INDIA–RUSSIA POLITICAL RELATIONS

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's words proved prophetic when as the Vice President of the Interim National Government in September 1946 he described the Soviet Union as "our neighbors in Asia" with whom "we shall have to undertake many common tasks and have much to do with each other", Since the mid-fifties, the two countries have shared an uninterrupted friendship through many a historical development and: various ups and downs. The basic framework of friendly relations has remained intact despite the redrawing of the map of Eurasia after the disintegration of the Soviet Union.¹

The heritage of Indo–Russian partnership of the last half-century is tremendous; its basic foundations are still viable. What is of top priority right now is to reassess what has been achieved and determine what should be done by the political leadership, statesmen, leaders of business society, entrepreneurs, academicians, analysts and public opinion in both countries in order to add more flesh and perhaps new joints to the solid skeleton of cooperation.

Indo–Soviet bilateral ties were not only of significance to both of them but also had worldwide implications. The long-term understanding between them was based on their common appreciation of each other's major concerns. From the Soviet side it was due to Moscow's unequivocal support for India's stand or Kashmir in the important forums both in and outside the United Nations. Now the Soviet Union has been replaced by
the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Russia has become the heir-successor state along with veto power in the UN. But Russia is functioning in a completely changed context and time of both domestic and external milieus. Its commitment and priorities have also undergone transformation with the end of the ideological monolith called the Soviet Union.²

As regards the political ties between India and Russia, they have continued to grow after the initial uncertainties. The appointment of Yevgeny Primakov as the country's foreign minister in January 1996 resulted in upgrading of India in the overall scheme of Russia's foreign policy priorities. Speaking to journalists soon after his appointment, he named India in the fourth place after the USA, Europe and China in the list of the countries with whom Russia sought to develop relations. The recently adopted Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation has stated that Russia's South Asia policy will be "pragmatically revived, based on the real capabilities...of the parties, and rest on economic stimuli." And these "economic and geopolitical considerations demand close ties with India,"³ thus, initiated on a note of uncertainty, Russia has gradually adopted a positive posture towards its policy and its relations with India. The latest developments here are really encouraging. It seems as though the top leaders of both states are confident on the point, that in this rather fluctuant and unpredictable world, it is wiser and more reasonable to rely on all-weather friends.

The political relations between the two countries have also been strengthened in the last years. Russia reiterated its support to India's position on Kashmir. Yeltsin also expressed his support to the case of
India becoming a permanent member of the Security Council when the subject comes up for consideration, the commonality of political interest was dearly seen in the Moscow Declaration of 1991 which stressed on protecting the interests of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious states. Both countries have agreed to fight against terrorism and drug-trafficking. During his visit to Delhi, Chechmyrdin reiterated in no uncertain terms that his country was not supplying any military equipment to Pakistan and it has no intention of doing so in the future. He also named Pakistan as one of the countries from where mercenaries were fighting against Russians in Chechnya. Russia has expressed its willingness to jointly fight with India against fundamentalist religious and other ethnic movements.  

In January 1993 President Boris Yeltsin made a long-awaited and twice postponed visit to New Delhi to mend fences. The visit provided an opportunity for both countries to articulate and usher in a new and pragmatic phase in the relationship. The status of Indo-Russian cooperation today is reflected in the results of the Yeltsin trip and that of Indian Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao's visit to Moscow a year and a half later. Yeltsin's visit culminated in the signing of a twenty-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation (without a continuation of the security clause of the 1971 Indo-Soviet treaty). The banality of this document reflected the end of the old "special relationship," but the present understanding is far from bereft of political strategic meaning. Russia and India remain important to one another.  

Such has been the nature of this friendship which has survived many ups and downs and has endured for nearly five decades and also
from 1998 to 2000, the period that saw two important events: the 1999 Kargil war between India and Pakistan when India needed spares for its vast military equipment of Soviet Union origin, and the change of guard from Boris Yeltsin to Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin in 2000. Moscow was helpful both in arranging spares from its near-abroad countries during the Kargil war and in ensuring flight clearances from countries hesitant to allow air passage to aircraft carrying equipment and spares for Indian troops.

The long-awaited Delhi Declaration on strategic partnership, signed during President Putin’s visit to India in October 2000, speaks in clear terms on what, in the Kremlin and at Race Course Road, are perceived as common approaches to major world and regional flash points.

In the context of tremendous political relationship, here it is important to describe in brief on some important issues on which these relations firmly stands as Kashmir issue, Treaty of friendship and cooperation, Islamic fundamentalisms and international terrorism, India-Russia-China strategic Triangle, Kargil conflict and India’s claim for permanent membership in security council.

**Kashmir Issue**

From the beginning since its independence, the Kashmir issue had always been on the top of the agenda of foreign policymakers. Apart from other relevant factors, the intensity of India’s relationships with the outside world is to a great extent judged by the perceptions of those countries regarding Kashmir. Thus, it could be easily concluded that the
Kashmir problem has been a very serious issue affecting India's relations with the outside world. It used to be the hallmark to judge the intensity of friendship/enmity of India with a particular country.

It is interesting to document the Indo-Russian relations and locating Kashmir in the Russian foreign policy in view of the changing territorial boundaries of both India as well as Russia. In fact, apart from physical geography, the nomenclature of Russia too has changed during the course of the history from Russia, Soviet Russia and now Russian federation. The Baltics and former Soviet Central Asia have emerged as independent Republics. Be that as it is, Kashmir has been a strategic location in the entire region being affected and in turn laying impact on the events and developments in the region and continues to be so.

Before an in-depth analysis of contemporary Russian policy is made, it is imperative to have a look at the historical dimension. The great Indian leader, Jawaharlal Nehru, after visiting the then USSR in 1928 wrote that the British in India had used the bogey of a Russian invasion to encourage Indian hostility to first Tsarist and then Soviet Russia. The argument of a 'bogey' aside, British did perceive a Russian advance through the then Jammu and Kashmir state.\(^6\) Thus, accordingly they formulated and implemented the policies in the entire region in this very perspective. In pursuance of the threat real or imaginary of a Russian invasion through frontiers of Kashmir, the British Government in India had to indulge in great machinations to exercise direct control over the affairs of Jammu and Kashmir. They were more concerned over the affairs and particularly the defense of Gilgit, Chitral and Hunza which connected Kashmir to Central Asia.
Moscow's Kashmir policy from 1947–1952 was largely determined by its Cold War perception at the global level. Consequently, despite Kashmir's strategic importance for the former USSR, a serious policy about this region was ruled out. It was clearly evident from the Soviets' attitude towards this issue in the UN in January 1948. During the discussions, it considered both India and Pakistan as "reactionary" and adopted a neutral posture on this issue as its delegate remained absent from voting. The UN Security Council resolutions and debates between 1948–57 indicate that Russian responses to Kashmir were shaped and articulated in view of the military pacts which had great security implications for the entire region. Moreover, the Indian foreign policy of non-alignment drew Russia closer to India.

The Soviet position on Kashmir became sharper with the US and its allies taking a partisan position on Kashmir and imposing its own agenda in the UN. Reacting sharply to the Frank Graham report, who was appointed by the UN to effect demilitarization on the basis of the UNCIP resolutions of August 13, 1948 and January 5, 1949, the Soviet representative at the UN, Jacob Malik observed:

"Finally, these plans, as regards Kashmir, aim to achieve the bringing (in) of American–British troops into the territory of Kashmir, and to convert the latter into an American–British colony, and into a military–strategic strong point... The Security Council has not asked, nor authorized Graham... to ask India and Pakistan... For admission of armed forces of UN members into Kashmir... Evidently, Mr. Graham received authority direct from Washington, from the Pentagon." Malik charged the USA and the UK as the main obstacles to a Kashmir settlement.
With the demise of Stalin in 1953, when N.S. Khrushchev and N.A. Bulganin assumed the new leadership of Soviet Russia, there was a change in Soviet foreign policy. The cooperation with nonaligned countries was declared to be a top priority by the leadership. N.S. Khrushchev and N.A. Bulganin visited India 1955. During Bulganin's and Khruschev's sojourn of India in December 1955, not only did they insist on incorporating a visit to Kashmir in their itinerary, but Khruschev also spoke in an unambiguous manner in support of India. In his speech at Srinagar, he said, "The question of Kashmir as one of the states of India has been decided by the people of Kashmir." Soviet Premier, N.A. Bulganin, speaking in the Supreme Soviet of USSR, said that "the question of Kashmir is already resolved by the people of Kashmir themselves; it considers itself to be an integral part of Republic of India. Soviet Union supports the Indian policy on the Kashmir question, as it completely serves the interests of strengthening peace in that region of Asia".

The Soviet role was crucial during the debates in UN Security Council in 1957. On 24 January 1957, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution sponsored by US and UK and three other Countries seeking the resolution of Kashmir plebiscite. The Soviet Russia abstained from voting. However, in February, 1957 the US, UK along with Australia and Cuba introduced a resolution in the Security Council for the introduction of UN forces towards the demilitarization of Kashmir. According to v.v. Zhurkin, "This resolution which sought to destroy the sovereign right of India and threaten occupation of Kashmir by imperialist forces under the mask of the UN, angered the whole nation. The USSR voted against it and Resolution 4X was turned down on 20 February 1957."
In 1962, Pakistan raised Kashmir issue again in the UN Security Council with the support of US and sought UN support in conducting plebiscite in Kashmir. The resolution was vetoed by the Soviet representative in the Security Council.

During the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war on Kashmir, the Soviet representative in the UN held the position that Soviet Russia considered Kashmir as an Indian state. However, it was due to the efforts of Soviet leader, A.N. Kosygin that India and Pakistan signed the Tashkent Declaration.

The Soviet veto in the Security Council in favor of India in 1957 and 1962, etc., brought India and the Soviet Union closer to each other. Finally, the emerging Islamabad-Washington axis and conclusion of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in the wake of the Bangladesh crisis in 1971 tilted the Soviet balance in favor of India, including its unequivocal support for Kashmir.12

The decade of the 1970s was the period of convergence of the security interests of India and the Soviet Union, which resulted in each other's total support on all issues affecting them. However, in the beginning of the 1980s, particularly during the last days of Brezhnev, differences between India and the Soviet Union started emerging.6 With the coming of Gorbachev to power in March 1985, there occurred a doctrinal change in the Soviet policies towards the Third World,7 the repercussions of which were visible in their dealing with India as well.8 However, despite these unfavorable developments, the Soviet Union did not make any pronouncement on Kashmir which created a problem for India. Thus, Moscow's consistent support to India on the Kashmir issue
remained till the disintegration of the USSR in December, 1991.

With the emergence of Russian federation, it appeared that a shift had taken place in Russia's foreign policy on Kashmir. The statement of Russian Vice-President, A.V. Rutskoi in Islamabad in December, 1991 created a great deal of consternation in India. Perhaps the most significant illustration of the end of the Russo-Indian hiatus was the Russian President's unequivocal support to India's top priority foreign policy issue—Kashmir. This support was the veritable touchstone for future certitude in Indo-Russian ties. This was definitely in total contrast to the Kozyrev-Gaidar policy line which had advocated equivalence between India and Pakistan. It appeared as if Russian perceptions had turned full circle. However, the confusion was cleared in January, 1993 when Boris Yeltsin in his address to Indian Parliament expressed strong and unconditional support to the Indian position on Kashmir. He said "We stand for the integrity of India, we support the settlement in Kashmir according to the Indian version so as to maintain integrity and unity of India." We support it. He further promised Russia's support for the Indian position in the United Nations Security Council.

Now the Russian position on Kashmir dealt with three crucial issues.

(a) Russia's policy line vis-à-vis India and Pakistan.

(b) Russia's stakes in India.

(c) Russia's stakes in Indo-Russian friendship.

In 1996, during the visit of L.M. Primakov to Delhi, the Russian
delegation reiterated the Russian support to Indian position on Kashmir. Both the governments excluded the inclusion of Kashmir issue in the agenda of UN and concluded that the issue should be addressed through bilateral negotiations within the framework of Shimla agreement.14

On May 6, 2001 Russia opposed Pakistan's reported move to rake up the Kashmir issue in the U.N. Security Council, saying the Council president cannot impose any issue as the majority of its members were against it. "This issue is not on the agenda of the world body", the visiting Russian Deputy Foreign Minister, Yuri V. Fedotov, told reporters when asked about reports that Pakistan, which recently took over as president of the UNSC, proposed to raise the Kashmir issue.

Mr. Fedotov, who had meetings with the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, and Foreign Secretary, Kanwal Sibal, said the Security Council president "cannot impose" any issue and the majority of the Council members were against raising of the Kashmir Issue. He further added the "central problem" was not Kashmir but that of terrorism and training camps for, terrorists operating in Pakistan.

On June, 2001 Russian Ambassador at Islamabad Edward Sevchenko said that his country was always interested in seeing peace and stability in South Asia and having good relations with the countries in the region. "We always felt bad about the tense relations between Pakistan and India. We strongly believe that the Kashmir issue, the main hurdle, could be resolved only through negotiations by the two countries. No body from the outside can do much unless Pakistan and Indian ask them to intervene. Like any other country, Russia would certainly play its role if it is approached,"
The Joint Statement of 2002 also stresses the necessity for the Pakistani authorities to fulfill all their obligations for prevention of terrorists from infiltrating through the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir and for liquidation of the terrorist infrastructure in the Pakistani territory and in "the regions controlled by Pakistan". In addition to that, President Putin, during his Joint Press Conference with Prime Minister Vajpayee on December 4, clearly expressed his support to India's position on normalizing relations between India and Pakistan. According to the Russian President, withdrawal of troops from the Indo Pakistan border is good, but it's necessary to fulfill all the obligations. In these circumstances it's understandable why Indian Ambassador in Moscow Krishnan Raghunath's statement aroused so much interest in the Russian and Western mass media. In the interview to the newspaper Vremya M.N, answering the question about increased tensions in Jammu and Kashmir, he stated: The real problem is not Kashmir, the real problem is, Pakistan. And those commentators, who are concerned with Kashmir, should pay attention to Pakistan.\(^{15}\)

In the likely future, Russia's positive trends towards India and its unequivocal support on Kashmir will continue. It will not be because of emotional legacies or broad ideological understanding of the Soviet era but because changes of both domestic and global nature will compel Russia to continue its support to India on the Kashmir issue. Russia is convinced about India's capabilities as a regional power in maintaining tranquility in this troubled region. Hence, Russia will continue to have friendly ties with India. This will inevitably be based on Russia's firm commitment on India's stand on Kashmir. In future, these factors are going to influence Russia's foreign policy projections towards India in
general and its support on the Kashmir issue in particular. Hence, change in the Russian support to Kashmir is ruled out at this juncture. The emerging strong Indo-Russian ties will rather strengthen the latter's support on the issue both in the UN and outside it.

Trans-border terrorism is another area where the views of the two states converge. Cross border terrorism has been the biggest threat to stability in Russia, Central Asia and South Asia. Religious extremist forces with support from outside and use of terror and violence seek to fragment the multi-ethnic societies in these states and create new ethno-religious entities that have no space for minority cultures and religions. States seeking to build secular and democratic policies are also faced with the danger of being swamped by nationalist and fundamentalist forces representing other nationalities or religious groups who constitute the majority in some of these multi-national or multi-ethnic countries.¹⁶

The threat of instability caused by the forces of religious fundamentalism and cross border-terrorism has impeded the growth of democratic institutions and civil society especially in India and Russia.

India and Russia have a common strategic interest in ensuring peace, stability as well as a secular, pluralist and tolerant political order in the areas that lie between the borders of India and the Russian Federation. In the prevailing circumstances, it is imperative that India, Russia and the Central Asian republics should join against the common threat to their security, stability and secular social fabric.
Islamic Fundamentalisms and International Terrorism

India is facing Pakistan’s relentless support to terrorist activities in Kashmir. Russia is also worried about the Islamic movements in Tajikistan being run with linkages to both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Minor influences of such activities are also found in other states of the CARs. The continued terrorist menace in Kashmir, the war in Kargil, the development in Chechnya and Dagestan in the Russian Federation and increased onslaughts of Islamic extremists in the Central Asian republics bordering on Afghanistan, are the factors forcing India and Russia to regard the combat against externally–supported terrorism as the priority area for their cooperation and joint action. These activities not only pose challenges to the secular credentials of both Russia and India, but are also against the dominant cultural ethos of both societies.¹⁷

Terrorism seeks to destroy the multi-cultural fabric of India and Russia, especially in the Muslim majority areas. It has succeeded to a large extent in driving out religious minority from those areas through a process of ethnic cleansing. Be it in Chechnya or Kashmir, minorities of various hues are being targeted and large scale emigration has taken place. It is this homogenizing tendency that both the countries have to contend with while countering terrorism. Besides, these tendencies create disturbing trends the multi-ethnic or multi-racial societies and a challenge to the inviolability of borders and territorial integrity of both the countries. Hence, this commonly perceived threat has brought them closer to each other to fight war against such nefarious design in the region.¹⁸
India and Russia recorded "complete identity of views" on terrorism and called on the international community to take decisive action "against those who aid and abet terrorism across borders, harbor and provide sanctuary to terrorists and provide them with financial means, training or patronage." The two countries further stressed that "international action against terrorism cannot be selective, but has to be uniform, comprehensive, continuous and multifaceted.19

From CIS to China to South Asia, forces of religious extremism, with well coordinated networks and command systems, have threatened the existence of multicultural societies. The spectre of fundamentalism dominates politics and relations within and between states in the above regions. No summits take place without focusing on this danger, no document results from such summits or visits of state dignitaries or bilateral meetings without emphasizing the urgency to counter terrorism. Since forces of religious extremism move between borders, it makes it even difficult for states to cope with international terrorism.20

The nexus between drug trafficking and terrorism in the golden crescent has become a major reason for political and social instability in the region. It is reported a large portion of drug money finds its way to militant and terrorist groups which comprise fundamentalists and mercenaries from Arab countries, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Chechnya, Sudan, Algeria and Egypt. Golden Crescent is not only the centre of drug trafficking but is also a training ground of Islamic militants who are trained in use of weapons and explosives, etc.

The fountainhead of international terrorism, religious extremism and drugs and arms trafficking are Pakistan and Taliban-controlled
Afghanistan that has been created and supported by the former.

The coercive role of the state has grown, in the name of countering extremist and destabilizing forces. Spending on strengthening security apparatuses have limited their ability to spend in the social sector which has made life more difficult for the people. Large number of people has become refugees as a result of terrorism and counter-terrorism.

**Indo–Russia–China Strategic Triangle**

A multi polar world order would be one that is fair, just and democratic in which all nations are equal and enjoy equal security. Russia has been vigorously championing the idea of multi polar world as against the tendency of unilateralism. Unilateral approach to international relations would lead to the unchallenged supremacy of the USA. At the broader level India, Russia and China agree that the world should be a multi polar one.

While acknowledging the need for a multipolar world this approach is not in terms of blocs but the need to maintain a balanced and a stable world order. A unipolar world could lead to instabilities and the utmost need was to have a balancing force. Similarly it also attaches importance to the centrality of the UN in a multipolar world.

The concept of multiplicity was formally voiced for the first time in the Sino Russian forum. In the communiqué issued after President Yeltsin's Beijing visit in April 1996, both Russia and China committed them to the concept of building a multipolar world. The Indo–Russian joint statement of December 1998 also stresses the need of creating a
"multipolar world based on sovereign equality of all states, democratic values and justice".

During Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov’s visit to India in December 1998 he proposed at an informal level that India–Russia and China should come together and form a ”strategic triangle” in the interest of peace and stability in the region. The initial response was one of caution which could be explained by the fact that strategic triangle implied common perceptions and convergence of interests vis-à-vis a common threat.21

The proposal did not evoke an enthusiastic response at that time in either India or China. The fact remains that all these three countries have the major share of their economic transactions with the Western countries, rather than with one another. Additionally, between India and China, there is an unsettled border dispute and conflicting interests and mutual rivalry in the region.

However, as the Russian ambassador to India, Albert S. Chemyshov told in the course of a long talk held in the third week of June 1999, Russia has derived immense satisfaction in the fact that even if there is no formal agreement among the three.

It is apparent that Primakov’s proposal was not an off-the-cuff remark. Other government leaders—including President Yeltsin himself—have repeatedly emphasised the need of greater understanding and cooperation among the three great countries of the region. Primakov’s proposal thus reflected a deeper and long-term thinking among the Russian, strategic community and even a degree of consensus among the
policy-makers. It appears that the idea enjoys wide support in the Russian strategic community as a means of resisting the pressure of the dominant West. In order to preserve its strategic autonomy in the face of growing US pressure, Russia needs closer cooperation with large countries like India and China. It is believed that even if these three major countries do not enter into a formal agreement and only take similar positions on major issues independently and informally like on opposing "humanitarian intervention" in the affairs of sovereign states, their joint weight cannot be totally ignored.

It would seem that only the confirmed Westerners and Atlanticists, who would like Russia to be an integral part of the West and who, incidentally, happen to be in a minority in present-day Russia, scoff at the idea. In the Russian formulations it is repeatedly asserted that the purpose of the "strategic triangle" is not to form any formal alliance or military bloc or a grouping relationship directed against third countries—above the entire West. 22

The strategic triangle of Russia, China and India is a far Cry from the point of view of present day political reality and the West would go to any extent to spoke spanners in the wheels of any such arrangement. Nonetheless, in the military technical field, Russia's strategic planners have already made it a fait accompli to an extent by turning Russia into the largest supplier of military equipment and technologies to both India and China. Significantly, hints have emanated from Beijing recently of a more favorable appraisal of the "triangle" idea. It is in India's long-term interests to promote good neighborly relations with China. At the same time a discreet policy of due containment coupled with engagement
would best serve India's interests and defeat the Chinese policy of keeping India confined to South Asia in a stand off with Pakistan.

India can seek to expand its international linkages to be able to play its due role at the regional and world stage at a time when a new balance of power is evolving among the major players. Both Russia and China are vigorously pursuing what they call an "omni-directional" or multi-dimensional policy. There is no reason why India should be inhabited from pursuing a similar policy in order to pursue its own geopolitical interests.

It would be in India's interest that exclusive and mutually hostile alliances are not formed in the post-Cold War world. Undue pressure from the West can force Russia to move closer to China, which would not be in India's or Russia's own interest.

Moscow has shown a certain readiness to accept India as one of great powers in the multi-polar world, China would prefer to ensure that India remains at best a regional power confined of South Asia and does not emerge, and is not recognized, as a great power in Asia or the world as a potential rival of China. From this point of view the current status quo, when China is the only super power in the Security Council appears to suit China.²³

Russian president Putin Stands for Russia–China–India Strategic Cooperation he said that Russia, China and India should join their hands to defend Asia's common interests on the principles of "openness and transparency." It is impossible to establish a new architecture of international relations as a whole without the participation of Russia,
China and India," Putin said in an interview here with the Russian RTR television on the eve of his state visit to India, which is also the first trip to New Delhi by a Russian state head in the last ten years. "Russia, China and India have common interests in Asia, which we want to promote together. I see nothing special or dangerous in it," noted Putin, who will visit India on October 2–5, 2000.

The changed paradigm of International relations where the dominant tendency is cooperation, it is possible for India, Russia and China to initiate such trilateral cooperation in areas of common interest and concern. At the economic level, there is potential for India, Russia and China to cooperate with each other in areas such as high technology, machinery, energy, pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, chemicals etc. Joint ventures could be set up in any of the abovementioned areas. At this exploratory stage of trilateral cooperative endeavor it would be worthwhile to identify areas of common interests. These could be participating jointly in constructing transport corridors (one envisaged rail connection from Bangladesh to Kazakhstan) or building of oil pipelines, improving banking facilities etc.

**The Indo–Russian Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, 1993**

The Treaty of 1993 reflected the changed global realities. The change in the title itself depicted the mutation that had occurred in the relationship. The word peace was erased from the title. It clearly signified that Russia was no longer bound to ensure peace for India by lending its might in conflictual situations. What changed the nature of the treaty was the absence of the security clause that had formed the core of the earlier Indo–Soviet Treaty, 1971.
Yeltsin was lucid on this point when he stated that the treaty differs from the earlier one "in particular on the issues of strategic defence. We do not like to see ourselves jointly with India making preparations for a war with a third country. No we do not." He candidly stated, "We do not like any 'axes', triangles', polygons or any other blocs...we want our foreign Relations, including those with India, on a bilateral basis, not directed against any third party.

The deletion of the security clause meant in practical terms that there was no provision for immediate mutual consultations in the event of an aggression against one party in order to

(a) Remove the threat; and
(b) To take measures to ensure peace and security.

Article IX of the early treaty had also committed both states not to enter into any military alliance directed "against the other, not to allow the use of their respective territories for any action detrimental to the other, and not to support any third state in a military aggression against the other. While such specificities were not spelt out by the new treaty, it did not totally obliterate all security aspects. It did reiterate that neither country would take any action that might affect the security interests of the other. It also pledged to uphold each other's territorial integrity.

In short, the new treaty of 1993, by deleting the security clause squashed the "special relationship" syndrome that had characterized Moscow–New Delhi relations for two decades. The thrust henceforth was to be on purely bilateral relations and cooperation. This was not surprising as the external stimuli for a convergence of mutual threat
perceptions demanding otherwise, no longer existed. The immediate external stimuli for the 1971 Treaty had been the Washington–Islamabad–Beijing axis that impinged on India in the wake of the Bangladesh crisis and an imminent Indo–Pak war. The end of the Cold War changed the Washington–Islamabad equations. And the new global context invalidated the China factor, with both Moscow and New Delhi making progressive strides in their respective relations with Beijing. In fact, Gelatin’s public visualization of good relations among Russia, China and India, the three biggest nations in Asia as strong, stabilizing influences in international politics was received with a great deal of interest.

The fourteen-clause treaty of 1993 did focus on all areas of bilateral cooperation. Broad platitudes were adapted to deal with issues containing divergent perceptions. One such issue was that of nuclear weapons. The treaty emphasised the need to eliminate weapons of mass destruction and dwelt at some length, on the importance of nuclear disarmament. Simultaneously, the treaty emphasised the importance of minimum defence capabilities to strengthen security and stability in the region.

**Kargil Conflict**

Russia took an unequivocal stand that the Kargil conflict was caused by the "penetration of armed groups from Pakistan onto the territory of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir".31 A Press release by the Russian Foreign Ministry on June 17, 1999, made an "earnest appeal" to Islamabad to "refrain from violations" of the Pakistani–Indian accords on "the location of the agreed line of control which separates India from
Pakistan in Kashmir region" the press releases added that "any attempt to change this line may have grave consequences" and that "the withdrawal of the armed groups beyond the line of control and the restoration of the status quo would, to a considerable extent, serve to defuse the tension in the region".24

In spite of change of guard from Boris Yeltsin to Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin in 2000 Russia always concerned of Indian defence requirements. During the 1999 Kargil conflict when India needed spares for its vast military equipment of Soviet Union origin, Moscow was helpful both in arranging spares from its near-abroad countries and in ensuring flight clearances from countries hesitant to allow air passage to aircraft carrying equipment and spares for Indian troops.

To raise doubts about the civilian government's ability to control the country's generals. Thus, Vladimir Skosyrev of Izvestia remarked that the legacy of army rule for several decades has not been overcome in Pakistan. Without the approval of the army, important foreign policy questions are not resolved. It is known that the generals and Islamic fundamentalists were not satisfied with the Lahore diplomacy. In order to pacify the army and the opponents among the chauvinists, Sharif gave approval to the operation in Kashmir. However, war is a serious issue and should not be entrusted to the generals, added Skosyrev.36

Moscow has taken the same line as the other G-8 countries urging the maintenance of the Line of Control (LOC) and peaceful bilateral settlement of Indo-Pak issues during the Cologne Summit of the G-8 in June 1999.
The role played by Moscow during the Tashkent peace conference following the Indo–Pak War in 1965 remains a fond memory for the Russians. Hints are given that Moscow would not be averse to playing the same role if the two sides—meaning India and Pakistan—so desire. But in all its official formulations, Russia has upheld the principle of peaceful bilateral settlement of Indo–Pak issues in accordance with the Simla Agreement of 1972.

**India’s Claim for Permanent Membership in United Nations Security Council**

In context to view latest development in international arena, there is a hard need of reformation in the United Nations Security Council. Particularly the need to enhance its representative nature, it should be well recognized more sustainable and balanced. India and Russia stress the need for strengthening the UNO, observance of international law and norms. The approaches of Russia and India to reforming the UN are close.

No doubt India is interested in getting the permanent membership of the UNO. It appears that this particular interest of India can best be served in a cooperative and not a divisive world order where no current permanent member would veto India’s bid of permanent membership. India officially announced her candidature for permanent membership of the Security Council during the 49th General Assembly in 1994. Recent developments have shown that there is a growing consensus on recognizing this and a movement is building up in India’s support.

Moscow has shown a certain readiness to accept India as one of the
great powers in the multipolar world. While on the development of Indo-Russian political relations we may note that Russia consistently supported India's claim for a permanent seat in a reformed security council. During his visit to India in 1993, President Yeltsin also promised to support India's candidature for permanent membership of the Security Council. This was stated by all Russian high level dignitaries and was restated by premier Primakov in New Delhi visit and was also subsequently reaffirmed by various high level visitors from Russia.

Similar support has never come from Beijing. China would prefer to ensure that India remains at best a regional power in Asia or the world. As a potential rival of China, from this point of view the current statuesque, when China is the only Asian power in the Security Council appears to suit China. It is not unlikely that Beijing opposes New Delhi's bid for the permanent membership of the Security Council when the issue of reforming and further expanding the Security Council comes for decision at some future date.

Any reformatory decision can only be taken by unusual consensus among the present five permanent members, the consensus, or absence of these of, would depend on the emerging power equation among the P-5 and a number of other factors, including unpredictable factors.

From various statements of Russian leaders time to time, and in Indo Russia joint statements, Russia has repeatedly committed itself to support the case of India.

In a clear dig at the United States, India and Russia "confirmed their opposition to the unilateral use or threat of use of force in violation
of the U.N. Charter" and vowed to work for establishing "a multi-polar and just world order based on sovereign equality of all states, their territorial integrity and non-interference in their internal affairs. Russia has restated its strong support for India's bid to win a seat on the United Nations Security Council, describing India as "a deserving and strong candidate for the permanent membership in an expanded U.N. Security Council". Russia has also backed India-drafted United Nations resolution on measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

When Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in India on a three-day state visit in the first week of December 2000, he certainly made the headlines but no media frenzy marked his stay in India despite a joint declaration underlining cooperation on wide-ranging issues, What most people remembered of the visit was a translation gaffe: President Putin standing next to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh making a statement which basically meant that Russia supported India's candidature for the permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council. President Putin did away with the interpreter and spoke in fluent English. He said that he meant permanent membership with veto power. In the midst of all this, not many bothered about the real essence of the fifth summit meeting between Russia and India since October 2000, when President Putin became the first Russian leader to visit India after a gap of eight years.


3. Ibid, pg 441.


10. Times of India, December 12, 1955; New Times (Moscow), No 2.


