

NATO and Security of Central Asia

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Abstract

The disappearance of bipolar system following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, has also changed many strategic concepts. Central Asia, as a part of the Soviet empire, has become an arena for regional and global challenges after these transformations. The region, already faced with various political, economic, social and cultural problems, soon became a location for the activities of Islamic fundamentalists, which in turn intensified regional crisis. Different socio-political problems made the ground for these activities.

The basic question of this paper is: What is the role of NATO enlargement and its effects on security provision in Central Asia? This paper tries to answer that, "what role can NATO play in Central Asia in order to provide security in this region specially after September 11th and the following events". Based on current security issues in Central Asia, America has seriously emphasized on socio-economic reforms under the "Greater Middle East" framework. Central Asian leaders are obliged to control political, social and economic crisis to prevent terrorist acts and reduce public dissatisfaction. Political transformations following the Soviet Union collapse have clearly revealed that the roots of threat and instability in Central Asia are essentially internal. Sooner or later, leaders of these states have to resolve these threats, based on a clear understanding of regional sociopolitical realities.²

Key words: NATO, Central Asia, Russia, America, Islamic Fundamentalism, Caspian Sea, Europe, Soviet Union, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan

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Introduction

Collapse of the Soviet Union and conversion of its fifteen states into independent countries caused deep and extensive changes in Central Asia. The disappearance of bipolar system following the disintegration of the Soviet Union has also changed many strategic concepts. Central Asia, as a part of the Soviet empire, has become an arena for regional and global challenges after these transformations. The region, already faced with various political, economic, social and cultural problems, soon became a location for the activities of Islamic fundamentalists, which in turn intensified regional crisis. Different sociopolitical problems made the ground for these activities. Extensive ethnical ties with Afghanistan caused Central Asia to be gravely influenced by the outcomes of civil war in this neighboring country.

The basic question of this paper raises is: “What is the role of NATO enlargement and its effects on security provision in Central Asia”? and tries to answer the that “what role can NATO play in Central Asia in order to provide security in this region specially after September 11th and the following events”. The Author tries to answer this question with survey of the different threats in the region after the independence of these countries.

Partnership for Peace (PfP) and Russia

There were extensive debates about how NATO and NACC could cooperate with Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). There

were also serious debates about peace keeping in Yugoslavia after its destruction and division. All these dialogues about the requirements and necessity of peace protection in after-the-cold-war Europe were accompanied by Partnership for Peace (PfP) program, proposed by NATO. PfP Program was announced in January 1994 as a mechanism to respond the security concerns of former Warsaw Treaty members including Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. They were extremely worried that the Soviet Union pattern might repeat again after its military invasion to Chechniya. The program was designed and implemented considering the sensitivities and concerns of the Russian Federation¹.

Since US had tried hard to use NATO as a means for global leadership under its preferred regulated framework and to run a campaign as if it is a necessity for the security of the world and Europe, the it firmly proposed new roles for NATO to establish peace and stability in and out of Europe. It included environment protection and humanitarian assistance to disaster-stricken countries in the new list of NATO responsibilities. From the beginning, NATO expansion advocates had noted the importance of relations with Russia and positions and views of this country. Many worked for Russia's membership in NATO, while some argued for establishing proper arrangements for NATO-Russia

1. David S. Fadok. *Assessing NATO Enlargement in Light of Europe's Past and Asia's Future*. USAF Institute for National Security Studies, March 1999, p 9.

cooperation¹. Meanwhile, new NATO members, especially Baltic States had no interest in gaining any especial right by Russia regarding them. In March 1995, Estonian Foreign Minister strictly opposed granting any special jurisdiction or power to Russia as a part of Russia-NATO cooperation arrangements². NATO leaders, however, always emphasized the importance of coordination with Russian authorities³.

Before the Soviet Union destruction, Russian leaders initially expressed their optimism for joining NATO. Boris Yeltsin even suggested NATO membership in December 1991, as a means for a new security system. Dominating Euro-Atlantic viewpoint in Russia justified this approach completely. Some Eastern Europe leaders had already proposed the idea of an "Eastern NATO".

Leaders of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, who had the bitter experience of the Red Army presence, and were worried about the restoration of dominance-seeking behaviors in Russia after the destruction of the Soviet Union pleaded for a new security arrangements with NATO expansion toward the East. They were, therefore, the first states joining NATO. Partnership for Peace (PfP) program was NATO leaders' –especially Americans'–first response to these concerns. The US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, proposed the

program in October 1993⁴. Despite Yeltsin's initial agreement with NATO expansion, a combination of transformations, pressures, protests and objections were developed and intensified in Russia⁵. It must be noted that Warren Christopher proposed this plan after the suppression of the Russian Duma by Yeltsin in October 1993⁶. Following Russia's military operation in Chechniya, there were more concerns about restoration of the policies of the Soviet Union era⁷. Russia's trends and directions in the Bosnia war and their support for Serbs –which was under the nationalists' domestic pressures–aggravated these conflicts⁸.

Unlike Euro-Atlantic supporters, Russian neo-Eurasianists intensified their opposition with NATO expansion, believing it is completely against the Russia's interests⁹. Eurasianists, among whom Yvgeny Primakev was one of the most prominent figures, admitted the importance of cooperation with the West, but sought a clear consideration of Russia's interests in these arrangements. Many of them have clearly expressed their disagreement with NATO expansion in the Russian Duma¹⁰. In their view, the US wants to strain Russia's relations with

1. Stanley Kober, NATO Expansion and the Danger of Second Cold War. *Cato Foreign Policy Briefing*, No. 38, Jan. 31, 1996, p. 1.

2. Ibid.

3. Michael Ruhle, Nicholas Williams. *The World Today*, May 1995, p. 88.

4. Ibid., p. 417.

5. Anatol Lievin, Russian Opposition to NATO Expansion. *The World Today*, Vol. 51, No. 10, 1995.

6. Igor Maslov. Russia and NATO, a Critical Period. *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No.1, Winter 1998, p.5.

7. Timothy Edmonds. NATO and its New Members. *Survival*, Vol. 45, No. 3, Autumn 2003, pp. 145-47.

8. Vlad Sobel. NATO, Russia and the Yugoslavia War. *The World Today*, Vol. 51, No.11, Nov. 1995, p. 214.

9. Leonid Ionin. *Russia and NATO: Problem of NATO Expansions to the East, Russian Politics and public Opinion, 1992-97*. Final Report (Moscow), pp. 4-7.

10. Ibid., p. 13.

former Soviet Union states, and also tries hard to create conflicts between Russia and other Asian countries.

Many Russian experts believed that NATO expansion would harm the Russian democratic process seriously and have thus warned about empowerment of right or left wing extremists¹. Many Russians expected that after Warsaw Treaty dissolution, the US would ensure the same thing to happen to NATO; although some believed that NATO expansion would be in accordance with Russian interests, provided it could improve Russian cooperation with the West². Among extensive debates between opponents and proponents of NATO expansion, many noticed and warned about its possible consequences such as widening the gap between Russia and the West, starting a new cold war, increasing Russian efforts for enhancing its influence on its surrounding e.g. "Near Abroad"³, weakening European security, and developing a new kind of militarism in Russia⁴.

After formal invitation of the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary in May 1997, NATO and Russia signed an agreement for official cooperation, according to which both sides announced that their security would be achieved by close ties with each

other⁵. After Helsinki Treaty in 1975 by which European countries emphasized on concerted efforts on many socio-political issues, this agreement was of considerable historical significance. The agreement consisted of four parts in which mechanisms for consultation and cooperation in military and political issues under Russia-NATO Permanent Joint Council were recommended⁶. The most important part was the foundation of Russia-NATO Permanent Joint Council which might pave the way for solving many NATO-Russia disputes.

Russia and NATO agreement on the formation of Permanent Joint Council in order to coordinate mutual affairs, facilitated their cooperation. Commitment for development of democracy, human rights and market economy as well as avoiding coercion and military power application against each other were reflected in this agreement. In the 50th anniversary of NATO in April 1999, Russia was no longer considered a threat based on its new strategic concept. With the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary official joining NATO at the same year, the organization realized its expansion with 19 members.

NATO after September 11

11 Sep. 2001 terrorist attacks attracted more attention toward NATO⁷; the US sought new options based on Article 5 of this treaty that requires all members to jointly defend any member who is under

1. Anatol Leiven. Restraining NATO; Ukraine, Russia, and the West. *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 4, p. 73.

2. Tatiana parkhalina. Of Myths and Illusions: Russian Perception of NATO Enlargement. *NATO Review*, May/June 1997.

3. Elaheh Koolae, *Politics and Government in Central Asia*. Tehran, SAMT Pub, 1997.

4. Alexi Pushkov. NATO Enlargement, A Russian perspective. *Strategic Forum*, No.34, 1995, pp 25-28.

5. NATO Enlargement and Russia. *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, Vol. 47, No.1, Jan 1998, pp 197-99

6. Ibid., p. 201.

7. Anthony Forster, William Wallace. What is NATO for? *Survival*, Vol. 43, No. 4, Winter 2001, p. 107.

attack. Thus, global functions were proposed for NATO in the World War against terrorism, which the US brought up in response to the attacks on its soil. NATO which was initially established to confront Communism, was now being used against global threats imposed by unstable and powerless governments¹. The US and European governments wished to realize their own goals, so NATO had to accept new functions under new circumstances. NATO strategic concept review in 1999 was in line to these changes². In this regard, the cooperation of multinational forces in maintaining security and stability under the supervision of the United Nation Security Council and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) could be mentioned.

NATO has become an organization responding to the global needs of the US and Europe after Sep. 11. Twenty four hours after the attacks its members signed the mutual defense agreement on Sep. 12th for the first time in 52 years³. The incident clearly demonstrated the importance of expanding ties between Europe and the US. Trans-Atlantic relations underwent a grave transformation after Sep. 11 that also included NATO relations with Russia⁴. The US wanted NATO to become an organization for fighting terrorism and tries to apply the capacities of Article 5 for its own security needs after Sep. 11⁵. Europeans' opinions strongly agreed with this

approach after those shocking incidents, and various polls clearly showed that the Europeans were willing to use their power along with the US in war on terrorism. The shocks resulted after Sep. 11 attacks also forced NATO expansion opponents to review their stance, and thus, the most important impacts were revealed in the relations between NATO and Russia and NATO expansion opponents.

Another important step was taken in November 2002 in Prague Summit: when the membership of three Baltic states as well as Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria was accepted. Aftermath of September 11 memberships of Baltic states was not considered a threat to Russia; instead, it was seen as a step for advancing democracy and market economic values in Northern Europe⁶.

Using new NATO strategic concepts after Sep. 11 terrorist attacks, the war on terrorism was strongly emphasized. All NATO members had to use all their capabilities to perform their new roles and functions based on the new organization design. The condition for expanding cooperation with Russia was improved and most opposition came to an end after Sep. 11 although there were new competitions after a short time. NATO-Russia relations entered a new level following these changes and especially after Russia's military cooperation with the US in Central Asia and Afghanistan. The successful experience of cooperation in Balkan war brought hopes of joint exploitation from coordinated activities.

1. Ibid., p. 110.

2. Ibid., p. 115.

3. Philip H. Gordon. NATO after 11 September. *Survival*, Vol.43, No.4, Winter 2001-2, p. 89.

4. Ibid., p. 89.

5. Ibid., p. 100.

6. Philip H. Garodon. Op.cit., p. 97.

Security Challenges in Central Asia

A brief review of security challenges in Central Asian region seems to be necessary for examining NATO's roles and functions in maintaining Central Asian security. The Soviet Union dissolution rewarded the Central Asian States with an unwanted independence¹. Leaders who had shaped republic governments under the communist system, continued their operations as new national leaders. All except Askar Aghayev, the President of Kyrgyzstan, were Communist Party leaders in the Soviet Union era. Their dependent economies no longer received huge financial subsidies from Moscow, so they had to seek new business partners². It initially seemed that Central Asian states are moving toward political and economic openness; however, this trend was soon changed after stabilization of authoritarian governments³.

Multiple economic crisis encountered in the aftermath of the Soviet Union dissolution as well as lack of proper social, cultural and political capacities and weak relations with global economy⁴ resulted in unfruitful economic reform. Landlocked-ness, lack of access to free waters, are other problems that make reshaping economic patterns difficult. Centuries of authoritarian leadership in the region

and specifically the civil war experience in Tajikistan caused political openness and civil institutions development to be extremely difficult, although it initially seemed that Central Asian countries will move in this direction after the Soviet Union destruction.

Neighborhood with Afghanistan causes the region to be influenced by its internal changes⁵. Ethnic linkages between Central Asia countries and Afghanistan accelerated this influence⁶, which was facilitated when Najibollah government was overthrown. When Tajikistan civil war began, Kabul's Tajik government strongly supported the opponents of Dushanbe government. Tajikistan was the only country in the region that allowed Islamic parties to have formal activity⁷. Civil war in the country provided a good opportunity for Central Asian secular leaders to ban these parties and consider their activity as a regional security threat⁸.

One of the serious problems in Central Asian due to its neighborhood with Afghanistan is illicit drug traffic as a main smuggling route to Europe⁹. In fact, 80 percent of heroin reaching Europe crossed from Afghanistan and Pakistan¹⁰. The enormous revenue

1. Elaheh Koolae. *The Soviet Union From Formation to Destruction*. Tehran, The Institute for International and Political Studies, 2001, 3rd Ed.

2. Bruce George. NATO, OSCE, and Regional Security Issues in Central Asia and the Caucasus. *Perception*, Vol. II, No. 4, Dec/Feb. 1997-98, pp. 1-2.

3. Pauline Jones Luong. Seminar Summary, Policy Pathway in Central Asia. *CSIS*, Nov.15, 2002, p. 1.

4. Brookings Institute, the Economy: From Transition to Sustained Growth and Integration, Feb. 2004, www.brookings.edu/views/papers/200402041inn.htm

5. Elaheh Koolae. Security ties between Afghanistan and Tajikistan. *Central Asia and Caucasus Studies*, No. 38, Summer 2002, pp. 83-109.

6. Eric Miller. *And the Walls Came Tumbling Down: Central Asia and Security, Past, Present, and Future*, April 1997. pp. 2-3.

7. Jacquelyn K Davis, Michael J. Sweeney. Central Asia in U.S. Strategy, and Operational Planning: Where Do We Go From Here? Feb. 2004, pp. 5-8.

8. Alec Rasizade. The New Great Game in Central Asia After Afghanistan. *Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Summer 2002, pp. 1-2.

9. Fiona Hill. The Brookings Institute, Global Politics, May 2001, www.brookings.edu/comm/policy_briefs/pb80.htm

10. Ibid.

and profits obtained from this illegal business can solve many economic crises of the region. Administrative and political corruption in most governmental organizations of Central Asian countries has complicated the campaign against smugglers. As Taliban continued drug trade with a dual objective, most opposition groups in the region tried to use this resource to solve their financial problems¹. Taliban considered drug trade as a resource to meet their needs, as well as a lever to battle profanity². Weak and incapable governments ruling the region had no power to deal with this problem. Because of their structural weaknesses, they did not have the required capability to confront drug traffickers who gained huge revenues with this business. The fall of Taliban, along with the central government weakness, has in turn intensified the opium cultivation and as a result, drug traffic has increased³.

Along with economic, ethnical and drug problems in Central Asia, environmental issues is worth to be mentioned. In addition to water shortage, these countries face extensive and various environmental problems as they did as the Soviet Union states⁴. The region witnessed the drainage of the Aral Lake which was named an environmental catastrophe by

the UN⁵. In April 1993, Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) emphasized in its summit in Tashkent on the necessity of taking urgent measures to reduce environmental problems and compensate the consequences⁶. The socio-economic crisis of the region have in turn intensified the political, military and security threats and aggravated the influence of different regional and international powers.

Energy Resources and the Transit Routes

Considering the fact that the countries located on the east and the wet sides of the Caspian Sea have faced severe socio-economic problems after the Soviet Union disintegration, exploitation of its energy resources has earned growing importance⁷. The escalating trend of socio-economic crisis in Central Asian countries projects the significance of these resources and their transit routes⁸. American companies, seeking their interests by seriously influencing regional changes, were the most eminent players in the region after the Soviet Union destruction⁹. In 1994, the US Secretary of State and Pakistan Military Intelligence Agency agreed on Taliban empowerment in Afghanistan, should the security of this country be guaranteed so that

1. Regional Leaders have Always Mentioned This Issue in Their Assaults on Opposition Groups.

2. Jacquelyn K. Davis, Michael J. Sweeney. Op. cit., p. 41.

3. The UN Authorities Have Repeatedly Warned About This Issue, the Threat of Which is Obviously Toward Afghanistan Neighbors, Including IR Iran.

4. Alexander Nitzche. Fresh Funding Boosts Economic Environmental Work in Central Asia. *CSCE Newsletter*, Vol.10, No.3, Ap. 2003, pp. 1-9.

5. Elaheh Koolae. Economic – Political Roots of Crisis in the Aral Lake. *Central Asia and Caucasus Studies*, No. 8, Winter 1994, pp. 178-88.

6. Alexander Nitzche. Op.cit., p. 9.

7. Hooshang Amirahmadi. *The Caspian Sea at a Crossroad*. U.S.: Macmillan Press LTD. 2000.

8. Stephen Blank. Hearing Before the Subcommittee on the Middle East. House of Representatives, Oct.29, 2003.

9. Dianne L Smith, Central Asia: A New Great Game, www.carlisle.army.Mil/ssi/pubs/1996/centasia.pdf

Pakistan would become the energy transfer route¹. Unocal was the American company playing an active role in this project; however, Sep.11 events, showed them their tragic miscalculations while the American people paid the price.

Although Central Asia states possess enormous mineral resources –Turkmenistan has the fourth biggest natural gas resources, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have various minerals- their unemployment rate is very high. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have favorable natural features to generate energy from water resources; this provides great opportunities for cooperation with their neighboring countries². However, socio-economic disintegration after the Soviet Union destruction and opposition of authoritarian governments in front of waves of democratic movement, as well as foreign interference have all suppressed the opportunities to use these economic capacities.

Different statistics are provided about the amount of energy resources in Caspian Sea and Central Asia³. However, it is generally accepted that approximately 3% of total known energy resources of the world are located in this region. Energy needs have caused many countries, especially Turkey and Pakistan, to be attracted to the Central Asian region. Turkey has focused its efforts on Caspian Sea basin

and Azerbaijan resources⁴, while Pakistan played an important role in Taliban empowerment in Afghanistan in order to gain access to regional energy resources.

Countries such as Russia and Iran tried to expand their cooperation with these states to play their own role in providing access routes to the global markets⁵. Geographical situation of Central Asian and Caucasian countries (except Georgia) has made access to global markets an influential factor in their foreign relations; a factor that the US has used markedly to promote its role in the region⁶. While Iran and Russia try to transfer Caspian and Central Asian energy through their own territory, America has always stressed on the multiplicity and diversity of energy transfer routes⁷. Thus, it has supported the western pipelines from Baku to Supsa (in the Black Sea) and Geyhan (in the Mediterranean Sea) in spite of their heavy costs.

As mentioned before, energy transfer routes from Central Asia and Caspian Sea area have caused serious changes in the region in the decade following Soviet Union destruction⁸. Surrounding countries have made every effort to reach considerable financial profits and various political and economic advantages by transferring energy through their

1. Ted Rall. The New Great Game: Oil politics in Central Asia. *Alternet*, Oct. 11, 2001, <http://www.alternet.org.story.html>.

2. M.E. Ahrari, James Beal. The New Great Game, *Mc Nair Paper*, 47, Jan 1996. www.edu.eu/inss/mcnair/mcnari47/mo47toc.htm.

3. Robert A. Manning. The Myths of Caspian Great Game and the New Persian Gulf. *The Brown's Journal of World Affairs*, Vol. 217, Summer/Fall 2000, pp. 1-2.

4. Lynn Pascoe. Security, Stability, Prosperity: Engaging the Eurasian Front Lines States, Sep.20, 2002, U.S. Department of State.

5. IREX (International Research and Exchange Board). Islam as a Political Force in Central Asia, Jan27, 1999, www.IREX.org/pubj/policy/islam

6. Jacquelyn K. Davis, Michael J. Sweeney. Op.cit., p. 42.

7. Lynn Pascoe. Op.cit.

8. Eugene B. Rumer. Central Asia after September 11, *Strategic Forum*, No. 195, Dec.2002, pp. 3-4.

territories. In the meantime, the US as always tried to deny Iran its right to use its natural advantages by providing an access route to open seas. America always followed “Everyone but Iran” policy in years after the Soviet Union destruction. Meanwhile, Russia tries to restore its traditional ties with Central Asian states and use the Soviet Union era pathways for energy transfer. Russia as the biggest oil exporter in the world –who competes with Saudi Arabia- and China as the largest oil importer have played significant roles in regional changes¹.

In their meetings and negotiations, Russian and Chinese authorities have discussed to build a 2400 Km pipeline from Argarsk in Siberia to Manchuria in China with a cost of \$2.5 billion². China has always paid special attention to energy transfer via Central Asia. Both Russia and China have always resisted the US attempts to influence energy transfer from Central Asia³. Uzbekistan, which has geopolitical dominance over the countries in the region⁴, has tried continuously to expand its relations with the US in order to avoid Russian pressures. Furthermore, Kazakhstan with its deeply interrelated economy with Russia is seeking to build pipelines to export its oil to Eastern Asia especially China⁵.

Turkmenistan, neighboring with Iran and Afghanistan, has become the Central Asia gateway.

There were considerable efforts in this country to transfer natural gas to free waters via Iran and Pakistan⁶. The most important of these efforts were American-Pakistani attempts to empower Taliban in Afghanistan so that they could guarantee security of energy transfer. But Russia has used its own influential levers in this competition. A 25-year contract between Russia and Turkmenistan for gas purchase clearly indicated the Russian geopolitical dominance in the region⁷. Russia purchased about 20 billion cubic meters of natural gas from Turkmenistan just in 2004⁸. Thus, energy resources had a great role in shaping deep and extensive competitions in the region, which reminds the Great Game.

The New Great Game

Following the Soviet Union dissolution and the resulting geopolitical vacuum in Central Asia, a new Great Game began in the region. This term reminds of Russia-Britain struggles over Western and Central Asia in the 19th century which ended up with October. 1917 Revolution. Considering its relations with the US and Europe as foreign policy priorities after the collapse, Russia urged regional leaders to accept the responsibility for security maintenance and pay its price themselves. But Tajikistan civil war changed the Russian politicians' attitude

1. Yu Bin. The Russian- Chinese Oil Politics. *Pacific Forum*, CSIS, 3rd Quarter, 2003, pp. 1-2.

2. Ibid., p. 2.

3. Klevemaln. Oil and new Great Game. *The Nation*, Feb. 16, 2004, <http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/oil-watch/oil-newgreatgame.html>

4. Shaukat Khamrakulov. GUUAM: What is the Future? *CSIS*, July 11, 2001.

5. Keith Bush. The External Relations of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. *CSIS*, May 20, 1997, p.7.

6. Dianne L. Smith. Op.cit., pp. 1-2.

7. The United States, Russia, and Central Asia, New Cooperation or the Old Divide? Harriman Institute, Feb. 2004, p. 1, Harriman, Columbia.

8. Caspian Energy Update, Energy and National Security Program, *CSIS*, p. 2.

dramatically¹. Reinforcing its division 201 in Tajikistan, Russia supported Dushanbe against its Islamic-nationalist opponents, with the help of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan who were also concerned about expansion of Islamist movements in their territories. Although, Tajikistan civil war came to an end with Russian and Iranian assistance after Taliban empowerment in Afghanistan, its consequences and the fear of expanding political Islam sensitized Central Asian leaders about security problems. With the excuse of resisting Islamic groups, authoritarian states of the region increased their suppression of liberalism. Socio-economic crisis helped Islamists to promote their influence in the region,² but Central Asian Islamic groups' relations with Taliban government intensified insecurity and instability in these countries³.

Pakistan and America's support of Taliban as well as financial aids from Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates to Islamic fundamentalists, quickly worsened regional security scenario. This has greatly concerned China about the appearance and spread of Central Asian socio-political instabilities in the Muslim province of Xinxiang⁴. Ethnical ties accelerated the transfer of these instabilities from Central Asia to China. The presence of two million

Kazaks is an evidence of considerable capacity for transferring instability to China⁵. China's energy interests are increasing day to day and that is the reason why it has recently been interested to regional issues. Central Asia leaders have in turn taken advantage of relations with Russia in order to suppress China's influence. Some reports show that a number of Xinxiang had training courses in Afghanistan when Taliban ruled the country⁶.

When Eurasian outlooks gained predominance in Russian foreign policy, relations with Central Asian states became a high priority. Threats of fundamentalist Islamic movements spreading into the territory of Russian Federation which habitats about 20 million Muslims is enough to justify this approach. Russia has created deep and extensive socio-economic correlations with these states; however, since the idea of "Russian Monroe Doctrine"* was proposed, the Soviet Union territory has been of critical importance for Russian leaders so that any kind of foreign interference has been considered a serious threat to Russian interests. Features of dependency inherited from the Soviet Union era facilitated the restoration of Russia's influence in the region, although the US has seriously tried to prevent Russian power renewal⁷. America

1. Elaheh Koolae. Role and Influence of Russia in Tajikistan. *Political-Economic Ettelaat*, Nos. 199-200, Summer 1997, pp. 96-104.

2. Martha Brill Olcott. Democracy, Human Rights and the War on Terrorism in Central Asia. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, June 27, 2002, p. 4.

3. Shireen Hunter. Religion, Politics and Security in Central Asia. *SAIS Review*, Vol.21, No.2, Summer/Fall 2001, p. 2.

4. Eric Miller, *And the Walls Came Tumbling Down*; *Central Asia Security, Past, Present, and Future*, April 1997, pp. 17-18.

5. Mustafa Aydin. New Geopolitics of Central Asia and the Caucasus, Ethnic Diversity and Identity. www.mfa.gov.tr/group/sam/20html#02.

6. Winfried Schnieder Ditrirz. Lack of Security in Central Asia. *Central Asia and Caucasus Studies*, International Conference on Central Asia and Caucasus, 2004.

* Referring to the US President, James Monroe, Who Warned European Countries from Interfering in South American Countries Affairs in 1823, and Called the Region America's Backyard.

7. Alec Rasizade. The Specter of a New Great Game in Central Asia. *Foreign Service Journal*, Nov. 2002.

targeted the containment of Iran and Russia in the post- Soviet Union era.

Following the destruction of bipolar system, Iran has attempted to change its foreign policy from idealism to realism. Although Tajik events and the initial responses from Islamic Republic of Iran leaders concerned Central Asian countries of Iran's possible attempts to help Islamic activists, the positive role Iran played - along with Russia- in bringing Tajikistan civil war to an end ceased these concerns. Iran provides the only safe and secure route for geographical access of Central Asian countries to various economic advantages; however, due to America's "containment" strategy, it was not able to take benefit of this capacity to meet its own interests and regional needs¹. The US has clearly and continuously announced its opposition and actually took actions against energy transfer via Iran. However, Iran is swapping a small percentage of regional energy resources in the oil terminals of Persian Gulf.

Another factor influencing regional insecurity is the new legal regime of the Caspian Sea. Iran, signifying and emphasizing on a consensus among all neighboring countries, has always stressed on its legal rights. Disagreements between littoral countries about each one's rights and responsibilities provided an opportunity for outsiders and extra-regional powers to interfere in the issues of this lake².

Considering the importance of energy issue in America's foreign diplomacy, the Caspian Sea has become the most important strategic point for the US. Regional changes show that the Great Game is now mainly focused in the Caspian Sea area³. The American government estimates that 4.7 million barrels would be produced daily in this region in 2010 and therefore, considers it as one of the most important world regions in reducing vulnerability for global oil market changes and in diversifying its own energy resources. Most oil resources outside Middle East will soon vanish and the US has tried to decrease its reliance upon importation from Saudi Arabia after Sep. 11 attacks; these all indicate the growing importance of Caspian Sea oil resources for the United States. America believes that it needs to control world energy resources if it wanted to play a global leadership. According to some estimates, Kashghan oil resource in Kazakhstan, containing approximately 25 billion barrels of crude oil, is the biggest resource in the world⁴. In Azerbaijan, the capacity of Shah Deniz oil resources is also estimated to be about 5.9 billion barrels⁵.

The United States has seriously tried to prevent restoration of Russia's influence in the former Soviet Union states⁶. Assisting and promoting state-building process in Central Asian and Caucasian region was a

3. Ibid., p. 3.

4. Brigitte Vassort-Rousset. American's Silk Road Strategy: American Geo-strategy for Central Asia, *www.upmf-grenoble.frp.96*.

5. Ibid.

6. Henrikki Heikka. Grand Strategies and Eurasian Security, Four Strategies for 2010. Russia and Eurasian Program, 2002, *Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)* Washington D.C. pp. 2-4.

1. Fiona Hill. The Great Game, *Globalist*, July12, 2002 <http://www.Brookinger.edu/views/article/hill/20070712.htm>.

2. Amy Meyers Jaffe, Robert Manning, Op. cit., pp. 112-129.

high priority in the US regional policy. Because of their proximity to the region, however, Iran and Russia have a specific geographical advantage¹ which the US can not deny, which complicates geopolitical games of the region. China also considers growing American influence in the region, a threat for its own interests, thus pursuing proximity to Russia². Opposing America's attempts for establishing a hegemonic order, China and Russia tend to build a multi-polar world.

The US is gravely worried that nuclear technology may disseminate from Russia if external pressures increase. Many Russian authorities have already expressed the necessity to review disarmament agreements with the US, should NATO expand to the East³. Russia's influential role in establishing peace and security in the Caspian Sea and its extensive outcomes especially on developing relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran was an issue of constant concern for the US. Russia, faced with Islamic and ethnicity-driven threats in its own soil⁴, finds its relations with the US a necessity for its national interests after Sep. 11. Following terrorist attacks on the American soil and after the US government's declaration of war on terror, Russia has been looking for a faster improvement of its relations with the US.

Threats of Islamic Fundamentalism

After the collapse the Soviet Union, national leaders of the region had to face a serious political alternative, the political Islam. It was clear that despite decades of anti-Islamic propaganda, Islam would have a major role in determining the regional identity after the demise of communism. Regarding this fact, changes in Afghanistan, the fall of the communist regime and the occurrence of civil war in this country had immediate effect on Islamic movements in Central Asia⁵. In contrary to initial propaganda against Iran disseminating political Islam, it soon became clear that the real Islamic threat is not coming from Iran, but from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia⁶. Conversely, by playing a positive role in bringing Tajikistan civil war to an end, Iran showed well that it is trying to improve its economic, political and social ties in the region. Like Russia, Iran has always clearly announced its opposition to the presence of foreign powers in the region⁷.

In the face of weakness of civil and political institutes in the region, Islamic activists have become a speaking tongue for protesting against various political, economic and social difficulties⁸. Islamists have also become suitable agents for campaigning against authoritarian ruling regimes.

1. Robert O. Manning, Op. cit., p. 2.

2. Stephen Blank, Scramble for Central Asian Bases, Ap. 2003, www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/3B5-18cfm.

3. Alvin Z. Rubinstein, America's Stake in Russia Today, *Agenda 2000*, Vol. 419, No.1, Winter 1997, pp 31-38.

4. Stephen Winterstein, The Market for Central Asian Legitimacy, *Orbis*, Vol.43, No.3, Summer 1999, pp 435-437.

5. IREX (International Research and Exchange Board). Islam as a Political Force in Central Asia. Jan 27, 1999, www.irex.org/pubs/policy/islam.asp.

6. Olivier Roa, Geopolitical Expansion of Central Asia. Translated by: Abolfazl Sedghi. *Journal of Foreign Policy*, Nos. 29-30, Winter and Spring 2000, p. 100.

7. IREX, Op. cit., p. 3.

8. Alex Rasizade, the New Great Game in Central Asia after Afghanistan. *Turkish Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Summer 2002, pp. 1-2.

Regional problems have increasingly enhanced their influence. Following the Tajikistan civil war experience, they succeeded in restricting these activities by drawing a direct linking line between political parties' activity and instability and challenge in this country.

Islamic parties and groups have expanded their activities in all Central Asia countries, although there was no room for legal activity in any country except Tajikistan. In all these countries, political veterans of the communism era consider Islamic movement as a strong rival¹. Jome Namangani and Taher Yuldash, leaders of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) participated in a series of terrorist acts against Islam Karimov. Their agents were also identified in Feb. 1999 bombing in Tashkent. They even took a number of Japanese as hostage in Kyrgyzstan in August 1999 and then kidnapped a number of American mountain climbers, too. Uzbek authorities accused Islamists of drug trafficking for providing resources for their activities². Tajikistan civil war provided an opportunity for Karimov to increase his pressure on Islamic activists. There are reports about IMU being related with Al Qaeda. The result was that Uzbekistan played a major role in suppressing Talibani Islamists in the region and also in toppling Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Transfer of Taliban's ideology into Central Asia cleared out the roots of threats in the region. After all, regional leaders used

Islamic threat as an instrument for suppressing their opponents and increasing pressures³.

Security of Central Asia after Sep. 11

Terrorist attacks in America changed Central Asian situation completely, with its presence in Afghanistan to overthrow Taliban and fight Al Qaeda and Bin Laden. American military forces soon showed that they do not intend to leave the region after Taliban's fall⁴. Along with promoting its military ties with regional countries, the US negotiated with Japan, Australia and other Asian countries showing their interest for establishing an Asian security treaty (Asian NATO). America clearly showed that it is its strategy to stay in Asia⁵. Their troops have been positioned in Khanabad, Uzbekistan and Manas, Kyrgyzstan. For some Central Asia leaders such as Islam Karimov and Askar Aghayev, America's presence is a mechanism for reducing the ever-increasing pressures of Russia and China.

Russia has strongly opposed its continuous presence in Central Asia, and expanded its influence in the region by installing and continuously operating Kant military base in Kyrgyzstan, permanent presence of division 201 in Tajikistan, signing a 25-year agreement for purchasing natural gas from Turkmenistan, and promoting the role of

1. M.E. Ahrari, James Beal. Op. cit., p. 2.

2. Ibid.

3. Mostafa Aydin, New Geopolitics of Central Asia and the Caucasus, [www.mfa.gov.tr/groupa/sam/20thm#05\(1999\)pp.1-2](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/groupa/sam/20thm#05(1999)pp.1-2).

4. Steplen Blank. US Strategic Priorities Shifting in Central Asia. *Eurasianet*, March 25, 2004, pp. 1-2.

5. Steplen Blank. U.S. Strategic Priorities Shifting in Central Asia, Op. cit., p. 1.

huge governmental organizations such as Gas Prum¹. Meanwhile, the US has focused on regional factors of instability and insecurity. Considering Afghanistan civil war and the activity of Talibani fundamentalists in that country, America has emphasized on the necessity of economic and social reforms² in order to enhance regional economic growth and advance collective security systems.

China and Russia, concerned of America's military presence in the region, expanded their military and financial ties more than ever. Upgrading collective regional security treaty –formed by Russia and Central Asian states in the first years after the Soviet Union destruction- to the level of organization is a clue of these concerns³. Central Asia was an important issue in American diplomacy before Sep. 11 because of its vast energy resources, but after those terrorist attacks, it became a permanent target for American foreign policy⁴.

The US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, talked about America's persistent interests in Central Asia in his speech before Foreign Relations Committee of the Congress. Although there was no room for this kind of speech before Sep. 11 events; however, launching war on terror and also Taliban's activity in the region paved the way for expressing this view. George W. Bush, stating America's foreign policy, emphasized on peace expansion through establishing

open societies and confronting terrorism and tyranny⁵. Regional governments followed economic and political reforms according to America's new policies. Passing "Enduring Freedom Act", American Congress provided the opportunity for their persistent presence in Central Asia, an objective which was in clear contrast with Russian and Chinese security considerations.

Prior to Enduring Freedom Act, Silk Road Strategy Act was passed in March 1999 in order to assist Central Asian and Caucasian economic and political restructuring and improve economic development in the region. After terrorist attacks in Tashkent and Batkin (Kyrgyzstan) Madeleine Albright suggested Border Security Project for Central Asia (America's \$3 million assistance to Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and then Turkmenistan and Tajikistan can be viewed in the same framework⁶). Meanwhile, the US Secretary of State put Islamist Movement of Uzbekistan in its list of terrorist groups. In brief, America's energy priorities in Central Asia were closely linked to security issues after Sep. 11.

Among all countries of the region, Uzbekistan has been the greatest suppressor of individual and social freedoms and violator of human rights. However, because of its critical geopolitical position in the region, Uzbekistan attracted America's highest attention and cooperation⁷. The US has aggravated

1. Harriman Institute, Op. cit., pp. 1-2.

2. Pauline Jones Loung, Op. cit., p. 3.

3. Toda Diamond. International Eurasian Institute for Economic and Political Research, Eurasia-net, Oct 1, 2003, <http://iicas.org/librren/geopolit/01-10-03.htm>.

4. Elizabeth Wishnick. Growing U.S. Security Interests in Central Asia, *US Army War College*. Oct 2002, p. 1.

5. Ibid., p. 2.

6. Elizabeth Wishnick. OP. cit., p. 5.

7. Lynn Pascoe. US Policy in Central Asia and the War on Terrorism. The Heritage Foundation, www.heritage.org/research/asiaandthepacific/wm/40.cfm.

its pressures on Islam Karimov for fulfilling economic and political reforms.

By the way, the Russian Federation, China and Iran consider America's long-term presence as an unfavorable event which in turn can lead to new threats. Many American experts were concerned of the consequences of American troops' long-term presence in the region after Sep. 11¹. The experience of supporting Taliban for inhibiting Iran from energy transfer from Central Asia and Caucasus and its irretrievable damages, was only one of the reasons justifying these concerns. But the US government believes that close supervision over regional issues and stabilization of economic and political processes are strategically important in providing security in the region and the world, especially America's national security². Initially forming a close cooperation with the US to suppress Taliban, Russia has then opposed permanent presence of the US troops in the region.

NATO and Security of Central Asia

There are deep changes in NATO's nature and function after the Soviet Union disintegration. These changes were consistent with international system transformations which were intensified following Sep. 11, 2001. Due to lack of Russia's power there are deep changes in NATO's nature and function. These changes were consistent with

international system transformations which were intensified following Sep. 11, 2001, leading to NATO expansion in the region. When military forces suppressed the Russian Duma to support the President, NATO's expansion toward the East as well as requests from three Eastern Europe countries –Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic- for security provision gained greater importance. Changes in Russians in foreign policy caused their position against NATO expansion to change considerably. Some Russian officials supported joining NATO and some seriously opposed it³. However, they all soon expressed their strong objection to NATO's presence in the former Soviet Union territory and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Partnership for Peace (PfP) program reflects America's attempts to decrease Russian's sensitivities and increasing domestic conflicts between right and left wing nationalists and those who supported expanding ties with the US. Russian military operation in Chechnya provided good evidence for countries that were worried about Russia's willingness for expansion after the Soviet Union. By designing and implementing PfP, NATO leaders tried to respond the security concerns of Eastern European and CIS countries⁴. All Central Asian states joined the program before 2003 in order

1. Eugene B. Rumer. OP. cit., pp. 2-3.

2. Fiona Hill. Central Asia and Caucasus, The Impact of the War on Terrorism, www.Freedomhouse/research/nitransit/2003/hill/essay/pdf.

3. Mikhail Khodarenko. Western Interests in Central Asia, *Dialogue*, Vol. 3, No. 4, April/June 2002.

4. William D. Omalleg, Roger N. McDormott. NATO's Opportunity to Build Regional Stability in the South Caucasus. *Central Asia and Caucasus Analyst*, Vol. 5, No. 10, 19 May 2004.

to design and implement military cooperations, the trend of which was completed between 1997 and 2003¹. Tajikistan was the last country to join the program. While American troops were deployed to Central Asia region, NATO's role was becoming more prominent. Central Asian states organize their military relations with the US according to the weight of their ties with Russia.

Since Sep. 11, countries of the region have focused on greater cooperation with America, the framework of which was provided by PfP program. Russia's strong sensitivity posed serious limitations on NATO's activities in Central Asia², although many Russian authorities prefer America to be present in Fargana Valley than Taliban. Regional leaders tried to expand their ties with NATO especially after hostage crisis in Kyrgyzstan, to confront threats caused by their opponents and Islamic fundamentalists. Turkmenistan, with its closed political environment created by Safar Morad Niazov, has not practically developed extensive relations with NATO and had kept it formally. Unlike Turkmenistan, Baltic states have strongly pursued and requested for NATO membership. Because of Russia's extensive presence in the region, there were great limitations for organizing ties with NATO; these limitations changed considerably after Sept 11³. Central Asian countries did not achieve the basic political, social and

economic characteristics required for NATO membership; Sept 11 aftermath, however, gave America the opportunity to be directly and militarily present in the region.

Conclusion

After the Sep. 11, the United States has considered the security of Central Asia as an important part of its "Greater Middle East" plan⁴. It has intensified in creating a hegemonic order after those terrorist attacks. Russia's weakness was another factor for this increasing acceleration. Central Asian leaders who had carried out collective regional arrangements with Russia and China -from 1992 Tashkent Security Treaty to 1996 Shanghai Treaty- turned their attention to develop political and military relations with the US. In this new situation, Uzbekistan is a special priority, and this concerns other countries.

But "Colored Revolutions" in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan changed the political situation of the region once again. Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan has played a very brutal role in Andijan demonstration, where about one hundred people had died. Islam Karimov accused to prepare another "Colored Revolution" in Uzbekistan, with help of Islamic fundamentalist of abroad⁵. He has permanently talked about the threats of Islamic fundamentalism in the region as the severe threat. After these

1. Jacquelyn K. Davis, Michael J. Sweeney. Op. cit., p. 72.

2. Joseph Ferguson. Growing Pains. *Pacific Forum, CSIS*, 1st Quarter 2002.

3. Ibid.

4. Winfried Schnider Ditzitz. Op. cit., pp. 204-207.

5. see: Elaheh Koolaei(ed.) *The Myth of Colored Revolution*. Tehran, Abrare Moaser, 2005.

developments, his ties with Moscow improved rapidly.

Russian authorities have also expressed their opposition to America's presence several times. They believe that America has not realized Russia's reciprocal expectations. Putin administration in Russia, however, has adopted a positive stance towards America's war on terror in Central Asian region. But Russia's extensive cooperation with the US and its support of the Northern Front for toppling Taliban –in which Iranian government had also a major role- did not receive a proper response from the US. America soon made it clear that it does not intend to leave Central Asia and is reinforcing its military forces in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Domestic pressures have been increasing on Putin to stop this trend, considering his behavior as unilateral concessions. In order to strengthen its presence in Central Asia, Russia faces serious economic problems. Regional leaders are in turn becoming increasingly dependent upon America against various domestic threats.

Most of the former KGB agents and also members of current Russian security agency (FBS) and authorities of Defense Ministry, Foreign Ministry and Ministry of Interior have expressed their grave oppositions to American presence and influence on Central Asia. Founded in 2000, NATO-Russia Joint Council has not been able to respond to these concerns and protests. Chinese leaders are also worried about America's increasing presence in Central Asia. Uzbekistan, was a member of

GUUAM¹ Regional Union became America's strategic ally in war on terrorism in Central Asia. Tashkent government has previously shown its interest for developing relations with the US, rather than NATO, but after Andijan events this strategic linkage has been ended. An important factor in adopting this strategy was to fight Islamic fundamentalists who have been threatening Islam Karimov's government. After the Soviet Union destruction, Uzbekistan government tried to reach at an influential position in the region, which Russia did not recognize however currently the two countries have experienced close relationship again.

Although the roles and influence of NATO, Shanghai Security Treaty and Tashkent Treaty – which has been promoted to Organization- should not be underestimated in security provision in Central Asia, Sep. 11 incident and aftermath gave America an opportunity to take the lead in war on terrorism, and thus increasing its military forces in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. This policy has been firmly rejected by Russia and Vladimir Putin faced with severe domestic pressures. With Pakistan's assistance, America facilitated Taliban empowerment in Afghanistan in order to achieve its own goals, this time by using Al Qaeda's terrorist activities, which was supported by Taliban. Central Asian leaders with their authoritarian views have also found war on terrorism a favorable chance to suppress their own opponents more severely.

1. After exit of Uzbekistan: GUAM

Based on current security issues in Central Asia, US has seriously emphasized on socio- economic reforms under “the Great Middle East” framework¹. Central Asian leaders are obliged to control political, social and economic crisis to prevent terrorist acts and reduce public dissatisfaction². Political transformations following the Soviet Union collapse

have clearly revealed that the roots of threat and instability in Central Asia are essentially internal. Sooner or later, leaders of these states have to resolve these threats, based on a clear understanding of regional sociopolitical realities. Colored Revolution has the situation more complicated and to analyze these developments we need further time.

1. Jacquelyn K, Davis, Michael J. Sweeney, Op. cit, p. 30.
2. Alce Rasizade. The Specter of a New Great Game in Central Asia. *Foreign Service Journal* , Nov. 2002, pp. 51-52.

ناتو و امنیت آسیای مرکزی

الهه کولایی^۱

در پی تجزیه اتحاد شوروی و تبدیل پانزده جمهوری آن به کشورهای مستقل، منطقه آسیای مرکزی شاهد تحولات و دگرگونی گسترده و عمیق بوده است. از میان رفتن نظام دو قطبی در پی فروپاشی اتحاد شوروی نیز سبب تحول بسیاری از مفاهیم استراتژیک شد. منطقه آسیای مرکزی به عنوان بخشی از قلمرو سابق امپراطوری شوروی پس از این دگرگونیها به عرصه رقابتهای منطقه‌ای و جهانی تبدیل شده است. این منطقه که با مشکلات گسترده و متنوع سیاسی - اقتصادی - اجتماعی - فرهنگی مواجه بوده، به زودی به عرصه فعالیت بنیادگرایان اسلامی تبدیل شد که بر شدت بحرانهای منطقه افزود. دشواریهای گوناگون سیاسی - اجتماعی زمینه را برای این فعالیتها مهیا ساخته است. همجواری منطقه با افغانستان و پیوندهای گسترده قومی با این کشور سبب انتقال پیامدهای جنگ داخلی افغانستان با آسیای مرکزی گردیده است.

هر چند نقش ناتو، پیمان امنیتی شانگهای، و پیمان تاشکند که به سازمان ارتقا یافته، نباید در تأمین امنیت آسیای مرکزی کم ارزیابی شود، ولی تحولات پس از ۱۱ سپتامبر سبب شد تا آمریکا نقش رهبری جنگ تروریسم را در افزایش نیروهای نظامی خود در قرقیزستان و ازبکستان محقق سازد. سیاستی که به شدت از سوی روسیه مورد مخالفت قرار گرفته و دولت ولادیمیر پوتین را به شدت تحت فشارهای داخلی قرار داده است. آمریکا که در پی تأمین اهداف خود، حاکمیت طالبان را در افغانستان با کمک پاکستان صورت بخشیده بود، در شرایط پس از ۱۱ سپتامبر از اقدامات تروریستی القاعده که از حمایت طالبان برخوردار بود، همچنان به عنوان فرصتی جدید برای تأمین اهداف خود بهره گرفته است. رهبران اقتدارگرای آسیای مرکزی هم در پی تقویت اقتدار متمرکز خود، وضعیت مبارزه با تروریسم را مناسب یافته، سرکوب مخالفان خود را با شدت بیشتری دنبال کرده‌اند.

براساس مباحث کنونی امنیت در آسیای مرکزی، رهبران آسیای مرکزی موظف شده‌اند بحرانهای اقتصادی - اجتماعی - سیاسی موجود را برای جلوگیری از رشد اقدامات تروریستی و کاهش ناراضیاتی عمومی حل و فصل کنند. تحولات سیاسی پس از فروپاشی بخوبی نشان داده ریشه‌های تهدید و ناامنی در آسیای مرکزی اساساً درونی است. رهبران این جمهوریه‌ها براساس درک واقعیتهای سیاسی - اجتماعی منطقه، رفع آثار تهدیدات را از درون دنبال کرده‌اند. در این مقاله به پیامدهای گسترش ناتو به سوی شرق و نقش آن در تأمین امنیت آسیای مرکزی پرداخته شده است.^۲

واژگان کلیدی: ناتو، آسیای مرکزی، روسیه، آمریکا، بنیادگرایی اسلامی، دریای خزر، اروپا، اتحاد شوروی، تاجیکستان، ازبکستان.

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۲. این مقاله از یک طرح تحقیقاتی تحت عنوان: «ناتو و امنیت آسیایی مرکزی» استخراج شد که با اعتبارات پژوهشی دانشگاه تهران اجرا گردیده است.