USA and China. During his period, Moscow increased economic aid to Pakistan. In the middle of 1983, an agreement over Afghanistan between the two governments was close, but it could not succeed, probably the US pressured Zia regime into a tougher line. After Andropov's death in February 1989, Chernenko became the General Secretary of the Communist Party. During the visit of Indira Gandhi to Moscow to attend Andropov's funeral, Chernenko spoke with Indira Gandhi for twenty-five minutes but refused to give anytime to General Zia of Pakistan. This indicated a harder Soviet line on Afghanistan. The Soviet Communist Party politburo member, Ustinov visited India in March 1984. During his discussions with Indira Gandhi, both sides expressed concern about the militarisation of Pakistan. Ustinov said that Chernenko would visit India, but, as in the case of Andropov, his health was to prevent the prospect of his visit. The basis of Indo-Soviet relationship was so well rooted at that time, though Kashmir was not mentioned during the course of bilateral relationship, it was implied that the Soviet Union was supportive of India on the Kashmir issue.

The successor of Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Moscow in May 1985 was an indicator of good relationship between the two countries. His visit to Moscow was the first official visit abroad since he became Prime Minister. The problem posed

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73 Ibid.
75 Ibid, p. 31.
by Pakistan’s role in the South Asian region figured prominently in his talks with the Soviet leader Gorbachev. Rajiv expressed India’s concern over the induction of qualitatively new order of weapons by Pakistan and also over the country’s nuclear programme, which seemed to have support from certain quarters, indirectly referring to China. Gorbachev responded by saying that the Soviet Union fully appreciated India’s apprehensions and fears in this regard. In his banquet speech in honor of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on 21 May 1995, Gorbachev said, “we highly appreciated India’s contribution to the cause of strengthening peace and international security, and to enhancing the role of the non-aligned movement in this matter.” Rajiv drew a parallel during his trip to Frunze, between Soviet policies under the leadership of Gorbachev and current government policies in India. “Surprisingly”, he remarked, “I feel that what he is trying to do in the Soviet Union is not very different from what we are trying to do in India”. During the visit, Rajiv Gandhi and Gorbachev signed a 15-year cooperation agreement. Soviet concern to maintain ties with India was evident in a comment made in October 1985 by Deputy Foreign Minister, Mikhail Kapitsa. He assured a Pak newspaper that his country wished to be friendly with all the South Asian states, but “in case of a problem between India and its neighbours, we will side with India”. This statement could well be taken as an assurance by the Soviet leader that the Soviet Union would support Indian stand on various issues including the Kashmir issue.

The Delhi declaration on the principles of nuclear weapon free and non-violent world, signed during the visit Gorbachev to New Delhi on 28 November 1986,
demonstrated a novel approach to interstate relations. The recognition of the priority of universal human values in this space and nuclear age formed the philosophical and ethical foundation of the declaration. Though the two countries elaborated the document, its significance went far beyond bilateral and regional boundaries.\(^79\) This broad framework of Gorbachev’s policy approach aimed at achieving a nuclear-weapon free and non-violent world, and developing closer relationship with all countries including the US and China. But Gorbachev hastened to add, “what we do to improve relations with China will not weaken our relations with India”, essentially reiterating his earlier assertion that “we shall not make a single step that could damage India’s real interests”.\(^80\) Even he privately assured Rajiv Gandhi about Soviet support in case of a Sino-Indian conflict.\(^81\) During the talks both the sides shared common positions on most other foreign policy issues – the Indian Ocean and Diego Gracia, the Middle East, South-East Asia, Southern Africa and Nicaragua.

With the introduction of the policy of Perestroika the Soviet leadership focused on broader issues like democracy and economic reforms. Gorbachev’s ‘New Thinking’, the foreign policy counterpart of domestic Perestroika prompted him to redefine the place and role of the Soviet Union in the world and to come out of ‘stagnation’ in foreign policy launched under Brezhnev.\(^82\) Andrei Kozyrev, the Deputy Head of the Department for International Organization, who later became the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, highlighting the negative aspects of the old Soviet policy, said, “our direct or indirect entanglement in regional conflicts brings about

\(^80\) n. 80.
enormous losses, exacerbating overall international tensions, justifying the arms race and hampering mutually beneficial economic ties with the West.” 83 Hence, Gorbachev was interested in enhancing relationship with the West, arms cut and opening the polity and economy to the forces of globalization, marketization and democratization. As a result of this policy, Indo-Soviet relationship was looked in a wider perspective. However, Gorbachev era did not witness any change in the traditional Soviet stand on the Kashmir issue.

From the above analysis it could be inferred that the Indo-Soviet relations were cordial though there were phases of ups and downs. As the well-known diplomat P.N. Haksar avers: “it does bear repetition that India’s foreign policy, including its relations with the Soviet Union has strengthened India’s independence and sovereignty”. 84 As we have observed, starting from a neutral attitude during the Stalin regime, the Soviet Union took a committed stand in supporting the Indian stand on the Kashmir issue. Several factors were responsible for bringing the two countries closer. India’s commitment not to take part in super power politics, reflected in its leadership of NAM was a major factor in developing Indo-Soviet relationship. Unlike Pakistan, which was a strong ally of the US, India was interested to maintain good relationship with both the US and Soviet Union along with other countries. Even Khrushchev once told the Indian Ambassador to the Soviet Union, T.N. Kaul in 1963, that, “we do not want to spoil your relations with America. Our friendship can enable both of us to improve our relations with the US.” 85 Mutual rivalry with China, though from

85 n. 10, p. 23.
different reasons, also brought the two countries closer to some extent. Common factors in their foreign policy such as disarmament, anti-colonialism, anti-racism and the concept of peaceful coexistence between different social and political systems strengthened Indo-Soviet relationship. Both were interested to check the US interventionist policy in the South Asian region. Besides these, high level visits by top politicians, ministers, military leaders and trade officials by both the countries maintained the continuity in their relationship. As a result, India was the Soviet Union’s longest third World trading era, it was in expected lines that the Soviet Union came ahead to support Indian stand on the Kashmir issue.

The policy of the Soviet Union to support Indian stand on the Kashmir issue continued in the same pace till the breakdown of the Soviet System. It was the introduction of the policy of Perestroika that marked change in the Soviet outlook towards internal as well as international problems. The disintegration of the Soviet Union altered its priority of interests in the South Asian region, consequently affecting Soviet policy towards India and particularly Kashmir.