The importance of a study of Soviet reaction to India's efforts to normalise relations with Pakistan and China cannot be gainsaid. The study highlights the juxtaposition of the elements of realpolitik and ideology as also the short and long-term objectives in Soviet policy.

The Soviet Union's interest in the development in South Asia, practically its next door neighbour is understandable. It was motivated both by geopolitical and ideological considerations aiming at promotion of stability and peace in a region close to its frontiers.

The present study examines in detail and critically scrutinises and evaluates the Soviet reactions to India's efforts to normalise relations with China from 1968-69 and with Pakistan from 1972, that is, the conclusion of the bilateral Simla Agreement. The late sixties and early seventies witnessed the emergence of Islamabad-Beijing-Washington axis which has negative impact on the general Soviet policy of bridging the gulf between India and its neighbours, Pakistan and China. Although Moscow has been in general in favour of
normalisation of India's relations with its neighbours, there have been periods when it did not view this process with particular favour.

The study is based on important Soviet Party and State pronouncements, writings and speeches of top Soviet Party and State leaders as well as commentaries, articles and writeups in the Soviet media.

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