CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Relations between Moscow and Beijing have gone full circle in the past half century, from alliance to containment and now to strategic partnership. To understand the ebbs and flows in Moscow's China policy it is necessary to look into the Soviet history.

History which is characterized as chronicle of the past provides the solid base for building up future relationships. In International Relations, there is no permanent 'friend or foe', today's bitter enemy can become tomorrow's staunchest ally. It is interest which runs supreme, and Russia and China are not exceptions to it. Despite being communist countries both Soviet Union and China counted each other as enemy number one and targeted each other with their nuclear weapons. But today Russia and China no longer consider each other as enemy and both countries have developed "very deep" relations in the strategic field.

China has the largest population in the world, while Russia is the largest nation in terms of territory. Both are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. Obviously, the significance of Sino-Russian relations extends far beyond the interests of the two nations. It also affects the stability of Asia and the world at large.

Soviet-China relations before disintegration of USSR were characterized by a number of ups and downs. In February 1950 just four months after establishment of the PRC the two countries signed the treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Cooperation. The first half of the 1950s was the honeymoon period. However, by the late 1950s differences in national interest and ideology emerged leading to serious disputes in early 1960s which developed into acute conflict and border clashes in 1969. Hence in the late 1960s and 1970s the USSR regarded China as one of its main rivals and stationed approximately one million troops and one third of its SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missile along the Sino-Soviet border, threatening to make a 'surgical' first strike on China's, nuclear bases. Under serious threat, China had to prepare for a military intrusion from north.
However, in 1980s two countries came to realization that these were not in the interests of either side and they made effort to alleviate the situation. These efforts resulted in the normalization of the relations during a state visit to Beijing by the then Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in May 1989. (Qimao, 1999, pp. 206-207)

1.1 Historical Background

Relations between Russia and China the world's two largest states from the point of view of territory and population respectively have always had a strong impact on the course of global and regional politics. During the 1960s and 70s there have been sharp ups and downs in their relations. Soviet pilots fought on the side of Chinese when China was attacked by militarist Japan. During the Second World War thousands of Chinese helped the Soviet Union both at the front and the rear. (Ragachev, 1997, p. 25).

Russo-Chinese relations exert a powerful influence on Asian world politics. Today, a strong and increasingly stable bilateral detente seems to have emerged, but change is the law of life and neither state's future is mechanistically predicable. The relations between Russia and China have always exerted to impact on the larger regional and global political scenario. During the historical processes of formation and expansion of two large empires or state systems they came to share the largest land boundary running into 7500km. The fact, that the two shared a long border, which was also disputed, inter alia generated nascent and actual apprehensions and distrusts regarding each others, motives and objectives. At the same time two were also compelled to extensively interact and deal with each other.

Mao Zedong made numerous references to the 'unequal' relationship between Chinese communist party and the Soviet Union during Stalin's era which started with his refusal during the Chinese civil war to provide greater support to communist rebels, in spite of the ideological bond. Stalin was indeed initially reluctant to repudiate the Sino-Soviet Treaty of August 1945, signed with the Guondnang, and with it, the commitments of the Yalta arrangements in the Far East. Negotiations for a new treaty did not go smoothly and Mao, who was in Moscow during the winter of 1949-1950, had to cool his heads for
nearly two and a half months. People's Republic of China had to accept the disparity of power with its Soviet 'protector' and the Mao admitted later that he had hardly any choice but to allow Stalin in 1950 to get away with beating Manchuria and Xinjiang as 'semi colonies of the USSR by prohibiting citizens of third countries from entering these two regions and by preserving its economic interests. Already in 1939, a treaty had been signed between nationalist China and Soviet government for economic collaboration in Xinjiang for ten years, providing for instance, Soviets with exclusive right in the exploration of oilfields and some universal resources.

The Chinese leadership realized their move from a subordinate position vis-à-vis the USSR to a more trusted allies only when they came to North Korea's assistance and resist American forces. It did not go without rebuff. This was reflected in Nehru's words to John. F. Dulles, during the latter's visit to New Delhi in May 1953, that the 'Soviet Union wants to keep China dependent upon the Soviet union as its spokesman and does not want China's admission to the UN in reality.

Stalin's death in March 1953 facilitated a re-appraisal of Sino-Soviet relations, taking into account the Chinese resentment over Moscow's patronizing attitude. The visit of China by a Soviet party and state delegation headed by Khrushchev on 29 September and 12 October 1954 for fifth anniversary of the PRC played a substantial role in the adoption of the 'Panchasheel' as the basis for relations of between the USSR and its allies. It is clear that China and Russia today share a number of common interests. Countries are struggling to protect their actual (Chechnya, Xinjiang) or virtual (Taiwan) common integrity, reform their old command economy, alleviate poverty and maintain a stable society Moscow and Beijing are also concerned by what they perceive in this part- cold war world as Washington's arrogance and domination, in particular on matters related to global and regional security.

Some agreements forced upon the Chinese in 1950-51, largely in line with the Sino-Soviet Treaty of 1945, such as the establishment of four jointly owned companies and existence of Soviet bases at Dairen and Port Arthur, were addressed, by the dismantling of the former and the evaluation of the latter. Along with it Soviet agreed to give new
loans adding up to 520 million rubles. The Belgrade declaration of June 1955, issued at the end of Khrushchev’s visit to Tito’s Yugoslavia and acknowledging that every country had the right to choose its own path to socialism, seemed to auger well for the further establishment of more trusting relations, even if Mao Zedong was to comment to a Yugoslavian delegation in September 1956 that “liberty, equality and fraternity were a slogan of the bourgeoisie which had a direct resonance on Sino-Soviet relations since the shadow of the father and son relationship of the past had not completely give way to a brotherly relationship (Rubinstein, 1956 : 4-6). China blamed the interventionist attitude of Moscow regarding the popular uprising in Poland of the summer of 1956 as a main frustration of ‘Great Power of Chauvinism’ in trying to exert pressure on the Polish leaders and even threatening to resort the use of military force. (Jain, 1983:304-315).

For Mao Zedong, the unity of the communist camp came nevertheless first and he did support the Soviet military intervention in Hungary. Beijing was of the view that this country should not be abandoned to the ‘reactionary forces’ even if there was no love lost for Stalin, Mao had not shared Khrushchev’s unrestrained criticism of the former Soviet leader at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, done furthermore without consulting the Chinese leadership, and which had only weakened the communist camp and lead to the events in Poland and Hungary. In a conversation with Khrushchev in 1958, Mao Zedong stigmatized the unrestrained criticism of Stalin, explaining that ‘out of Stalin’s ten fingers, three were rotten. (Jain, 1983: 304-305).

By the mid fifties, the two communist giants had started to fight for influence in Asia. The Soviet leadership had made it clear that it wanted to emulate Chinese activism in developing relationships with a number of non-communist countries of the Asian continent. While Chinese had in this endeavor a platform with the Bandung Conference, the Soviets in turn also hoped to achieve the same by hiring India as a ‘Spring board’ for multiplying contacts with the states of Asia so as o counterbalance China’s hegemonic proclivity.

The joint Soviet-Chinese Declaration of January 1957 emphasizing the complete unity of USSR and the PRC as an important factor in unifying the whole socialist camp and
Mao’s agreement to participate in Moscow international conference of communist parties in November 1957, on the occasion of the Fortieth anniversary of the Russian October Revolution, were just a lull in the growing tension. Soon Mao’s wrath was triggered by the two Soviet proposals: the establishment of a short-wave radar station in China to maintain communications with the Soviet submarines operating against the US in the Pacific Ocean and the setting up of a joint Sino-Soviet submarine flotilla operating under the Russian command. Mao interpreted the first proposal as a Soviet attempt to gain a new military base in China and the second an unacceptable substitute for an earlier Chinese request for Soviet technology and documentation in order to enable PRC to build its own nuclear power submarines. The Chinese assured the USSR of attempting to put China under its military control as, in 1962, they were to accuse Moscow of the same imperialist logic in shipping missiles to Cuba. (Anderson, 1997:315-323).

It was out of question that the Chinese would accept to share the ownership of a submarine fleet and to have a radar station which would not be the property of China, built with investments of the Chinese government, even if jointly exploited. In July 1956, Mao vented in rage at Soviet ambassador Pavel Yudin regarding the ostensible resumption of unequal treatment of China by the Soviet leadership. The shelling in August 1958 of the coastal islands of Quemoy and Matsu in the straits of Taiwan did not go down well with the Soviet leaders since it went against the relaxation of tension with the US favored by Moscow. The Chinese leadership, rallying behind Mao’s metaphor that ‘the east wind is now stronger than the west wind’ were increasingly restive in giving support to ‘wars of national liberation and ‘anti-imperialist struggles’. Moscow feared that inconsiderate foreign policy initiative of the PRC would only push a number of Asian countries into the western rings or could even escalate to a destructive war if the super powers were to intervene on opposing sides. (Anderson, 1997:315-323).

Mao was increasingly critical of Khrushchev’s revisionism and of his perceived fascination for peaceful coexistence with the capitalist west. When in July 1958, a leftist camp against the Iraqi-pro-western government sparked a brief but intense crisis in Middle East, leading to landing of British and American troops in Lebanon and Jordan, the Chinese officials urged the USSR to take a firm stand against ‘American imperialist
aggression'. Contrary to Beijing’s wishes, Khrushchev quickly decided there was little to be gained by risking a direct East-West confrontation. He preferred to propose on July 19, a summit conference to which the American, British, French and also Indian leaders would be invited to discuss the crisis in the Middle East. If this proposal was aborted it nevertheless reflected the growing warmth between Moscow and Delhi whereas the relations with Beijing were cooling off. Another instance of a diplomatic move favoring India was when in June 1957, Moscow supported, unsuccessfully, the participation of India in the disarmament commission which was to meet in London in August of the same year.

The positive recognition of India’s active policy in favour of nuclear disarmament stood in sharp contrast with the increasingly dubious attitude of Soviets vis-à-vis Chinese nuclear weapons programme they had agreed to back when it was launched in 1955. A secret defence technology agreement, which provided for broad Soviet assistance to China in the development of a nuclear device, was signed in October 1957. Soon after, Soviet nuclear weapon scientists and engineers were dispatched to China. Sensitive information were transferred and equipment sold for Uranium processing and enrichment. Soviet leaders turned things around when they formally notified their Chinese counter parts, on 20 June 1959 that no prototype bombs or detailed technical blueprints would be provided. (Ziegler, 1994:529-544).

The Soviets were less and less prone to take at face value the Chinese growing ranting and ravings on India with regards to the Tibetan insurrection of March 1959, if the Soviet leadership considered that the Chinese could legitimately put down the counter revolutionary rebellion, they accused China of playing into the hands of imperialist powers. Moscow blamed Beijing for unleashing its own propagandist campaign against Nehru whom the Soviet considered a far sighted statesman able to recognize the vital importance of India’s friendship with socialist camp. They called the Chinese authorities that, in the first place, the responsibility fell on them for letting the Dalai Lama escape to India. Moscow also stressed the fact that Nehru never disputed that Tibet was not part of China and that the imperialist powers would only benefit from a sharp deterioration in Sino-Indian relations. In spite of ruthless and suppression of the Tibetan rebellion and an
agitated political class in India, Nehru had indeed avoided to go overboard and developed a rather resigned outlook fearing, an influx of Chinese in to Tibet and within ten or twenty years time, there would be little left of the old Tibet.

Within few days of this ill-breaking meeting with Eisenhower at Camp David, Khrushchev headed a Soviet party delegation including Suslav and Gromyko, to Beijing in early October 1959 for the tenth anniversary of the founding of PRC. There he warned the Chinese that the socialist camp should avoid any moves that could be exploited by the reactionaries to push the world back to the tracks of a heightened Cold War and that the principles of peaceful co-existence between the two global systems were more than just a temporary tactical maneuver. At this point of time Moscow and Beijing were holding increasingly divergent views not only on foreign policy matters but also on domestic policy. The Soviet disfavored the cult of personality developing around Mao and labeled as disastrous the 'Peoples, commune' and 'Great leap forward'- which were the first serious attempts to depart from the Soviet model of development and to display their incomparable revolutionary order.

In the initial post-soviet period, Russia hoped to establish equal partnership relations with the developed world, especially the west with the initiation of a systematic transformation to democracy and market economy the ideological divide between the two socialist and capitalist systems came to an end. Russia expected to be taken as a natural partner by the west on equal basis. This was evident in the foreign policy concept of 1993 which said “the war of ideologies have keen concluded, the ground work is being laid for equal partnership with neighboring leading democratic and economically developed countries on the basis of standing up for our values and interests through real interaction and not by rushing from confrontation of Utopias.

The socialist ideology was totally removed from Russian foreign policy during this period. Earlier ideology of communism was one of the determining factors of Soviet foreign policy. “It is a vital necessity for Russia’s foreign policy orientation to proceed not from ideological principles or party demands, but from fundamental national interests”. Thus even though commonwealth of independent states (CIS) was given top
priority in the Concept of 1993, Russia's actual primary objective was partnership and relationship with US. The concept itself says "for the foreseeable fulltime, the relations with the US will retain a prominent place on the scale of Russian foreign policy priorities, corresponding to the position and weight of US in the world affair. It also said ‘Relying on the existing agreements in the military, political and economic and financial spheres, Russia will strive towards the stable development of relations with the USA, with a view towards, strategic partnership and inclined towards alliance. (Kuhrt, 2007:213-243).

Russian foreign policy concept of 1993 termed CIS as ‘Near Abroad’, and was given top priority. However immediate concern of Russia was to ensure that various agreements signed during the Gorbachev period were not annulled. Moreover, Russia needed western aid and technology to sustain its economy. Thus, on the one hand Russia hoped that strategic partnership or even alliance with the only superpower status of the US in the aftermath of the demise of the Soviet power. In April 1993, President Yeltsin and the US President Clinton had their official meeting during which Clinton offered $1.6 billion credit to Russia’s which was much less than was promised to Gorbachev by the west and US. More surprisingly by 1998 Yeltsin and Clinton met fourteen times but without much headway on the economic assistance front. (Kuhrt, 2007:213-243).

Foreign aid had become very essential for Russia as its economy was in bad shape after ‘shock therapy’ treatment by Yelstin. Russia had inherited a drastic decline in industrial and agricultural output from USSR. The economy was dominated by military industrial complexes which accounted for up to third of the industrial output. For example the shares of military industrial complexes were almost 75% of industrial output in St. Petersburg, and in Moscow over 50%. Inflation was a major problem in December 1992, wholesale prices were thirty four times higher in December 1991. In fuel and energy sector, prices increased 80 fold and in consumer products more than twenty four fold. The picture got further worsened in 1993 after the introduction of internal convertibility, the exchange rate of rubble against dollar faced steep decline, resulting in soaring up of prices of imported goods. Also living standards fell to all time low and a huge population automatically slipped below poverty line.
The history of Moscow - Beijing military - technical cooperation goes back to the 1950s when the two communist giants, the Soviet Union and newly formed People's Republic of China, signed the treaty of alliance. Moscow extended massive aid to its communist ally that laid to the foundation of the latter's heavy industry. However in July 1960 thousands of Soviet technicians and experts were suddenly withdrawn from China in protest against their political education by the latter. The following two and half decades were marked by intense political and ideological rivalry and antagonism between two coupled with serious border dispute which erupted in bloody conflicts over the Usuri river island in March 1969. (Rogachev, 1997, pp. 149-150).

Beginning in the late 1960s, the ideological rivalry between Soviet Union and China about who is the true communist came on surface. Soviet leadership tried to orchestrate unified socialist -response to China's challenge. The international Department of CPSU Central Committee held regular meetings with its counterparts in the East European Socialist Countries and Mangolia to coordinate propaganda on China question, including symposia, research and media campaign in the third countries. (Wishnick, 2001: 50).

To resolve the true communist issue the international communist conference was called on June 7, 1969 at Moscow. Addressing the conference, Brezhnev bemoaned the Communist Party of China's "departure from Marxism-Leninism", "break with internationalism" and "organization of armed conflicts". He urged his fellow communists to fight against imperialism and cooperate in defense of Marxist-Leninist ideas. (Brezhnev, 1969, pp. 10-13).

By the 1970s, the Chinese leadership had articulated an alternative vision of the world that ran counter to Soviet postulates on proletarian internationalism. In April 1974, Deng Xiaoping outlined China's view of international relations, the "theory of three worlds". According to this international relations proceeded from 3 groups of states:- the superpowers (first-world); the West, and East European States and Japan (second world); and developing states (third world, including China). The Soviet leadership blamed China for "deideoloziation" of international relations' and to sponsor a block spearheaded in the first place against the USSR and world socialism. (Ellision, 1982, pp. 309-312).
The ideological rift between Moscow and Beijing formally ended with the restoration of party-to-party ties during the May 1989 Deng-Gorbachev summit. For the Chinese, the turnaround came following the resolution of what Deng Xiaoping called the "three big obstacles" - the militarization of northern border, Afghanistan, and Vietnam in the late 1980s. This was followed by Moscow's repeated offers to update China's Soviet built industrial plants of the 1950s and the nuclear power industry. (Nelson, 1993:149-151).

By mid 1980s rethinking began in Moscow as well as in Beijing. The Soviet leadership and analyst began to doubt the wisdom of the 'siege mentality" over defence preparedness and total reliance on military security. It was acutely realized that excessive defence expenditure was draining the resources of the country. This realization along with other factors laid the basis for rethinking in Moscow on its general strategic policy and posture and also relations with China.

In 1980s China had began to demonstrate signs of an opening towards Moscow. The Kremlin responded positively, hoping that an opening to China could weaken the Sino-American axis which had developed during the 1970s. For the first time since Brezhnev had attempted to create a rapprochement in 1964 an improvement in Soviet-China relations seemed possible. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, however, had stalled any rapprochement. In January 1980 the Chinese declared that the invasion meant that any negotiation would be inappropriate. (Pipe, 1998, pp. 178-180).

The military buildup along the border damaged the Soviet Union both economically and strategically. The split with China opened a second front in the west's confrontation with the Soviet Union that was exploited by both Beijing and Washington throughout the 1970s and 1980s. China isolated the Soviet Far East by shifting its trading relations. The number of Soviet ground forces in the Far East, and Central Asia had increased between 1965 and 1980s (Anderson, 1997, pp. 9-11). These prevailing conditions forced Gorbachev to normalize relations with China to stop West and US to play 'China card' against it.
In March 1981, Moscow proposed to Chinese a series of measures to build confidence. Although the Chinese rebuffed the proposal, a series of meeting did take place between the officials of the Soviet and Chinese foreign ministries. As the result of those meeting things became clearer that Sino-Soviet relations changed for the better again as the post-Mao leadership concentrated its energy on modernization of the country, an objective that required a more constructive relationship with Soviet Union. By September 1981 Moscow had proposed the resumption of negotiations on the outstanding issues of the border. Soviet initiatives were renewed in March 1982 at Tashkent. Brezhnev announced that the USSR wished to negotiate on issues of border, but dictated clearly that he would not make concession on the situation of Afghanistan. By the early 1980, the Soviet leadership was convinced that Sino-American forces were attempting to encircle USSR. There was every incentive to try to 'break down' the Sino-American rapprochement and reverse the trends of the 1970s. (Anderson 1997, pp. 9-11).

In addition, the Soviet leadership was also influenced by the growing relationship between Washington and Tokyo. Moscow was anxious about the growing industrial and military power of Japan and what appeared to be its inevitable anchorage in an alliance with USA. This development provided a greater degree of urgency to the necessity of certain strategic developments such as on securing of Sea of Okhostk for the deployment of Soviet SLBMs.

When Aradopov died in March 1984 practically all this foreign policy initiatives had ended in failure. There was little progress on the Polish issue; more Soviet troops were in Afghanistan, but with little prospects of victory. In 1978, Deng Ziaoping, the new Chinese leader, introduced a reform programme that called for four modernizations. High priority in the policy was given to economic development Moscow hoped that for a longtime to come, China would concentrate on its domestic reconstruction which would make peace with neighbouring countries a preconditions. It was for instance noted that from 1979 to 1989 PRC was reported to have reduced its deference expenditure by 7 per cent. (Ditmer, 2001, pp-399-401).
Soviet foreign policy during the Cold War exhibited considerable variability, notwithstanding the fundamental antagonism between the communist world and the West. East-West relations were at times close to military confrontation and at times cooperative. The arms race was interspersed with arms control agreements. Former friends became enemies and intervention gave way to "new thinking" - in a world during the Soviet period there were multiple forces at play that constantly pushed Moscow in new direction. Donaldson and Nogee found seven general variables that they believe influenced the changing direction of Soviet foreign policy:

1) Change in the structure in the international system from multiplicity to bipolarity;

2) Growth of polycentrism in international communist movement followed by collapse of the movement altogether;

3) The development of military technology that makes possible the total destruction of an adversary;

4) The achievement of military parity between the USSR and USA, followed by collapse of USSR as a superpower;

5) Transition of Soviet regime from a totalitarian system to an authoritarian oligarchy and then to a fragmented polity;

6) The failure of command economy;

7) The differences reflected in the leadership of different personalities, from Stalin to Khrushchev to Brezhnev to Gorbachev.

As we survey Russian foreign policy in making after demise of USSR in the post-Cold War era both Nogee and Donaldson identify five broad underlying factors that collectively explain much of changes and variability in Russian foreign policy.
1) The change in the structure of the international system away from bipolarity;

2) Decline in Russian military capability;

3) Russia’s transformation from command economy to market economy;

4) Russia’s integration into the global economy and its increasing reliance on the global market;

5) Russia’s political leadership and domestic politics especially as manifested in the struggle between Yeltsin and Russian nationalists, followed by Putin’s effort to restore the power of the state and its central control.

The debate over Russian foreign policy in 1990s tended to focus on a single stark polarity - Atlanticism vs Eurasianism. This in turn was a debate over the attitude towards the meaning of West and East. In East main actor was China and a rhetoric of a Russo-China ‘‘strategic partnership’’ was an attempt to establish a counterbalance to an increasingly fraught relationship with the West.

Second reason behind tilt to East was due to its ‘‘geo-economics’’. Despite economic crisis in Asian Tiger countries the region stood in stark contrast to Russia’s constant struggle to come to terms with modernity and modernization. The chronic underdevelopment of Russian Far East would require investment from Asian countries above all Japan and China as would the effective exploitation of the energy reserves in Sakhalin. (Kuhrt, 2007:2-5).

The third reason is a ‘‘geo-ideological’’ one in which the East not only represent the spiritual alternative to western modernism but a broader alternative to the West in general. (Sakwa, 2000:175-175).
1.2 The Development of Relations After Disintegration of USSR

a) Post-1991 Partnership

While the paths of the two countries seemed to have converged in May 1989 at the time of Gorbachev visit to China in the midst of the pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square, the domestic choices made both in Beijing and in Moscow after this short lived reconciliation between the two communist giants were 20 poles apart that many observers wondered whether in the post 1989 period, Sino-Russian relations would not be more complicated than Sino-Western relations.

Freshly democratized Yeltsin’s Russia faced so many challenges that it saw in China cooperative counter weight to the pressure and lecturing of the west. Isolated Beijing first found in Moscow one of the few remaining capitals agreeing (not allowed) to sell weapons to China, then later a ‘strategic partner’ ready to join its campaign against the US missile defence programme and prepared to close its eyes to China’s infringements on human rights.

The care of Russia is important, as it was the first country, 1996, to try out the for China’s new multi-polar foreign policy: the establishment of ‘partnership relation’ with the major or regional powers. In the following years, a dozen countries and regional organizations concluded partnership agreement with the PRC. For instance in 1997 France and then the US signed ‘global partnership or constructive strategic partnership, declarations with China. The concept of partnership is perfectly adopted to the more fluid and flexible political and strategic relations that regional powers are to develop in the post-cold water ear. The ideas and objectives underlining this new concept is that other regional or major powers should establish with China relations that are neither
antagonistic or confrontational, nor so close that they might be perceived by the rest of
the world as an “alliance” against a third power.

From the beginning of the post-Soviet era, the Sino-Russian partnership has clearly been
a ‘strategic’ one paving the way to the building, with the signing on July 16, 2001 of the
new Russo-China bilateral Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation of what can be
qualified as a ‘privileged partnership’: Today Russia has become if not China is only
‘only at least its closest ‘partner’ well ahead of smaller countries friendly to China such
as North Korea, Thailand, Iran, Burma, and of course other regional powers such as
Brazil and India, not to mention the allies of the US (France, Japan). Immediately after
the emergence of Russia as a sovereign republic, there were initial debates about its
geopolitical orientations. The debates are reminiscent of the 19th century on the question
of Russia’s destiny: whether it lay with the west or Russia had a unique destiny. One
school of thought called westernizes adhered to Russian ideology that gives priority to
“modernizations and cordial relations with Europe. They believed that “enlightened
elites could westernize the country, as was the case with Peter the Great.

The Atlantists firmly believed that Russia’s transformation required close cooperation
with the west. They also saw Atlantic foes as the natural parteners for Russia’s entry into
the civilized world. Andrei Kozyrev, the first foreign minister, German corporation, the
head of the centre for strategic studies and liberal democratic reflections in Duma
belonged to this category. They argued that “Strategic partnership with other UNSC
permanent members, NATO, G 7 and deep ties with EU are important.

The other school of thought is the great Russians who also based their philosophy on
arguments of the 19th century. Russophiles believes that the goal of the state is to lay the
foundations of the birth of great Russia. Their thinking was influenced by the Greek
Orthodox Christianity which was unique. This made them to conclude that Russia had a
different destiny to become a world leader. The property included Alexander Solzhenistin
a foreign affair expert, Surgei Baburin, Koustantin Zatlin and vice speaker of Duma
Vladimir Shirinovsky. They strummed the Byzantine traditions based on the Orthodox
Church which earlier considered Russia as the “Third Rome”. (Groom and Light, 1994:17).

The Eurasiansts formed the third school of thought. They based their philosophy on the post-revolutionary emigrant movement developed in the Soviet Union led by Lev Gurmilev. For them Russia’s geo-strategic interesting are neither than those of the whole area of CIS. They considered US as the most expansionist and hostile power vis-à-vis Russia. They believed that there was no real conflict of interests with Asian powers; hence Russia should create a block of countries in Eurasia dissatisfied with American dominance. Some Eurasianists suggested that Russia should assume the role of a bridge, connecting Europe and Asia and many insisted that Kremlin concentrate its attention on the East, not the west. The Eurasists argued that Russia’s symbol was the two headed eagle and one should look east. Many adherently of this school of thought were connected with, old Soviet institutes devoted to the study of Asian affairs.

At the same time, Sergei Gonchavov, Head of socio-Soviet section at institute of Far East of the Russian Academy of Sciences in and early as 1992 objected Moscow’s preoccupation with the West “as developmental model and a business partner and warned Kremlin not to neglect other regions such as China, and the Islamic world, that were of great importance to Russia.

Regarding Asia in general and China in particular, the Foreign Policy concept 1993 document asked for a realistic assessment of the nature of relations with China must consider the differences in ideology and the socio-political system two countries and must also proceed from the principle of no alternative for Russia other than good neighborly intensive and substantial relations with it. In the past cooperation with Peoples Republic of China (PRC) and USSR costed too much to both countries and was one of the main reasons for our alimentation from the region. Moreover, by maintaining all round lies with Beijing, we should also borrow a quite a bit from PRC for implementing our own economic systems.

16
So, Russia took note of the differences in the Russian and Chinese ideology as Russia adopted capitalism while China remains socialist. Nevertheless the prosperity of trade and profitable commercial ties compelled Russia to opt for a policy of accommodation with C. The foreign policy concept 1993 further elaborated that “on the whole our relations with China must be such that third countries are not tempted to are it against Russia, just as China is not tempted to play the Russian card in its relations with other countries. Russia needs a well planned and circumspect policy, which would give us the opportunity of foreign policy maneuvering in matters where our positions diverge. In sphere of military and technical co-operation we should measure commercial interests against the task of maintaining stability in the region and not permitting the recreation of situation from the cold war times, when the USA armed Taiwan while we armed communist China.

During the initial period after the disintegration of USSR, Russia decided to move away from the third world countries. It was felt that third world countries could not contribute to the economic development of Russia. The debts owed by third world countries to the USSR were very high.

Russia’s role in the world affairs during the transitional period was very limited. As in the early 1990s Russia decided to integrate with the Euro-Atlantic spurting. Moreover west did not see Russia as equally and treated her as spent force. The foreign aid did not match expected levels. The former foreign minister of Russia rightly remarked, “In foreign policy we expected that a radical shift away from confrontation in favour of rapprochement with the west would automatically change the west’s leadership to Russia and Mobilize concentrated political support and economic aid for us. There unrealistic expectations lift a mark on the first draft of the foreign policy concept of 1993. (Kuhr,2000:121-138).

The economic crisis of 1998 affected Russia badly and Yeltsin appointed Yevegeny Primakov as prime minister to deal with the crisis. Primakov started cracking down oligarchs which included Yelstin supporters also. This resulted in removal of Primakov and appointed Putin as new prime minister. But before his removal Primakov gave new
orientation to Russian foreign policy by giving priority to the third world. At the time, when India was alimented in the world after conducting five nuclear tests at Pokhran in Rajasthan, Primakov proposed a trilateral alliance between India, Russia and China. On the eve of New Year, Yeltsin resigned and nominating Putin as acting president who has already proved his worth by ruthlessly crushing Chechen rebellion.

b) Russian policies towards China during Yeltsin regime

The new Russia’s relations with China did not at first look promising. Diplomatic activity was initially focused on the main economic powers of the West, which appeared to downgrade China as a potential partner: Kozyrev remarked: ‘Whether we have a stabilization fund, and whether we enter the world economy depends on the G-7.... With all due respect, China is not a world economic leader for the time being.'(SWB,SU/1321 A1/4 5th March,1992).

Nevertheless, one year into Yeltsin,s incumbency, the new state’s first summit was held in Beijing, rather than in Tokyo. The Beijing summit laid the foundations for a qualitatively new relationship largely devoid of ideological considerations and continued Gorbachev’s policy of engagement with China. The assertion that it was ‘largely by default that China became the chief object of Russian diplomacy in Northeast Asia is not borne out by the evidence. While courting the West and Japan for economic reasons, the diplomatic ball had already started rolling in China’s direction as early as December 1991, when Vladimir Lukin (as Chair of the RSFSR parliamentary committee on International Affairs) visited Beijing to show his understanding for ‘China’s concern that the exit of the USSR would leave the United States as the lone hegemon’(Nguyen.1993:285-301).
The Foreign Ministry of Russia (MID in Russian language) was accused of continuing and even exaggerating its Soviet predecessor’s ‘Euro-Americocentrism’, while ‘displaying a tendency to relegate the South and East to a minor position (Goncharov, 1993:102-115). Others pointed to the fact that states such as China, Turkey and India were attempting to integrate into the world economy but ‘without losing face and while protecting their own interests’, while partnership with the West, and in particular Japan, entailed substantial strategic concessions and playing the role of junior partner.

The reasons for the MID’s shunning of China are best described as a combination of lack of expertise (i.e. Kunadze and Kozyrev’s backgrounds) and the fact that in these early months Yeltsin had placed too much of the burden of foreign policy making on the shoulders of the MID. It was not until the appointment of Pavel Grachev as Defence Minister in May 1992 and the establishment of a presidential Security Council (also in May), that the Foreign Ministry’s pre-eminent role in Russian foreign policy began to come under scrutiny. Igor’ Rogachev, an old China hand, was made ambassador to Beijing, but in the Kremlin there were few high level champions of rapprochement with China (a notable exception was Evgeni Primakov, head of the SVR, who early on drew attention to the need for a balanced policy in the East). Instead, in the first half of 1992 official policy towards China displayed a breathtaking degree of naivety and clumsiness. Thus in March 1992 Kozyrev concluded that relations should be based on ‘pragmatism’, a pragmatism that in his view included developing ‘nongovernmental ties with Taiwan at the same level as most other countries without damage to political relations with China,(Buszyinski,1992:172).

Nevertheless, the Chinese model of reform, in particular the free economic zones, such as the successful example of Shanghai, was championed by some as a model to emulate, in particular in order to revive Russia’s ailing Far East; their common border and mutually complementary economies made a perfect ‘fit’. Just as Gorbachev had been seeking a ‘way to bind the Soviet Union and China on the basis of common developments in domestic politics’ so too did Yeltsin
come to realize that this was the surest way to convince both the Chinese leadership and his domestic critics that the pro-Western policy had been but a lull in the traditional, centuries-old friendship of two neighbours (Buszyinski, 1992: 172-175). Thus, the director of the Institute of the Far East, Mikhail Titarenko, wrote: 'in Russia as in China the close connection between the internal economic reforms and open foreign policy defines the possibilities for their joint cooperation. (Titarenko, 1995: 27-36).

The industrial lobbyist and centrist politician Arkadii Volskii espoused reform: 'Our situation is much closer to the Chinese experience than to the experience of any other country. We should study their experience in conducting land reform, as well as their experience in state support of the private sector with the help of laws, taxation, investments, etc. We should also study the Chinese experience of setting up free-trading economic zones. (Bazhanov, 1992: 166-167). Conservative elements were keen to point out that the relationship with China 'does not threaten us with the fate of a raw materials appendage to somebody's industrial machine'. Others highlighted the importance of the fact that China had good relations with both the USA and Russia, thus serving as 'a theoretical model of an independent foreign policy for Russia' (Muradian, 1992: 39-50).

Hearings on Russian foreign policy held to scrutinize Kozyrev's draft of the 'Foreign Policy concept' addressed the issue of China's place in this 'concept'. Vladimir Lukin advocated a balanced policy: 'Russia's relations with China are of particular importance, and due to their priority these relations must be placed on an equal footing with our European and American orientations. The draft concept allotted priority status to relations with countries of the Asia-Pacific region as well as Southern and Western Asia, because, it argued, these countries were of great significance: for establishing our Eurasian status and in terms of achieving a balance in relations with the West and for diversifying foreign economic activity, and also as countries that, due to their geopolitical position, have a direct influence on the situation in the CIS (Kozyrev, 1992: 1-10).

At the beginning of 1990, nearly two years before the collapse of the Soviet Union, Deng Xiaoping asserted: 'Whatever changes take place in the Soviet Union, we should steadily expand relations with it, including political relations on the basis of the five principles of
peaceful co-existence and refrain from arguing over ideological differences.’ (Kui, 1996:7). Nevertheless, the leadership in Beijing had not bargained for the collapse of the Soviet Union and the ascendancy of Yeltsin’s, whose democratic credentials did not find favour with the regime in Beijing. China warned of a possible return to Tsarist imperialism, suspicious that Moscow could switch allegiance to the government on Taiwan, and fearing the overspill into Chinese society of reformist ideas. (Sherman, 2000:166-67).

The Tiananmen experience, when students inspired by Gorbachev demonstrated against the regime, was still fresh in the leadership’s mind. In addition, the new Russia’s apparent intention to make itself an integral part of the West both politically, economically posed the question of whether Moscow would join in the inter-national condemnation of China’s human rights record. At first it seemed China’s fears might be realized, as Kozyrev declared Russia’s first priority as being ‘to ensure all human rights and freedoms in their entirety, I believe that these questions are not an internal matter of states but rather their obligations under the UN Charter, international covenants and conventions.’ In any case, by 1993 in Russia ‘concern about human rights in the People’s Republic of China shrank to the circle of a few government officials and academics’. (SWB, SU/1294 C1/2, 3rd Feb.1992).

Once it was clear that Russia’s ‘flirtation’ with the West was over, the Chinese simply restated their original philosophy. Li Peng, in a report to the National People’s Congress (NPC) in 1992 spoke of China’s ‘good-neighbour policy’ as ‘an important component of China’s foreign policy’. The following year, again reporting to the NPC, Li noted that ‘friendly relations between China and its neighbouring countries are established on the basis of national interest, regardless of whatever differences there may be between their ideologies and political systems’. (Xuetong, 1995:12) Prior to the 1995 parliamentary
elections a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman stated that whatever the outcome China would adhere to the current course of ‘constructive partnership’ (Kuhr, 2007:25-35).

Chinese interests in cooperation with Russia were based on practical as well as strategic issues. Wan Li, the head of the Chinese parliament emphasized that ‘China’s economic development needs a peaceful international environment. Therefore, China is willing to live on good terms with all other countries.’ Essential components of China’s security strategy were defence modernization, the establishment of a regional security mechanism, and the development of ‘good-neighbour’ relations. The friendly relations between China and its neighbouring countries are established ‘on the basis of national interest, regardless of whatever differences there may be between their ideological and political spheres’. (Xuetong, 1995:13). As David Lampton wrote, ‘Beijing’s foreign policy framework has been stable because it has its origins in China’s domestic goals and needs rather than in the international system itself.’ (Lampton, 1995:63-75).

As we have seen, the issue of human rights did not hold sway over Russian foreign policy for long. The official report on Kozyrev’s visit to Beijing in March 1992 emphasized that while the two sides had different understandings of human rights they were ‘not inclined to let these differences put a brake on inter-governmental relations’. Accompanying Kozyrev on his trip was the Chairman of the State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, Petraven, who expressed concern at the fall in trade between the two countries in 1991 in comparison to 1990. He noted, however, that the volume of decentralized and border trade had increased. An agreement on trade and economics as well as on MFN status for Russia was signed. In May Deputy Prime Minister Aleksander Shokhin made a trip to Beijing for further talks on economic issues. (Gill and Kim, 1995:147).

In August 2002, there was an eight-day visit to Russia by Qin Jiwei, Chinese Defence Minister, to discuss arms cuts in the APR, troop reductions on the joint border and arms sales. While problems on the demilitarization and demarcation of the border remained,
the infrastructure for dialogue was being established, an infrastructure noticeably lacking in relations with Japan. At this time the furor over the Kuril islands was reaching crisis point and it seemed less and less likely that Yeltsin’s trip to Japan could bring either political or economic benefits. In this context the frequent military contacts between Russia and China and the pressing problem of border demarcation and demilitarization and control and monitoring of cross-border trade, setting up customs posts and so on, entailed contact on an almost daily basis. The military exchanges facilitated the establishment of trust and cooperation, a feature distinctly lacking in Russia’s dealings with Japan. During 1992 (not including the December summit meeting) there were at least ten visits exchanged between Russia and China concerning some aspect of military cooperation, whether arms sales, exchange of aircraft personnel, or discussions on nuclear technology. (Kuhrt,2000:35-45).

Apart from Kozyrev’s brief sojourn in Beijing in the early part of the year there had been few meetings in the economic and political sphere – it was the military and the industrialists who were setting the agenda. It was not until November, in meetings to prepare for the summit that wider issues of cooperation began to appear. Importantly, in his meeting with Kozyrev, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen stressed that China and Russia had common interests in preserving stability in Central Asia and that China’s plans to establish economic relations with these states would take into account their close links with Russia. Kozyrev appeared grateful too that Qian understood the need to curb Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asia and the importance of the CIS in this regard. (Xinhua,SWB,SU/1549/A1/2,27 Nov.1992).

As Yeltsin faced growing criticism from the Supreme Soviet of his and Kozyrev’s pro-Western policy, the chance to make political capital out of the forthcoming visit to China, and shortly afterwards India, was tempting. Yeltsin now set about criticizing Kozyrev’s ministry, emphasizing the need for a ‘multi-vector’ foreign policy that would pay equal attention to both East and West. However, the growth in trade turnover with China was unexpectedly high, so that the Foreign Ministry was now able to parry charges that the
economic crisis was hampering trade by pointing to the flourishing economic relationship. 1992 saw trade rise to a record high of US$5.8 billion, imports of Chinese goods making up the larger part of this figure. While China's trade with Russia was minimal compared to trade turnover with the United States and Japan, Russia represented an important market for cheap consumer products from the adjacent. (Garver, 1998:126).

c) On Taiwan question

The Russian MID had seriously underestimated the sensitivity of the Taiwan issue for bilateral relations. In January 1992, a delegation from Taiwan visited Moscow, prompting speculation that this might herald a change in the Kremlin's China policy. In an attempt to limit the damage, the Russian MID issued a statement insisting that the delegation had been invited privately and not by the government and emphasizing that El'tsin's administration viewed Taiwan as an inalienable part of China. However, this was not the end of the matter. On 9 September 1992 a committee was established to deal with cultural and commercial affairs with Taiwan, headed by the industrialist Oleg Lobov. The committee was apparently 'non-governmental', but as Evgenii Bazhanov has pointed out, 'China wanted to know why Yeltsin had created an unofficial committee by decree and why it comprised so many government officials'. (Bazhanov, 2000:177). Yeltsin acted swiftly, and issued a clear statement:

In relations with Taiwan the Russian Federation proceeds from the premise that there is only one China. The PRC government is the only lawful government representing the whole of China. Taiwan is an inalienable part of China. The Russian Federation does not maintain official interstate relations with China. (ITAR-TASS, Sept.19, 1992).

Nevertheless, only two days after Yeltsin’s decree Lobov went ahead with the visit, issuing a statement prior to his departure to the effect that maintaining and developing economic and trade relations with the PRC was important, but that the trip to Taiwan would not 'cause any indignation on the part of Beijing'. As one journalist noted, Yeltsin's decree closed 'an unfortunate page in our relations, when a semi-official agency for contacts with
Taiwan was created under Russian Federation governmental structures without the knowledge of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and subsequently disbanded. (SWB, SU/1491/A1/6 Sept.23, 1992).

d) December 1992: First Russo-Chinese Summit

Just before leaving for Beijing Yeltsin noted that some accused his government of ‘Americanization, of looking towards the West all the time, that is why we are now making the second break-through into the Asian-Pacific Ocean region after the visit to the Republic of Korea’. Later, at a press conference in the Chinese capital, Yeltsin expressed surprise at the calm reaction to the summit from Tokyo, revealing the extent to which Russia was now viewing this visit as compensation for the lack of success in the relationship with Tokyo.(SWB, FE/1567 A1/Dec.18,1992).

Certainly there were many agreements signed at the summit, twenty four to be precise, but none of these were in themselves spectacular. In many cases they simply codified what was already the status quo. However, various subcommittees were established which would hold regular consultations and sustain the level of diplomatic activity: these included an intergovernmental commission on trade-economic and scientific-technical cooperation. The Chinese pressed for the commission to tackle the problems of cross-border trade such as increasing transport capacities and the number of passport controls. These moves were important because they sought to increase government control over spontaneous trading activity, which of course could lose the government important tax and excise revenue. In addition, Shokhin noted the significance of establishing control over the transfer of military technology, as there had been several cases of private individuals attempting to conclude deals on private visits. (SWB, FE/1569 A1/8,21st Dec.1992).

The new course of Russian foreign policy in Asia was re-emphasized on Yeltsin’s visit to India at the beginning of 1993 where he stressed that Russo-Chinese rapprochement did not in any way mean a choice between one or other country: ‘Russian–Chinese relations are part of the main channel of our Asian policy. The principle of squeezing some other
country out of it is absolutely unacceptable... 'Bearing in mind the old animosity between China and India, this statement may well have been intended to calm Indian fears of being downgraded by Moscow in favour of Beijing. However, the deliberate vagueness of the statement could also be interpreted as a sign to Japan that Russia intended to keep its options open in Asia. The final draft of the Foreign Policy Concept further underlined the point: 'Russia's relations with China should be such that third countries will not be tempted to use China against Russia, and vice-versa, that China will not be tempted to use the "Russian card" in its relations with other countries.' (SWB, SU/1770 C2/1, 18th Aug. 1993).

High-level exchanges of visits in 1993 were again dominated by senior officials from the military and industrial spheres. Meetings in the political sphere were confined to a meeting between Kunadze and the head of the PRC chancellery for political questions, and a brief meeting between Kozyrev and the Chinese ambassador to Moscow. April saw the visit to Russia of the Commander-in-Chief of China's navy and it is likely that at this time negotiations were begun on the sale to China of Kilo class submarines. In May the commander of the Leningrad Military district visited Beijing to discuss further military cooperation. June saw a further visit of Chinese naval officials to Moscow for talks on the submarine deal, and at the beginning of July Russian naval officials were then invited to Beijing as guests of the Chinese Ministry of Defence. A five-day visit to Russia by Colonel-General Liu Huaqing, vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission, included visits to Vladivostok to inspect the Pacific Fleet and meetings with Shokhin and Chernomyrdin to discuss industrial and scientific cooperation and defence conversion. In August, the Chinese Chief of General Staff of the PLA arrived, moving Grachev to declare that relations with the PRC were 'one of the priorities of Russia's military policy'. (SWB, SU/1740 A1/2, 14 July, 1993).

The frenzy of military contacts obscured unresolved issues such as the increase in Chinese pirate attacks on Russian vessels in the East China seas. A Foreign Ministry spokesman noted that Russian offers of talks to discuss the safety of sea-lanes were going
unheeded by the Chinese. An increase in illegal Chinese migration to the Russian Far East was also causing tension that required urgent attention.

Thus, while 1994 was again marked by a substantial number of visits by military officials, there was an increase in discussions of political and economic questions, including the question of the border regime. Trade turnover in 1993 was the highest ever, reaching more than $7 billion in total. However, it was clear that a high proportion of the turnover consisted of cross-border trade, and the clampdown by Russian authorities on Chinese ‘shuttle merchants’ meant that 1994 showed a significant downturn in trade turnover, reflecting the sharp fall in imports of Chinese goods. The fact that turnover fell well below the high of 1993 until the year 2000, when it reached just over $8 billion, was evidence of the still primitive nature of Sino-Russian trade. Shokhin was outspoken in his condemnation of Chinese trading methods: ‘Without a departure from the barter scheme, which allows a couple of Chinese companies to dictate prices and choice of goods, we shall fail to keep trade with China on a proper level.” (FBIS-SOV-94-104, May 31, 1994).

e) The Second Summit: from ‘Good-neighbourliness’ to ‘Constructive Partnership’

According to the joint declaration issued at the summit meeting of September 1994, Russo-Chinese relations had now reached the stage of ‘constructive partnership, genuinely equal relations of good-neighbourliness, friendship and mutually profitable cooperation, based on the principles of peaceful coexistence’. It was emphasized that these relations did not have the character of an alliance and were not ‘directed against a third country’. However, the constructive partnership could not disguise the fact that trade had fallen drastically from a high of over $7 billion to only $5 billion (the MFEA had projected $8 billion.) This was due mainly to a sharp fall in imports of Chinese goods. The two sides emphasized that economic relations still had ‘enormous potential, the effective use of which is capable of playing an important role in the economic
development of both countries'. As if to compensate for the miserable state of economic relations, the declaration contained a particularly detailed section on international relations including a clause on the 'inadmissibility of displays of expansionism, hegemonism, the politics of force or the creation of opposing blocs'. (Kuhrt, 2000: 121-135).

Those who wished to place a positive gloss on the declaration, such as the conservative newspaper Pravda, wistfully speculated whether the words ‘friendship’ and ‘constructive partnership’ were a ‘return to the Russian–Chinese political lexicon from the romantic era of the distant 1950s’. Once again Lukin stressed that the only way to ensure substance and interdependence in the economic relationship was to make Russia and China so dependent on each other that any split would be ‘unacceptably painful to both countries’. (At hearings on Russian foreign policy in 1992 Lukin had described this as a relationship of ‘irreversible mutual dependence’.) Addressing Chinese business circles in Beijing that year, Viktor Chernomyrdin, noting the drop in trade turnover, had called for ‘new forms of interaction’, namely investments by the Chinese, joint exploration of Russian natural resources, and construction of infrastructure facilities in the Russian Far East. (FBIS-SOV-94-104, May 31, 1994).

The summit planned for autumn 1995 failed to take place due to El’tsin’s illness, but there were numerous exchanges of visits encompassing all aspects of bilateral relations. No doubt with one eye on the upcoming parliamentary elections, Gennadii Ziuganov, leader of the KPRF, and Grigorii Iavlinskii of Iabloko, both made trips to China before the end of the year. May saw the visit to Beijing of the Defence Minister Grachev, who called for the creation of a multilateral security alliance, a proposal swiftly rebutted by his Chinese hosts. who were no doubt wary of the similarity to Brezhnev’s conception of an Asian collective security pact mooted in 1969. Meanwhile border issues were becoming pressing: demilitarization was making little progress due to differences over the exact location of the demilitarized zone, while the launch of the Border Guards’ campaign, ‘Operation Foreigner’ the previous year had had further adverse effects on cross-border trade.
Nevertheless, on the occasion of Li Peng’s trip to Moscow in June 1995 it was claimed that ‘complete political unanimity’ existed between the ‘two great powers’. Russia reiterated its stance as a staunch supporter of the ‘one China’ concept, while China endorsed Russia’s invasion of Chechnya by stating that it had ‘complete understanding of the actions taken by the Russian side to preserve the country’s unity’. It was becoming increasingly common for Russian politicians to refer to the two countries as the ‘two great powers’: as Chernomyrdin and Li Peng declared, ‘the two great powers have no need of lectures to run their own lives’. (This approach was demonstrated by Russia’s refusal to vote in favour of a European Union resolution in the United Nations condemning China’s human rights record. The reason given for the vote at the time was that Russia could not disregard the explanations of the Chinese that adoption of the resolution would have a ‘destabilizing character for the internal situation in China. Finally, the MID briefing noted that ‘as distinct from other countries, Russia and China have, over the last three years conducted an open bilateral dialogue on human rights’ (SWB, SU/2811/ B/6 8th June, 1995).

f) 1996: from Constructive Partnership’ to ‘Strategic Co-operation’

Thus in his annual address to the Federal Assembly in February 1996, Yeltsin was able to take comfort in the relationship with China, while warning of geopolitical changes for Russia linked to NATO expansion. While expressing disquiet at attempts to undermine or directly interfere with ‘legitimate Russian interests in the CIS’, he referred by way of contrast to the agreement on confidence-building measures around the Sino-Russian border. The ‘eastern’ orientation of Russian foreign policy was now firmly entrenched, and Yeltsin was to be aided in this by his new Foreign Minister Evgeni Primakov, appointed in January 1996. Primakov was an orientalist and a staunch advocate of a balanced foreign policy: ‘A power like Russia, with enormous interests in Asia and the Middle East, cannot walk on just one – “Western leg.”’ (12 October 1998, at www.vladivostoknews.ru).

1996 proved another testing time for Russian foreign policy, as April saw the renewal of the US–Japan alliance in the wake of Chinese military posturing in the Taiwan straits.
Russia's relations with Japan were in stasis and following hard on the heels of plans for NATO expansion, the pledge to renew another Cold War alliance seemed a double blow. The third Sino-Russian summit in April 1996 was thus held against this backdrop, in an atmosphere of unprecedented cordiality, with the two sides declaring their intention to develop relations of an 'equal, trusting partnership aimed at strategic cooperation in the twenty-first century'.

By the time of the fourth summit in April 1997, spurred on by the relatively high trade figures of 1996 – $6.8 billion – both sides now pledged to increase trade turnover by the end of 1997 to at least US$7 billion (the figure reached in 1993), and to $20 billion by the end of the century. However, the decision to conduct trade in convertible currency (from 1996) may have been the reason for the sharp fall in Chinese exports to Russia the following year. The highlight of the 1997 summit was the ‘Russo-Chinese Joint Declaration on a Multipolar World and the Formation of a New World Order’. Among other issues, the two sides affirmed their opposition to any attempts by one state to 'strive for hegemony or conduct politics from a position of force and monopolise international affairs'. Nevertheless, despite the concurrence of views on international issues there were growing signs of strain as the economic relationship struggled to keep pace with the political and military one.

Hopes of reaching the trade turnover of $7 billion by the end of 1997 were dashed, the final total according to Goskomstat amounting to a mere $5.24 billion. Of this figure, only $1.26 billion accounted for Chinese imports, although according to the Primorye regional administration’s department for foreign trade, undocumented illegal imports accounted for an additional $3.6 billion a year. China’s huge trade turnover with Japan of $60 billion, and with the USA of $43 billion in 1997, highlighted the small volume of its trade with Russia. (12 October 1998, at www.vladivostoknews.ru).

Thus, towards the end of 1997 both sides began criticizing the low level of trade. China was disappointed by the Russians’ growing lack of enthusiasm for their often shoddy consumer goods, while Russia was irritated by China’s rejection of a Russian bid to supply equipment to the Three Gorges hydroelectric project. In addition, there had been
optimism that Russia would be able to earn billions of dollars by building nuclear power plants in China, but due to fears that haggling over prices might mean China would put out the projects to general tender, Russia simply lowered its prices. Viktor Mikhailov, Minister for Atomic Energy, bemoaned this state of affairs, complaining of Beijing's new-found 'cold pragmatism'.

Meanwhile, there were high hopes of the Russo-Japanese 'meeting without neckties' in Krasnoiarsk in December 1997. A closer relationship with Japan would mean that Russia's Asian policy would no longer be 'walking on one Chinese leg', to borrow Primakov's phrase. Whether Japan could offer more than China in economic and political terms was a different matter. It was, in any case, clear that there would be no rejection of China in favour of Japan, for the core of the Sino-Russian relationship could not be reduced to economic relations alone. The disappointing economic relationship was offset by the attention paid to global issues at the following year's summit in November 1998. In particular the joint declaration emphasized the problems that could arise from globalization and interdependence, as well as 'attempts at using currency and financial levers to impose political and economic conditions which infringe upon the legitimate national interests of a particular country. (ITAR-TASS, 23 November 1998, FBIS-SOV-98-327.).

Russia and China also signaled their intention to increase efforts to curb ethnic separatism and religious extremism. As we shall see, these concerns were voiced increasingly often as the crisis in Kosovo deepened. The final Sino-Russian summit of Yeltsin's incumbency, just a few weeks before his resignation, was informed by both Kosovo and the second invasion of Chechnya. The Joint Declaration that came out of the 1999 summit made little or no mention of bilateral economic or political issues: with the US announcement of its intention to abrogate the ABM treaty and the events in Kosovo, both Beijing and Moscow were caught off-guard. However, there were signs that Russia and China were becoming increasingly vocal about the US role in international affairs, and the use of force to safeguard human rights (Kosovo). The Declaration specifically pointed to 'attempts to weaken the role of the United Nations' as well as 'the seeking of excuses to give irresponsible interpretations of the substance and principles of the UN
Charter and finally, 'the jeopardizing of the sovereignty of independent states using the concepts of “human rights are superior to sovereignty” and “humanitarian intervention”
The two sides drew attention to the development of the Shanghai Five’, specifically the meeting of law-enforcement heads and defence ministers, to be held in 2000, as well as the eventual meeting of foreign ministers (in line with the Bishkek Declaration of August 1999). The final section declared their mutual support for the preservation of state unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity.(FBIS-SOV-1999–1210, 10 December 1999).

The trade in arms would seem at first glance to be one of the few bright spots in the two countries’ economic relationship. Kozyrev’s sojourn in Beijing in March 1992 was brief, and his remarks on human rights seemed at odds with Moscow’s apparent willingness to continue arms transfers, as evidenced by the CIS Chief of Staff Valeri Samsonov, who the previous month had rushed to Beijing to reassure the Chinese that deliveries would not be affected by the USSR’s collapse. After Kozyrev and Aven’s trips to Beijing, the exchange of visits by Chinese and Russian military officials increased at a startling pace. April saw the visit to Russia of the head of the PLA’s General Logistics Department, Zhao Nanqi, to discuss arms purchases while the Deputy Commander of the Russian Air Force travelled to the PRC for an exchange of air force personnel. As Bates and Kim point out, military cooperation consisted of three components: talks on demilitarizing the border, which had begun way back in 1989; the ‘institutionalized military relationship’ which had already begun in 1990 with fairly high-level visits; the third component was discussion of technology and weapons transfers. At least ten exchanges of visits took place in 1992 on matters related to defence and military technology, including a visit by Viktor Mikhailov, the Minister for Atomic Energy in November (Gill and Kim, 1993:122-135).

After a visit by China’s Defence Minister, Egor Gaidar, acting Russian Premier, noted the dynamism of Sino-Russian military and technical ties as evidence that both were now overcoming their previously confrontational relations, which would strengthen their geopolitical positions in the long term. Domestic factors in both countries were pointing to the wisdom of maintaining arms deliveries: since Tiananmen the Chinese had lost American and French supplies. Moreover, when in December 1992 a furor erupted over
France's sale of 60 Mirage fighter aircraft to Taipei this must have been an important signal to Moscow that its decision not to sell arms to Taiwan and to draw a veil over human rights issues by continuing, and even upgrading arms sales, was the right way to forge a new relationship with China. Moreover, by 1992 'China's economy was booming and the government, and especially the PLA had money to address some of the PLA's deficiencies'. Hence Yeltsin's statement at the December 1992 summit: 'We proceed from the basis that today China is one of the most solvent countries in the world.' Strangely, Shokhin appeared to contradict Yeltsin's confidence in China's solvency: 'It is very difficult to predict the volume of this cooperation in 1993 and its dynamics, because the Chinese side is short of hard currency and the Russians do not want to exchange armaments for jackets and sports shoes.' (SWB, FE/1569 Al/8, 21 December 1992).

The biggest single arms deal was the sale to China of 26 Su-27s, a deal concluded in 1990 under Gorbachev, although the contract was not agreed until nearly a year later, and the aircraft were not delivered until 1992. A second batch of 22 Su-27s was ordered between 1992 and 1993, but was not delivered until 1995-96, as the delivery was delayed by unresolved issues regarding payment terms: 'Russia insisted that 70 per cent or more of the payment be made in hard currency, compared to 35 per cent for the first batch of Su-27s in 1992.' The new Deputy Defence Minister, Andrei Kokoshin, visited China in October 1992 and helped lay the foundation for transferring production rights to the Chinese. In an interview shortly after his appointment, he had drawn attention to the severe problems facing the defence industry. (SWB, SU/1556 Al/1, 6 December 1992).

By the time of the December 1992 summit, arms exports were described by the MID as 'a major lever of the transformation of Russia's economy on the basis of market relations'. At the same time, it was noted that other major arms-exporting countries needed to 'step back and open up more export possibilities for Russia'. In general, there was widespread concern that Russia had 'yielded' its position as a major arms supplier to countries like the United States. This was depicted not only as a financial, but also a serious strategic loss. Viktor Glukhikh, chairman of Gazprom vowed that Russia would never leave the world arms market, declaring Russia's yielding of its former 'positions' as 'abnormal'. According to Glukhikh, in 1989 the USSR led the global market in arms exports, with a
share amounting to 38.7 per cent. By January 1993, this had dropped to 17 per cent, while the USA had increased its share of arms exports over the same period from 30 per cent in 1989 to 56 per cent in 1992. (ITAR-TASS, SWB, SU/1593 C2/3, 22 January 1993.)

The drive for hard currency earnings to prop up the ailing defence industry led Mikhail Malei, adviser on defence conversion to remark: ‘To Russia, the export of military hardware will be profitable even if we sell it cheaper than world prices by a factor of six. According to Sergey Kortunov the principle of ‘sell to anybody who pays’ was already being given priority in the Gorbachev period.Yeltsin was convinced of the necessity of exporting arms to China, declaring that Russia was ‘prepared to trade on all fronts, including in the area of the latest up-to-date weapons’. China’s interest in purchasing arms was detailed in a ‘secret report’ of the Chinese Communist Party’s Military Commission, which instructed the government to increase purchases of weapons from the former Soviet Union and increase China’s sales to Third World countries. The report noted that this strategy would mean saving valuable currency reserves, adding that the military budget for 1992 had been increased by 40 per cent from the previous year. (SWB, FE/1568 A1/6, 19th Dec.1992).

However, there were signs that the Russian foreign policy establishment was not at first entirely happy with the defence industry’s drive to sell more weapons to China. In an article published at the beginning of December 1992, Kozyrev warned of the dangers of ‘pursuing “easy dollars” from military deliveries without taking into account the political consequences’. He concluded optimistically that Russia was ‘gradually accustoming Western partners to the thought that they will have to make room in the markets, including the high-technology and arms markets’. Kozyrev made the same point again in February 1993 in a speech to the Supreme Soviet, noting the need to monitor ‘structures which are independently rushing into the arms markets often without taking proper account of security interests, secrecy or even maintaining adequate prices’(Kozyrev.1993:12-20).

The defence industry plants themselves complained that state weapons orders did not benefit them, as payment was in rubles, so that there were problems paying wages.
Bureaucratic procedures in approving military exports were slow and cumbersome, and required as many as nine different signatures from the relevant ministries, including the Ministry of Security and the SVR, which apparently could take between eight and 15 months to collect. In view of this state of affairs, defence industry directors stated their intention to trade independently in arms produced over and above state orders. (Glebova, 1993:12-21).

The drive to compete with the West increased as Russia came into conflict with the United States over arms sales to countries such as Malaysia, Iraq and Cyprus. Thus, Shokhin declared Russia's intention to continue to denounce the 'dishonest competition methods' used by the United States in the world arms markets, quoting US opposition to Malaysia's purchase of MiG-29 fighter planes. (, SWB, SU/1682 C2/1, 7 May 1993).

Meanwhile, the head of 'Oboroneksport', Sergei Karaoglanov, was accused in 1993 of 'allowing Russia's positions to weaken'. Meeting with the Chinese Chief of General Staff in August that year, Grachev stressed that relations with the PRC were 'one of the priorities of Russia's military policy'. He specifically emphasised the fact that determining China's military-technical requirements would make it possible to 'plan the load on the Russian Federation defence industry and to a certain extent to maintain a number of enterprises in China's interests'. (ITAR-TASS World Service, 17 August, SWB, SU/1773 C1/1, 21 August 1993.)

The debate over whether defence plants should be allowed to take responsibility for exporting their own products was conducted by a myriad of interested parties. Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoi accused Kozyrev of actively blocking 'advantageous deals' to sell Su-27s. According to the director of one defence plant, Kozyrev was to blame for losing a major deal with Libya, which subsequently bought instead from the United States, as well as ruining negotiations with Taiwan for the purchase of 150 Su-27s. When Kozyrev countered that the latter deal could not go ahead because the Russian Federation did not recognise Taiwan as a sovereign state. Rutskoi retorted: 'Such considerations are not of great importance for the Americans: they have sold their F-16 aircraft to Taiwan.' Finally, Rutskoi concluded that Russia had lost US$15 billion in failed deals over the
previous year, which was 'several times greater than $2.5 billion which the G-7 countries promised to grant Russia during the Tokyo summit'. (SWB, SU/1774 C2/2, 23 August 1993.)

The most controversial aspect of the Russo-Chinese military relationship was the sale to China of a licence for production of Su-27 fighter planes. In April 1996, Yeltsin apparently agreed to transfer a third batch of 18 S-27s and in principle to begin producing the aircraft under licence in China. (Sergounin and Subbotin, 2000:194-216) This brought the total number of aircraft sold to China to 72. According to one Russian analyst however this does not square with the facts – there was no confirmation of a third batch. The same analyst noted too that the sale of the production license was not as big a coup as had been claimed: the licence entitled China to produce 200 aircraft and no more, without the right of re-export to a third country.

In fact, the programme for the production deal was in two stages, the first being local assembly from kits produced in Russia, and the second being full local production with the licence covering production of between 90 and 100 aircraft, but according to Aleksandr Sergounin and Sergey Subbotin, 'most observers say production will probably be half that, beginning at a rate of ten to twenty per year'. (Sergounin and Subbotin, 2000:123-145). In any case, some argued, Russia was moving to a new generation of fighter plane, which it had refused to sell to China. There were those who argued that selling the production licences would mean a loss of hard currency for the defence industry, depriving them of serial production and future revenue. Others, including Yeltsin and Grachev, were sanguine that China would not use these weapons against Russia.

Further deals with China included the sale of four Kilo class submarines, concluded in late 1994, two being delivered in 1995 and two in 1997, but estimates of the price paid by the Chinese vary. Bates and Kim cite a figure of $250 million each, but others reckon the price to have been only $90 million per unit, while Germany had apparently sold equivalent submarines for more then $200 million each. It was also not clear what the final number of submarines would be. Western estimates often state that China has
purchased higher numbers – one analyst maintained that China was due to purchase an additional 12 submarines by the end of the century. (Starr, 1996:104).

Further naval equipment was purchased by the Chinese in early 1997; two Sovremenny class destroyers were sold to China, apparently at below market prices. According to an anonymous Russian government source, the Chinese ‘groundlessly lower prices and refuse to co-ordinate pricing methods’, resulting in the difference between the buyer and seller price for the destroyers adding up to as much as $100 per ship. The substantial decline in Russo-Chinese trade turnover in 1997 was blamed on the slowdown in arms sales. (SWB, SU/3074 S1/3, 12 November 1997).

As to the strategic implications of these sales, it is certain that the Kilo class submarines and the destroyers will add to China’s naval projection capabilities. The submarines are apparently the best of this type in the world, their main advantage consisting in their extraordinarily quiet acoustics, making them extremely difficult to detect. The destroyers, while not the newest type, are a significant purchase due to the fact that they normally carry up to eight ‘Moskif’ surface-to-surface missiles as their main armament. According to one report the Chinese have requested 24 launchers on each ship. The purchases in the naval sphere have not been large but it should be noted that China has major ship-building capabilities of its own, so much so that one Russian naval officer asserted that despite the small volume of naval technology purchased, China could eventually ‘rearm those submarines with cruise missiles and missile torpedoes’ of their own design. (Blank, 1997:65-98). However, most analysts are in agreement that for China to upgrade from a brown coastal to a blue water navy will take a considerable period of time: ‘The Chinese navy will remain until and beyond 2015 – an antiquated coastal navy.’ (Shambaugh, 1997:7-29).

In sum, although Chinese imports of Russian weapons began to decline after 1997, China remained Russia’s largest client: thus, in 1991 China’s share of Russian arms exports was only 3 per cent, compared to India’s 29 per cent, but by 1992 China’s share had already shot up to 37 per cent, against India with 35 per cent. However, there were no arms deliveries to China at all in 1994 and in 1995 its share was only 11 per cent. while India’s
1996 was a bumper year for Russian arms sales to China, a massive 40 per cent of all Russian arms exports. Nevertheless, despite the fact that Russia maintained second place in the world rankings of the 30 major suppliers of conventional weapons, the volume remained small compared to the world’s leading supplier, the United States. In 1996 for example, a good year for Russian arms exports, the figure was still only $3.90 billion against $9.26 billion US sales. The aggregate figures for 1993–97 show that the United States sold $53.13 billion dollars worth with Russia trailing behind with $15.25 billion. (SIPRI Yearbook, 1998:124-130).

In 1998–99 China obtained the licence to manufacture Su-27SK Flanker B aircraft, and discussions began on the licence for Su-30K fighter jets. Russia was still cautious, however, and held back on the Su-30MKI licence, which was obtained by India in late 1999. The mercantilist motives behind Russian arms sales were questioned by Kokoshin in his new capacity as head of the Presidential Security Council, who declared that the choice of countries to which the Russian Federation exports arms should be dictated not by commercial, but rather by national security interests. Despite the large volumes of sales, one should not necessarily assume that Russia was making a significant contribution to China’s conventional armory — according to Konstantin Makienko, these imports from Russia accounted for only about 1–2 per cent of the overall arms in the Chinese Armed Forces. Moreover, in terms of a threat to the Russian Far East, the types of weapons China was purchasing were strategic rather than tactical, i.e. more suitable for an attack on Taiwan and the South China Seas. Makienko, like many others, believed Russia’s nuclear arsenal remains its main deterrent. Nevertheless, the words of one Russian analyst showed that arms exports were still perceived as a reliable instrument of foreign policy: ‘Conquering the vast Asia-Pacific armaments markets can be of considerable economic and geopolitical significance to Russia.’ (Petrovsky, 1997:20-38).

By autumn 1995, it had become clear that the West intended to proceed with the eastward expansion of NATO and there were calls for Russia to respond by finding ‘new allies’. In propaganda terms, it was more than ever vital to portray the relationship with China in a positive light. As the China expert Andrei Voskresenskii observed, the MID was pushing the ‘soft variant’ of friendly relations with China. A wide-ranging consensus emerged
that saw the proposed expansion of NATO as a threat to Russian security, and essentially as a betrayal by the West. Lukin, although a moderate centrist, spoke of a possible Russian response that could include the ‘formation of a strategic union between Russia and China and other eastern countries (SWB, SU/2811/ B/6 8th June, 1995).

This has been a period of reassertion of Russian foreign policy. Putin showed sign of cooperation with the US and the west during 9/11 after which there was a full scale cooperation in the war on terror. However disagreements arose with the expansion of NATO to eastward i.e. adding former Soviet Union republics to the NATO fold, on ABM treaty and on Iraq war. But Putin not allow the disagreement to grow to a rivalry and accommodated such behavior.

The main objective of this period was to give a predictable and pragmatic look to Russian Foreign Policy. This was evident in the foreign policy concept of 2000, which says, The Russian Federation is pursuing an independent and constructive foreign policy. It is based on consistency and predictability on mutually advantageous pragmatization. This policy is maximally transparent, it taken into account the legitimate interact states and is aimed at seeking joint decisions. Russia is a reliable partner in international relations

Foreign policy service 2000 is marked by non-confrontationist approach. It took a flexible attitude towards NATO. Rhetoric was replaced by realism during this period. The introduction of new foreign policy concept in July 10, 2000 based on realistic assessment of the world situations was the first step. The concept itself acknowledges that, “A successful foreign policy of Russia on Federation must be based on maintaining observance of a reasonable balance between its objectives and possibilities of attaining these objectives. Concentration of politico-diplomatic military, economic, financial and other means on resolving foreign political tasks must be commensurate with their real significance for Russia’s national interests, while the scope of participation in international affairs must be adequate to the actual contribution to strengthening the countries positions.
In his New Year speech of 2001, Putin emphasized acquisition of new friends and the regaining old ones as priority, "we can now say today that we choose the direction of our advance correctly and calculated our strength correctly also. Our achievement includes political and economic stability, economic growth, and prosperity for the people, strengthened statehood, law and order. They also include an open foreign policy, the acquisition of new friends and the regaining the old ones". He acknowledged that Russian Far East is rich in natural resources, but it is scarcely populated and underdeveloped. Involvement of China and Japan can contribute to the development of the region. The Russo-Chinese partnership has allowed the almost complete resolution of old disputes such as the border disputes, an increase in bilateral trade (US $ 8 billion in 2000 and $ 10 billion in 2001 set against $ 1 billion in 1990), in particular in arms sales of China, (over $ 4 billion in 2001) and the development of a few regional joint projects (People’s Daily, 5th January, 2002, P-7). The establishment in 1995 of ‘Sanghai Five’ a group of countries comprising China, Russia and three central Asian Republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) aimed at enhancing the economic development, stability and security of this region (the group is now known as ‘Sanghai Cooperation Organization’ following the admission of Uzbekistan in 2001). Even before September 11, the major goal of the group had moved from the establishment of confidence building measures (reduction of troops along borders) to the common fight against separatism, expansion and terrorism.

At first summit between Putin and Jiang Zemin in Beijing (18 July 2001), the two leaders signed a joint declaration and statement on ABM (Anti-Ballistic missiles) that criticized the US plan to develop NMD (Anti-Ballistic missiles) system, strongly denouncing it as Washington’s desire to seek unilateral military and security advantages. The US was warned of the most grave adverse consequences of it proceeded with the plan and that any damage to ABM treaty until triggers a new arms race. The incorporation of Taiwan into any foreign TMD (Theater Missile Defence) system was also declared as ‘unacceptable’ by both chiefs of state, while Russia stated that it faithfully’ adhered to ‘one China policy of Chinese communist party. The treaty concluded in Moscow a year later refigured their ideas and also incorporated a common wish to see the emergence of a multi-polar world.
In December 1991, the Soviet Union disintegrated into 15 independent republics and Russia succeeded it as a permanent member of the UN Security council. Russo-China relations thus face a new test. Would the two countries maintain normal relations regardless of their different social system and ideologies, or would their relations deteriorate even to a state of hostility? This was not only concern to the two neighbouring countries but also to many others, especially the US, Japan and other Northern East Asian and European nations. Fortunately, the leaders of both China and Russia handled the transition in the relationship carefully and skillfully.

On 27 December 1991, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen sent letters to new republics, including Russia, informing them that China recognized their independence and was preparing to establish diplomatic relations with them. Two days later, the Chinese and Russian deputy foreign ministers signed a protocol expressing the mutual desire to develop a "goodneighbourly" friendly relationship on the basis of the Five Principles of peaceful coexistence or Panchasheel (i.e., mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; mutual non aggression, non-interference in each-other's internal affair, equality and mutual benefits; and peaceful co-existence), and China expressed its support for Russia as successor of State to the USSR in the UN. Thus two nations made a first key step towards the normalization of their relations. (Ditmer, 2001, pp- 399-401).

Since then the Sino-Russian relations have developed in a smooth and healthy direction. There have been three stages in the development of relationship:-

1. In December 1992 Russian President Yeltsin visited China and met Chinese President Yang Shang Kin. This was the first summit meeting between Russia and China. The two signed a joint statement on the foundation of mutual relations, stipulating that they would establish a good neighbourly relationship on the basis of five principles of peaceful coexistence. The document set the tone of friendships and cooperation. They signed a further 24 agreements on cooperation in various field. (Donaldson & Nogee, 1948, p. 96)
2. In September 1994, Chinese President Jiang Zemin visited Russia for a summit meet with Yeltsin. This produced a second joint statement deepening the bilateral relationship as a "constructive partnership oriented towards the 21st Century", and a statement affirming the two countries commitment to no use of nuclear weapons and not to target nuclear armed missiles against each other. The two leaders also signed an agreement delineating the 55 km. western sector of Russo-China border. This second summit could be termed as stage of 'constructive partnership'. In May 1995 Jiang Zemin visited Russia to attend the 50th ceremony commemorating victory in World War II. During his visit Russia confirmed its support for 'one China principle' and its opposition to Taiwan joining the UN; (Donaldson & Nogee, 1999, p. 96)

3. In April 1996 the third Russo-China summit meeting was held in Beijing. Jiang and Yeltsin signed a new joint statement proclaiming the forging of a 'strategic partnership of equality and trust oriented towards the 21st century'. The Chinese Leadership supported Russian position against eastward expansion of NATO. On 26 April, 1997 the heads of state of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan met in Shanghai and signed an agreement on the confidence building in the border area. Since then, Russo-Chinese relations, developed beyond a bilateral relationship, with greater cooperation in the international arena. This indicates that the relationship This indicates that the relationship has a stage of strategic partnership. (Qimao, 1999, pp. 288-290)

Russian leaders in the initial days of post-Soviet period entertained hopes of becoming a part of the Western world and bring about a systematic change from the communist political and economic system to western type liberal democracy and market economic with the help of Western political support and large scale economic and technological assistance. The then Russian foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev who was staunch supporter of "Pro-West approach" and followed Atlanticist foreign policy in the hope of Russia's political and economic integration into the West. In his talk with German foreign minister Heinrich Geuschev in January, 1992 Andrei Kozyrev called for the establishment of a 'single security space from Vancouver to Vladivostok'. The threat of eastward orientation
of NATO was still not on the horizon and Moscow at this time had a benign and favourable view of the west. Kozyrev was fond of saying that democracies do not wage wars and he was keen that Russia joined the "civilized democracies". (Bakshi, 2004, pp. 24-26).

As regards the USA in particular, it was even hoped that partnership between two nuclear powers the USA and Russia - would provide strategic stability to the post-cold war world. Such a policy would be exact opposite of their global rivalry and deterrence of mutual annihilation during the Soviet era. The Russian Ambassador to the USA called for 'special kind' of relations between the USA and Russia. Andrei Kozyrev said in February 1992 that the Russian US interaction could become one 'decisive factor in international security today". Lt. General Vladimir Manrikov proposed a "grand US-Russian geopolitical partnership.” (Bakshi, 2004, pp. 27).

Thus, in the initial Russian order of priorities China was given a place behind the USA, Western Europe, Japan and Republic of Korea. The Russian foreign ministry even asserted that China was only of secondary importance in the Russia's foreign policy. Pro-Western proponents defended the idea of strong ideological, economic and even military alliance with the West. Former Russian Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar for example, recommended "cementing a military alliance with the West and switching our deterrence potential to the Far East. (Bakshi, 2004, pp. 27-28).

Honeymoon with the West ended very soon and disenchantment and differences started surfacing. Russia had expected and called for the unfolding of a new "Marshall Aid Plan" by the western countries in its aid. The failure of the reforms, also led to the growth of anti-Western sentiment in the country. While in the initial period of the westerners or the Atlanticists led by the foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev and his foreign policy establishment were more assertive, now the 'geopolitics' the 'Eurasists, the 'nationalists', and advocates of great power status for Russia became more assertive and began to criticize pro-Western policy of Kozyrev as the policy of “yes” and making one sided concessions to the west. (Bakshi. 2004. pp. 28-29).
Following the dissolution of parliament in autumn of 1993 and the election of new bicameral parliament and adoption of new constitution in December 1993, a more workable relationship has developed between the parliament and presidency. The relationship has shifted from being strictly confrontational to one that includes more compromise and consensus building. As a consequence the foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev was forced to modify his pro-Western stance. One is able to recognize this shift in policy orientation in several areas. First, formal statements by the foreign minister Kozyrev were by then less cooperative in nature towards the west than was previously the case. Second, Russia stressed its role as a major factor in the world and asserted its position on such issues as the Balkan conflict. Finally there was a renewed emphasis placed on relations with the “Near Abroad” (Kavet & Kzhemiatin, 1997, p. 195).

There were shifts in emphasis and priorities, but no sharp turns in the policy. Moscow was neither in the position, nor willing to confront the West in the old Soviet style. But Russia began to pay greater attention to its neighbours in Asia. Ties with great Asian countries India and China - were consolidated through Presidential visits in January 1993 and December 1992 respectively. These visits were projected as imparting a greater balance to Russian foreign policy between the West and East.

As Yeltsin stated at a press conference on December 18, 1992 in Beijing "We want balanced relations in Europe and Asia alike". Similarly Chinese were feeling increasingly isolated in the world as tensions grew with great Britain over Hong Kong, and the USA and France concluded arms deals with Taiwan. For this reason, the Chinese leaders shelved their political differences with the Yeltsin Govt. and welcomed the opportunity to enhance cooperation with Russia. (Wishnick, 2001, p. 123).

In 1995, despite continued controversy on border trade and growing opposition in the border regions to any territorial concessions to Beijing as a part of the border demarcation process, high level meeting between Russia and China addressed many issues. Kozyrey's trip to Beijing in March led the groundwork for the year's bilateral contracts, including Li Peng's visit to Moscow to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, and the third Sino-Russian summit held in Beijing in 1995. In another sign of the continuing
progress in Russo-China bilateral relations, President Jaing Zemin represented China at May 1995 ceremonies in Moscow marking the 50th anniversary of the victory against Nazi Germany.

It is broadly agreed that relationship between Russia and China in the post-cold war period can be classified into three stages. The period from 1992-94 is regarded as one of "Good Neighbourliness, the second phase from 1994-1996 as one of "constructive partnership" and third phase from 1996 onwards is regarded as one of "strategic partnership" directed towards 21st century. (Wishnick, 2001, pp. 124-125).

In 1997 "Joint declarations on a multipolar world and the formation of new world order", by then Russian President Boris Yeltsin and his Chinese counterpart Jiang Zemin announced their commitment to develop a 'partnership for the purpose of strategic interaction in the 21st century.' The statement was widely seen not only as a challenge to American "hegemonism" but also a confirmation of the qualitatively new relationship that had emerged between Moscow and Beijing after the end of the Cold War (Sherman, 2000, p-10).

Moscow and Beijing also share many security interest and threat perceptions, from an attachment to geopolitical concepts such as spheres of influence and balance of power for international security agenda. Beijing has publicly backed Moscow on issue of handling Chechen conflict, while Russia reciprocated Chinese efforts to suppress separations in Xinjiang and supported 'one China' policy towards Taiwan. Both have a major stake in ensuring peace and stability in the Korean peninsula.

Both Russia and China have also developed a strategic relationship directed towards 21st century in the post-cold war era. At the summit which took place on April 24-26, 1996 both Yeltsin and Jiang affirmed that two countries "were entering into a new stage of partnership, based on equality and trust." Given continued attempt by certain states to apply pressure and engage in block politics, by cooperating in matters of strategy Russia and China would be able to work towards a multipolar world. During this summit meeting, it became apparent that Russia and China saw their bilateral relationship as a
way of relieving perceived pressures from the West. Thus Chinese side expressed its understanding for the Russian position on NATO expansion, while Yeltsin affirmed Russia's support for the People's Republic of China's position on Taiwan. (Wishnick, 2001, pp. 128-130).

In Central Asia both Russia and China have their claims for energy security and in this region the interest of both countries seems to be on odds. After the disintegration of USSR, China acquired three new neighbours - Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Trade between Central Asia and China has been low with many of the same problems afflicting Russo-China regional trade. Like the Russian Far East, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have also complained about unscrupulous Chinese traders and illegal migrants streaming across their borders. The governments of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, for example were vocal in their protests against Chinese nuclear testing, which took place near their border at Lop Nor in China's Xinjiang province. In May 1996 Xinjiang complained that Kazakhstan had shipped radioactive scrap metal to the region. (Xing, 1996, pp. 58-60)

Beijing have some significant stakes in the Central Asian region. First, Central Asia neighbours the troubled Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR), where a segment of Uighur Muslim population is striving for independence which is posing grave threat to Peoples Republic of China. Secondly, China is today a energy hungry country and a net importer of oil and wants access to Central Asia's vast petroleum resources. Thirdly, China's manufacturing sector is on the boom and need the market to sell its finished products, Central Asia is the ideal place for this purpose. (Xing, 1996, pp. 58-62).

In 1994 Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan were among four Central Asian states to join NATO's Partnership for Peace programme and in beginning of 1997, a series of military exercises have been taken place in Kazakhstan. Chinese analysts have paid close attention to growing military ties between Central Asian states and NATO, especially in the aftermath of the Kosovo crisis in the spring of 1999.
Due to their history of relation with Moscow and their geographic position at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and the Middle East, the Central Asian states have tried to maximize their freedom to maneuver. Nazerbayev has called the "preservation of independence" the most important aim for Kazakhstan. While president Akaev of Kyrgyzstan has outlined a "Silk Road diplomacy" fostering relations with East and the West alike. As these leaders develop their own approaches to foreign policy, differing from perspective in both Beijing and Moscow, Russian and China face an increasingly complex strategic environment in Central Asia. (Xing, 1996, pp. 58-64)

The most serious potential flashpoints in relations between China and Central Asia, however, concerns ethnic relations. Central Asia and Xinxiang are linked by overlapping ethnic populations more than one million Kazakhs and 375,000 Kyrgyz live in Xinxiang, while 262,000 Uighurs live in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Another potential source of friction concerns the possibility of Russo-China rivalry for influence in Central Asia. For example in 1995 Nazarbaev signed an accord with China granting Kazakhstan the right to use China's pacific port at Liangyugang in Jiangsu Province. The agreement improved Kazakhstan's access to trading in Pacific rim by shorting the distance to Pacific it is only 3500km from Kazakhstan to Liangyugang less than half the distance needed to reach Russian Far East ports. (Harris, 1993, pp. 112-115).

In the field of military cooperation China emerged as the Russia's most promising client in the 1990s. In fact, from 1992-94 China purchased 97 per cent of its weapons from Russia. In 1992 China spent $1.8 billion on Russian weapons, including 26 SU-27 fighter aircraft. The SU-27s were supposed to be the first installment of a total purchase of 72 planes. China also purchased missile - guidance and rocket technology, rocket engines and surface to air missiles including SS-300 air defence missile system, similar to Patriot. (Hallooway and Bicker, 1997, p. 20)

The showdown between China and the USA's Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Strait in March 1996 demonstrated to the Chinese the importance of modernizing their sea power. According to military analysts this motivated the Chinese to purchase of two Soveremenyi class destroyers equipped with advanced missiles including Sunburn ship-
to-ship missiles, SA-N-17 surface to air missiles, and SS-N-22 cruise missiles. In addition, China had contracted for four advanced kilo class submarines. To improve rapid reaction capability China has purchased 14 IL-47 transport aircrafts. In August 1999, Russia agreed to sell China forty to sixty of the Su-30 MKK fighters for $2 billion. Chinese officials had expressed their interests in this top of the line aircraft ever since India purchased similar planes (SU 30 MKI) in 1997. In 2000 Russia provided the Chinese with several dozen SU-27 UBK fighters at a price tag of $1 billion in partial payment of Soviet debt to China. (FBIS, Nov. 20, 2000, p. 20).

To conclude, the first half of 1990s, the improvement of relationship with China gave substance to Yeltsin’s attempt to reorient Russian foreign policy away from a pro-Westerns focus and appealed to all political spectrums. Moreover Russian hostility to NATO expansion gave new impetus to rhetoric supporting a Russo-China partnership as counterbalance. Despite changes in the strategic environment leading to close cooperation between Russia and China in the short-term lagging Sino-Russian economic relations, the growing potential for Russo-China competition in Central Asia and continuing distrust of China in the Russia's border regions all sets for a more fluid Russo-China relationship in the new millennium.

Russia and China share common view on many national and international issues such as, joint fight against terrorism, opposition to the US led unilateralism and supporting multilateralism just international world order, strengthening the UNO; non-interference in the internal matters etc. Both countries are the permanent members of the UNSC. All these and many more political issues of divergence and convergence interests have been discussed in the next chapter.