CHAPTER - IV

INDIA AND SUPER POWERS UNDER RAJIV GANDHI'S REGIME

In this chapter, an attempt is made to discuss India's relations with the Super Powers under the dynamic leadership of Rajiv Gandhi. Historically speaking, the interactions between the two, i.e., US and USSR and the relations between them (Cold War and Power Politics) have greatly influenced the formulation of the foreign policy of independent India. In fact, the policy of non-alignment was mainly designed as the principle governing India's relations with the Super Powers of the world. In deed, it was the attitude of the Super Powers, which was mainly responsible for the adoption of non-alignment as the basic principle of India's foreign policy. India, along with the newly emerged independent countries of the world, in the 1950s determined to remain aloof from the politics of Super Powers. When there was race for supremacy in the world politics, these countries accepted non-alignment as their principle of foreign policy like that of India. Therefore, the influence of Super Powers on India in terms of formulating non-alignment as a strategy of its foreign policy is one of unique contributions. Hence, while studying the foreign policy of India, it is indispensable to know the role of Super Powers and their influence on India. In view of this, Rajiv Gandhi during his premiership gave considerable attention to the normalization/improvement of relations with the
two Super Powers, i.e., USSR, and US which had a direct bearing on India’s foreign policy. It was also his endeavor to maintain friendly relations with the Super Powers.

**A Brief History of Indo-American Relations:**

India and America, the two biggest democracies of the world have been no doubt friends since pre-independence days, yet their relations have not been cordial and co-operative. Further, the relations between India and US had always ups and downs and remained complex for quite a long time. Perhaps this is mainly due to India’s strategic perceptions. The differences between the two countries have led to the abnormal relations on various international issues, since the days of Jawaharlal Nehru and then followed by Indira Gandhi’s. Summing up the decades of Indo-US relations, Stanley Hoffmann commented, “Of all the major countries, India is the one whose relations with the United States have been the most baffling. The story since 1947, when India became independent, is one of mutual irritation and missed opportunities”.¹

In spite of certain degree of differences, both India and the US the two largest democracies of the world had some common similarities on various issues. The two countries had friendly relations since pre-independence because Britishers were controlling India’s relations with the rest of the world. Hence there

were no problems between the two countries. Even America had extended its moral and material support to India in her struggle for independence. Therefore, Jawaharlal Nehru, commenting on the historical relations between India and US and its support said, “Between the United States and India, there had existed friendly relations even before India gained her independence. No Indian can forget that in the days of our struggle for freedom we received from your (US) country a full measure of sympathy and support. Our two republics share a common faith in democratic institutions and the democratic way of life and are dedicated to the cause of peace and freedom”.  

It was during Indira Gandhi’s period, particularly in the early 1970s the relations between India and US were not cordial due to a number of reasons, such as continued supply of arms to Pakistan, supply of Uranium to Tarapur Atomic Power Plant, nuclear issue, etc. Further, the relations between the two countries aggravated in the early 1980s with the Soviet Union’s intervention in Afghanistan. In fact, the Afghan issue was a major cause of concern to India. Because, US did not like Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and criticized the intervention as illegal and immoral. The deteriorating relations between the USSR and the US had great bearing on India.

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However, the year 1982 is marked as an era of India's move towards West and improvement of relations with the US. By 1982, India, under Indira Gandhi's leadership, began to move closer towards West in order to strengthen the Indo-US relations. On the contrary, the US also became soft towards India when it approached International Monetary Fund (IMF) for loan as it was working under the US direction. Further, Indira Gandhi also initiated the dialogue with the US for transfer of sophisticated technology to India, which culminated in the memorandum of understanding signed in the early 1985 between Rajiv Gandhi and Ronald Reagan.

**Major Issues of Cooperation and Irritants during Rajiv Gandhi's Period:**

It is important to note that it was also during the time of Rajiv Gandhi that India and the US did not agree on some of the international issues. These are important not only to India but also to the world at large, like the Indian Ocean as zone of peace, supply of arms to Pakistan, apartheid in South Africa, the Palestine question, disarmament, Super 301 trade business, the issue of Afghanistan and the larger issues of colonialism and neo-imperialism. Such disagreements have hampered the Indo-US relations since beginning. Further the US was not happy with India’s non-alignment policy. It believed that non-alignment especially to a liberal country like India, abdicates responsibility
standing up to the Soviet threat. More ever, the US has viewed Indian non-alignment as a mark of tilt towards the Soviet Union.

In spite of greater degree of disagreements between the two countries on various issues, Rajiv Gandhi, the dynamic Prime Minister, made herculean efforts to remove the obstacles that came in the way of improving the Indo-US relations. He was also committed to establish world peace and left no stone unturned in achieving the same. It was his endeavor to improve the strained relations between India and the US if not in all areas at least in some selected areas of co-operation. Even President Reagan in his interview to the ‘Far Eastern Economic Review’ said, “We have our differences with India certainly, but I truly believe that India and the United States have reached a point where we can pursue a mature and constructive relationship based on the values and interests we share rather than points of differences”.

However, India’s desire to be friendly with the US was voiced by T.N.Kaul the then Ambassador to US in the following words “India would like to be friendly with the USA, but not as a surrogate or client state. If the US administration does not accept equality and reciprocity, mutual respect and understanding as the basis of friendship, then indeed it would be difficult to improve India-US relations. But such an attitude of the USA cannot endure for long. As India becomes more and more self-reliant and strong-

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economically, politically and defense wise - America will have to realize her vast potential for peace, security and development in the region, in Asia and in the world.\textsuperscript{4}

On the contrary, India also expected the US to encourage it in strengthening the bond of friendship without affecting India's policy of non-alignment. This can be promoted by cultivating more and more economic, technological and military co-operation with India. Then this was considered a forward movement in improving the Indo-US relations.

a) U.S. Dual-Use Technology Transfer:

Rajiv Gandhi, soon after assuming the office of the Prime Minister, thought of encouraging more technology transfer and foreign investment from the West. At the same time, he also determined to improve the Indo-US relations, which had many ups and downs, and in fact more unfriendly than friendly. The optimism of Rajiv Gandhi in improving the Indo-US relations was due to several reasons. Firstly, it was believed that Rajiv Gandhi was more receptive to the West than his mother was. Secondly, it is hoped that he, being Western educated, unorthodox in approach and with firm belief in modern technology, engineering, science, would try to improve India's relations with the US. Thirdly, the growing Indian need for Western technology was regarded as an important point in improving the relations.

\textsuperscript{4} P.G.Salvi., Supra No.2, p-140.
Therefore, by December 1984, a month after Rajiv Gandhi assumed the office of Prime Minister, both India and the US finalised the memorandum of understanding on technological cooperation, “which was eventually signed in May 1985” originally initiated during Indira Gandhi’s visit in 1982. “The objective of the (MOU) was to establish a mechanism for the expeditious review of export license applications for India without jeopardising the US national security and nuclear non-proliferation interests. The agreement permits the use of sophisticated American technology for Indian business and military ventures”.

As a result, it was in June 1985, Rajiv Gandhi, with an avid object of improving the friendly relations and getting technological know-how, paid the first ever-official visit to the US, within six months of his massive electoral victory which had aroused renewed hopes of a breakthrough in the Indo-US relations. Former US diplomat Dennis Kux, commenting on the visit stated: “Rajiv Gandhi made an excellent impression on his American hosts; the handsome young Prime Minister differed from the preachy arrogant Indian stereotype. He was quiet, seemed to listen to what American

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5 J.N.Dixit., Across Borders, Fifty Years of India’s Foreign Policy, Picus Books, New Delhi, 1998, p-173.
6 P.M.Kamath and A.A.Mutalik Desai, Indian Perspective on the US Literature and Foreign Affairs (Ed), Prestige Books, New Delhi, 1993, p-142.
leaders had to say, spoke softly and had a touch of humour". Even though Rajiv Gandhi made it clear that he was not going to alter the basic thrust of his country's foreign policy (he pointedly visited Moscow before Washington), his change of style from his mother's made India to look different. The US Ambassador to India at that time, Harry Barnes, commented: "this was a new start, good for India and good for the USA".  

Rajiv Gandhi, the youngest Prime Minister of the biggest democracy of the world proved himself an international leader within a short span of time. In recognition of his international stature, he also headed the NAM as its Chairman. As a result, during his official visit to the US "he was accorded the honour of addressing a joint session of the US Congress, a privilege which was not offered even to his mother during her three official visits to the United States. The Vice-President George Bush accompanied Rajiv Gandhi on a trip to NASA space center at Houston, Texas, the two developed friendly personal ties". This clearly demonstrated that Rajiv Gandhi had a unique quality of charisma and leadership. This tended to a new era in the Indo-US relations.

While in America Rajiv Gandhi decided to visit Houston. The high point of visit to Houston was his meeting with the representatives of high technology firms who informed him about

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8 J.N.Dixit, Supra No.5, p-173.
9 Dennis Kux Supra No.7, pp-403-404.
the know-how, which America could sell to India. "Rajiv Gandhi evinced keen interest as senior executives of these firms made three sets of presentations. The first pertained to new methods and discoveries in petroleum and metals prospecting, the second to application of new information in the fields of medicine and scientific education and third to the development of new materials in space. After the presentations, the Prime Minister said, "India was interested in buying only technology appropriate to its present stage of economic development. "We want to have modern technology relevant to our ambitions. Besides, we should also be able to afford it. Our endeavor is to carry information and education to the countryside." 10

During his stay in US, Rajiv Gandhi held wide-ranging talks with US President Ronald Reagan and was successful in establishing some rapport with the US administration. In addition to this the visit of Rajiv Gandhi greatly contributed to enrich the understanding and cooperation between the two countries. But during this visit any of the major agreements were not included in the agenda of talks. However, during the discussions both Rajiv Gandhi and Ronald Reagan looked beyond the current problems and moved forward to establishing better relationship on a new basis. From all accounts Rajiv Gandhi's visit created a new climate in the United States relations with India. This did not imply that all differences were resolved.

10 The Times of India, 17 June 1985.
**Indo-US Joint Statement:**

After prolonged discussion the two leaders issued a joint statement on June 15 1985. The two leaders called on all governments to combat the new danger of organized terrorism as "a threat to peace and democracy". The statement emphasized mutual collaboration in science and technology. They also identified some specific areas of collaboration like extending the Science and technology, initiative for another three years, initiating a vaccine action programme, and a long term research and technology development programme, and programme for development of commercial technology". 11

After Rajiv Gandhi's return from the US, the Government of India earmarked four areas where it needs such technology. These are energy, transport, communication and agriculture. Stressing his commitment to bring high technology to India Rajiv Gandhi said, "We are looking ahead removing strife, removing our petty difference, to making India to forge ahead as fast as possible to become the equal of any other country." 12 Further, the main and foremost object of Rajiv Gandhi's visit to the US was to make India one of the strongest nations of the world using the sophisticated technological know-how. And it was also his vision to take India to the 21st century.

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Prior to Rajiv Gandhi’s visit, in the month of April 1985 the US had sent a fifty-member delegation for the seventh meeting of the Indo-US sub-commission on science and technology. William Schneider, Jr. Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance, led it. Prof. Yash Pal. Secretary Department of Science and Technology led the hundred member Indian delegation. At the meeting, both India and the United States agreed on a new collaborative research programme in material sciences, recommended at the seventh Session of the Indo-US science and technology sub-commission. Further, the administrators and scientists of both countries discussed various aspects of Indo-US cooperation in six broad fields namely “(I) health, medical and life sciences, (II) physical sciences, (III) earth, atmospheric and marine sciences, (IV) energy, (V) environment and ecology; and (VI) information sciences”. ¹³ This co-operation between the two countries in the field of science and technology did not doubt a step forward in the improvement of the Indo-US relations. Further, it was also considered a milestone in developing the co-operation between the two countries after a lapse of several years.

America had agreed in principle to transfer the high technology to India when Rajiv Gandhi visited USA in 1985. But the US decision-making process proved to be slow in its action and started adopting delay tactics in so far as the transfer of technology is

¹³ Hindustan Times (New Delhi) 9th April 1985.
concerned. In fact, apprehension of the US was that the transfer of technology to India would certainly endanger her interests primarily due to India's military linkage with Moscow. It is because of this that the American pentagon adopted delay tactics and made so much delay in transferring the technological know-how to India. Therefore, once for all, the transfer of technology stalled for indefinite period. Further, the US also suggested some safeguards to be undertaken by India in the event of transfer of technology. The main objective behind the US move was to avoid the passing of the sophisticated technology to the USSR via India.

Realizing the same it was in the month of October 1985 Rajiv Gandhi again visited the US. There he renewed his stand and made a plea to the US government to transfer the technological know-how to India at the earliest. As a result, the US administration approved the transfer of sophisticated technology worth 60,000 dollars. In continuation of this the US government also declared that the technology would be sent to India at the earliest without taking into consideration the military linkage with Moscow.

It was at this juncture that the US government was reported to be on the verge of clearing the sale of the world's most advanced computer to India. This development followed by the most important meeting of the then scientific advisor to the Defense Ministry, V.S. Arunachalam, with the senior US officials. Fred Ikle, "the US Under Secretary of Defence, was understood to have
assured Arunachalam that the USA would be selling the Supercomputer to India".14

The hope generated by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit, became further bright when the US offered to extend the area of cooperation to defence, and for this purpose invited India to send senior military officials to key American defence universities/establishments. In October 1986, the US Defence Secretary, Casper Weinberger paid visit to India. During this visit both India and US reached an understanding regarding the transfer of high technology to India. As per the understanding, the decks were cleared for the transfer of U.S. military related technologies initially in a couple of selected fields and for the likely sale of Supercomputers to India following the U.S. defence Secretary Casper Weinberger's talks".15

Further, the US also came forward to supply the critical components for the development and production of a wide range of defence equipment such as engines and electronics for the light combat aircraft project, radar and telemetry system for testing missiles, anti-tank weaponry, night vision equipment, armour piercing projectiles and super alloys, fire control and transmission mechanisms for the main battle tank prototypes".16 In response to Rajiv Gandhi's visit to the US in June 1985, the US Defence

15 The Times of India, 15th October 1986.
16 The Hindu (Madras) 13th October 1986.
Secretary, Casper Weinberger met Rajiv Gandhi in October 1986 at New Delhi and said, “US had agreed in principle to sell the Supercomputers sought by India, subject to certain safeguards to be worked out by experts of the two governments”. The US came forward to help India to modernize its defence. The two countries also reached wide ranging and substantial agreement on the transfer of high technology equipment, including Supercomputer. The US showed its willingness to sell General Electrics 404 Engines for the light combat aircraft being developed by India, technology equipment for missile testing, night vision equipment etc.

Although a good beginning was made with India, and “with the exception of the sale of the 404 engines, the United States remained reluctant to transfer high technology items that may contribute directly to India’s weapon capabilities. The United States was not willing to consider India’s request for technological assistance for its booster rocket program since this would contribute to assistance delivery capabilities. Thus, technology for the peaceful program that involved rocket motors, inertial guidance systems, liquid fuel tanks and components, and propellant technology was excluded”.18

17 The Hindu (Madras) 13th October 1986.
However, an anti-climax came when Casper Weinberger, during his visit to Pakistan, announced that the US had agreed to supply an airborne warning platform to Pakistan at the earliest, but the system to be provided would be decided in due course. He further said that the US would assist Pakistan in strengthening its defence capabilities to meet any border threat under a new six-year package. He added that US felt there was a need to enhance Pakistan's air defence capability in particular. India felt severely over the reported statement of Casper Weinberger. Because she believed that the induction of AWACS into Pakistan's defence would certainly threaten the security interests of India. Thus, the ray of hope by Casper Weinberger's visit to India was disappointed by the U.S. policy towards Pakistan.

The Dilemma of Sale of Supercomputer:

In spite of all disagreements and divergent perceptions between USA and India on certain issues, still there were some agreements and MOU's signed between the two countries. These paved the way for normalizing the relations. In fact, the document signed in New Delhi in December 1986 for the sale of Supercomputer was "a landmark in the chequered history of Indo-US relations. Both President Reagan and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi played significant roles in getting the deal cleared. Its importance lies in the fact that India is only the third country (after the United

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Kingdom and West Germany) to such favoured treatment from Washington. Not even Israel, America's closest ally, has been given this facility.20 This was not successful in improving the Indo-US relations due to the delay in transferring the Supercomputers. The US Department of Defence continued to oppose this on the ground that the "misuse" of the machine for purposes other than stipulated. "It was well known that the US Defence Department was initially opposed to the sale of even a single Supercomputer to India because it feared that the technology would pass into Soviet hands. By contrast, the state Department and white house were willing to take a "calculated risk" to wean India away from its dependence on Moscow.21 Therefore, the deal was thrown into the cold storage because of divergent perceptions.

The United States Under Secretary for international trade Mr. S Bruce Smart, talking on the implementation of the memorandum of understanding on transfer of high technology, said that the fear of diversion was among the major causes for this malaise. Further, he also said, "Within the government, there are differing opinions from time to time on the matter of exporting sensitive technology to third countries."22 From the above statement it is clear that the US Congress and the Defence Department were reluctant to transfer technology to India. In spite of differing perceptions and imposition of restrictions and safeguards, at last the US administration agreed

20 Hindustan Times (New Delhi) 13th December, 1986
21 Hindustan Times (New Delhi) 13th December 1986
22 Hindustan Times (New Delhi) 14th May 1987.
to supply a less sophisticated model of Cray XMP-14 Supercomputer instead of Cray XMP-24 as sought by India. Even, for this also the US administration put a condition that “the officials of Cray Research Inc, manufacturers of Supercomputers, will be on site to ensure that neither the Soviets nor the Japanese gain access to the computer”. 23 In fact, India felt greatly perturbed over the carrot and stick policy adopted by the US in so far as the Supercomputer deal was concerned.

In the context of the Supercomputer deal the US demanded to inspect and monitor the end-uses of the facility in order to safeguard it against Indian misuses and accessibility to other countries. “In some quarters in India, this was seen as a compromise on India’s sovereignty. The MOU got dubbed as “NPT” in disguise”. 24 It should however, be noted that the Western allies also did not have freedom to use them according to their requirements and even to transfer the systems to new sites within their territories. Even, India had to face the same situation like the US Western allies in so far as the deal of Supercomputer was concerned.

Taking into consideration too many pre-conditions/restrictions imposed by the US administration and the indifferent attitude of the Pentagon, prompted Rajiv Gandhi to search for other avenues of acquiring the Supercomputers. As a result, he “approached Japan the only other manufacturer of a similar computer”. 25

23 The Hindustan Times (New Delhi) 4th March 1987.
24 Quoted in P.M.Kamath and A.A.Mutaik Desai, Supra No.6, p-143.
25 The Times of India, 9th December 1986.
Sensing Rajiv Gandhi's approach to Japan, the US administration promptly initiated talks with Japan to arrive at an understanding on the terms of sale of such machines to countries like India that are “neutral but friendly”.

Therefore, Rajiv Gandhi's approach to Japan to acquire the similar computers clearly indicated that his leadership did not compromise with India's national interest. Further, it was also made clear that there was no shift in India's foreign policy under Rajiv Gandhi's leadership while acquiring the sophisticated technology from the US. Even Rajiv Gandhi's leadership also proved that he was not inclined towards West though he was Western educated and un-orthodox in nature while getting the technological know-how.

Taking note of India's disappointment over the sale of Supercomputer, the US decided to soothe Rajiv Gandhi's sentiments by way of offering more computers apart from the Supercomputers already sought. But the US administration's decision to sell Cray XMP-14 Supercomputers to India was to keep its words of transferring the high technology came just a few days before Rajiv Gandhi's visit to the US. However, "the purchase of Supercomputer for weather forecasting and other agricultural related operations from the US was subject to a series of negotiations, particularly because India had initially sought more advanced Supercomputers, the Cray XMP-24. The US government finally cleared the sale of lower capacity Supercomputers, the Cray XMP-14. Even then the deal was held up on the question of

26 The Times of India, 9th December 1986
maintenance fees since it was felt that Cray Company's demand was on the higher side".27

Though the decision disappointed Rajiv Gandhi, then Foreign Secretary A.P.Venkteshwaran urged the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi to "accept the offer in order to gain entry into the US high technology world. Rejecting the offer would freeze India out of high technology cooperation with the United States! This became the rationale for India to accept the sale".28

However, during his trip to the US, Rajiv Gandhi confirmed his decision that India would accept the Cray XMP-14 Supercomputers. Accordingly, "India had signed the formal contract for the purchase of Cray-XMP-14 Supercomputer from the US. The then financial advisor to the Department of Science and Technology, B.K.Chaturvedi signed on behalf of the Indian government and Michael Dickey, senior Vice-President of the Cray research Inc, on behalf of his company".29 Apart from this, the US also promised to provide additional computers in line with "India's need for upgraded capability and the growing mutual confidence that implementation of our agreement will provide".30 Therefore, the transfer of Supercomputers was considered a significant step in strategic partnership between the two countries.

28 Quoted in Dennis Kux, Supra No.7, p-108.
29 The Hindu, 6th May 1988.
30 Dennis Kux, Supra No.7, p-414.
Rajiv Gandhi's Visit: October 1987

Despite all the irritants, India intended to improve the relations with the US in order to get the sophisticated technological know-how transferred, to develop India into one of the strongest countries in the world by making use of the said technology. As a result, In the fall of 1987, Rajiv Gandhi, “after attending the United Nations session, paid his second official visit to Washington – the first time an Indian Prime Minister returned to the US capital after an interval of only two years”. Rajiv Gandhi's visit aroused new hopes in the Indo-US relations despite certain irritants and disagreements between the two countries. The main idea behind Rajiv Gandhi’s visit was to strengthen the bilateral relations and to expand the co-operation in the areas of defence and technology. During the meeting both Rajiv Gandhi and President Ronald Reagan “dealt with various issues including Islamabad’s nuclear ambitions, the US policy towards Pakistan, nuclear proliferation, cooperation in science and technology in various fields, including defence, Afghanistan, Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement and the East-West relations. During the discussion, Rajiv Gandhi told Reagan that India did not want nuclear weapons and “we certainly do not want nuclear weapons in our neighbourhood”. Conveying his concern over developments in “our immediate vicinity”- an obvious reference to Pakistan-he said, “Yet another country now seems on

the threshold of fulfilling a long ambition of acquiring nuclear weapons”. 32

In concrete terms, the outcome of Rajiv Gandhi and Reagan talks was the enunciation of new initiatives announced by President Reagan himself in his farewell speech on 20th October 1987. Briefly stated, they were as follows,

"i) extension of three year Indo-US initiative on science and technology;
ii) expansion in bilateral trade and reduction in trade barriers and check on protectionism;
iii) co-operation in India’s need for upgraded technology dealing with computer science;
iv) pledging cooperation in stemming drug trafficking;
v) expansion in defence cooperation with special reference to LCA;
vi) enhancement in the productivity in arid zone agriculture and water management;
vii) utilization of Indo-US fund for cultural and scientific cooperation;
viii) planning exchange of visits by dignitaries and parliamentarians of the two countries;
ix) commencing a programme for fellowship in research institutes of science and technology".33

Rajiv Gandhi, after his trip from the US, was optimistic about the talks he had with the President Reagan, except on the Pakistan's nuclear issue. However, Rajiv Gandhi on the nuclear issue asserted by saying, "If the US really exerts pressure, I have no doubt that Pakistan will change its attitude toward nuclear weapon programme". On the Indo-US defense co-operation the Prime Minister stated, "We have seen progress on that confidence building exercise. We have completed every thing we had targeted to do. Now we had ups and downs and our differences. But these two years have seen a very substantial improvement in our relations".\(^{34}\)

b) US Arms Aid to Pakistan:

The US arms aid to Pakistan has remained a major irritant in the Indo-US relations since beginning. The history of the Indo-US relations reveals that Pakistani factor was influential in the Indo-US relations. The American military aid to Pakistan, which began in 1954, was a cause of great concern to India. Because, the supply of the US arms to Pakistan always had a significant bearing on the security interest of India. "The United States has been engaged in arms transfer to Pakistan since mid 1950s when Mutual Security Pact was concluded between the two countries in 1954 in utter disregard of Indian interests and susceptibilities. In spite of India's opposition to the US move to aid Pakistan, US President Eisenhower announced on 25\(^{th}\) February 1954, that US had decided to give military assistance to Pakistan for the purpose of

\(^{34}\) Quoted in Dennis Kux, Supra No.7, p-414.
strengthening the “defence capabilities in the Middle East”. During 1954 to 1965 Pakistan received over $ 630 million grant in military assistance for weapons; $ 619 million for defence support and some $ 55 million worth of equipment purchased on cash or concessional basis. On 8 September 1965, the US declared an embargo. Pakistan acquired through third countries hardware worth about $ 200 million including 90 fighters from West Germany, through Iran and sizeable number of Patton Tanks through Turkey with the full knowledge of Pentagon.

Thus the US arms supply to Pakistan obviously increased the threat perception in the South Asian region. Therefore, Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India, vehemently criticized American move and said, “it upsets all kinds of balances, the present equilibrium and all that” and “encourages the Pakistani authorities in their aggressiveness and increases tension and conflict between India and Pakistan”. However, in response to Nehru’s apprehension and criticism the US authorities asserted that military assistance to Pakistan “is not directed in any way against India” and that “this allocated to Pakistan for defense against Russia and China”. 

36 Quoted in Shri Ram Sharma, Lal Bahadur Shastri: An Era of Transition in Indian Foreign Policy, Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi, 2001, p-38.
38 D.C.Jha, U.S. Policy Towards India, in Verinder Grovers, Supra No. 37, p-177.
Further, it was also during 1965 Indo-Pak War that America openly supported Pakistan with arms and ammunition despite India's strong protests. It also continued the same in 1971 Indo-Pak war also. In fact, America's open support to Pakistan caused security imbalance in the South Asian region. Therefore, the supply of the US arms to Pakistan had been the single largest and constant irritant in the Indo-US relations. Even during 1980s Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan, the US again supplied sophisticated weapons to Pakistan to contain the growing Soviet Influence in the South Asian region. As a result the Reagan Administration “announced a $3.18 billion arms and economic aid to Pakistan in 1981. The arms package proposed the sale of forty long-range F-16 fighter bombers to Pakistan, the most modern, sensitive radar, as well as other military personnel carriers”. The rationale behind the sale of arms is to give Pakistan the ability to handle "a range of limited cross border threats from Soviet or Soviet backed Afghan forces". However, the arms were meant for Talibans to fight against the Soviet forces. The adverse effect was on India. Therefore, the US were the root cause for conflicts and tensions in South Asia. It aimed to minimize the Soviet influence in the South Asia. This naturally tended to security imbalance in South Asia. Therefore, taking into consideration the security threat

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39 Quoted by Moti Lal Govila, Indo-American Relations in the Post War Decade, in Verinder Grover's (ed) International Relations and Foreign Policy of India, USA and India's Foreign Policy, Deep and Deep Publication, New Delhi, 1992, p-251.
in the South Asian region Walter Mandale, former US Vice-President, said, “it was a mistake to introduce new and more advanced aircraft into the Indian sub-continent. I think induction of F-16 aircraft is a mistake. I would much prefer to encourage attempts by India and Pakistan to resolve their differences, to lay emphasize on peace and diplomatic negotiations and reduction of tensions rather than escalate arms which solves nothing”.40

The United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane J.Kirk Patrick, categorically stated that the arming of Pakistan “was neither an actual or an intended threat of India”. Further, he said, we call helping Pakistan to have some confidence as it confronts the problems of refugees and the Soviet presence on its own border”.41 The American view remained dubious in so far as the arms aid to Pakistan was concerned. Further, (in 1984) the US Assistant Secretary of state, Richard Murphy visited India in October 1984 and told the Indian officers that the moment Afghanistan crisis was over, arms supply to Pakistan would completely be stopped. Meanwhile, efforts were made to see that the sophisticated arms that were in the process of being supplied were immediately stopped”.42

Taking into consideration the continued US arms supply to Pakistan, Rajiv Gandhi decided to draw the attention of US

41 Quoted in Moti Lal Govila., Supra No.39, p-251.
42 Shri Ram Sharma. Supra No.33, p-102.
President Reagan. As a result, it was during his visit to US in October 1985, Rajiv Gandhi conveyed to President Reagan, "India's concern over the continued supply of arms to Pakistan but it had no effect on the latter who suggested that the best solution would be for India to improve its relations with Pakistan. He also told Rajiv Gandhi that with American arms aid, Pakistan might abandon its nuclear option". This clearly indicated that the US was not willing to discontinue arms supply to Pakistan due to its strategic interest. Further, India too was willing to improve relations with Pakistan since it was supporting the terrorists along the Indo-Pak border to disturb the peace process initiated by India.

Therefore, in spite of all the assurances, it was during Rajiv Gandhi’s period that the US continued to supply sophisticated weapons to Pakistan despite India’s strong protests and deep concern expressed in various international forums. India's clear perception was that the supply of the US arms aid to Pakistan would tend to arms race in the South Asia. Further, the US always considered Pakistan as a strategic country and used it to serve its vital interests in south Asia. Therefore, Rajiv Gandhi, during his visit to the US in June 1985, said that, "India was worried about US arms supply to Pakistan because "we have to counter it by spending more money by diverting our resources from development " . He said, most of the arms Pakistan got were not of

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the type that could be used against Afghanistan. He referred to the Sea-Skimming missiles, which, he said, could not be used in mountains. "We are keen not to embark on any arms race with Pakistan and our objective is reduction of arms in the region".44

The decision of the US administration to transfer of Air borne Warning and Control System (AWACS) planes to Pakistan became another obstacle to improve the Indo-US relations. India was greatly disturbed and alarmed because she believed that the induction of AWACS in the Pakistan's army would pose grave challenge to its air defence. Further, India also voiced that it would threaten the security of India and deteriorate relations between the two countries. Therefore, India protested against the US decision and expressed its deep concern over the transfer of AWACS to Pakistan. As a mark of protest, the then External Affairs Minister, N.D.Tiwari, cancelled his visit to the US against the lease of the AWACS to Pakistan which were definitely meant to have a substantial offensive against India".45 However, American justification for supply of AWACS to Pakistan was to avoid the alleged air intrusion from Afghanistan. Perhaps, "Americans forgot the fact that AWACS were ineffective in the mountainous region of Afghanistan, they could be of great value in monitoring India air space as well as a significant portion of the Soviet air space in the

44 Asian Recorder, 31(28), July 9-15, 1985, p-18404
45 Quoted in Shri Ram Sharma, Supra No.33, p-105.
Tashkent area". But the "Defence Ministry's Report noted that the US administration's willingness to transfer AWACS planes to Pakistan would only have "minimal impact" on dealing with "alleged" air intrusions from Afghanistan "but a substantial force multiplier effect against India."  

Commenting on the reported statement of the US Administration's decision to supply AWACS aircraft to Pakistan, the then Foreign Secretary, A.P.Venkateswaran in a threatening version said, "if the United States decided to sell sophisticated spy planes to Pakistan there is a possibility of India seeking similar equipment from the Soviet Union. He further said, "So far we have not gone in to ask the Soviet Union for an AWACS (Air borne Warning and Control System), but if some such development (sale by the US of AWACS to Pakistan) takes place, there is a possibility". On the whole the result was arms race in South Asia.

Taking cognizance of the reports from India about the sale of AWACS to Pakistan, the "American acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Herbert G. Hagerty, said," The US has not taken any final decision on sale of Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) to Pakistan and will take into consideration India's views before taking the decision". In this regard the US foreign policy

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46 Quoted in Shri Ram Sharma, Supra No.33, p-92.
47 Asian Recorder, 33 (26), June 25-July 1, 1987, p-19520
49 Patriot (New Delhi) 1st February 1987.

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was inconsistent. On the one hand the US was showing interest in forward movement in improving the Indo-US relations, on the other, it was trying to affect the security of India by supplying sophisticated weapons to Pakistan. As far as the issue of Afghanistan and security of India are concerned the US categorically stated, “The United States does not accept the argument occasionally voiced by Indian officials that the Soviet presence in Afghanistan does not constitute a threat to Pakistan and that the United States military sales programme to Pakistan is unnecessary. Here the choice focuses on the differing Indian and American perceptions of security issues in an area of the world that is important to both.”

That is how the relations of India and the US had more ups and downs than the normal relations. It is because of this that the United States and India have continued their divergent perception on security issues.

Despite certain irritants Rajiv Gandhi made sincere efforts to strengthen friendly relations and technological co-operation with the US. However, it was in October 1987, that is within two months of Rajiv Gandhi’s visit, a big reversal came when the “US Congress Committee cleared the $ 4.2 billion military and economic aid package for Pakistan on December 4, 1987”.

Under this package, Pakistan was (sic) to get about 60 F-16s bringing the tally to 100.

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50 Current History, 85 (509), March 1986, p-100.
Besides this, Weinberger in principle agreed for the supply of about 20 F-16s, which was the latest and more sophisticated version of the already supplied F-16s. Interestingly, the clearing of the aid package was stalled for three and half months because of certain new evidence that Pakistan was clandestinely following a nuclear weapon programme. This was done despite Islamabad's outright refusal to satisfy US Law on “fugitive nuclear weapons program”. This time before India could protest against the military aid, the aid was finally stalled in August 1987 because a Pakistani was found stealing sensitive materials helpful in the manufacture of nuclear weapons outside the US. By this decision the US Congress, on the one hand, cleared Pakistan and, on the other hand, branded India's peaceful nuclear program by equating with Pakistan's nuclear program. In fact, the US deliberately chose to ignore even after knowing Pakistan's capability of enriching uranium - a technology and gave a call for halting the nuclear race in South Asia. Rajiv Gandhi, while making a statement in the Rajya Sabha said, "It was made abundantly clear to the United States leaders during his recent visit that there was no comparison between the nuclear programme of India and that of Pakistan. The two countries could not be equated in this context. Pakistan was trying to attain nuclear technology clandestinely through stealing and smuggling and their whole nuclear program was targeted to make nuclear weapons. On the other hand, India had developed its nuclear

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52 Pradyot Pradhan, Nuclear Pakistan and India's Response, India Quarterly, 43(1), January – March 1987, p-4.
technology on its own and none of its nuclear programme was in military sector.\textsuperscript{54} Due to the biased attitude of the US, India was disturbed.

The US Congress Committee's move to equate India with Pakistan on nuclear proliferation issue caused strong reaction in India. "The government of India conveyed to the US Embassy in New Delhi, on December 4, 1987 its adverse reaction to the American Senate panel's amendment on nuclear proliferation which sought to equate India with Pakistan and permit the US President to continue to give Islamabad military and economic aid despite its nuclear weapons programme."\textsuperscript{55} Even, Natwar Singh the then External Affairs Minister, while making a statement in the Rajya Sabha warned that the Indo-US relations would be "adversely affected unless the clauses seeking to equate India and Pakistan in the US Senate sub-committee recommendations were deleted".\textsuperscript{56} Even Rajiv Gandhi conveyed India's concern to the US Ambassador in India, John Gunther Dean on the reported remarks by the US on the nuclear issue. During the meeting it was pointed out to him that the US Congress Committee's vote would provide an alibi to Pakistan to continue its non-peaceful nuclear programme. The strong Indian reaction, later on compelled the US to amend its decision. President Reagan took steps for this purpose and the US

\textsuperscript{54} Asian Recorder, 33 (50) Dec 10-16, 1987, p-19777.
\textsuperscript{55} Asian Recorder, 34(4) Jan 22-28, 1988, p-19848.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.
Congress revised the proposal. The crisis was over but it was a bitter experience to India. The unfriendly friendliness continues to characterize the relations. India's deep and time tested friendship with the Soviet Union and the American committed friendship with Pakistan continue to hinder the growth of the Indo-US friendship and cooperation.

The justification given by Ronald Reagan was that the US arms aid to Pakistan was not directed against India and also that of Pakistan's clarification that the US aid was not directed against any of its neighbours, were hardly convincing not only to India, but also to the Soviet Union and Afghanistan. Perhaps, it was plainly hypocritical in view of the statement made by the Bush administration in 1989 wherein he clearly defended the US action in aiding Pakistan as reported in one of the newspapers.

While "defending the supply of 60 F-16 aircraft to Pakistan, the Bush Administration for the first time admitted at a Congressional hearing (yesterday) that the US military programme to Pakistan was aimed at maintaining the current military balance with India, which is given as 3-to-1. While the previous Reagan Administration had never openly stated this or even hinted that India was a potential aggressor and justified arms sales to Pakistan on the basis of the threat it faced from the Soviet Union and the Kabul regime™.57 This clearly indicated that the US arms supply to

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57 The Hindu, 4 August 1989.
Pakistan appears to be not only directed against India but also indirectly to subdue the Soviet Union.

BY mid-1986 after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan, there was shift in the US politics. In this context, Pakistan ceased to be a frontline for the US thereby reducing Washington’s attention and importance in the South Asian region. Further, by the end of 1990, the US administration invoked the pressler amendment, which stopped all types’ of economic and military aid to Pakistan. Thus, ended for the time being the US patronage to Pakistan in matters of arms aid.

c) "Indian Ocean" Zone of Peace or Military (Zone) Bases:

The issue of Indian Ocean was not only a matter of great concern but also a major irritant in the Indo-US relations. India sees the Ocean as a vital frontier; along with the North-West and North-East land boundaries to protect its maritime interests. Besides, India regarded the Ocean as an important trade roots for its economic development and security. The British, who had sway over the Ocean right through the Second World War, found it economically unviable to continue their hold. As a result, “in 1967 Britain announced, “all their military forces outside Europe and Mediterranean would be withdrawn”.58 The Indian Ocean started gaining importance in the 1970s when the British withdrew from east of Suez. This naturally made Indians feel vulnerable and unprotected. Perhaps, “they felt even more so when United States

58 Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, 1987, p-6.
gained a base at Diego Garcia. Consequent upon the US acquiring Diego Garcia base, "the Soviet Union for the first time sent a small squadron of its navy in March-April 1968 which attracted world-wide attention and some Western observers considered it as a something of a beginning of Soviet drive to control the Indian Ocean. All these clearly indicated power politics of the Super Powers to establish their control the Indian Ocean. When both the Super Powers started gaining control over the Indian Ocean, the situation in the area started worsening.

In view of these developments India declared Indian Ocean a zone of peace. The big powers, along with US and Soviet Union were mainly responsible for converting the Indian Ocean a zone of peace into a military zone to protect their marine/security interests and establish supremacy. Perhaps, the rivalry between the two Super Powers and establishment of military bases led to arms race in the region. Obviously, it was a cause of concern to hinterland and littoral States surrounded by Indian Ocean. This not only threatened the security and integrity of these states but also affected trade roots in the Indian Ocean. However, Rajiv Gandhi commenting on the Super Powers rivalry, once said, "these rivalries are not of our making. We are not party to them. But they threaten to intrude upon our concern with the progress and development of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean".

60 Foreign Affairs Reports, 35 (2) February 1986, p-16.
61 Deccan Herald, 5 July 1986.
The politics of Great Powers became more important with the British decision to withdraw from the region. The other naval powers felt that they could fill the so-called "vacuum" with the British withdrawal. It was this power vacuum theory that tended to the miliatarisation of the Ocean. In the race to fill the vacuum and to develop the permanent military base in the Indian Ocean, the US were the first Super Power to do so to counter the Soviet naval activity in the region. The competition between the US and the USSR to build the military base in the Indian Ocean disturbed - India and other littoral States who were struggling to keep the Indian Ocean region as "a zone of peace". Therefore, Rajiv Gandhi while speaking at New Delhi on 2\(^{nd}\) April 1985 said, "Indian Ocean has become a playground for world navies. It has become infested with nuclear weapons. We are strongly committed to a zone of peace in Indian Ocean and we will work towards this end. The big powers’ presence in the Indian Ocean poses a threat to all the littoral States. The continued militarisation of Diego Garcia is a matter of deep concern to us. We would like the Indian Ocean to be free from Super Power rivalry and tensions".\(^{62}\)

Further, taking into consideration the Super Power rivalry in the region Rajiv Gandhi, while speaking at the banquet hosted in his honour by the Prime Minister of Australia, at Canberra on 14\(^{th}\) October 1986 said, "In 1971, the United Nations declared the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. The declaration has remained a dead

\(^{62}\) Rajiv Gandhi, Selected Speeches and Writings, Supra No.11, (Vol-I), p-300.
letter while the ocean has been transferred into a theatre of tension by the induction of foreign naval presences and their panoply of nuclear war. The United Nations General Assembly is once again considering at its current session the question of convening a conference to give effect to that declaration. I hope our discussions here will contribute to a congruence of Indian and Australian positions in New York. The vast riches of the Indian Ocean will be denied to us if the Ocean is usurped by the war machines of others.63

Rajiv Gandhi had made clear his stand of complete elimination of Super Power rivalry from the Indian Ocean area. Rajiv Gandhi even urged the two Super Powers to arrive at some kind of agreement to "freeze" their naval activity in the Indian Ocean in the interests of the littoral states. As a result, the ground was set for the two Super Powers to discuss on the various issues that caused tensions to the international community after the Delhi Declaration.

When Gorbachev became the President of the USSR in 1985, a new era of liberalization began. Taking note of the same, Rajiv Gandhi persuaded Gorbachev to stop the arms race in the Ocean by converting the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace. Gorbachev, who was also in favour of reducing the naval forces from the Indian Ocean supported "the United Nations Declaration on the Indian

Ocean as a Zone of Peace" and called for the "Demilitarization of Indian Ocean".64 thereby joining hands with India to convert the Indian Ocean from military zone to a zone of peace. But the US was reluctant to withdraw its naval forces from the Indian Ocean in view of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and also its strategic interests in the South Asia. The US insisted that unless the Soviet Union withdrew its military from Afghanistan, it would be difficult to resolve the Afghan issue and there would not be any dialogue.

Taking into consideration the adamant attitude of the US, and the growing US military activities in the vicinity of Indian Ocean that were detrimental to the littoral states, the Soviet Union criticized Washington for endeavoring to turn the Indian Ocean into an "American Lake" in order "to train their guns on the independence of other countries". The American naval bases in Kenya, Somalia, Oman and Diego Garcia "are designed to further American imperial design". These bases should be "dismantled immediately" for the security of the Indian Ocean countries, and offered their aid to India to turn the Indian Ocean into an "Ocean of Peace".65

The US linked the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan to the issue of Indian Ocean and arms aid to Pakistan. Once "Americans contended that it was the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan that

had provoked them to go all out to build up Diego Garcia as a powerful base... One may not agree with them totally but the American went to the extent of saying that all the military bases they might acquire in the Indian Ocean and all their naval bases in the Gulf area could not equal the striking power of the land-based Soviet forces in Afghanistan".\textsuperscript{66} Therefore, India pleaded that the US had to de-link the Afghan issue from other questions in order to protect the security of India. However, the US continued arms supply to Pakistan despite India's protests till the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan. Therefore, the continued Soviet occupation of Afghanistan was the root cause in strengthening Pakistan's claims to American assistance, and heightening the tensions in the South Asian region, which provided the US and the Soviet Union with the reason to continue their naval build up in the Indian Ocean.

It was the Soviet Union, which positively responded to Rajiv Gandhi's call for demilitarization of the Ocean and accordingly decided to reduce its naval forces from the Indian Ocean. Further, it was also due to the détente that emerged between USA and USSR relations in the latter half of 1985 made India optimistic in turning the Indian Ocean into an Ocean of Peace. Also by this time Soviet Union also withdrew the military forces as agreed in the Geneva summit. The result was to reduce the US naval forces from the

Indian Ocean. In this regard, Rajiv Gandhi's leadership proved to be successful in demilitarizing the Indian Ocean and to establish peace in the region putting an end to the arms race between the two Super Powers.

d) **Super 301 Trade Businesses:**

Another major irritant that came in the way of Indo-US relations was the issue of Super-301 in the beginning of 1989. The US always maintained "big brother" attitude towards smaller and developing countries with an object of establishing hegemony and control over their trade relations. As a result, the US introduced new laws "popularly known as Super-301" to bring the countries of the world to its terms. "Super-301 is a provision of the Trade Act of 1974 under which the US Trade Representatives identifies, in an annual report, those "priority foreign country practices" that, if eliminated, have the greatest potential for the expansion of US exports. Besides identifying trade liberalization priorities, the United States Trade Representatives (USTR) can initiate Section 301 investigations regarding those practices in countries where the liberalization priorities have not been met".67

Super 301 trade’s law was just one among the draconian laws, with an objective to keep the countries having not only adverse business dealings but also the countries, which have not maintained good relations with the US. The main rationality behind

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such move was to influence indirectly the national and economic interests of the countries who failed to satisfy US business laws. However, India was one among such countries, which had adverse business dealings with the US. Consequently, the US decided to take punitive action against India not only for her adverse trade relations with the US but also for various other reasons. Thus the U.S. was clear, in punishing India for her stand on the Afghan problem, refusal to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, and violation of human rights in Punjab etc. Despite the MOU of 1984-85, which introduced substantial changes in the Indo-US relations in the areas of defence co-operation and sales of military and dual-use technology. However, the substantial changes in the Indo-US relations did not last for long when the US put a barrier on the Indian trade at the international level. This obviously made India to follow different path as far as its relations with the US are concerned.

The differences between India and the US came to the fore (reached the climax) when the “United States proposed to include the issues related to intellectual property rights (IPR) in the Uruguay Round (UR) negotiations. India vehemently opposed the inclusion of any item dealing with intellectual property rights in the UR negotiations. It could be argued that the US had vested interests in pushing the intellectual property rights at the multilateral trade negotiation as she along with other industrialized
countries held 92% of patents”.68 India opposed the inclusion of IPR within the GATT framework; because India argued that GATT was mainly concerned with trade in goods. It is not an appropriate forum to negotiate issues of IPR. Further, it argued that the issues pertaining to IPR should be discussed at the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) an organisation set up for the purpose. India expressed its genuine concern about the interests of the developing and least developed countries and believed that the economy of these countries was not ripe enough to concede the demands of the industrialized countries. As a result, the issue of IPR was not priority agenda for India though it was for the US.

Despite strong opposition from India and other countries, the US succeeded in pushing the IPR’s item on the Uruguay Round negotiation agenda along with three other new areas: agriculture, services and Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMs) as mandatory issues for negotiation in the GATT Ministerial Conference in Punta del Este in 1986. New Delhi started negotiating at UR presuming that no sovereign country can be compelled to negotiate on the issue not in its interest. Washington was successful in bringing the IPRs issue at multilateral trade negotiation as a full-fledged item for negotiation.

However, in 1989, India named under the US Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 for unfair trade practices. Listing India on Super and Special 301 (S-301) clause was seen as a shrewd strategy to pressurise it to negotiate on trade Related Intellectual Property Rights at the Uruguay round (UR) multilateral trade negotiations, she would face retaliatory sanctions unilaterally under US trade laws. “The national Trade Estimate Report related in early May 1989 by United States Trade Representative (USTR), Carla Hills, named India along with Japan, South Korea, Brazil, Canada, and the European Community as among worst offenders”.

Interestingly, charges against India did not concern restrictive with respect to merchandise trade. Instead, “India cited for its restrictive policies in respect of foreign investment and an invisible, namely, insurance. The USTR would like India to revise its policy of requiring government approval of foreign investment and to open its insurance market to foreign companies”. The main intention of the US was to take revenge upon the countries, which refused to be not inline with it. However, India under the dynamic leadership of Rajiv Gandhi opposed the harsh measures introduced under Super 301 against India. In an oblique reference to the U.S. action of naming India under Super and Special 301, Rajiv Gandhi said, “what is worse, those of us who have dared to raise our voice have been threatened with retribution. We are not going to be cowed by such pressures”.

69 India Indicated of Putting Unfair Trade Barriers, Indian Express, 5 May 1989.
70 Times of India, 23 June 1989.
71 The Hindu, 5th September 1989.
On May 25, 1989, the US put India on the hit list under “Special 301” and Super 301 (alongside Brazil and Japan). The “specific negotiating objectives” Washington expected among other things with respect to India were: Improved patent protection for all classes of invention, elimination of discrimination against use of foreign trade marks, registration of service marks, effective protection of well known marks, improved access and distribution for US motion pictures, improved enforcement against piracy, conclusion of an intellectual property annex to the bilateral science and technology agreement, and constructive participation in multilateral property negotiations.  

America invoked Super-301 against India just less than six months before Rajiv Gandhi was about to face the General Elections. It is believed that the US had chosen this time deliberately to pressurize Rajiv Gandhi on the economic front. Rajiv Gandhi who all along made herculean efforts to improve the Indo-US relations thereby removing the irritants. Therefore, Rajiv Gandhi had to undergo pressure from the US during his last days in office. By invoking Super 301, the US wanted to kill two birds with one stone, i.e., firstly by affecting Indian economy and secondly, by creating political pressure on Rajiv Gandhi. By invoking Super 301 against India the US aimed at undermining the growing influence of Rajiv Gandhi in the international arena who withstood all sorts of the US pressures tactics and emerged as an

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able leader in the world. Perhaps, the US action in the form of Super and Special-301 failed to deter Rajiv Gandhi who was struggling hard to develop India into one of the technologically powerful country in the world. His leadership contributed to make India a self-reliant nation.

**Indo-Soviet Relations:**

India and the Soviet Union, the two Asian giants though following different political systems are no doubt good friends in the eyes of world community. The two countries became successful in developing a high degree of co-operation in almost all spheres of bilateral relations. These two countries remained model for peaceful co-existence and co-operation following the principle of equality, mutual respect and mutual understanding of each other concerns. It is because of close friendship between the two countries that the Soviet Union always stood on the Indian side in times of crisis. Therefore, the warm relations with the Soviet Union were a constant factor in Indian foreign policy. A former Foreign Secretary (and a known Russophile), T.N.Kaul noted “relations between India and the Soviet Union are not a matter of temporary convenience or expediency, but the corner stone of our foreign policies” 73

The passage of time has further strengthened the bonds of friendship and the foundations of co-operation and co-existence

between the two countries. It is because of this bond of friendship that both India and Soviet Union showed the world community that the history of Indo-Soviet relations is a history of ever-increasing co-operation. It is pertinent to note that the study of the Indo-Soviet relations reveals that the two countries never had strained relations between them. In fact, this is mainly because of deep understanding and mutual co-operation principle on which the Indo-Soviet friendship was built. An attempt is made here to discuss the start of the Indo-Soviet relations under the dynamic leadership of Rajiv Gandhi.

**A Brief History of Indo-Soviet Relations:**

The history of India’s relations with the Soviet Union dates back to pre-independence days “when it offered support and sustenance to revolutionaries, like Virendra Chattopadhyya, Raja Mahendra Pratap, Mohammed Barakatulla, Pandurang Khankoje and host of others. As early as in 1914 a group of freedom fighters, comprising Chamapakraman Pillai, Taraknath Das, Bhagwan Singh and Lala Har Dayal arrived from Berlin and were warmly received by officials of the Tsarist Russia. This group was in active contact with the Chadar party and carried on extensive propaganda against British imperialism by smuggling “subversive literature” to India via Kabul”. 74

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74 N.M.Khilnani, Gorbachev and Indo-Soviet Relations PTI Feature Vol-7 (14), November 5, 1986, p- C 271.
Taking into consideration the historical relations and bond of friendship between the two countries Jawaharlal Nehru during his visit to Moscow in 1927 to attend the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution said, “India is an Asian country. So is the Soviet Union sprawling over Asia and Europe. Between two such neighbours there can be amity or enmity; indifference is out of the question”.75 From the above it is evident that the friendship between India and the Soviet Union was deep rooted. In fact, Jawaharlal Nehru, ever since he became the Prime Minister continued to develop India’s friendly relations with USSR in all the fields. Therefore, the role played by Jawaharlal Nehru was one of paramount importance in laying the foundation of Indo-Soviet friendship. Further the successors of Nehru also faithfully adhered to his policy of co-existence. It is because of this that the friendship between India and the Soviet Union, which existed since the days of pre independence, has continued unabatedly.

The Soviet Union, which not only stood by India’s side at the time of urgent situation but also extended its support even at the UN, whenever India’s territorial integrity was in question, as in the case of Kashmir and Goa. Further it is also pertinent to note that it is because of the fear of Soviet Unions’ veto power that the Western countries could not point at India, especially for its aggression on

Goa in 1961. Therefore, it is made known to the world society that "the Indo-Soviet friendship was so deep rooted that none on the earth could disturb the friendship which was based on common interest and co-operation. Commenting on the Indo-Soviet friendship in her message to friends of the Soviet Union meeting in Bombay in May 1981, Mrs. Indira Gandhi said, "Between the people of the Soviet Union and India there is a strong and warm friendship, which has stood the test of time. This friendship is based on shared concern for peace and international brotherhood, common opposition to colonialism and racialism and a deep desire to enlarge economic and cultural relations to mutual benefit." 76

Therefore, the friendship that existed between the two countries stood as a model to the world community. It is because of this that both the Soviet Union and India became a source of inspiration to other countries of the world for their everlasting friendship. Even many countries in the world appreciated the type of friendship that was developed between the two countries. On the whole, the friendship of the Soviet Union for India has remained steady like, to use a lovely metaphor from the Geeta, "a flame in windless spot which does not flicker." 77

77 K.P.S. Menon., Supra No.3, p-5.
Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty: 1953

The Indo-Soviet friendship Treaty signed in the year 1953 marked the golden era in the history of Indo-Soviet relations. The treaty is thus the latest fruit of the plant of Indo-Soviet friendship, in spite of formidable obstacles. Therefore, the Indo-Soviet Treaty stood as a testimony to the everlasting friendship between the two countries. Further, the relations between India and the USSR steadily developed after the visit of Nehru to the USSR in 1955 and return visit of Soviet leaders to India in the following year. The Soviet Union also supported India’s policy of non-alignment, peace and disarmament and national independence. In turn, India has also supported the Soviet Unions’ policy of peace and co-operation. The mutual understanding and co-operation between the two countries greatly helped to develop a durable friendship.

In fact, it is no secret that there was a lot of similarity of views between India and Soviet Union on a variety of subjects,” such as ridding the world of the nuclear menace, preventing the spread of miniaturization to outer space, the need to settle conflict through patient dialogue rather than through military means and eventually bring about a climate of peace, harmony and cooperation, where full respect is given to the aspirations of the different peoples.”

78 Blitz, 29 November 1986, p-31.
Major Issues of Rajiv Gandhi's Period:

During the premiership of Rajiv Gandhi, the Indo-soviet relations further strengthened and also developed the co-operation and co-existence to a greater extent. Rajiv Gandhi in his broadcast to the nation on the 12th November 1984, i.e., the day he attended the office in the South Block, reaffirmed his government’s full commitment to maintain and develop further friendship with the Soviet Union, one of India’s time tested friends. No doubt, several times Soviet Union had come to India’s rescue during its critical days and always stood behind India to safeguard its security and integrity. Therefore, India attached much importance to Soviet Union. According to Rajiv Gandhi. “We highly value the wide-ranging and time-tested relationship with the Soviet Union based upon mutual cooperation, friendship and vital support when most needed.”

During Rajiv Gandhi’s tenure, he gave utmost importance to strengthen good relations and reaffirmed his decision to develop further India’s friendship and co-operation in different fields with Soviet Union.

But, at the initial stage, several apprehensions were expressed in certain quarters of the country that Rajiv Gandhi with his Western education, Western culture, a new political background and unorthodox nature would tilt more towards West than East. It was also believed that Rajiv Gandhi’s liberalized policy

79 Rajiv Gandhi, Selected Speeches and Writings, Supra No.11,(Vol-1), p-8.
and his love towards modern technology, which he intended to get from the West, was said to be the reason for his inclination towards the West. Further the influence of the West on Rajiv Gandhi was another important added reason. True to this, Rajiv Gandhi tilted towards the West in order to acquire the modern technology, which includes Supercomputers and highly sophisticated military and defence equipments from the West. But “Rajiv Gandhi had assured the then Soviet Premier Mr. Tikhonov during his visit to India at Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s funeral that his government would continue the policies pursued by Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru in strengthening friendly ties with the Soviet Union and other countries”. 80

In fact, Rajiv Gandhi’s line of thinking with regard to modern technology was inevitable, as he wanted to take India to the 21st century. But Rajiv Gandhi who extended the hand of friendship and co-operation with the West made no significant effect on the Indo-Soviet relations. It is pertinent to note that he did not compromise in any way India’s national interest, her non-aligned policy and her time tested friendship with Soviet Union at the cost of Indo-US agreements on the transfer of advance technology. India, a trusted friend of the Soviet Union would not forget its friendship whose relations were based on peace, reciprocity and mutual understanding. Therefore, it was a baseless observation.

80 Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1st November 1985.
made in some corners of the country that Rajiv Gandhi was tilting more towards West than towards East. Perhaps, Rajiv Gandhi as Prime Minister of India made strenuous efforts to strengthen more friendship with the Soviet Union.

a) Towards Greater Cooperation:

Rajiv Gandhi’s Visit to Moscow:

As a matter of goodwill and friendship, the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi undertook a six-day tour to Soviet Union in May 1985. This was the first official visit undertaken by Rajiv Gandhi since he assumed office in October 1984. The main object of his visit was to reaffirm India’s stand of friendship and co-operation with the Soviet Union. It was also his endeavour to strengthen the bonds of close friendship and the development of co-operation to a larger extent involving huge areas between the two countries. During his stay at Moscow, Rajiv Gandhi told the Soviet leaders, “He would continue the splendid record of Indo-Soviet relations built over the last three decades. Friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union were an integral element of India’s foreign policy and the people of India regarded the Soviet people as friends “who have stood by us in times of need”. He also said that India would continue to preserve and promote further relationship with Soviet Union as it was maintained in the past. During his visit Rajiv Gandhi also got an opportunity to convince the soviet leaders that

81 Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1st November 1985.
India’s quest for new advanced Western technology would not come in the way of its commitment to promote the Indo-Soviet friendship.

**Rajiv – Gorbachev talks:**

During his visit the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi held talks with Gorbachev, which included both bilateral relations and international issues covering wide-ranging subjects. The international issues discussed included peace and disarmament and the developments in South-East Asia, South-West Asia, Iran-Iraq war, South Africa and Central America. Rajiv Gandhi also briefed Gorbachev on the efforts made by him to develop friendly relations with neighbours and the initiative taken as the Chairman of the NAM. The leaders of both the countries also signed two important bilateral agreements on economic co-operation. The first agreement on economic and technological co-operation provided for Soviet participation in the important projects included in the Seventh Five Year Plan, particularly in the power, coal and petroleum sectors. There was (sic) also provision for Soviet participation in the iron and steel machine building sectors... This agreement also covered a credit of one billion roubles. The second agreement signed was on the main directions of economic, trade, scientific and technical co-operation between the two countries up to 2000 AD".82 The main sectors covered by this agreement are power, coal, oil and gas industry, science and technology, ferrous

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82 Rajiv Gandhi, Selected Speeches and Writings, (Vol-1), Supra No.11, p-341.
and non-ferrous metallurgy, machine building, medicine and public health. The second agreement was for greater co-operation between the two countries in diverse spheres of Indian economy up to the year 2000. By this agreement India became the first non-socialist country to secure such a long-term understanding with the USSR. Largely, the agreement paved the way for exploration of hitherto untapped areas. In addition to this greater economic assistance from Soviet Union and increased exports of products of India’s heavy engineering and small scale industry.

As far as international issues are concerned, both India and the Soviet Union signed a joint statement. In this, the two countries expressed serious concern over the continuing tension in some areas of South West Asia, particularly Afghanistan. Even they asked Iran and Iraq to declare ceasefire the long war and called upon the countries to solve their problems with a peaceful political solution. The joint statement also covered the issues including military intervention in Afghanistan, Diego Garcia, Nicaragua and Palestine. President Gorbachev assured Rajiv Gandhi that his country would not take any initiative to produce nuclear weapons and it was ready to end the arms race provided all other countries committed to this endeavour in the interest of the entire world.

83 Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi Visits USSR, Allied Publishers, Information Department of USSR Embassy, New Delhi, pp-10, 11.
Further, the joint statement expressed “profound satisfaction” on both sides over the results of the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi’s six-day state visit, which “has further strengthened bonds of close friendship between the people of the two countries”. The conviction was recorded that it “will be a new and important step on the road to further development of relations.” Further, Rajiv Gandhi’s visit contributed towards increasing the bilateral co-operation between the two countries in various fields of human development.

No doubt, the visit of Rajiv Gandhi to the Soviet Union aroused new hopes in diverse fields and cemented the relations between the countries. Appreciating the outcome of Rajiv Gandhi’s visit to Moscow, the Mainstream in one of its editorials rightly observed: “For one thing the strengthening of mutual trust and cooperation between the two countries of major significance already bound by more than three decades of tested friendship—is an important event by any international standards. This is precisely the basic achievement of the Prime Minister’s trip, the first foreign tour undertaken by him after assumption of office”. In fact, Rajiv Gandhi’s visit provided a good deal of understanding between the two countries and established an excellent personal rapport with the Soviet Union leader Gorbachev. The visit no doubt greatly helped to maintain friendly relations and to further the cause of co-operation with the Soviet Union. Further; the visit also made the

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84 Asian Recorder, Supra No. 19, p-18373.
85 Mainstream, 23(4), June 1, 1985.
Indo-Soviet friendship stronger and laid out long-term plans for all round co-operation. In addition to this, it made clear during the time of issuing the joint statement on international issues that both India and the Soviet Union had similar views. This was an indication how these two countries have developed the concept of mutual understanding and co-operation since pre-independence days.

**Gorbachev’s Visit to India: November 1986.**

In response to Rajiv Gandhi’s visit to Moscow, Mikhail Gorbachev, the General Secretary of the Soviet Communist party, paid a four-day official visit to India on 25 November 1986, which provided a big boost to the Indo-Soviet relations. The visit also provided an opportunity to both the countries to reaffirm their commitment towards the development of the Indo-Soviet special friendship treaty of peace and cooperation. Both Rajiv Gandhi and Gorbachev discussed the broad outlines of future co-operation in a long-term perspective. The two leaders signed several important bilateral agreements. “The agreement on economic, scientific and technical co-operation encompasses the Tehri hydroelectric complex, the modernization of the Bokaro steel plant, the setting up of new coking coal mines and oil exploration in West Bengal. One important element of this agreement was the provision of local cost financing by the Soviet Union”.

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86 Rajiv Gandhi, Selected Speeches and Writings, (Vol-II), Supra No.63, p-337.
The agreements in the economic, commercial and cultural areas reflect the growing strength and dynamism of the Indo-Soviet relations. In fact, the growing co-operation between the two countries under the dynamic leadership of Rajiv Gandhi was considered a milestone in the history of Indo-Soviet relations. Commenting on the economic and technical co-operation, Rajiv Gandhi said in a joint conference with Gorbachev. “We have also decided to give a qualitative thrust to our science and technology cooperation. We shall perhaps take totally a new approach in this sphere, doing joint research projects in fresh technology areas together and then moving from that stage to the production stage of these technologies”.87 Further, Rajiv Gandhi described the new arrangement as the “largest economic agreement” ever signed between the two countries. He said, “there are two new elements in this economic agreement – the local cost financing and the turn-key approach. We have also agreed to increase our trade by about two and a half times by 1992”.

At the end of Gorbachev’s visit a joint statement was issued, in which the two sides expressed their profound satisfaction at the relations of close friendship and wide-ranging co-operation

88 Quoted in Hemen Ray, Supra No.65, p-196.
characterized by mutual respect, warmth and trust between the peoples and leaders of the two countries. The visit considered as a new landmark in the development of friendship and fruitful cooperation between the Soviet Union and India and described the relations between the countries as a “model of peaceful coexistence” based on the principles of equality and mutual respect and non-interference in each other’s internal affairs. No doubt, Gorbachev’s visit further strengthened the mutual trust between the leaders and the ties of close friendship between the people of the two countries.

Later, Rajiv Gandhi’s visit to Moscow in July 1987 to inaugurate the Festival of India further boosted the Indo-Soviet relations and the bond of friendship. On 3 July 1987, Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi signed a comprehensive long-term programme of scientific and technological co-operation between the Soviet Union and India. Similarly, in November 1987, the Festival of USSR was opened in India. In a message Gorbachev said that the festival of USSR in India and the Indian festival in the Soviet Union were “landmarks in the history of our two countries. They embody the joint response of our two great nations to the epoch-making dates: the 40th anniversary of independent India... They graphically prove that our lasting traditional friendly contacts have entered into a new stage.” It was under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi that the Indo-soviet relations had gone far beyond the bounds of official governmental ties and heralded a new era of mutual trust and co-

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89 Hemen Ray, Supra No.65, p-202.
operation. Gorbachev acclaimed Rajiv Gandhi's leadership in strengthening the Indo-Soviet relations and made it clear that India continued to play the key role in world politics.

b) Delhi Declaration:

India the champion of peace always stood for non-violence and peaceful co-existence in the world. It was Mahatma Gandhi the father of Nation (India) who spearheaded the struggle for disarmament and peace in the world. Later on Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi followed by Rajiv Gandhi joined the bandwagon of Mahatma Gandhi's peace movement. However, Rajiv Gandhi played a predominant role in establishing the world peace by reducing the nuclear weapons. Further, in the efforts of Rajiv Gandhi, the Soviet Union President also joined hands to achieve world peace. In fact, Gorbachev's visit to India was considered a landmark in many ways, including the establishment of peace and disarmament. Further, his visit introduced new philosophic concepts in the identity of views on world peace and disarmament. Gorbachev happened to be the first Soviet President who accepted Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence as constituting a code of conduct among various nations of the world. During the meeting both the leaders resolved to work towards establishment of world peace. Accordingly, the two leaders on 27 November 1986 signed the historic document for non-violent and nuclear free world, which is popularly known as the “Delhi Declaration”. Rajiv Gandhi, in his
statement to the Parliament at the end of the Soviet leader's visit and in the conclusion of a joint statement, said, "Moscow had joined India in a common vision of nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world" and that "the ideals of Gandhiji and Lenin have found expression in the New Delhi Declaration. The Declaration, he said, "is a vitally important initiative". It sets forth principles, which must find universal acceptance if there is to be a peaceful future. The Declaration is being circulated as an official document by the United Nations. We commend the declaration to the world community for acceptance".90

As part of the Delhi Declaration, the two leaders opined that the UN convention should be concluded immediately as a major concrete step towards complete nuclear disarmament. The "Delhi Declaration" aimed at destruction of nuclear weapons and establishment of no-violent world "called for barring of all weapons from outer space which was described as the common heritage of all mankind, banning of all nuclear tests, prohibition of the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction, banning of chemical weapons and destruction of their stockpiles. It also called for the reduction of the conventional weapons and armed forces".91

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91 Asian Recorder, 32(52), December 24-31 1986, p-19237.
The text of the “Delhi Declaration” is as below,

“Today humanity stands at a crucial turning point in history. Nuclear weapons threaten to annihilate not only all that man has created through the ages, but man himself and even life on earth. In the nuclear age, humanity must evolve a new political thinking, a new concept of the world that would provide credible guarantees for humanity's survival. People want to live in a safer and more just world. Humanity deserves a better fate than being a hostage to nuclear terror and despair. It is necessary to change the existing world situation and to build a nuclear-weapon-free world, free of violence and hatred, fear and suspicion”.92

At the final phase of discussion, the two leaders issued a joint statement and supplemented it by a 10 point Declaration, which was popularly known as “New Delhi Declaration”.

The two leaders set forth the following principles for building a nuclear-weapon free and non-violent world.

1) Peaceful co-existence must become the universal norm of international relations.

2) Human life must be recognized as supreme.

3) Non-violence should be the basis of community life.

4) Understanding and trust must replace fear and suspicion

92 Foreign Affairs Reports, 37 (3&4), March-April, 1988, p-91.
5) The right of every state to political and economic independence must be recognised and respected

6) Resources being spent on armaments must be channelled towards social and economic development

7) Conditions must be guaranteed for the individual's harmonious development

8) Mankind's material and intellectual potential must be used to solve global problems.

9) The "Balance of Terror" must give way to comprehensive international security

10) A nuclear-weapon free and non-violent world requires specific and immediate action for disarmament: it can be achieved through agreements on

   a) Complete destruction of nuclear arsenals before the end of this century;

   b) Barring of all weapons from outer space, which is the common heritage of Mankind;

   c) Banning of all nuclear weapons tests;

   d) Prohibition of the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction;

   e) Banning of chemical weapons and destruction of their stockpiles;

   f) Reducing the levels of conventional arms and armed forces”.

93 Rajiv Gandhi Selected Speeches and Writings (Vol-II), Supra No.63, pp-333, 334.
The ten-point “New Delhi Declaration”, indeed, constitutes a Charter for the transformation of outlook and relations among nations. Gorbachev taking into consideration the repercussions of nuclear holocaust said, "survival of mankind must be placed above all interests and the security of any one state is inconceivable without security for all”. 94

Indeed, the “Delhi declaration” signed between Rajiv Gandhi and Mikhail Gorbachev was not only considered an epoch making event in the history of nuclear world but also a major contribution to the world’s largest peace movement undertaken by India. In this regard, Rajiv Gandhi’s leadership that heralded the peace movement was successful in impressing Gorbachev to join hands with India, which, ventured into elimination of nuclear weapons from the world. Even Ronald Reagan impressed by the Delhi Declaration’s call, responded positively in the cause of establishing nuclear-free-world. As a result, it was in 1987 that both Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan reached an agreement in Geneva, which culminated in signing the INF Treaty. According to the Treaty, both leaders agreed to eliminate the intermediate-range and short-range missiles, not to have systems thereafter, and to carry out the other obligations set forth in the Treaty. In fact, the larger part of the credit goes to Rajiv Gandhi for bringing the two Super Power leaders to reach an agreement on the INF treaty aimed at mass

94 S.C.Parasher, Supra No.64, p-457.
d) India's Position on Politics of Super Powers Regarding Afghan Crisis:

The Afghan crisis became a cause of disagreement between the US and the Soviet Union in the 1980s. Perhaps, the Afghan issue created a rift in the Indo-US relations. Because, the Soviet Union's entry in Afghanistan created a volatile atmosphere in the South Asian region. It was displeasure for the US. Therefore, from 1980 onwards the relations between Super Powers started drifting. In the given context, India had to face a peculiar situation because India was making efforts to normalize its relations with the US and at the same time it was trying to strengthen its bond of friendship with the Soviet Union, a strategic partner. This naturally made India feel insecure in the South Asian since the US was pumping huge arms and ammunition into Pakistan, which posed great threat to India.

India, which always maintained good and friendly relations with the Soviet Union since independence days, had to face an embarrassing situation due to the Soviet's intervention in Afghanistan. Further, the Soviet Union intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 changed the whole scenario; in the South Asian region. Soviet intervention in Afghanistan made the whole world
turn its eyes towards India, the leader of the non-aligned countries for its stance on the Soviet action. Prior to this most of the non-aligned countries, not to mention Washington and Beijing, expressed sharp opposition to the Soviet move. Indira Gandhi, who made a surprise come back in the mid term elections in January 1980 made India’s stand clear that (1) the Soviets acted on the request of the government existing in Afghanistan prior to the big air lifts; 2) the government of India trusted the Soviet assurance that the troops would be withdrawn as soon as Afghanistan requested it; 3) India perceived more danger to its own security in the concerted Cold-War type responses of the United States and China to the Soviet action; 4) any Sino-American move to arm Pakistan and destabilize the region would compel India to renew its strategic collaboration with the USSR, and 5) by abstaining from voting in the UN General assembly, India kept some distance from Moscow in order to be able to work patiently - unilaterally or in conjunction with other nations - to ensure at least a sizable and early Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.95 But the USA did not like the way India criticized Soviet’s intervention and its soft corner towards condemning the Soviet Union’s action in Afghanistan. This naturally put India in the dilemma when the international community was criticizing Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan and the US was insisting on withdrawal of Soviet forces. Therefore,

India had to face an embarrassing situation when Soviet Union entered into Afghanistan. As a result, the Afghan issue started taking different shape during the regime of Indira Gandhi. Consequently, Indira Gandhi without taking side decided to adopt wait and watch approach to the Afghan crisis in the light of the Soviet Union's friendship.

When Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister the situation in Afghanistan became one of the debatable issues at the international forums and organizations. Because of the rivalry between the US and the USSR the Afghanistan issue was internationalized and it reached the high point at a time when India was making sincere efforts to normalize its relations with the US. The main objective behind the internal strife between the US and the USSR was that one of the Super Powers America did not like USSR's entry into Afghanistan. It was at this juncture that Rajiv Gandhi also became the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The US taking Rajiv Gandhi's position as the Chairman of the NAM started questioning his stand on the Afghanistan crisis. However, Rajiv Gandhi during his visit to the Soviet Union in May 1985 remarked in response to a question, that the subject of Afghanistan did come up in his discussions with Gorbachev and India had put across its point of view. "Our position on Afghanistan is very clear. We are not for any country interfering or intervening in the internal affairs of another country".96

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It was during the regime of Rajiv Gandhi that India had to face a similar situation existed during Indira Gandhi's period. Due to the ideological rivalry between the US and the USSR, India had to face a peculiar situation. On one hand India was seeking the transfer of Western technology for its development, and on the other hand, India could not condemn strongly the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan, as it was the traditional friend and strategic partner of India since independence days. Therefore, the Afghanistan issue became a cause of concern to India when the US started criticizing the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan and its support to the puppet government in Kabul. Since both the Super Powers locked horns over the issue and the Afghanistan issue was not only internationalized but also blown out of proportion. However, Rajiv Gandhi as the leader of the NAM decided to ease the Afghanistan crisis thereby bringing the warring groups to the negotiating table so as to reach some kind of agreement on the issue.

Accordingly, Rajiv Gandhi visited the USSR and the US in May and June 1985 respectively, and had the opportunity to discuss the Afghan crisis and nuclear issue with the two leaders, and urged them to arrive at an amicable solution to the issues at the earliest. It was Rajiv Gandhi eventually undertook a mediating role in resolving the Afghan crisis through encouraging a negotiated settlement among the warring sections. In the backdrop of Rajiv Gandhi's visit, both Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan first met in
Geneva in November 1985 and it was resolved to end the stalemate in the Afghan issue. Though the meeting between the two leaders eased the tensions somewhat, yet no substantial progress was made.

However, it was soon after the signing of the Delhi Declaration in November 1986 that things began to change at the international arena. Against the backdrop of the declaration, in 1987 both Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan again met in Geneva and reached an agreement on the Afghan issue, which was popularly known as Geneva Agreement. As part of the agreement, “half of the limited Soviet military contingent has been withdrawn from Afghanistan”.97

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97 Grigory Bondarevsky, Two Years of the Delhi Declaration: Some Reflections, Mainstream, 37 (8), November 19, 1988, p-31.