The regional cooperation is intended to minimize tensions and conflicts within the region. It is an adjustment for mutual benefit based on national self-interests.

Before the Russian conquest in the 19th century, Central Asia was mainly divided into three Khanates – Bukhara, Khiva and Khokand. The Khans, Emirs and Islam were the main sources of political legitimization. At that time religion and culture were the main cementing factor for regional cooperation in Central Asia.

Since their independence in 1991, the Central Asian states have been developing regional cooperation by different important components. From an economic perspective, despite significant individual differences, the Central Asian republics are inter-dependent on each other. No one country possesses a definite competitive edge over the other economies of the region. And politically, the heads of state not only issued non-binding declarations of intent but also took concrete action by forming an interstate council consisting of the presidents and premiers of the member states, which facilitate cooperation in the region.

Besides the individualistic or nativization of their military development, Central Asian states are enhancing their regional cooperation in peace and security, which is conducive to the region's stability and integrity. Apart from security cooperation, environmental cooperation is also improving regional stability significantly.
All the republics of Central Asia are struggling with particular problems of their own. Inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts along with linguistic and religious problems seriously affect the prospects of peace and stability in the region. After the ethnic, linguistic and religious problems, the territorial disputes are the most important area of conflict. Besides, serious conflicts have arisen over the usage of natural resources especially water and environment. A lucrative drug trade also poses a major threat to the stability and integrity of this region.

Lastly, the geographical proximity of Central Asia has enhanced the geopolitical significance of the region for both regional and extra-regional players, which have both advantages and liabilities for the regional cooperation in Central Asia.

The proposed study titled “Regional Cooperation in Central Asia” has been organized into five chapters.

The first chapter discusses the historical background of the Central Asian states and the theoretical and conceptual parameters of regional cooperation.

The second chapter deals with various factors of regional cooperation in Central Asia.

The third chapter provides in details about various problems of regional cooperation in Central Asia.

The fourth chapter investigates the role of external powers and dimensions of regional cooperation in Central Asia.

Chapter five includes a brief summary of the findings of the study.