



Center for Strategic & Regional Studies
Kabul

Weekly Analysis- Issue Number 102 (January 24 -31, 2015)

Weekly Analysis is one of CSRS’ publications, which significantly analyses weekly economic and political events in Afghanistan and the region. The prime motive behind this is to provide strategic insights and policy solutions to decision-making institutions and individuals in order to help them to design best policies. Weekly Analysis is published in local languages (Pashto and Dari) and international languages (English and Arabic languages).

In this issue:

- Preface 2

The U.S. and Russian New Cold War

- Uni-polar System has ended! 4
- Old Players, New Game and Afghanistan 4
- Russian Re-entry in Afghanistan 5
- Central Asia: The Place of Global Competitions 7

Obama’s visit to India: A Message to the Regional Countries

- Trip with Symbolic Messages 8
- Value of the Trip for Both the Countries 9
- Empowerment of India and Regional Strategic Balance 10
- The Impact of Obama’s visit on the region11

Preface

In this volume of weekly analysis you will read in details about: the start of new Cold War between Russia and the U.S., and the facing of these two super powers in Afghanistan, and the trip of the U.S. President Obama to India, which is analyzed by the analytical board of CSRS.

Recently, after the global conflicts between Russia and the U.S., some Russian analysts believe that a war may occur between the two super powers, but based on the international cases and the conditions of Russia and the U.S. it is impossible that these countries will declare face to face war against each other, in addition to military balance, there are other reasons too that prevent both the countries from face to face war, but there is the possibility of other forms of war against each other. Recently there are believes that Russia will face with the U.S. in various fields and regions, in addition there are the possibilities of Russian and American conflicts in Afghanistan.

Why Russia is interested to enter into Afghanistan? To what extent is it possible that Russia and the U.S. will have conflicts in Afghanistan? What were the messages of Obama's visit of India to regional countries, namely: China, Pakistan, and Afghanistan? These are the issues which will be discussed in details in this issue of weekly analysis:

The U.S. and Russian New Cold War



In 19th century the Russian Empire occupied many regions of Central Asia, and in 1878 its boundaries reached the banks of Amu River, on the other hand, India was controlled by British, so both the empires started competition, and the mentioned competition was known as “the Great Game”.

Lenin and Trotsky started communist revolution at the last stages of World War I, and it was due to this “Communist Revolution” that some historians called it the beginning of Cold War with the West; because communist revolution was a serious competitor against Western capitalism and the West, therefore the revolutionary government of Russia denied to pay back the loans of the U.S. that the Tsarist Russian Empire has gained from it, so based on the mentioned issue and some other reasons, the U.S. broke its relationship with the revolutionary government of Russia in December of 1917.

However, between 1929 and 1933, the U.S. faced its greatest economic crisis of the 20th century, which caused the United States a huge economic loss, and the mentioned economic crises were known as “Great Depression”. On the other hand, Japan was also raised as a regional power, which caused risks to the U.S. interests; therefore the U.S. President of the time Franklin D. Roosevelt felt it necessity to formally recognize Russian government in 1933, so on the one hand it will stop the expansions of Japan, and on the other hand, the U.S. will seek some commercial interests in Russia.

In 1939, once again, the U.S. and Soviet relations were severed due to the defence and non-aggression pact of Nazi-Soviet; but when Hitler invaded Soviet Union, as a result Soviet Union also joined Allied Forces. Once again, those relationships were for short period, because the

World War II was not yet ended that Stalin disagreed with Churchill and Roosevelt during their negotiation about the upcoming global system and division of regions among themselves, and after the World War II the conflict among them was formally called Cold War. The war among them continued up to 1991, which divided global politics into two poles.

Uni-polar System has ended!

1979 was the decisional year of Cold War, because in many countries around the world communists challenged the interests of the U.S., and the Soviet, which was counted as the mother of communism, attacked Afghanistan. Therefore, the U.S. President Jimmy Carter and Zbigniew Brzezinski got the opportunity to take revenge of Vietnam from the Soviets.

Because of the support of International Forces from Afghan Jihad and Afghan Mujahidin, the Soviet lost war in Afghanistan and its empire was destroyed in 1991. After the mentioned incident, the Cold War ended up and the U.S. was the only Post Cold War superpower.

In 2001, Russia and China established Shanghai Cooperation Organisation against the Uni-polar Power, The U.S., but it did not challenge the U.S. up to 2008. China and Russia supported the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, but they were vacillated about the war of Iraq.

This condition continued up to 2008, but when Russia invaded Georgia, therefore, for the first time uni-polar system of the world was under serious questions, and later on Russia and China vetoed two Western sponsored resolutions against Syria, which one of them was against the economic sanctions of Syria, and the second was about attacking Syria.

However, the incidents of Ukraine exposed Uni-Polar system and it is now crystal that the world is not Uni-polar any more, neither is the U.S. the only hegemonic superpower of the world. In addition, Russia entered into an economic block with the economic giants like China, India, South Africa, Brazil, and so on, which is known as BRICS. This block had challenged many systems of international politics; because Russia and Chin do not trust the Western "IMF".

Old Players, New Game and Afghanistan

After the veto against Syrian agreements, the evens of Ukraine shows that, once again the world will witness the old type of competition that existed during the Cold War. Russia will join China, the Western Europe will join U.S., the Latin American countries would be interested towards Russia as like it was during the Cold War, and the decisional conflict of the mentioned competitions will be in the rich areas of the Central Asia.

It will be better for Afghanistan to stay neutral, so it will not be involved with the neighbouring countries that are in competition with each other. For example, Afghanistan should keep balance in its foreign policy between Pakistan and India, China and India, and the U.S. and China-Russia.

Russian Re-entry in Afghanistan:

During Cold War, Russia played such a role in Afghanistan that not only caused inflaming war in Afghanistan, but also caused her to be burned. Yet Afghanistan is not out of the problems that are caused by the Russian invasion of the country, and still there are many signs of the Russian grief visible that caused failure of various fields of the country.

After the ten years long USSR invasion of the country, Russians withdrew its forces through Hairatan Bridge, so the Soviet expanded empire collected its skirts and became small. During the Mujahidin period in Afghanistan, Russia invited some Mujahidin groups to Moscow, including Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani, with the cooperation of Iran, so the Jamiyat Party released the Russian soldiers that they arrested during Jihad. Therefore, from the mentioned event the relationship of Russia and Jamiyat Party, which was made during Afghan Jihad, were built.

At the beginning, the Russian did not pay any attention to Afghanistan; but when the Taliban appeared on the political theatre of Afghanistan, Russia was concerned that fundamentalism and drug smuggling may increase in Central Asia; therefore in addition to supporting Iran and India, Russia started supporting the Northern Alliances (Ahmad Shah Masood and Professor Rabbani).

As during the Taliban regime Russia was supporting the Northern Alliances, so the Taliban were obliged to give asylum to the leader of Uzbekistani Islamic Movement Tahir Yeldash and his friends, later on in 2000 the Taliban did not only formally recognized the Bosnian Government, but also given them a chance to open its embassy in Kabul.

Because of the responding action of the Taliban, Russia was obliged to negotiate with the Taliban, finally Zamir Kabulov, representative of Russia, started negotiation with the Taliban, and in the negotiation Russia accepted that they will not support the Northern Alliances anymore; but according to Wahid Mozhdah, who was the political director of Central Asia in the ministry of foreign affairs, Taliban lost diplomatic opportunity of negotiation with Russia.¹

¹ - Read the book of Wahid Mozhdah, Afghanistan and Five Years of Taliban's Kingdom.

After the incident of 9/11, because of three reasons, in addition to China, Russia also supported the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan:

First: both the countries were concerned about the increase of extremism in Central Asia and Xinjiang Province of China; because during the Taliban regime there were many fundamentalist groups in Afghanistan that were directly linked with Xinjiang Province and Central Asian countries;

Second: they believed that spread of drugs was directly related to the Taliban; while China and Russia had many drug-addicted people, and in addition to many losses, some of the national budget was spent on those people. In addition, they believed that extremist groups take advantages of smuggling.

Third: the incident of 9/11 caused many countries to support the U.S., because the public opinion of the globe was with the U.S. In addition to that, the U.S. was the only global superpower, so due to the mentioned reasons China and Russia stood with the U.S.

Why Russian relations with Afghanistan empowered once again? All the answers of this question are in 2008 and 2009 years. In 2008, Barak Obama was elected as the U.S. president, and in 2009, the Afghan Presidential Election was held, after frauds and challenges in which Hamid Karzai was elected as the president of Afghanistan. The U.S. intervened in the Afghan election, which its details are given in the books of Robert Gates and Kai Eide. The intervention of Obama and Richard Halbrook changed the policies of Hamid Karzai, as a result, he sent a letter to Medvedev of Russia, and later on, he had trips to China and Moscow. Therefore, from 2009 the interest of Russia increased in Afghanistan, and forgiven the loans that the communist regime had gained from the Soviet.

As the Russians felt the value of Afghanistan, so they send Alexander Muntisky as their new ambassador to Afghanistan. He was diplomat in the foreign affairs ministry of Russia in 1984, and later on, he was ambassador in some South Asian countries like Pakistan, India, and Nepal. While coming to Kabul, he said that Russia want to complete its uncompleted projects in Afghanistan.

Central Asia: The Place of Global Competitions

According to the famous American Political Scientist, Joseph Nye, who also had used the expression of “Soft Power”, in 21st century the power will move from the U.S. to Asia. He does not say this from his heart, but the statistics of Asian countries’ economies shows that economic power is really moving toward Asia.

According to many internal analysts, six Asian countries (China, India, Russia, Japan, Turkey, and Gulf countries) will play an important role in the future of the globe. Overall these countries have conflict with each other, and some of these countries like India and Japan have close relations with the U.S. due to their competitions.

In addition to that, the Central Asian region, to which Russia, China, Iran and Europe has border, and most of the countries around the globe have their interests there, will be the spot of competition in a near future. The question may arise, why this region will be the spot of competition in the future. The reasons behind it are: this region is naturally rich, global demand of economic powers for energy is increasing, and the geopolitical location of the region, which the famous British Geographer Halford John Mackinder expressed his idea about it one century ago that the one that will be superpower in this region, will be the superpower of the world.

In 1998, a famous American Strategist Zbigniew Brzezinski also has written a book about it, and he has given advice to the U.S. that for keeping its global reputation it is important to save its interests in these regions.

Obama's visit to India: A Message to the Regional Countries



On 26 January 2015, India celebrated her 66th anniversary of Republican day. The incident that gives more importance to the day, compared to the previous anniversaries, was existence of Barak Obama as a special guest of the ceremony. Obama and his wife had a three days visit to India.

Obama is the first U.S. president, who has participated in the celebration of republican day of India, which is accepted as world's greatest democratic country. The Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomed Obama in the airport, which was an unprecedented event. Later on, Obama was guided to the Indian Presidential Palace, and he was officially welcomed by the Indian President Pranab Mukherjee.

The celebration ceremony was held in a magnificent and attractive way, and the development and improvement of India was exhibited in various academic and industrialized fields, which was broadcasted live by Indian television channels, and it was a symbol of power of the great Asian country in various fields.

Trip with Symbolic Messages:

According to Los Angeles Times, the main point of Obama's visit was not only to participate in the international meetings or exchange ideas about a specific topic, but it was planned that Obama will have sufficient time to have a friendly meeting with the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

From various points of views, Obama's trip could be counted as a trip with symbolic messages, which was especially felt in Pakistan. First of all, by attending the celebration of Indian Democracy, Obama opposed the issue of Kashmir from the point of view of Pakistan. Every year Kashmiris, who struggle for independency from India and have the support of Pakistan, celebrate the Indian Democracy Day as a dark day, which was done so this year.

Another symbolic message of the trip was stay of Obama and his wife in Taj Mahal Hotel. The mentioned hotel was attacked by Lashkar-e-Tayeba in 2008, currently it is counted as the symbol of intervention of Pakistan in India, and it had a clear message for Pakistan. Choosing Taj Mahal Hotel for Obama and wife's stay meant that negative policies and export of terrorism of Pakistan is not acceptable for the U.S. any more.

Value of the Trip for Both the Countries:

The trip was not only a symbolic trip, but also had academic values for both, the U.S. and India. Two weeks prior to this visit, Obama sent U.S. Foreign Minister John Kerry to New Delhi for preparation of the visit, which expresses the value of the visit for both the countries.

In a shared press conference of Obama and the Indian Prime Minister that was held after a few hours of Obama's arrival in New Delhi, Obama expressed his vision about the new cooperation between India and the U.S.; he said that he and the Indian Prime Minister agreed on security and defense cooperation. The U.S. and India reached significant developments for the civilian nuclear cooperation, and this important step represents that both the countries can cooperate for improvement of their relationship with each other.

Narendra Modi also said that the cooperation of both the countries in the field of civilian nuclear systems represents the improvement of relations and trust between these countries, and it is an opportunity for the expansion of economic relations between India and the U.S., and added that the relationship between the two countries entered a new stage. Obama's negotiation with Indian authorities caused failure of an important nuclear safety deadlock between the two countries, which is counted as an important step toward the strategic cooperation.

They also discussed about other issues during Obama's visit, for example, they discussed decreasing greenhouse gases. India is the third greenhouse gas productive country around the world. But yet Indian authorities did not feel themselves responsible for decreasing the mentioned harmful gases; because, decreasing poverty by economic development is in the priorities of Indian policy.

Empowerment of India and Regional Strategic Balance:

However, behind all the discussions, smiles and shaking hands, there was a great goal hidden beneath it, and the goal was that the U.S. would stay in the position of global leadership. If the U.S. want to stay in the global leadership, it has to prevent all the actual challenges that will occur in the near future, and convert those challenges to potential challenges for reaching its goal. Earlier the U.S. had the decision of struggling against the challenges; but, because of the Middle East crisis and emergence of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, and prevention of Ukraine, the U.S. delayed its actions that should be taken regarding its decisions about its decisions against the challenges.

Strategic balance can be used as a diplomatic containment for the ambitions of China, and Obama's emphasis on engagement with Asia, empowerment of commercial relations with India, is based on the mentioned goal. In his last two years of presidential period, Obama want to implement the prioritized economic, military and political goals that were suspended due to some unexpected events.

China is not interested to military intervention in the global crisis and prefers to pay even more attention to its economic expansion. Economic cooperation between India and the U.S. can cooperate the U.S., which is growing in Asia, to overlap the Chinese market in other countries and start competition with China, which will decline the economic development of China.

In other words, we can say that the unconventional and unprecedented trip of Obama was a serious start of the Asian game of the U.S., in which containment of China was at the top of its priorities, because China has the capacity and facilities of filling the gap of the existence of the Soviet Union, which was the reason of global strategic balance during the Cold War. The available land and population, expanded market with economic development, the membership of the United Nations Security Council, and military power of China are the reasons which shows that China can stand against the U.S. totalitarianism for creation of global strategic balance.

The Chinese authorities and elites believes that the military and security existence of the U.S. in Asia and Pacific Ocean, by any excuse, has an important goal, which is the containment of China; because, China believes that international system is demand of multipolar system, and the expansion of China's influence over the East Asian Regional Organizations concerned the U.S. that if China influences those organizations, it will move those countries toward the direction that would be against the interests of the U.S.

The Impact of Obama's visit on the region:

Obama's trip may increase regional conflicts, especially between India and Pakistan. Many times the U.S. asked Pakistan for suppression of terrorism and stopping dual gaming, but it did not give any result. Pakistanis found out that it is India which is important for the U.S. in its Great Asian Game.

So, isn't it strange that the Pakistani authorities followed Obama's trip with concern, and while Obama's trip to India, the Chief of Pakistani Army Raheel Sharif went on a trip to China and met with the Chinese Military Officials. For showing their reaction toward Obama's trip to New Delhi, Pakistanis expressed that they also have the option of making relationships with China.

The End

Contact Us:

Email: info@csrskabul.com - csrskabul@gmail.com

Website: www.csrskabul.com

Contact: (+93) 784089590

