The attempt to reform the communist system led to its demolition. The East European communist international system lost its 'conflict-containing' capacity and its 'self-maintaining system' succumbed to the rising tide of national ethnic upsurge and vehement assertions of national sovereignty by the newly emerging states in the region. Three decades before, George Modelski perceived the intrinsic character of the communist international system, "the system manifests both cooperation and conflict; it harbors the "seeds of war" and in the event of a failure of the mechanisms of "conflict - containment" the seeds of its own destruction." (1)

The intrinsic strength of the system was based on the communist ideology. Gorbachev's deliberate move for deideologisation of the system and international relations resulted in its delegitimization. Charles Gati observed, "Ideologically the foundation of the East European alliance is sinking, the edifice of its socialism is cracked." (2) Within a period of few months in 1989 the entire post-Second World War structure in East Europe fell apart: the communist rule; Soviet domination; the division of Germany; the GDR itself; the Eastern alliance system; the entire Cold War. (3) The cause of East European upheaval was traced to the inherent components of the system. Zinoviev observed, "These disorders stem from the essence of the communist social system, from its power-structure, from the internal relationships of society seen as an integral whole, and from the roots of Soviet imperialism." (4)

With the radical changes in Eastern Europe the system of international relations based on ideological affinity, geopolitical proximity and mutually advantageous relationships, gradually lost its traditional character. Soviet foreign policy saw Eastern Europe as a priority throughout the post-war period, and there was close interaction in the most diverse areas of state-to-state relations. (5) The economic alliance—CMEA and military treaty—Warsaw Treaty Organisation cemented the relations of the Soviet Union with its East European allies and helped maintaining its hegemony. Valerie Bunce analysing Soviet reforms and international change in historical perspective concluded, "When Russia is weak, Eastern Europe unstable, and conflict among the European power increases." (6) By the close of this century, the Soviet Union—a superpower with independent and challenging ideology failed to face the challenge of time and the edifice of Soviet hegemony suddenly collapsed. Raymond Pearson observed,

> The decolonization of the "Last Empire" demonstrated the ultimate incapacity of imperial authority to confront the challenges of the late twentieth century. (7)

Coping with the legacy of the Soviet superpower system placed enormous pressure on Russia's democratic leaders as they attempted to balance economic reform, political sovereignty and military security. (8) By the 1980's the communist parties of Eastern Europe, torn by disparate pressures from their publics, the West, and the East, and without much of claim to rule, had lost


their traditional influence and power (9). Gorbachev reforms also failed to channel the media revolution to the advantage of the existing establishments. As a result, glasnost backfired disastrously upon communist authority throughout the Soviet bloc. (10) Realism had finally triumphed over idealism of Gorbachevian reforms. On the other hand, scholars perceived that Gorbachev's apparent intention was to accelerate the bloc's decentralization that had begun after Stalin's death. (11) Conservation of super-power status through military means was neither feasible nor desirable; which could deepen internal crisis in the Soviet Union. Hence the policy of deregulation of East European bloc by promoting 'freedom of choice' of the economic and political system and, supporting absolute independence and sovereignty reflected that the doctrinal change in Soviet foreign policy and its perceptions of the international system was a real one. (12) Eduard Shevardnadze asserted,

If we had original come to the Eastern European countries wearing the halo of liberators, then we had to continue this noble and honourable mission...

(13)

The Soviet Union's withdrawal from Eastern Europe, the reunification of Germany, and the end of the Cold War dramatically altered the context in which Russian foreign policy would operate in the future. (14) With the absence of impelling force of socialist internationalism, national sovereignty emerged as a disintegrating force in the socialist international system. New


deideologised Soviet perceptions of Europe, irrelevance of antagonistic military and economic alliances and growing realisation of global interdependence of nations changed the international environment beyond recognition.

With the evaporation of supranational jurisdictions and allegiances, the nationalist tide of competing sovereignties has gathered a momentum unprecedented in European experience. (15).

On the other hand, the process of disintegration in the communist world perculated down to the state systems. International communist system maintained its command over the sub-systems of nation-states during the last four decades. During a crisis situation as seen in Hungary in 1956, and in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the international mechanism and the ideology of socialist internationalism suppressed sub-system's deviations asserting independence. Now the policy of perestroika and the changing political scenario reversed the role of the Soviet Union and the international system in relation to its sub-systems of East European states. While economic and political crisis in the communist systems prompted the leaders of the East European states to seek alternatives to existing norms discarded by circumstances (16), the policy of perestroika favoured resident - states by restoring political sovereignty and independence. (17)

Consequently, the multinational communist states witnessed a deeper disintegration process. Collapse of communist system of party rule and the destruction of the administrative command system led to disintegration of the union, irrespective of whether it was a totalitarian (USSR) or self-governing (Yugoslavia) Marxist socialism. (18) The growing nationalism with the corresponding decline of the

international system proved fatal to the integrity and state sovereignty of the multinational states as the USSR, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. Unhindered pursuit of sovereignty by the republics evidenced the real assertion of national self-determination unchallenged by any superpower in the region. The slogan of sovereignty totally undermined the existence of any effective international system in the Eastern Europe.

Rise of sovereign states in the entire Eastern Europe including the Soviet Union was a proof of total demise of the erstwhile communist international system. Adam B. Ulam perceives that this new phenomenon of Stalinist "legacy poses a threat to the world order: a fragmented Soviet Union, its parts now independent states, ... might prove a no lesser danger to international stability than that which had been posed by the Soviet Union at the height of its power". (20)

In fact, the process of disintegration of the Soviet bloc began with the Gorbachevian policies of perestroika and glasnost. The liberalism loosened the system controls within the communist domestic as well as international system. The Soviet decision not to oppose the decommunisation of the Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union's commitment to respect the right all states to determine their respective political and economic systems and not to interfere in their internal affairs transformed the fundamental character of the erstwhile communist international system. The concept of Common European Home revolutionized the ethos of the East-West politics by transcending the division of Europe and ending the cold war. In this process of


deideologisation and East-West economic and political cooperation, the military alliance - WTO and economic organization - CMEA lost their relevance. Ultimately, the westward move of the East Europeans embarking on the independent path of development totally undermined the communist economic and political systems.

Common European Home

Perestroika aimed at dismantling the giant edifice of the Cold War. On 12 June 1990, Gorbachev said, "The Soviet Union is an organic part of Europe... turbulent processes in Eastern Europe are a direct result of perestroika..." (21) Hence, the philosophy of Common European Home was advanced to end the East-West conflict to facilitate the politico-economic transformation of communist Europe.

During the post-world war period, the division of Europe in bloc alliances with enemy images and the legacy of cold war with mutual mistrust between East-West constituted the prominent feature of international relations. This antagonism originated from the intense military - political, ideological and economic rivalry between confronting political systems. Under these circumstances,

... a crisis situation in any East European country was globalised and aggravated, and that it seriously destabilized East-West relations irrespective of whether the international political barometer registered calm or storm when the crisis erupted. (22)

This amply witnessed during the crises in Yugoslavia in 1948, in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968 when the issue of national sovereignty was crucially involved.

Gorbachev explained the homogeneous character of the Europe which included the Soviet Union. "The notion of European area transcends geographical boundaries from the Atlantic to the Urals. It comprises the Soviet Union, ... inseparably linked with the old World by common historical


Deideologisation.

The profound socio-political and economic changes in the East European countries assigned them a new role in the all-European process and in the system of East-West relations. New conditions were to be created for economic, social and scientific, technological progress, and for the free development of nations. Mikhail Gorbachev envisaged this need and opportunity to overcome economic and political crisis, and to strengthen the national interests of the socialist nations. He propounded the idea of common European home in his book on Perestroika.

The concept of a "common European home" suggests above all a degree of integrity, even if its states belong to different social systems and opposing military-political alliances. It combines necessity with opportunity. (24)

The idea of common European home crystallised and the ideological antagonism of systems gradually subsided. The traditional approach of confrontation between East and West was minimised and integrated Europe emerged superseding all rivalries to cope with the new economic, political and psychological needs of the region.

... in the present situation it is especially important not to emulate medieval fanatics and not to extend ideological differences to inter-state relations. Stability in these relations, their reduced susceptibility to political ups and downs will likewise consolidate stability in Europe as a whole. (25)

Crucial Role of Europe

Mikhail Gorbachev emphasised the importance of Europe by tracing the Russian history as "an organic part of the great European history." (26) "Where geography and history have closely interwoven the destinies of dozens of countries and nations". (27) He saw,

24. M. Gorbachev, Perestroika supra note no.112 p.195.
26. Mikhail Gorbachev, Perestroika, Supra note no.112 p. 191.
27. Ibid, p. 195.
The Soviet approach to Europe was a radical departure in the foreign policy of Soviet Union and the socialist world. Political theorists observed, "Gorbachev's policy towards Western Europe is part of his attempt to move international relations from confrontation to cooperation." (29) Gorbachev was credited for the "peaceful invasion of Western Europe as the piercing of a window into Europe". (30) This major change in policy towards Europe was considered to reduce the prominence of the United State's role in Europe. But it was, in fact, "an effort to base peace in Europe on the integration of Western and Soviet values". (31) Secondly, the relaxation of Soviet control over Eastern Europe was to follow an all - European phenomenon. An authority on the communist systems observed:

In sum, the de-Sovietization of Eastern Europe is essential for the Europeanization of the Soviet Union. (32)

The fusion of East - West of Europe, virtually superseded the erstwhile rigidity and overwhelming socialist internationalism and the alliance systems in East European international communist system. The constraints on state sovereignty in the world socialist system were now irrelevant. The East European states emerged as sovereign nations in conformity with the universal


29. Peter J.S. Duncan, "Soviet Policy Towards the Main West European Powers", in Gorbachev and Europe edited by Vilho Harle (Pinter Publishers, London, 1990), p. 100 (pp. 84-102).

30. Alexander Zinoviev, KATASTROIKA, Supra note no.4, p.9.


principles of international politics. The Gorbachev's concept of "common European home" materialised,

the devolution of the Soviet empire under peaceful and stable conditions and afford Eastern Europe an opportunity to get on its feet and stand on its own. (33)

The common European home theory helped the East European states to overcome the old and the cumbersome but ingrained forms and methods of political and economic international relations. The principles of international law and unrestricted exercise of sovereign powers by these states were fully recognised.

The respect for the choice of their development made by European peoples and the resolute rejection of any attempt, by hook or by crook, to force any nation to change its choice must be ... not only an all-European, but also an international law. (34)

The Gorbachevian effort to unite Europe was also vigorously propagated by the public organisations. The Detente from below was equally powerful for the unification of Europe at the peoples' level as well as among the ruling elites. The Vienna Memorandum to Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) evinced the peoples' determination "to further develop detente from below and to build bridges across the rift dividing our continent". This was ensued from the perception that "Mutual trust cannot be created solely by Governments. It must be built up between citizens as well". (35).


35. "Detente in the Gorbachev Era", by Vladimir Tismaneanu in ORBIS (Summer, 1987), p. 239.
Vindication of Universal values.

Eduard Shevardnadze, Foreign Affairs Minister of the USSR appreciated the council of Europe's efforts "to the process of Eastern and Western Europe's mutual adaptation", and visualised the council as "a common European forum for jointly handling appropriate initiatives". (36) He enunciated:

... each State must retain the freedom to choose its political, economic, social and cultural development, and its national identity. Universally recognised legal values devoid of any ideological colouring can serve as the common denominator. (37)

New International framework.

The common European home concept envisaged a legal framework for all European states including the Soviet Union. Gorbachev said, "We are convinced that a reliable legal foundation should be furnished for the all-European process. We visualise a common European home as a law governed community". (38) The economic and military, security were to evolve organisations and real strength of an individual state.

Many of the countries of eastern Europe may seek practical guarantees to assure their sovereignty and independence. The extent that such assurances can be provided by Europe as a whole-for example, through the C S C E - the need for individual guarantees diminishes. (39).

The policy of perestroika maintained that militarism undermined the very foundations for a constructive restructuring

37. Ibid, p. 423.
of international economic relations. During his address to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg on 6 July 1989 Gorbachev said: "The philosophy of a "Common European home" rules out the possibilities of an armed clash and the use of force or the threat of force, primarily military force - between the alliances, inside the alliances, wherever". (40) Imperialism tried to preserve and perpetuate the system of international oppression and inequality implying the violations of sovereign rights of nations by using the arms race and embroiling the developing countries in it. Hence, disarmament was considered essential to guarantee all states sovereignty and equal economic security.

Stable security in Europe depends on efforts of the international community to eliminate nuclear, chemical and other types of weapons of mass destruction. A nuclear-free and non-violent situation in Europe would be an ideal foundation for a common European home. (41)

Repercussions The emerging new milieu in European international relations indicated the irrelevance and ultimate dissolution of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO) and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) in Eastern Europe. Economic and political need of the new situation was in favour of a common European home. Hence the objective was: "to create in the continent a situation that will reliably guarantee an improvement in the equality of life for the Europeans without encroaching upon systems, traditions and international commitments of individual states." (42) But as the circumstances changed the concept of


42. Vadim Zagladin For Peaceful International Relations, Supra note No. 34, p. 117.
common European home resulted in disintegration of the communist systems paving the way for fuller sovereignty for the East European states. Gorbachev confirmed the demise of divisive forces in Europe.

... erstwhile "curtains" and "Walls" will be forever relegated to the past, and borders between states will continue to lose their "divisive" purpose, self-determination of sovereign nations will be, realised in a completely different way. (43)

The disintegration of the communist international system transcended by the unficiation or cooperation wave in Europe rendered the military and economic organizations redundant. The Communist international organizations were first to withdraw from the field.

The Dissolution of Warsaw Treaty Organisation

In the changed international scenario, Warsaw Treaty Organisation gradually lost its relevance to the international system of the erstwhile socialist nations. Mainly a military organisation, it emerged as a reaction to the Western military alliance of NATO, and was sustained by the arms race for parity or for the quest for superiority with the West. The vital source of strength of the organisation was derived from the principles of socialist internationalism prevailing in the world socialist system of Eastern Europe. It became more or less a supra-national authority by involving Brezhnev doctrine in case of deviation by any East European state through its exercise of sovereign powers, allegedly in conflict with the interests of the socialist system. The growing independence from Moscow and assertion of sovereignty by East European states in post-1989 change proved to be unmanageable and the existence of the organisation became undesirable in the new situation. The entire process ultimately

rendered the Warsaw Treaty Organisation redundant as an integrating force among East European nations.

Mikhail Gorbachev realised that the arms race was a serious drain on economic resources and this was U.S. imperialist strategy to weaken political position of the U.S.S.R. The U.S. objectives behind arms race were identified as:

To secure U.S. military superiority to try and drain the Soviet Union economically and weaken it politically, and, in the long run, to win world leadership... (44)

As a foreign policy strategy the Soviet Union emphasized on disarmament in international politics. The menace of total annihilation equalised the states and social systems, inseparably linked them together in a common destiny, and made survival the top-priority task of the time. During his policy statement in 27th CPSU Congress, Mikhail Gorbachev reiterated,

Our ideal is a world without weapons and violence, a world in which each people freely chooses its path of development, its ways of life. (45)

During his address to U.N. General Assembly in 1987, Gorbachev announced a "unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests". (46) Such categories as military superiority, the stake on victory in a nuclear war, and global hegemonism became obsolete and dangerous illusions presenting a deadly threat to all mankind.

With the new political military alliances and "combat wedges" in the form of strike aircraft and tanks have lost their

46. Mikhail Gorbachev, Realities and Guarantees for a Secure World (Novosti, Moscow, 1987), p. 5.
relevance in the interdependent and integral world. It aimed at the consolidation of peace and security, the prevention of war, ending the arms race, resolute disarmament and creating a climate of confidence and co-operation.

We see a Europe in the future whose Western and Eastern parts no longer bristle with weapons aimed at each other, but, on the contrary, draw unprecedented benefits, from exchanges of goods and values ... as partners rather than opponents. (47)

In this context, military doctrines and concepts became ever more important in assessing the real intentions of both military - political groupings and individual states. Now these were to be reviewed to remove the mutual suspicion and mistrust which had accumulated over the years between the East and the West.

On the issue of East and West strategic parity, the Soviet Union's policy proceeded from the assumption and recognition of the need to bring down parity to the lowest possible level - the level of "reasonable sufficiency". New military policy suggested that "a doctrine of restraint should take the place of the doctrine of deterrence". (48) Warsaw Treaty members announced in Berlin in May 1987 that they ".... will never, under no circumstances, start hostilities against any country or an alliance of countries, unless they themselves become the target of a military attack". (49) This implied a balance of armed forces on a possibly low level, a reduction of military potentials to the levels sufficient for defence only.


48. Mikhail Gorbachev, Perestroika and the New World Order Supra note no.21, p. 71.

The Soviet policy of demilitarisation increased the margin for independent initiatives and actions by the East European states. Emphasis on economic instead military relations with the West relaxed the inter-socialist relations enhancing the independence and sovereignty of these countries. Hence, Warsaw Pact deliberations lost considerable significance in the competition with west in technological and commercial realm of international interaction. Western theorists observed that this trend "afford East European countries greater room for manoeuvre in both domestic and international politics". (50)

The members of Warsaw Treaty Organisation asserted their stand in Bucharest on 7-8 July 1989.

The principled position of the Warsaw Treaty member states - to rid Europe of military blocs, to simultaneously disband both alliances and, as a first step, to liquidate their military organisations remain in force. (51)

The collective security was usually established by one group of states against another group which considered each other as a potential aggressor. Present security system needs were not against any particular state but against nuclear weapons which presented a common threat to all mankind. The new international security system delegitimised the classical wars aggressions, strife over spheres of influence and maintenance of national prestige and dignity through force and violence. During his speech at the Special Third Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR on 15 March 1990, Gorbachev said:

"The time has come to think about replacing military blocs with a system of collective security and cooperation bodies, taking into account the emergence of a united Germany


in the centre of Europe." (52)

The system of all embracing, universal security reduced the confrontation between East and West. It paved the way for the establishment of European relations on a genuinely non-confrontational basis and created the conditions for the simultaneous disbandment of WTO and NATO, to start with their military formations. "The world community will undertake to simultaneously dissolve NATO and Warsaw Treaty Organisation and all other military-political alliances.

All states recognise and respect in practice the sovereignty and originality of nations, their right to free choice and development of political, economic social and cultural systems". (53)

Just settlement of international disputes. It was now possible for nations to exercise their freedom of choice, a possibility that was unthinkable in the conditions of confrontation when the "enemy image" against each other's military alliance and attitudes of power politics prevailed. Former US Secretary of state and special presidential advisor Henry Kissinger stated:

... there are only two solutions for Europe; either both the United states and the USSR are present in force, or they both substantially reduce their presence. (54)

The Soviet concept of a comprehensive system of international security emphasised the just political settlement of


54. New Week, 12 December 1988.
international crisis and regional conflicts. In spite of differences between the East and the West in analysis and approach to the international problems, Gorbachev perceived the consensus on the protection of sovereign rights of nations.

But we agree that such sites of tension have to be eliminated by political means and with full respect for the independence and sovereignty of each country. (55)

It was considered relevant that in the process, unconditional respect for the sovereign rights of every nation to choose the ways and forms of its development was to be maintained. It was observed by a Soviet scholar: "The root cause of international crisis and many of the regional conflicts lies in the imperialist policy of diktat and interference in the affairs of sovereign states. Their settlement largely depends on whether the imperialist forces can be made to respect the right of every nation to independently determine its destiny". (56)

During the post-war period, Europe especially the Eastern Europe had been an arena of conflicts and tension caused by military rivalry between East and West represented by the antagonistic alliances of NATO and WTO. Now the new international milieu with changed attitudes and circumstances could not afford to continue with the traditions. "... the present security system is inadequate to deal with another feature of the emerging European picture - the rapid coming together of the two German states. Neither NATO, nor WTO or the four power mechanism could cope with this challenge very effectively alone". (57) An authoritative Soviet view of East Europe in 1988 observed, "... Central and Eastern Europe, and Europe as a whole, is not the place for

55. Mikhail Gorbachev, Speech at a Meeting with French MPs, October 3, 1985, Selected Speeches and Articles (Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1987), p. 231.


experimenting with maintaining a state of tension, especially when this involves countries belonging to different systems and military-political groupings". (58)

A just settlement of international crises would be through political means rather than the use of military might. The use of force even within the military alliances was denounced by the new Soviet Foreign policy. This prompted Gorbachev, during his visit to Finland at the end of October 1989, to sign a declaration that held, "there can be no justification for any use of force: whether by one military political alliance against another, or within such alliances, or against neutral countries by any sides" (italics added) (59). This eliminated the possibility of military intervention in Eastern Europe to maintain Soviet sphere of domination or to keep a political-military ally in the region.

Therefore, the only way out of the situation was a radical departure from the military-technical to political means ensuring both national and international security, and substantially changing the existing military doctrines as a practical embodiment of the approaches. Mikhail Gorbachev stressed,

We countered the militarist doctrine on which power politics are based with the concept of the 'balance of interests' and reciprocal equal security. (60)

The task was now to channel the relations between the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation on the non-confrontational lines and to start a political, military and other dialogues between them that would contribute to greater security and cooperation on the European continent. Soviet policy makers realised the "necessity to further


expand and develop contacts between the WTO and NATO, to jointly search for the ways to prevent the possibility of emergence of dangerous situations...." (61) During his press conference along with George Bush in Malta, 2-3 December 1989, he spoke about the transformation of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. "They should not remain purely military alliances, but rather become military-political alliances and, later on, simply political bodies. So that their nature would change in accordance with the changes on the continent." (62)

Never before has a military doctrine provided for a switch-over from military to political means of building security and never before has the national security itself been considered in such indissoluble linkage with international, universal security. During the first summit of W.T.O on 7 June 1990, since the collapse of communists governments in Eastern Europe, the main issue was of "transforming the Warsaw Pact from a 'military-political' to a 'political -military' organization." (63) The communiqué issued at the end of the meeting planned to review the Pact on the basis that it represented "sovereign and equal states.... built upon democratic principles". (64)

In this process of politicisation of military alliances, the Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze emphasised on the adoption of democratic norms of international relations within such alliances and in inter-alliance relations.

It is necessary not only to transform the blocs into essentially political alliances, but to agree on certain principles of relations between

63. Keesing's Record of World Events, (June, 1990), p.37550.
64. Ibid, p. 37550.
blocs and their member states.(65).

The democratisation process of the Warsaw Treaty ultimately resulted in the disorganisation of the institution. Gorbachev's "reforms have led to the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact as a cohesive, Soviet-dominated military alliance and will inevitably lead to the removal of all Soviet forces from Eastern Europe." (66) On 14-15 June 1990, Defence Ministers of Warsaw Treaty members agreed in a communique to press for radical restructuring "with a view to" "the withdrawal of Soviet forces from the territory of allied states." Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antal announced on 9 June 1990 that Hungary would withdraw from the Pact even if the alliance planned to dissolve eventually. On 26 June 1990, the Hungarian parliament voted unanimously in favour of withdrawing Hungary from the Warsaw Pact by the end of 1991 in consultation with other Warsaw Pact members. (67) Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland agreed on 2 January 1991 to withdraw all cooperation with the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, with effect from 1 July 1991. Almost all members favoured dissolution of the organisation. The three East European countries, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland "were moving vigorously towards an associate membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation". (68)

All these changes were not resisted by the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union agreed during last February and early March 1990 to withdraw its troops from Czechoslovakia and Hungary by mid-1990. Some 10,000 Soviet troops had already left both

65. Eduard Shevardnadze "On Foreign Policy", New Times (Moscow), Vol. 27 (1990), p. 15
Hungary and Czechoslovakia in 1989 under a gradual withdrawal of 50,000 troops from Eastern Europe as announced by President Gorbachev in December 1988. The troops had originally been sent into Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 to crush reformist regimes. (69) This eased the East-West antagonism in international politics.

If the Soviet Union becomes a less obtrusive presence in Eastern Europe - that is, if the countries of the region move towards more liberal political and economic practices - the perceived need for military forces on both sides is bound to ease, and equilibrium will therefore be more readily achievable. (70)

The unification of Germany was the most significant and major outcome of this new political and military equilibrium. Political changes in Eastern Europe facilitated gradual improvement in East-West relations and prompted a wide-ranging review of the Pact's military arrangements. One immediate consequence was the increased pressure on the Soviet Union to hasten the withdrawal of troops from Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union also agreed to pay compensation for the damage due to Soviet invasion in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

The reduction of Soviet troops in Eastern Europe implied greater freedom for the Soviet's Warsaw Pact allies. (71) The restructuring of relations with the Soviet Union for some of these countries (Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary) meant the recovery

69. Keesings Record of World Events (February, 1990), p. 37258.
of their sovereignty by ensuring the withdrawal of the remnants of Soviet military forces. This was "the end, formally too, all military and political ties and proof of that national sovereignty has won... But simultaneously with this physical withdrawal, the search is on for new guarantees to assure national sovereignty". (72).

Warsaw Treaty Organisation meeting in Budapest on 25 February 1991 unanimously approved and signed a protocol cancelling the validity of all military agreements, organs and structures of the Pact by 31 March. A communique issued after the meeting said that the decision to dismantle the Treaty's military organisation had been taken by "member states... acting as sovereign states with equal rights". It noted that the "elimination of Europe's dividedness offers a historical possibility to attain a new quality in security relations" based on each sovereign state's "freedom of choice". (73)

The organisation was finally dissolved by the remaining six members on 1 July 1991 in Prague. (74) The dissolution of Warsaw Treaty Organisation was a demise of the East European international frame-work which imposed legal, political, ideological and military constraints on sovereign - rights of its members states. In fact, this was a recognition of growing independent domestic socio-political systems and assertion of sovereign rights by East European states.

---


Demise of Council For Mutual Economic Assistance

Introduction

With the radical changes the communist perceptions and circumstances in the erstwhile socialist world, the intergovernmental economic organisation, i.e. Council for Mutual Economic Assistance among socialist nations gradually lost its relevance. The mechanism and the process of this organisation attracted Western criticism for its rigid cohesiveness and Soviet Union's dictating role in the national economies of the East European states. It was alleged that in order to establish the superiority of the socialist economic system in competition with the capitalist system, planning, specialisation and pricing and trade relations were the devices to exercise Soviet control on the Eastern Europe. But the CMEA incessantly claimed that this organisation was an important factor in strengthening the member's economic independence and sovereignty and to resist neo-colonialism. The co-operation among the members in the CMEA framework was affirmed as,

based on the voluntary nature, equality, respect for independence and sovereignty of countries, the combination of national and international interests, on the firm principles of socialist internationalism. (75)

Inefficient International Organisation

But this fact was well recognised even by Soviet authorities that the integration process based on rigid, inefficient, inter-state barter system of trade caused several problems detrimental to genuine economic interests of the member states.

The process of integration was reduced to one of bureaucratic organisation of economic interaction among the State systems of self-contained individual countries which were separated from one another by virtually insurmountable administrative,

Even CMEA, by the year 1986 conceded that "the difficulties in the material and technological supply, deficiencies in planning organizational and investment progress had also a marked effect on the dynamics of economic growth of the East European countries. As a result, the Soviet bloc "endured a slow but steady erosion of its ultimate goal of economic autarky". Political and economic upheaval in the Eastern Europe exposed its earlier loud claims and its helplessness to survive in the global economy.

It became evident by the mid 1980s that radical reforms were needed in co-operation policies, in the mechanism of capital and trade flows and in the institutions in order to facilitate a smoother and more efficient functioning of the CMEA as an integration organisation, or a qualitatively new co-operation structure was to be established. The drastic changes in East Europe coupled with the popular sentiment for independence and the pursuit of national interests put the Soviet Union in an uncomfortable position to lead the economies of the region. Soviet Union had to convince the member-states for the protection of full sovereign rights during the transactions of the organisation.

Notwithstanding the formal constitutional position of the CMEA however, the Soviets have been forced to reassure


77. CMEA Countries - the Year 1986 - Background Information (CMEA Secretariat, Moscow, 1986), p. 3.

Resistance to Soviet-inspired supranationalism and conflicting economic and political factors resulting from specific problems which the member countries tried to solve, made intra-CMEA trade disadvantageous. Integration presupposes that the states have considerable common interests and therefore may be ready to renounce sovereignty in certain areas by internationalising their national economic policy decisions. But the new wave of reforms in the Eastern Europe was basically for national sovereignty rejecting all constraints on it. Hence, CMEA could only survive with full recognition of sovereign rights of the member-states. Mikhail Gorbachev assured:

In no way does the CMEA infringe on the independence of any participating state and its sovereign right to be in charge of its own resources and capabilities and to do everything for the benefit of its people. The CMEA is not a supranational organisation. (80).

With the dwindling ideological links among the socialist nations of Eastern Europe, international relations yielded to economic considerations rather than military - strategic considerations which were dominant during the post-war period. The long experience of co-operation between CMEA member countries demonstrated the inefficiency of such methods of internationalisation of reproduction the balance of production and consumption of individual goods and services. It was usually considered that a recommendation agreed upon by the parties concerned was automatically transformed into a system of national directives to be fulfilled. The process of deideologisation of international relations highlighted the concrete national interests.

These interests proved to be stronger motives for carrying out concrete economic actions than general considerations of socialist integration. Assertion of national sovereignty functioned as a weapon to forge ahead the national economic interests beyond the framework of CMEA and to pave the way for free interaction with the world economy.

New economic thinking not only reflects, but also apprehends as objective realities such newly formed economic categories as world economy, universal division of labour, international market, world trade, global economic relations and others. (81)

World economy involves a fundamental process of internationalisation of economic ties. Its development is based on the development of production and consumption patterns in science and technology, transport and telecommunications and on the advance of the international division of labour. The new development of trade and economic relations between states was not only a category of business alone but also of international politics. The Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Member States at its meeting in Berlin in June 1987 noted that the problem had "assumed a truly global character, gone beyond the framework of economics and has a clearly political significance". (82) During his address at the 43rd Session of the U.N. General Assembly, New York 7 December 1988, Mikhail Gorbachev spoke about the new reality:

The world economy is becoming a single entity outside of which no state can develop normally, regardless of its social system or economic level.

All this calls for creating an altogether new mechanism for


the functioning of the world economy, a new structure of the international division of labour (83).

Thus, one of the central objectives in the shift in Soviet foreign policy since 1985 was to adjust foreign policy to the country's economic means and global needs of world economy. Consequently, the nature of world economy displaced the "concept that for years had distinguished between a 'world capitalist' and a 'world socialist' economy". (84) The socialist community and the world socialist system as a whole entered into a crucial stage of their contest with capitalism. They faced a complex problems of navigating the transition to new political and economic systems. The solution to them was made more difficult by past errors and delays. A Soviet authority noted:

Economic restructuring in the Soviet Union, Hungary and Poland directed towards a market economy, is forcing these countries to change the structure of their foreign economic relations as well. (85)

Socialist countries opted for open economy, for it was the only alternative to integrate them into the world economy. "If renationalization has been overwhelmingly politics - driven, internationalization is likely to be predominantly economic driven." (86) It was an economy developing with due regard to the international division of labour oriented to world market, having an economic mechanism adjusted to international co-operation.

The USSR regarded the establishment of the system of international economic security as a major prerequisite for attaining

84. Valeri Karavalev, "Eastern Europe is Opening itself to the World". International Affairs (Moscow), Vol. 4, April, 1990, p. 44.
it and for ensuring mutual understanding and a progressive reorganisation of world economic contacts. But the economic contacts were not to be used for economic and political pressure or interference into the internal affairs of sovereign states. The Soviet Memorandum to UN in 17 June 1906 says:

The very notion of international economic security which is constituent part of international security as a whole, presupposes, first and foremost, the non-use of force or threat of force, the protection of legitimate rights and interests of states, and the provision of reliable guarantees against their violation. (87)

The realities of the world market necessitated to overcome the logic of confrontation and needed a global economic system in which all countries without exception would participate on equal terms. The implementation of the concept of economic security was to "exclude from international practice all attempts to use international economic links to exert pressure and to interfere in the home affairs of states". (88) The Soviet Union continued to be the champion of national sovereignty in the new international system of economic relations.

... in advancing the idea of international economic security, the Soviet Union gives priority to respect for national independence and sovereignty, non-interference in domestic affairs, equality and renunciation of discrimination, strict observance of states' inalienable sovereign right to choose their own economic system (89).

Acceptance of world economy facilitated transnational economic activity which gradually gained prominence in the internationalisation of economic life. Its distinguishing feature was direct merging of the national production processes on the basis of co-operation carried on by the economic units of an international importance and within an international framework. This also brought contradiction between transnational corporations and the national-state in regard to sovereign rights.

Monopolies operating through their affiliations and subsidiaries, are undermining the sovereignty not only of developing, but also of advanced capitalist countries. (90)

Hence, the CMEA countries were to face competition from the biggest transnational corporations operating in the global market.

In the new international scenario, the USSR foreign economic policy in recognising sovereign rights of CMEA member-states indirectly disowned the erstwhile responsibilities to its allies in Eastern Europe. Soviet foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze stressed: "We must enhance the profitability of our foreign policy", and take care that "relations with other states burden our economy to the least possible extent". (91) In the later half of 1980s Mikhail Gorbachev concentrated on the domestic economic amelioration and aimed at building national interests overcoming traditional relations with its allies.

He has attempted to restructure the USSR's client-patron relationships according to a boldly conceived response to clients who were draining Soviet resources and deepening the USSR's


international isolation. (92).

In this process, ideological considerations were relegated to the background and pure economic interests dominated the Soviet foreign policy. Gorbachev was "much more interested in exporting Soviet - made goods rather than international communism". (93) Thus, a slow but steady globalisation of Soviet economic policy, displaced military and political initiatives as prime instruments of Soviet power. (94) According to the new model of co-operation, the principals in economic interactions would be the producers and consumers of the supplied products; they would enter into contracts not because of a command from "the top", but because of the mutual expectations of economic benefits. (95) This provided conducive atmosphere for the CMEA members to interact freely with the world economy unhindered by Soviet Union and full freedom to choose domestic economic system as their sovereign right. This process also led to the gradual demise of the CMEA as an integration organisation.

With the new thinking coupled with the radical changes in Eastern Europe, Soviet Union renounced the leadership of the bloc and called upon all nations to undertake steps to ensure international economic security. Mikhail Gorbachev asserted that the Soviet interest,

is not a claim to privileges and a special position, or an egoistic attempt to strengthen our security at someone else's expense, or a search for advantages to the detriment of others. (96)


95. The Staff of the Institute of Economics of the World Socialist System (Moscow), "A Soviet View of Eastern Europe", Supra note No. 58 p,214.
Ideological leadership of Soviet Union involving economic and political system of CMEA countries was no longer a constraint on sovereign rights of the member - states.

The USSR does not claim a monopoly right in interpreting the idea of international economic security. (97)

It was observed that shifting to more flexible market arrangements within CMEA economic relations and with trade and convertible currencies, all East European economies would face competition and incentives that in the longer - run would contribute to economic growth and development. (98) Hence, the democratisation of international economic relations and decisions according to the respective national interests emerged as a new pattern of relationships.

The East European states made use of the new international situation by asserting national sovereignty and free interaction with the West; independent of CMEA. The July 1988 session of the CMEA Council opened the way for direct negotiations and agreements between the communities and the individual CMEA members beyond the mutual recognition (99). "The new CMEA policy goal thus broke with the tradition by promising to replace central controls with the mechanism of the market"(100). It was observed that the crisis in CMEA integration would imply disintegration of the economic and power structures that constituted the 'material base' of the Soviet - East European relationships.

as was evolved over the past 40 years. (101)

In January 1990, Tamas Beck, then Minister of Trade of Hungary suspended all licences and contracts for exports to CMEA countries, including quotas stipulated in inter-state agreements. Exports to CMEA fell by 31 per cent in five months, while hard currency earnings rose by 19 per cent. Similarly, Bulgaria also resorted to cuts in exports to CMEA partners, curbing the increase in hard currency foreign debt. (102) During the 45th session of CMEA in Prague on 17 January 1990, sharp disagreements between Soviet Union and some member states, notably Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland came out openly. These representatives openly argued about the dissolution of CMEA and demanded for a speedier implementation of currency convertability and the right to trade with organisations such as the European communities (EC). The Czechoslovakian government reiterated on 4 April 1990 that it was withdrawing from three multilateral agreements designed to regulate the currency rate mechanism. On 7 May 1990, Czechoslovakia signed a pact to liberalise trade with the EC. This was considered by the Prime Minister, Marian Calfa as "a milestone on the way to Czechoslovakia becoming a full EC member". (103)

At the CMEA conference in Prague in 1990, the Romanian delegate stressed on the irrelevance of the current organisational set up of CMEA which "imposed mandatory state-level decisions and acted as a closed system, preventing closer interaction with the developed capitalist world". The Prime Minister of Hungary, Mikolas Nemeth, asserted that "Organisation of the CMEA must change or else it may cease to exist". The Czechoslovak Prime Minister emphasised on "the fundamental revision of the present mechanism of co-operation between the CMEA member-states on the


102. Keesings Record of World Events, Vol. 36, no.9, p. 37740 and 37744.

basis of market principles common in world trade." The conference made it clear that the CMEA could not exist in its original form and radical changes in the organisation were inevitable.

During the executive committee of the CMEA Council on 5 January 1991, Hungarian representative to CMEA, Bela Kadar opined that in recent years, the organisation had "lost touch with the realities of international politics and economics", and that for this reason it had been essential to wind it up. A major change in intra-CMEA trade patterns was introduced on 1 January 1990 when the members implemented a new agreement to settle all accounts in hard currencies. Hitherto, most of their mutual transactions were conducted either in the artificial "transferable rouble", or through direct barter and countertrade which were now abolished.

CMEA Council meeting in Moscow on 5-6 January 1991 agreed to disband CMEA altogether and to replace it with a new body to be known as the Organisation of International Economic Co-operation (OIEC). Thus, the period of alleged Soviet control over East European economies implying infringement on sovereign rights was virtually over. The demise of the CMEA placed on the East European agenda the questions of transition to new economic systems and the mode of joining the Europe. The East European states ultimately sought to join the mainstream—the capitalist West as soon as it was politically and economically feasible.
Relations with the West

The process of disintegration of the world socialist system was not confined to the systemic changes, but the erstwhile socialist nations made positive advances in establishing economic and political relations with their antagonistic system i.e. the capitalist world. Diminishing role of the communist ideology and acute economic crisis prompted the East European elites to seek relations with the West and to experiment economic innovations in order to secure and strengthen their power. Long before the major upheaval occurred, in the Eastern Europe, Brzezinski envisaged, "... the attraction of a more cooperative relations with Western Europe will grow. Even the Communist rulers of Eastern Europe - many of whom are more motivated by the desire to stay in power than by the goal of propagating communism - will be susceptible to this pull from the West. (105) S. Bialer observed in 1988, "Stability can be attained only by close ties with the West. Yet such links move the East European states away from the Soviet Union. "(106)

The economic crisis coupled with drastic political changes in Eastern Europe prompted the states of the region to denounce centralised socialist planning and isolated inefficient economies and to move for free interaction with the world economy and to seek formal relationship with the Western economic and military organisations. This proved the fact that the institutional framework of the communist international system was dismantled and the sovereign states of East Europe were free to interact with the whole world on the basis of sovereign equality and independence. Even in July 1988 the Soviet authorities recognised the freedom of East European states to pursue their national interests.


The countries of Eastern Europe now have broad opportunities to realise unhindered their national interests both within the framework of the socialist community and in relations with the West. (107)

The Soviet Union, the erstwhile leader and the so called hegemon of the region, also embarked on the path of free interaction with the outside world. If prior to 1985 the overarching objective of Soviet foreign policy had been to strengthen the "positions of socialism" at the expense of the West, by 1989 a new goal to secure Soviet admission to the elaborate collections of institutions that political system - had arisen to take place. (108) With the ideological barriers the pursuit of political and military superiority, and consequent economic crisis it confronted an impasse. Perestroika came out to restructure domestic as well as international system and opened it up to the global system.

The myths that clouded minds and prevented them from seeing the road ahead, are collapsing. The barriers that fenced the country off from the outside world are being removed. (109)

The effects of isolation. The urge to move out of the rigidity of the social system emanated from the economic crisis faced by the socialist nations. The deformity and the obsolete pattern of economic relations created isolation of the national economies not only from one another but also from the West. The parameters of foreign policy action of the East European states were circumscribed in the past and international issues were muted altogether by Soviet hegemony. Approaches to the West could attract Soviet displeasure ranging

from concern to active intervention in the internal affairs. (110).
Consequently, the East European nations including the Soviet
Union lagged behind the countries of the European Economic
Community in economic, scientific, and technological
advancement.

In the socialist countries, the view of West as a 'hostile
force' was revised. There was a growing realisation in the
socialist world that their 'self imposed isolation' for a long
period was detrimental to their interests. The West managed to
draw the socialist community into arms race in order to squeeze
its economic strength. (111) Hence, Mikhail Gorbachev insisted
on the East-West political co-operation.

We have failed to do many good things together because of
suspicion and lack of confidence. Alienation is an evil. Besides, economic
contacts provide the material basis for political
rapprochement. Economic contacts create mutual
interests helpful in politics. (112).

The 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union
initiated expansion of foreign economic ties as one of the major
objectives of foreign policy.

To develop on a mutually beneficial and equitable basis
stable, trade, economic, scientific and technical contacts
with interested capitalist countries and to improve
forms of co-operation with them. (113)

110. Ronald H. Linden, "New International Political Economy of
East Europe", Studies in Comparative Communism, Vol. XXV,
o.1, March 1992, p. 11.

111. Anatoly Karpychev, "The Art of Living Together", Socialism:

112. Mikhail Gorbachev, Perestroika: New Thinking for our

113. XXVII CPSU Congress: Documents and Resolutions (Allied
This willingness to interact with the interested western states gradually developed into open East-West relations. The socialist countries took initiative to forge economic ties with the west in order to assert their sovereign rights and to seek their economic advancement on equal terms with the capitalist world.

...the USSR and the other CMEA countries do not intend to retire into their shells. They are wide open for equal trade and economic co-operation with all the Western states. (114)

The unrestricted links with the capitalist nations and Western international organisations indicated that the traditional system of communist international relations was dying. It implied that the ideological constraints on sovereign rights of East-European states were vanishing. The move towards West followed the demise of the socialist integration mechanism.

...integration is almost certainly a dead letter, because both popular sentiment and region's economic needs indicate a strong west ward draw. (115)

The Soviet Union, both individually and jointly with its Warsaw Treaty allies on several occasions proposed disbanding military blocs beginning with their organisation. To ease the confrontation between East and West, the allied socialist countries stood for direct contacts between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO Organisations.(116) In fact, the process of westernisation of East Europe ultimately led to the dissolution of Warsaw Treaty Organisation and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.


Unification and Europe

East European movement towards West was essentially originated from the Gorbachev's new thinking and the concept of democratisation of international relations. Policy of Perestroika recommended to East Europeans an intensified dialogue with political forces in Western Europe. The Soviet reformers now considered East-West co-operation as an "unavoidable evolution of the World". (Gorbachev) Due to historical and geopolitical background of East European states, they could get a conducive atmosphere for the realisation of their sovereign rights in open international contacts with Western Europe.

... they have historically been part of Europe and they have a growing wish to participate in certain aspects at least of European unification, as well as to achieve greater control over their national political destinies. (117)

The progressive evolution of East European politics towards a more collaborative relationship with similar culture in the West provided them greater room for the expression of autonomous national interests and independent line of action. Gorbachev accorded East European regimes greater latitude in managing their internal affairs and dealings with the West.

... he placed the fostering of fully normalized relations with Western countries.... ahead of what had always been the Kremlin's primary objective on the continent, the maintenance of virtually absolute control over the East European glacis. (118)


The Soviet foreign policy, now designed to create better political climate in Europe in the world; endeavoured to reduce the level of military confrontation. It emphasised on the interdependence of nations, the mutuality of security, the efficacy of multilateral diplomacy, and the necessity in international negotiations to take into account the legitimate interests of all states. A Soviet Union, less reliant in its foreign policy on brute military force, and more accommodating to the interests of others was deeply desired by the West (119) George Bush, said in an interview with Pravda in Malta in December, 1989.

There is enormous support in our country for what Chairman Gorbachev is doing inside the Soviet Union. There is enormous respect and support for the way he has advocated peaceful change in Europe. (120)

The vehicle for peaceful change in Europe and co-operation between the East and the West was primarily the free economic interaction with the world economy. With the conceptions of socialist internationalism, socialist division of labour, it was unthinkable that the Soviet Union would consider itself to be the part of world economy. Gorbachev's statement to the American business community on 10 December 1987 was an admission that the communist system was keen to merge with the Western capitalist system.

We regard ourselves as a part of the world economy. It would be wrong from all points of view to pursue the line of isolationism and guide oneself by such approaches. (121)


The role of economic factors in world relations has always been great, but the present epoch is unparalleled in this respect. Thus, the main channel for the integration of socialist countries into the world economy was economic ties with the industrial nations of the West. But the initiative was to come from the socialist camp. According to a Soviet perspective,

The world economy is not going to adapt to our economy: it is for our economy to become a structural component of it, to find a fitting place in the world division of labour at the threshold of the 21st century. (122)

Hence, all East European socialist states including the Soviet Union approached the world economy and the Western international organisations through market economy to ensure the desirable economic prosperity during transition from extensive to intensive economic growth. "The more Soviet-Western relations improve, the greater the likelihood that Eastern Europeans may jump at the chance of freedom". (123) In this process the national and international constraints on state sovereignty of East European states were washed away. These states came out of the clutches of the socialist integration more vigorously than the Soviet Union. Consequently, West was attracted to encourage and to aid to Eastern Europe. It was observed,

Substantial economic and political changes congenial to the West are more likely there, in the short term than in the Soviet Union. (124)

The free economic interaction among East European states with the West gave a powerful impetus to the growth of East-West


economic relations and Soviet influence in East Europe declined considerably. "Indeed, the dynamics of the West European integration process widens the gap with the Soviet Union, impedes attempts at economic interdependence and increases Eastern Europe's drive towards Western Europe." (125) As an expression of their new freedom; "the people, nations and states of Eastern Europe are impelled toward the West". A continental shift was under way in which the parts that had been driven to the East were returning to Europe. (126) In this new wave of radical change, national independence and state sovereignty under universal principles of international relations were firmly established in this region.

East European relations with the West was not an event, it was a long process which was breaking the ice of socialist regimentation and forging ahead to open and establish multifarious relations with Western People, nations and international organisations. The Vienna Memorandum on the Helsinki Accords emphasised the East-West détente through popular support.

The growing contacts between independent and autonomous groups and individuals in East and West in recent years, and our common experience in developing a dialogue from below, have strengthened our conviction that more initiatives, proposals and non-governmental organisations are required to revitalise the CSCE process. (127)

The movement of population and recognition of rights of national and ethnic minorities were among the major demands. These public movements manifested itself into East-West


governmental dialogue and co-operation. On 9 November 1989, East Germany announced that East Germans could travel freely abroad. The Washington Post called "the most stunning step since the second World War towards ending the East - West division of Europe". (128) The breach of Berlin Wall was an evident move towards the West. In August and September 1990, the US and the Soviet Union removed many of the travel restrictions hitherto imposed on each others' diplomats. U.S. Defence Department rated the likelihood of the U.S. - Soviet conflict as lowest in the post-war period. (129) Romania declared its foreign policy as based on "peace, good relations with our neighbours and integrating into the process of a United Europe". (130) Similarly, Czechoslovakia also lifted travel restrictions on abroad and fortifications on Austrian and West German borders were removed.

The East European states after the revolutionary changes in 1989, hastened the Westernisation process by entering into trade and military agreements with the West European states and their international organisations. Hungary aimed at Finnish or Austrian type of neutrality founded on confidence with Europe. Hungary's need for loans and its trade surplus problems with the Soviet Union led it to look for trading partners within Europe. (121) On the other hand, European Community (EC) welcomed the reforms and extended help to East European states. France proposed to set up an East European Development Bank. With such a warm response of the West, the Soviet Union, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Poland had entered into formal diplomatic relations with Brussels. Simultaneously, the E.C. signed a wide ranging trade agreement with Hungary. In June 1988 in Luxembourg the E.C. and the CMEA signed a declaration of 'mutual recognition'. These developments ended almost 30 years of "un-remitting enmity between the two trading blocs". (132)

Thus, East-West economic co-operation transcended the traditional rivalry and antagonism and created new foundations of international relations.

Along with the establishment of official relations between CMEA and the EEC, many socialist countries extended their direct contacts with the West European states. The increased interdependence of European states was aimed to overcome the division of Europe. Due to socialist integration, it was expected that the East European states would integrate collectively with the world economic system. But the assertion of sovereign rights among East European states was so prominent that the traditional relations and the integrating international framework could not deter them in choosing their independent path.

The socialist countries adopted an open economy and unfettered entrepreneurial activities in order to merge with the world economy. The Western experience of management and marketing was essential in transformation of socialist economy into an open market economy. This caused problems and susceptibility of the new economies to the evil influences of the international capitalist market system. Socialist nations sought assistance of the West in this process. Helplessness of East European states made them dependent on the west for their economic amelioration. Hence, the economic sovereignty of these states would take time to gain firm grounds. New East European states are apprehensive of losing sovereignty to supranational economic forces.

The dominant trend within the socialist community will be for each country to integrate into the world economic system in its own way, sometimes without considering the interests of its partners in the community. (133)

The Eastern European nations are glad to have re-attained

their national sovereignty and self-determination. The thought of immediately losing it again to supranational forces is - as yet - an alien one. (134)

With the gradual disintegration of the CMEA, the EC sought increasingly to establish bilateral agreements with the individual countries with CMEA, Albania attended the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G-24 of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which coordinated the assistance to central and Eastern Europe. (135) The German Austrian and Swiss Ministers promised in September 1991 in Salzburg, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland for help to improve their economies. (136)

Similarly, the decline of Soviet power in Eastern Europe jeopardised the ideological homogeneity and military unity of this region. The forces working for the unification of Europe impelled the Soviet Union to reconcile with the revolutionary developments. On 15-16 July 1990, Gorbachev conceded the proposal of Helmut Kohl which allowed united Germany to join the NATO. On, 5-6 October 1991, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland declared that their security would be best served by integration with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), apprehending the dangers posed by the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. (137) This was an irony of history that Yelstin President of Russia, had also expressed his desire to be a member of NATO. (138) This serves to show that

137. Ibid.
westernisation of the erstwhile socialist world was not only complete but now the East - West was increasingly dependent on the Western economic and political systems.

The disintegration of the East European international communist system posed several problems of economic and political transformation. Dismantling the shell of communism, securing smooth transformation to new political and economic systems, the coping with the challenge of building a democracy. (139) The economic and political structures, legacies and dynamics in the post communist Eastern Europe involved "sweeping transformation that compressed not only the economic but also the political system". (140)

The collective endeavour of socialist community, under the leadership of the Soviet Union, to "catch up and overtake" The West economically had failed miserably. New political thinking and the great change having abandoned the fiction of an alternative international system made up of a collection of like-minded communist states, now left the East European states to negotiate individually and independently the entry into the western capitalist community. (141). The East European departure and separation from mainstream Europe was examplified, during the post-second world war period, in the emergence and subsequent maintenance of totalitarian communist system. Now in the post communist era, the process of return to the west was primarily manifested in the dismantling of these systems and creation of Western-style democracies and market economies". (142)

The disarray or lack of organization among the new East European states, leaves no doubt about their independence in dealing with the task of democratization of their political systems and to carry out market-oriented economic reforms. The

Western web of economic systems—transnational corporations and multi-national organizations—will certainly constrain considerably their national independence and state sovereignty. The East Europeans suffered from the loss of sovereignty with the embrace of communism under the Soviet hegemony. Now the diverse repercussions, as the demise of the Soviet Union, and the unification of Germany with the disintegration of the erstwhile international communist systems, have orphaned them to indulge in the quest for their identity and survival coping with new challenges in the international politics with a raised flag of sovereignty.