CHAPTER I

SOVIET POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION IN ASIA

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is essentially conceived as an organization of a regional cooperation and as such, it symbolises cooperation among like-minded states, notwithstanding its limitations and shortcomings.

The problem of cooperation in its various aspects has also been traditionally an important problem in international politics. After the destructive effect of the First World War it suddenly became a pressing issue for the international community. Efforts to establish League of Nations were noticeable and finally its very establishment in early thirties symbolised the growing desire of cooperation among states.

The birth of Soviet Russia in 1917 brought a new force in international politics wanting to promote cooperation among states, even of diverse socio-economic formation. As a matter of fact, the problem of cooperation among states emerged as one of the main tasks of Soviet foreign policy, right from the beginning. After the Second World War and the beginning of the nuclear era, Soviet foreign policy suddenly became pre-occupied with this problem. Hence it appears that Soviet foreign policy developed a specific framework for dealing with the problem of cooperation, although it was an integral part of the overall Soviet foreign policy itself. The formation of ASEAN and its development later on as an organization of regional cooperation certainly attracted increasing attention from the Soviet Union. It is
therefore logical for us to examine the framework of Soviet policy towards regional cooperation, globally or regionally, with view to have a better understanding of Soviet policy toward ASEAN.

It is generally known that over the years the Soviet foreign policy has operated in a specific framework. Ideology and reality, in a given situation appear to be the two constant factors in making this framework. These two factors deem to be inter-linked and they have acted and reacted on each other in the operationalization of the Soviet foreign policy. Thus an understanding of the specific framework of Soviet foreign policy requires not only ideas and concepts of international politics but also their operationalization in a given situation (issue-wise as well as, time-wise).

An attempt has been made here to define this specific framework for Soviet policy towards the problem of cooperation among states, regionally or globally.

Ideas and Concept

A careful examination of Lenin's ideas and views on Soviet foreign policy will bring out the ideological factor that have gone in the making of Soviet foreign policy. Lenin began to propound his views on the subject during the period from December 1917 to March 1918, when the new Soviet state was preparing to negotiate peace with

1. For details see:
Germany. He tried to bring the Allied Powers at a common platform for general negotiation on peace. But they repeatedly refused to take part in the peace negotiations. Therefore, Lenin decided to sign a separate peace treaty with Germany, as according to him, peace was the principal external condition for consolidation of Soviet power. Lenin's decision was opposed by a group within Soviet Russian which believed that peace would be a concession to imperialism. A resolution was also passed on the matter against Lenin's view. But Lenin stuck to his ideas and stated, "Perhaps the authors (of the resolution) believe that the interests of the world revolution forbid making any peace at all with imperialists? The incorrectness of this view is as clear as day. A socialist republic surrounded by imperialist power could not, from this point of view, conclude any economic treaties, and could not exist at all, without flying to the moon".

Lenin's strong advocacy for compromise and agreement, albeit tactically led to the signing of the first treaty that Soviet Russia entered with a major capitalist powers, viz., Germany (Brest-Litovsk Treaty). After the end of the First World War, against the background of growing hostility of the capitalist powers, normalization of relations with them became an urgent necessity for the Soviet state. It was during the long-drawn odd negotiations for trade with Britain from 1920-21 that Lenin further clarified his views. He said, "The entry of the socialist country into trade relations with capitalist countries, is a most important factor ensuring our existence in such a complex and absolutely exceptional situation". He further said on 23

December 1921 that "We shall do our utmost to preserve peace in future, that we shall not shrink from great sacrifices and concessions in order to safeguard this peace".

In March 1921, Soviet Russia registered a break-through in its relation with the hostile world by signing the Anglo-Russian Trade Agreement. Soon, other capitalist states followed the example of Britain and by 1924 Soviet Russia had managed to normalize its relations with the capitalist state; so much so, that trade and economic relations also began to develop. Thus a first small step, though a major one under the condition for the time, was taken to cooperate with other states of diverse background. However, a deep suspicion and hostility towards Soviet Russia remained a major feature of international politics of time.

One may had bear that Lenin laid particular emphasis on cooperation of Soviet Russia with what is now called today the developing states. In his perspective for cooperation among states of diverse background these countries occupied a place of pride. He emphasised the importance of having friendly relations with these countries when he stated in 1916 that "we shall exert every effort to foster association and merger with the Mongolians, Persians, Indians, Egyptians. We believe, it is our duty and in our interest to do this, for otherwise socialism in Europe will not be secured."

As a matter of fact, during 1919-21, Lenin has constantly laid stress on this very aspect of Soviet foreign policy. It is obvious

4. Ibid, Vol.33, p.144
5. Ibid, Vol.23, p.67
that Lenin's emphasis on special relationship of cooperation with the then colonial world was essentially dictated by his strategy of developing a stronger force against imperialism. However, a policy of cooperation with them clearly emerged.

Thus we can see that by 1924, Lenin's views on cooperation among states did emerge clearly and they were sought to be operationalize in Soviet foreign policy. We may point out here that these ideas and concepts form the integral part of his views on peaceful coexistence of states in international politics. In fact, peaceful coexistence became one of the founding principles of Soviet foreign policy, while compromise, concessions and cooperation were the essential strategy and tactic for such a policy.

Much of the inter-war years after Lenin's death was characterised by the pre-occupation of the Soviet leadership with domestic problems and since the rise of Hitler in Germany, in dealing with the new menace to the security of the Soviet Union. Since 1933 cooperation among states once again became a pressing problem for the Soviet leadership. One finds that during thirties, Stalin and other Soviet leaders consistently came out in favour of joint cooperative efforts in meeting the threat posed by fascist Germany. In December 1932, M.M.Litvinov, the Foreign Minister of the USSR, stressed during the resumption of relations with China that "It is only when all states maintain relations with one another that we shall be able to speak seriously of international cooperation in the cause of peace, of international guarantee of the observation of peace pacts and agreements and the creation of authoritative international
organizations". He also believed that the crisis of early thirties "could be neither cured nor alleviated by any measures amounting to discrimination and the intensification of economic strife between countries." Stalin stated in his report to the Seventeenth Party Congress of the CPSU (B) in January 1934 that "Our foreign policy is clear. It is a policy of preserving peace and strengthening trade relations with all countries .... we stand for peace and uphold the cause of peace". He further stated in his report, "while pre-war hysteria reigned in a number of countries, the Soviet Union had stood firm and immovable on its position of peace, meeting half way those countries which to one degree or another wanted peace preserved and exposing and unmasking those who were preparing and inciting war."

During the late 1930s when tripartite militaristic cooperation was formed between Germany, Italy and Japan, the Soviet emphasis on peace and cooperation with the Western countries increased. On 27 November 1937 Litvinov declared, "wherever possible, even when Soviet interests were not in the least involved, we have indicated our readiness to join the other great powers and the smaller nations as well, in a common, anti-war front".

8. Ibid, p.543.
10. Ibid.
Collective security and collective action against Nazi Germany emerged as one of the primary objectives of Soviet foreign policy; so much so, the USSR pursued this goal right up to the beginning of the Second World War (for instance Anglo-Soviet-French negotiations in August 1939).

The policy, however, fell through and the Soviet Union signed a Nazi-Soviet pact. But by 1941 with the forging of an alliance with Western powers during the war, it was obvious that the traditional policy towards cooperation among states had registered a big success, leading to fruitful result in the defeat of Nazi Germany and its allies.

The end of the Second World War heralded a new era in international politics, qualitatively different than the earlier period. The beginning of the cold war brought about ideas of confrontation and Lenin's views on cooperation did appear to be put into cold storage. Once the initial intensive period of cold war or confrontation was over after the Soviet Union had acquired the nuclear capability in 1949, the Soviet leadership did begin to remember Lenin's ideas on cooperation among different states. It was Stalin himself who in 1952 thus spoke of possibility of resuming cooperative relationship with other states. He admitted the coexistence of capitalism and socialism. He said, "the object of the present-day peace movement is to rouse the masses of the people to fight for the preservation of peace and for the prevention of another world war. Consequently, the aim of this movement is not to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism -- it confines itself to the democratic aim of
preserving peace." He further said, "In this respect the present-day peace movement differ from the movement of the time of the First World War for the conversion of the imperialist war into civil war, since the latter movement went further and pursued socialist aims."

We do find that with the advent of new leadership in the Soviet Union and with its growing nuclear capability, the problem of cooperation at regional and global level assumed its traditional importance in Soviet foreign policy. A contributing factor here was undoubtedly the rise of new-system states from the colonial and semi-colonial world. In such a changed internal and external environment, a range of new ideas on cooperation, though today may be viewed as modification and clarification of old ones, was marked among the Soviet leaders.

The beginning was made by the famous Twentieth Congress of Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). This congress unequivocally recognised the idea of peaceful coexistence between the two cold war blocs; in fact it emphasised that the goal of Soviet foreign policy was to promote peaceful cooperative relations with the capitalist camp and its allies in capitalist camp. Further, it may renew formulations by recognising the possibility of different roads to socialism as distinct from Soviet and Chinese paths. Thus it is true to say that the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU reactivised Leninist principle of peaceful coexistence in Soviet foreign policy and promotion of cooperative peaceful relations emerged as one of the

13. Ibid.
practical forms of such a policy. As the Twentieth Congress concluded in one of its main resolutions: "The Twentieth Congress of the party considers that the line of the Central Committee and the Soviet government which on the basis of the Leninist principles of peaceful co-existence, aims at improving relations, strengthening confidence and developing cooperation with all countries, is absolutely correct." In his report to the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU Khrushchev gave emphasis on the method of negotiation between countries and mentioned about Geneva Conference of the Head of Government of the Four powers. He said, "... since it has become possible to bring the positions of the powers closer together on a number of major international issues, the Soviet Union will strive with still greater persistence to establish confidence and cooperation between all countries, above all between the great powers. Equal efforts and reciprocal concessions are absolutely indispensable in the relations between the great powers." He further said, "The establishment of firm friendly relations between the two biggest powers of the world, the Soviet Union and the United States of America would be of great significance for the strengthening of the world peace."

The 20th Congress of the CPSU was also notable because for the first time Soviet foreign policy, after having recognised the importance of the new emergent states in Asia, Africa and Latin


16. Ibid. p.34.
America, developed a framework for Soviet policy towards this end. A well defined goal was to develop close and friendly relations with these countries. So much so, that the Congress even committed the Soviet Union to promoting collective security in Asia -- a concept which appeared to be less of a military nature. In his report to the 20th Congress, Khrushchev for example opined, "Assuring collective security in Europe, assuring collective security in Asia, disarmament, these are the three cardinal problems whose solution can lay the foundation of lasting and durable peace". Further he clarified, "In this connection, the significance of non-aggression treaties or treaties of friendship, whose conclusion would help remove existing suspicion and distrust in relations between countries and normalize the international situation, should be emphasised".

From mid sixties onwards the Soviet Union steadily began to involve itself in developing relations with the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Asian countries became the main target of such a foreign policy. Soviet support for struggle against the imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism became more expressive and a call for the unity of "all anti-war and anti-imperialist forces" was given. The resolution of Twenty-third Congress of the CPSU in 1966 declared, "To consolidate and protect peace, it is necessary to build up continuously the might of the peace-loving forces to promote their activities and to secure the participation of the broad masses in the struggle for peace."

17. Ibid, p.32.
18. Ibid, pp.36-37.
In this process the Soviet leadership began to realise increasingly that along with the development of the bilateral relations, a multilateral approach must not be forgotten. A case in point was Brezhnev's plan for collective security in Asia, first propounded in 1969. In June 1969, he pointed out, "the burning problems of the current international situation do not conceal from our view longer-term task, namely the creation of a system of collective security in areas of concentrated danger of another world war. Such a system is the best replacement for the existing military-political groups". Turning to Asia he stressed that, "... the course of events is also putting on the agenda the task of creating a system of collective security in Asia," although Brezhnev's proposal for Asian collective security failed to take off mainly because of cool response from major Asian countries, including India.

It was evident that the Soviet Union was interested in developing cooperative relations with all Asian states even on a multilateral basis; further it also indicated that regional groupings and associations for cooperation as distinct from military blocs and alliances in Asia would no longer evoke hostility from the Soviet Union. Hence it was not co-incidental that the clear shift in Soviet policy towards such grouping as ASEAN began to be marked by the


22. Ibid, p.201.


beginning of seventies. Brezhnev said at Alma Ata in 1973 that "we want every country and people to be guaranteed conditions for free development and national revival... the spirit of trust and mutual understanding to reign in relations among Asian countries...".  

Two major developments in international politics further convinced the Soviet leadership of the necessity of pursuing a consistent policy towards cooperation and mutually advantageous relations in Asian countries. The one was the successful conclusion of the Vietnam war by the unification of Vietnam and the withdrawal of US armed intervention there. The other was the signing of Helsinki Agreement for peace and security in Europe. As a matter of fact, the Helsinki Accord of 1975 became a kind of model which the Soviet Union wanted to promote in Asia. In his report to the Twenty-fifth Congress of the CPSU, Brezhnev announced that, "The Soviet Union intends to continue its active participation in the search for ways of consolidating peace and security on the Asian continent, and of developing equal cooperation between them as well. We shall work for this through bilateral contracts and also on a multilateral basis. Later, the Twenty-Sixth Congress of CPSU in 1981 pointed out that, "It is high time to go back to honest collective search of an all-embracing just and realistic settlement. In the circumstances, this could be done, say, in the framework of a specially convened international conference".  

25. L.I. Brezhnev, Following Lenin's course, Articles and Speeches, Progress, Moscow, 1975, p.252.


27. Documents and Resolutions, the XXVI Congress of the CPSU, Novosti, Moscow, 1981, p.20.
A succession of leaders after the death of Brezhnev, continued emphasis on the need of cooperative relations in Asia, although their firm opposition to military groupings and arms build-up in Asia and elsewhere continued. Yuri Andropov became the General Secretary of the CPSU in November 1982. While presenting his report at the joint celebration meeting of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Supreme Soviet of Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the formation of the USSR in December 1982, he said about the cooperation of the states that "we are for broad fruitful cooperation among all nations of the world to their mutual advantage and the goal of all mankind, free from diktat and interference in the affairs of other countries." This idea of cooperation among all the nations, in spite of their socio-political differences, became more clearer in the speech of Konstantin Chernenko, the next General Secretary of the CPSU at a meeting with the electorate of the Kuibyshev district of Moscow in February 1985. He said, "We are cooperating with all peace forces on earth in strengthening international security. In this day and age, this means, in particular, cooperation with the freedom-loving independent states of the former colonial and semi-colonial world."

Thus Andropov and Chernenko both believed that cooperation with the other countries have both economic and political aspect and it is essential for region's economic development and security.

The next General Secretary of the CPSU Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in March 1985. He not only reiterated the need of cooperation with all the countries, including the USA, but also put forward the

29. Speech is quoted in Soviet Review, No.9, 1985, p.3.
methods to achieve the regional cooperation and world peace. His banquet speech of 21 May 1985 is important in this respect which was delivered when Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi visited the USSR. He expressed his belief that "if every permanent member of the UN Security Council assumed an obligation to observe strictly the principles of non-interference, non-use of force or threat of force in relations with the countries.... this step would help remove seats of tension and promote a peaceful settlement of a number of conflicts in Asia, Africa and Latin America." He further said that the "Soviet Union is prepared to assume such an obligation". While turning to Asia, he proposed to approach the problems of security in Asia in a "common comprehensive" manner. He preferred the Asian countries to search "constructive solutions" to the peace and security problems by themselves. He proposed even the method to achieve this aim, when he said, "...here different methods are evidently possible - bilateral talks and multilateral consultations - up to holding at some time in future an all Asian forum for exchange of opinion and joint search for constructive solutions". While talking about Asian security and cooperation, Gorbachev had a model of Helsinki in his mind, which was signed in 1975, after ten years of discussions and consultations. He was aware of this time-taking process and said, "... of course the way to this is complicated. But the road to Helsinki was not smooth or even either".

30. Mikhail Gorbachev, Selected Speeches and Articles, Progress, Moscow, 1986, pp.106-111.


32. Ibid, p.73.

33. Ibid.
Gorbachev's view on cooperation with the countries of different socio-political systems has become more clear in his speech at Vladivostok in July 1986 where he has accepted US as a "great pacific power" and said "... without the United States and its participation, it is not possible to resolve the problem of security and cooperation in the Pacific Ocean to the satisfaction of all nations in the region". He said about Asia the Soviet state calls upon all Asian and Pacific nations to cooperate for the sake of peace and security. Everyone who strives towards these goals and who hopes for a better future for one's people, will find that we are willing to talk and are honest partners".

Our discussion above has highlighted the range of ideas and concepts during last 70 years which is relevant for understanding Soviet foreign policy on peaceful and cooperative relations with different states. This clearly brings out the fact that these concepts and ideas did emphasize the imperative need of cooperation between the Soviet Union and other states. Further it is relevant to note here that in Soviet view such a cooperation did not appear to dilute the commitment of the Soviet leadership to change a socio-economic development eventually leading to socialism in other states. It was precisely the given reality of the inter-war years and the post Second World War period that forced the Soviet leadership in implementing these ideas and concepts in a characteristic way. This characteristic way was certainly marked by the dilution of Soviet commitment to social revolution in other countries, while it emphasize growing

34. Ibid.
Soviet awareness of growing trends among states to cooperate mutually otherwise. And as such, the problem of cooperation among states became an international issue of considerable importance for Soviet foreign policy which was not entirely confined to bilateral relations of the Soviet Union with the other states.

It is therefore imperative for us to take into account the actual reality of the international situation during the period under study which is relevant to us. Such an exercise will help us in finding the in-built linkages between ideology and reality in the very framework of the Soviet foreign policy.

Implementation of Ideas and Concepts

We propose to undertake this exercise in a detail manner in our next chapter. Suffice here to focus attention on the major highlights of Soviet efforts in putting the ideas and concepts, discussed above, in practice against the background of emerging international issue of cooperation.

As we have noted earlier the Soviet state was born in an extremely hostile international environment. Apart from ideological orientations of the new Soviet state, its unilateral withdrawal from the First World War and renunciation of imperialist treaties, alliances and concessions had generated more hostility from the imperialist powers. Hence the immediate problem for Soviet foreign policy was to turn such an hostile international situation into a favourable one so that the new Soviet state could survive. It was during its sustained efforts in dealing with this important problem
that Soviet policy on compromise and cooperation among states of diverse socio-economic background developed as an overall objective of peaceful coexistence. The experience in dealing with the capitalist powers until the rise of Nazi Germany appear to convince the Soviet leadership of the sources and effectiveness of Soviet policy of developing cooperative relations with other states. Hence one may add that Soviet foreign policy took special care in developing cooperative relations with the independent countries of the third world, namely Iran, Afghanistan and Turkey, and generally supported colonial movements against the imperialist rule and domination.

The rise of Nazi Germany in 1931 presented a serious problem of security before the Soviet Union. A characteristic response in dealing with this problem was promotion of collective and cooperative action against aggression in order to contain Nazi Germany. Much of the thirties was spent on pursuing such a policy, though with little success. The second world war thus became inevitable making Soviet pre-occupation with cooperation as a policy and peaceful co-existence as a goal of Soviet foreign policy totally irrelevent. In some ways the war-time alliance against Nazi military machine appeared to restore the confidence of the Soviet leadership in pursuing that traditional policy on cooperation and coexistence among states. However, the immediate post-Second World War developments made the actual task of pursuing such a policy more problematic.


37. Treaty of friendship and non-aggression were signed in 1921 with the bordering countries in Asia, viz., Iran, Afghanistan and Turkey.
The post-Second World War period brought about a major change in the international arena. At the end of the war the United States emerged as a super power with nuclear weapons at its command. It was the only Western country which came out practically unscathed through the war. The other European powers were substantially weakened, losing their hold on their colonies in Asia and Africa, which emerged as independent countries in the international arena. On the other hand, the Soviet Union, though subjected to the burnt of the Nazi attack, emerged as a major power with the East European countries, where the socialist governments came to power. The Soviet Union tried her best to safeguard this socialist socio-economic system against any Western encroachment. Hence the Soviet foreign policy in the late forties and early fifties was formulated with this point in view. She gave more emphasis on an idea of European collective security and cooperation among the European countries. A Council for Mutual Economic Aid (CMEA) was formed in 1949 for direct cooperation in production of member countries and for development of economy of each socialist country, so that all of them could collectively achieve pre-ponderance over the Western economy.

At the end of the war one more important phenomenon was marked in international politics, viz., cold war. Though the cold war tension developed among the war-time allies during the Second World War period, it sharpened after the end of war between Britain, France and America on one hand and the Soviet Union on the other. The United States initiated military pact viz. North Atlantic Treaty Organization

38. CMEA was set up by decision of an economic conference of representatives of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the USSR in Moscow on 23 January 1949. It was joined by Albania in February 1949 and by German Democratic Republic in 1950.
(NATO) in 1949 with the European countries as its member. This occupied Soviet attention in Europe and she tried to strengthen the East European countries and the USSR vis-a-vis NATO.

The success of an idea of collective European security, led the Soviet leadership to think about an Asian collective security in the mid-fifties. Moreover, the formation of South-east Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1954 and Bagdad Pact in 1955 under the US auspices raised an alarm in the Soviet Union. In Asia, the Soviet leadership gave more emphasis on cooperation and co-existence with the countries of different socio-political orientations. During this period the Soviet view of Asian countries changed. The Soviet leaders marked the two important changes in Asia, first, the socialist governments were consolidated in China, North Korea, North Vietnam and Mongolia with whom the Soviet Union developed fraternal relations; second, the non-aligned posture of newly independent countries like India, Burma and Indonesia became prominent, which led the Soviet Union to establish closer relations with these countries. The Bandung Conference of the Afro-Asian countries in 1955 further led the Soviet Union to establish closer relations with these newly independent countries. The economic and friendly ties between the USSR and the Asian countries were strengthened further after the visit of

39. North Atlantic Treaty Organization was formed in April, 1949 with the USA, Britain, France, Italy, Canada, Belgium, the Netherland, Portugal, Denmark, Norway, Ice-land, Luxemburg, and then Turkey, Greece (1952), and the FRG (1955) as its members.

40. SEATO was formed with the US, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines and Pakistan as its members.

41. The Bagdad Pact consisted of Britain, Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan. In 1959 it was renamed as CEMTO because Iraq opted out of it.

42. It has been discussed in details in Chapter II.
N.S. Khrushchev and N.A. Bulganin to India, Burma and Afghanistan in 1955-56. The report of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU shows that the Soviet leadership developed keen interest in the third world countries by the mid-fifties and the idea of an Asian collective security also got ground during this period. The Soviet Union gave economic aid to many Asian and African countries in fifties to strengthen their national economy and increase their bargaining power with the Western countries. Together with the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) the Soviet Union tried to bring the newly independent countries closer to the socialist bloc.

In the sixties the international conditions changed due to acute ideological differences between the Soviet Union and the PRC. Therefore, the Soviet Union increased her involvement in third world and particularly in Asia. Her support for struggle against the imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism became more expressive. The resolutions and the report of the Twenty-third Party Congress of the CPSU in 1966 showed that the Soviet leaders felt a need for a regional cooperation and collective security in Asia which might check the increasing influence of anti-Soviet powers. To achieve this aim, the policy of peaceful coexistence was redefined and broadened. The Soviet Union tried to uphold mutually advantageous economic, scientific and technical cooperation, and cultural exchanges between all countries.


44. It has been discussed earlier in this chapter.

45. 50 Let Vilikoi Oktjaberskoi Socialisticheskoi Revolussi, Postanobлемie, Tezili Central Committee, CPSU, Progress, Moscow, 1961, p. 62.
During the late sixties the Soviet Union apprehended a new political development near her borders. She had strained relations with both the PRC and Japan. With the PRC she had ideological differences since 1960 and the Soviet Union maintained her armed forces near the northern borders of China. Her relations with Japan were not cordial because of Soviet occupation of islands which Japan claimed as her own viz., Hokkaido-Kunashiri, Etoforu and Shikotan (since the Second World War). In 1969 Soviet Union realised that in near future America was going to normalise her relations with the PRC and it had already a Treaty of Security and Cooperation with Japan. Therefore, the possibility of normalisation of the US-PRC and the PRC-Japan relations proved a cause of anxiety for the Soviet Union. Moreover, the British announcement of her forthcoming withdrawal from East of Suez by 1971 and the probable decrease in US involvement in Southeast Asia were sure to affect the international politics in Asia. Against these circumstances Brezhnev put forward his proposal for Asian collective security.

During early seventies, detente was marked in the relations between the big powers. President Nixon's visit to the PRC and the Soviet Union in 1972 normalised their mutual relations and indicated the period of detente. The Soviet policy of peaceful co-existence and cooperation with the countries of different socio-economic system reached to its zenith during this period. The Soviet leadership voiced their concern about peace and security in general. Bilateral treaties of friendship and cooperation were also signed with the developing countries like Egypt and India. Soviet view of different organizations of regional cooperations in Asian and African countries also changed.
The success of European Security Conference at Helsinki (1975) further encouraged the Soviet leadership to follow their policy of co-existence and cooperation. They assumed that a conference of Asian countries on the pattern of Helsinki, might bring peace and security in this continent. The Final Act of Helsinki, which accepted the principle of peaceful co-existence, was signed by 33 European countries. In fact, the principles mentioned at Helsinki are commonly accepted in different bilateral treaties, in international conferences and in the UN Charter. These were proclaimed during Panchsheel Agreement between India and the People's Republic of China in 1954. The Bandung Conference of Afro-Asian countries (1955) also accepted these principles for the cooperation among the countries of different social and political systems. Again, the Non-aligned movement aimed at the same principles. The Soviet Union regards that these principles would help in establishing security in Asia, bring the Asian countries closer and a kind of regional cooperation would develop among them. Brezhnev made it clear in 1972 that "collective security in Asia must, in our view be based on such principles of repudiation of the use of force in relations between states, respect for the sovereignty and inviolability of frontiers, non-interference in internal affairs, and broad developed economic and other cooperation on the basis of complete equality and mutual benefit... It is becoming increasingly clear that the real path of security in Asia is not the path of military blocs and groups or the path of putting on state against another, but the path of good neighbourly cooperation of all interested states"

46. L.I. Brezhnev, Following Lenin's Course, Progress, Moscow, 1975, p.31.
Leonid Brezhnev enjoyed quite a longer period as the Head of the State in the USSR and during his term he tirelessly worked to implement the Soviet policy of peaceful co-existence and cooperation.

He realised during the later years that to bring security and peace in Asia, US cooperation was also essential and naval race between the two super powers was to be checked. He said at the Seventeenth Congress of the Soviet Trade Unions in March 1982 that, "We would consider it possible to agree that the missile submarines of the two sides should be removed from their present extensive combat patrol areas, that their crusises should be restricted by limits mutually agreed upon. We would also be prepared to discuss the question of spreading confidence-building measures to the seas and oceans, especially to areas through which the busiest shipping routes pass. In short, we stand for the largest possible part of the world ocean becoming a zone of peace in the nearest future.

In the mid-eighties Gorbachev proved better diplomat than Brezhnev. In 1985, when he became General Secretary of the CPSU, he had clear ideas regarding the aims of Soviet foreign policy and the prevailing international conditions. Basically his proposal for Asian security, as referred to in May 1985, did not have much difference with Brezhnev's proposal. Like Leonid Brezhnev he also proposed participation of the PRC in Asian security. But side-by-side, Gorbachev tried to normalise the USSR-PRC relations. He realised that


48. This process started during Chernenko's period. In December, 1984, First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Ivan Arkhipov, went to China and the Soviet and Chinese governments signed agreements on economic and technical cooperation.
a plan like Asian security could not achieve success without the inclusion of the PRC in it. At the plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, Gorbachev gave special emphasis on Soviet Union's relations with China. He said "We would like to see a serious improvement in relations with the Peoples' Republic of China, and we believe that given reciprocity, this is quite possible" Therefore, delegations from both sides visited each other's country, sat down and discussed their mutual problems and thus the prevailing tension between them reduced.

Mikhail Gorbachev had broadened the scope of his plan. He had not ruled out even the possibility of participation of the US, which is not an Asian power. According to him United States' participation is necessary because it has greater interests in Asia, and any solution to the Asian problem is impossible without cooperation of the US.

The next step which Gorbachev took to achieve Asian security is his tireless efforts for disarmament. It was clear to him that unless and until steps would be taken to reduce overall armaments, the Asian security and cooperation could not be achieved because it is not a separate phenomenon. It is very much related with the over all security and cooperation of the world.

Gorbachev wanted to apply Helsinki model in Asia, which have reduced the possibility of war in Europe. He talked about world peace. He tried to create the conditions in Asia, where the states of different socio-political and economic interests could sit together and find out a solution. For this Mikhail Gorbachev tried, first, to

49. Quoted in International Affairs (Moscow), No.4, 1985, p.8.
improve USSR's bilateral relations with the other countries; second, to establish cordial relations among the Asian countries; and third, to solve universal problems. He has also declared that, "In general, I would like to say that if the United States gave up its military presence, say, in the Philippines, we would not leave this step unanswered.

The year 1985 is marked by important changes in Asia. A new awakening was seen in Asia against military alliances and nuclearization of the area. New Zealand refused to allow American warships, carrying nuclear weapons, to call at its ports in February, 1985. It also left the military pact ANZUS. In the spring of 1985, 28 members of parliament from the Australian Labour Party set up a group called "Labour Parliamentarians for a Nuclear-Free Australia". In April 1985, Australia officially refused to participate in Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) programme of the US President Ronald Reagan. The thirteen members of south Pacific Forum drew up Avarua Treaty (1985) to make the region a nuclear free zone. But the US, Britain and France refused to sign it. South Pacific countries also decided to impose a ban on dumping radio-active wastes into the ocean waters.


51. Australia, New Zealand and the US were the members of ANZUS which was formed in September, 1951.


53. The thirteen members are - Australia, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Papua-New Guinea, Niua, Nauru, Kuibati, Tavalu, Tonga, Vanuatu, Fiji, Western Somoa and Solomon Island.
These changes in the developing countries are sure to help the Soviet Union in achieving her aim of international peace and cooperation. Gorbachev peace plan in Asia and Pacific had culminated in Geneva where President Reagan and Gorbachev met in November 1985, and in a joint statement they declared that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought". The two sides also decided to refrain from seeking "military superiority".

The Soviet foreign policy thus is working within a set framework and the Soviet leadership though introduced some changes according to the need to their time, maintained continuity since 1917. Their policy of cooperation with the countries of different socio-economic system today had broader scope and hence it has succeeded in bringing the developing countries closer to the USSR.

Our critical review and analysis of international politics and international environment as it affected the Soviet Union during the last eighty years or so, comprise the reality with which the wide range of ideas and concepts on cooperation and peaceful relations had to grow. The inter-action between the two constant factors in Soviet policy may also be clearly seen in case of specific Soviet postures on cooperation and peaceful relations among states. The process of this inter-action was essentially determined by the framework of such a policy. It is precisely such a framework which generated specific postures and policies on the issue under review at any given period of time during the last eighty years or so. As a matter of fact the

historical development of Soviet policy on cooperation and peaceful relations among states in Asia, as elsewhere, can be understood better and in an objective manner, if we keep in mind the framework of such a policy, as defined above.

It is, therefore, logical for us to shift our attention now to the historical development of Soviet foreign policy in Asia, particularly towards the trends and organizations of regional cooperation, in Asia. We propose to undertake this exercise in the next chapter.