

NATO'S PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE (PfP) PROGRAM
AND REGIONAL SECURITY IN CENTRAL ASIA

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ABSTRACT

NATO'S PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE (PfP) PROGRAM AND REGIONAL SECURITY IN CENTRAL ASIA

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This thesis aims to discuss NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) program in Central Asia in terms of its role in promoting regional security. It focuses on the evolution of the cooperation between NATO and its Central Asian partners within the framework of the NATO's PfP program, as well as the Alliance's vision of security in Central Asia. The thesis argues that although NATO is active in Central Asia with its PfP programs, its engagement with the Central Asian states is mainly motivated by its own global security priorities rather than promoting regional security cooperation in Central Asia. This thesis comprises four main chapters. After the introduction chapter, the second chapter examines regional security challenges in post-Soviet Central Asia. The third chapter discusses the fundamental characteristics of NATO's PfP program and regional security in Central Asia. The fourth chapter examines NATO's PfP programs in individual Central Asian states by examining the priorities of each state in cooperating with the Alliance. The fifth chapter analyses the relevance of NATO's PfP programs for increasing its involvement in Central Asia since 2001 by taking its global and regional security priorities. The concluding chapter discusses the main findings of this thesis.

Keywords: NATO, Partnership for Peace (PfP), Central Asia, Regional Security

ÖZ

NATO'S PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE (PfP) PROGRAM AND REGIONAL SECURITY IN CENTRAL ASIA

Toktogulov, Beishenbek

Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

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Bu tez NATO'nun Barış için Ortaklık (BiO) programını Orta Asya'da bölgesel güvenliğin sağlanması açısından oynadığı rolünü incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Tez, BiO programı çerçevesinde NATO ve Orta Asya'daki ortakları arasındaki işbirliğinin gelişmesine ve NATO'nun Orta Asya'ya ilişkin güvenlik vizyonuna odaklanmaktadır. Bu tez NATO'nun BiO programı çerçevesinde Orta Asya'da aktif olduğunu kabul etmekle beraber örgütün bölge ülkeleri ile olan işbirliğinin Orta Asya'da bölgesel güvenliğin sağlanmasından çok, kendi küresel güvenlik önceliklerinden kaynaklandığını savunmaktadır. Bu tez beş ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. Giriş bölümünün ardından ikinci bölüm Sovyet sonrası Orta Asya'da bölgesel güvenlik sorunlarını incelemektedir. Üçüncü bölüm ise, NATO'nun BiO programının ve Orta Asya'daki bölgesel güvenliğin temel özelliklerini tartışmaktadır. Dördüncü bölüm bölgedeki her ülkenin İttifakla olan işbirliğindeki önceliklerinden yola çıkarak, NATO'nun BiO programını her bir Orta Asya ülkesi için ayrı ayrı incelemektedir. Beşinci bölüm ise, İttifakın küresel ve bölgesel güvenlik önceliklerini de ele alarak, 2001'den bu yana NATO'nun bölgedeki varlığını arttırması ile sürdürdüğü BiO programı arasındaki bağlantıyı analiz etmektedir. Sonuç bölümü ise tezin ana bulgularını tartışmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: NATO, Barış için Ortaklık (BIO), Orta Asya, Bölgesel Güvenlik

To My Mother Janyl Nazarova
and
To My Father Bektursun Biyaliyev

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CACO	Central Asia Cooperation Organization
CAEC	Central Asian Economic Community
CAEU	Central Asian Economic Union
CAU	Central Asian Union
CDRF	Collective Rapid Deployment Force
CENTCOM	Central Command
CIS	Commonwealth of the Independent States
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CST	Collective Security Treaty
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EU	European Union
EXBS	Export Control and Border Security
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia
GAO	General Accounting Office
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IPAP	Individual Partnership Action Plan
IPP	Individual Partnership Program
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
KIMEP	Kazakh Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research
MANPADS	Man Portable Air Defense System
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NAMSO	NATO Maintenance Supply Organization
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OCC	Operational Capability Concept
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

PA	Parliamentary Assembly
PAP-DIB	Partnership Action Plan on Defense Institution Building
PAP-T	Partnership Action Plan on Terrorism
PARP	Planning and Review Process
PDPA	Popular Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PMSC	Political-Military Steering Committee
PRTs	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
RATS	Regional Antiterrorism Structure
SAC	Self-Access Language Center
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SFP	Science for Peace
SNB	Sluzhba Natsional'noi Bezopasnosti (National Security Service)
SOFA	Security and Status of Security Agreement
UNDCP	United Nations Drug Control Program
UN SC	United Nations Security Council
USSR	Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics
US	United States

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope and Objective

This thesis aims to discuss NATO's PfP programs in individual Central Asian Partner countries in the context of the regional security. Therefore, it focuses on the evolution of the cooperation between NATO and its Central Asian partners within the framework of the PfP programs. The thesis analyses the NATO's intentions behind establishing close relationship with post-Soviet Central Asian republics since 1994 through its PfP programs in its regional partners in Central Asia.

The thesis focuses on NATO's achievements in dealing with regional security issues and implementing its mission in Central Asia through partnership activities. For this purpose, it seeks to examine NATO's PfP programs in individual Central Asian countries; Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan. It examines the level of participation of each partner in PfP programs and discusses NATO's role in their national and regional security affairs.

The cooperation between NATO and regional partners within the framework of the PfP programs has been expanded as a result of the terrorist attacks to the United States in 2001. The thesis analyses the cooperation between Central Asian states and NATO for the fight against terrorism and the establishment of secure and stable Afghanistan, which plays a crucial role in the process of the formation of regional security in Central Asia due to its geographical proximity, ethnic ties and being the main source of prevailing threats in Central Asia. It also examines NATO's increasing involvement in Central Asian security after NATO Istanbul Summit in 2004.

1.2 Review of the Literature

Following the end of the Cold War, NATO has been transforming itself to be better equipped to deal with the new global security threats. This process first has started with the 'Alliance's New Strategic Concept' issued at the Rome Summit in November 1991, by which opened the way for another new development in Alliance's military planning, which is the envisaged expansion of NATO's role from collective defense to collective security. The profile of collective security has increased in the post-Cold War era, as a means of preserving stability in the face of declining order.¹ The transformed NATO would be a collective security alliance to meet the emerging security challenges in the post-Cold War era.

Kenneth Waltz points out those functions vary as structures change, as does the behavior of units.² Thus, the end of the Cold War quickly changed the behavior of allied countries towards NATO. This has led to the change in the nature and purposes of NATO in the post-Cold War period. This process has gained momentum with the introduction of Partnership for Peace (PfP) at the Brussels Summit in 1994. It was widely believed that PfP would accelerate NATO's transformation which started with the end of the Cold War. The Alliance would be transformed not against the potential aggression to collective NATO territory, but to the threats to their collective interests beyond their territory.

The main purpose of the PfP, a program which helps transform the relationship between NATO and participating states, is to increase stability, diminish threats to peace and build strengthened security relationships between individual Partner countries and NATO, as well as among partner countries. The PfP structure was linked to the CSCE framework; that is all able and willing CSCE members were offered military cooperation in various areas, including transparency in defense

¹ Gülnur Aybet, *A European Security Architecture after the Cold War: Questions of Legitimacy*, London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 2000, p. 60

² Kenneth Waltz, 'Structural Realism after the Cold War', *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 2000, p.19

policies; democratic control of defense forces; interoperability with NATO force in order to undertake peacekeeping and humanitarian missions; and mutual consultations in the event of perceived security threats. According to the PfP Framework Document, this partnership was established as an expression of a joint conviction that stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic Alliance can be achieved only through cooperation and common action.

Following its conclusion at the Brussels Summit in 1994, PfP was hailed as the cornerstone of a new security relationship between NATO and the newly democratic states in the East.³ Since then, PfP has greatly extended the scope of contact between NATO and Central and Eastern Europe namely Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, and as a result we witnessed their accession to the Alliance in 1999 and 2004.

Like Central and Eastern European countries, five post-Soviet Central Asian states have also developed relations with NATO since 1991, first becoming the member of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) then joining PfP in 1994. The NACC, which later became EAPC, and the PFP provide mechanisms through which NATO and its partners can pursue practical defense and security cooperation on a range of issues.⁴ To my mind, their motivation to cooperate with NATO comes from their lack of military hardware and inability to cope with the regional security challenges.

Since five Central Asian republics became independent, transformation process in these countries has been focused on political, social and economic development. Whereas in the first half of the 1990s the most important questions concerned the consolidation of statehood and the transition to a market economy, in the second half, especially since the late 1990s, the principal issue has been political stability.⁵ If to

³ Ted Galen Carpenter, *The Future of NATO*, London: Frank Cass and Co., 1995, p. 65

⁴ Richard Weitz, 'Renewing Central Asian Partnerships', *NATO Review*, Autumn 2006

⁵ Boris Rumer, 'The Search for Stability in Central Asia' in *Central Asia: Gathering Storm*, ed. Boris Rumer, New York: M. E. Sharpe Inc, 2002, p.3

talk about the first half of the 1990s, it is clear that Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan have made major attempts to develop democratic institutions and become market economies while Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan have been reluctant due to the political conditions of these countries. With the incursions of the extremist militants in 1999 to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, the region has been facing growing challenge to the political stability or status quo within the region. In short, the state-building process has been difficult for Central Asian leaders because this has been complicated by the institutional and ideological legacy of the Soviet Union and the regional security challenges posing serious problems to the status quo.

Despite visible levels of political consolidation and economic reform, the region has remained beset by significant security challenges. Besides hosting organized crime, corruption, poverty, civil strife, radicalism and economic and environmental devastation, regional countries suffer from regional security concerns such as terrorism, ethnic conflicts, human and drug trafficking, and political and economic instability, whose consequences are felt far beyond Central Asia. For me, there is a need for a radical and compact solution which can eliminate the regional security challenges. For example, poverty reduction policy in Central Asian countries would be one of the solutions imagining that poverty is the main reason why many people are involved in such organized crime or drug trafficking.

The instability in Afghanistan has been major concern for regional countries because Afghanistan has been considered as the main source of prevailing threats in Central Asia. The countries in Central Asia face serious threats from Afghanistan having complex nature of the ethnic composition, militant groups and opium cultivation which can easily affect the current security regime of the region. For now, it seems the instability in Afghanistan will continue to pose serious threats to Central Asia for a long time to come. According to Sultan Akimbekov, the stability and the opportunities for development in the newly independent states of Central Asia

depend, to a large degree, on how events unfold in Afghanistan both at the present time and in the more distant future.⁶



Source: 'Building Network of Trust through Collaborative Science', Available at <http://www.llnl.gov/str/March05/Knapp.html>, Accessed on 31 August 2007

Figure 1: Political Map of Central Asia

Barry Buzan's concept of 'security complex' offers a clear understanding of regional security formation in Central Asia. For him, 'security complex' is a group of states

⁶ Sultan Akimbekov, 'Conflict in Afghanistan: Conditions, Problems, and Prospects' in *Central Asia: Gathering Storm*, ed. Boris Rumer, New York: M. E. Sharpe Inc, 2002, p.69

whose primarily security concerns link them together sufficiently closely that their national security cannot realistically be considered apart from one another...'⁷ One way of measuring this is the existence of the drug trafficking in the region where all Central Asian states must cooperate to get rid of this threat.

Despite their differences in terms of size, population, and economic and military capabilities, many societal, economic, political, military/security, and geographical factors tie the CA countries together, to the extent that the achievement and preservation of security in these countries cannot be the result of their individual efforts at the national level.⁸ However, their attempt for creation of effective regional security system in Central Asia remains halting due to their ineffective cooperation and dependence on external powers such Russia, China, USA and international organizations. Most importantly, this problem is combined with the Central Asian states' having old and lack of military hardware. According to Martha Brill Olcott, cooperation with the US and the NATO was already the most effective way for these states to modernize their militaries.⁹

Already members of NACC since 1991, Central Asian republics developed their relations with NATO after joining to the PfP. Central Asian republics joined NATO's PfP in 1994, with the exception of Tajikistan joining in 2002, to enjoy the privileges that NATO offers with its PfP Programs. NATO documents state that the PfP Program offers participating states the possibility of strengthening their relations with NATO in accordance with their own individual interests and capabilities and the PfP exercises are designed to improve practical military cooperation and common

⁷ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: National Security Problem in International Relations*, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991

⁸ Peimani, Hooman. *Regional Security and the Future of Central Asia: The Competition of Iran and Turkey, and Russia*, London: Praeger Publishers, 1998, p.2

⁹ Martha Brill Olcott, *Central Asia's Second Chance*, eds. Martha Brill Olcott and Anders Arslund, Washington: The Brookings Institution Press, 2005, p.71

capabilities in the areas on which PfP focuses and help to develop interoperability between the forces of NATO Allies and Partner countries.¹⁰

According to the Central Asian governments' view, the NATO's PfP programs as a means of strengthening and modernizing their national armies.¹¹ Their objective was accomplished by participating in joint peacekeeping exercises within the framework of PfP organized by NATO. The so called Central Asian Battalion (Centrasbat) was established on 15 December 1995 by Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan under the aegis of the United Nations (UN) and NATO's PfP.

The Centrasbat peacekeeping exercises conducted in the spirit of PfP Programs, with the help of NATO member countries, helped increase participating Central Asian countries' military interoperability and conduct basic peacekeeping operations. Most importantly, the PfP Program, with the bilateral military agreements with the US, Turkey and Germany, has helped strengthen their national armies. The cooperation between NATO and Central Asia within the framework has been developed in non-military fields, too.

Following the September 11 events, the security environment in the world has changed and strategic importance of Central Asia has increased for the Alliance. The US-led intervention in 2001 and NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan made clear the Central Asia's importance to the security and stability of Afghanistan. Thus, we witnessed the NATO's increasing involvement in Central Asian security affairs in the aftermath of the September 11. Central Asian states have also stated their serious concerns about the instability in Afghanistan and supported the military operations in the country.

¹⁰Robin Bhatti and Rachel Bronson, 'NATO's Mixed Signals in the Caucasus and Central Asia', *Survival*, Vol.42, No. 3, Autumn 2000, p. 131

¹¹ Bruno De Coppitiers, Bruno De Cordier and Firouzeh Nahavandy, 'The Central Asian Region in a New International Environment', *NATO Review*, Vol.44, No.5, 1996

For Martha Brill Olcott, for the most part of the first decade of independence, Central Asia's leaders liked to cite the unstable situation in Afghanistan as the sources of many problems, claiming it created an environment in which political reform was risky and economic reform needed to take a backseat to political stability. She wrote that the threat posed to Afghanistan's neighbors will be mitigated as long as there is a substantial US and international military presence in Afghanistan, logistically supported by the presence of the two US bases in Central Asia. For her, after the tragic events in 2001, this new security environment created an unexpected second chance for the Central Asian states,¹² I think, she means that now Central Asian states can make political reform and economic reform after September 11.

Central Asian partners have supported the US-led military intervention and the NATO-led ISAF in Afghanistan providing their airfields and airspaces within the framework of bilateral transit agreements. They have done so because Central Asian republics share similar interests with the Alliance vis-à-vis military operations in Afghanistan. As a result, at the Istanbul Summit in 2004, the Alliance stated the increased importance of the Central Asia and decided to put a 'special focus' on the region to strengthen the relations appointing special representative and liaison officer to the region. Most importantly, at the Istanbul Summit, the Heads of States and Governments welcomed the decision by Uzbekistan to develop Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), to enhance cooperation with NATO that has already been achieved within the framework of the PfP program.

Despite these developments, we can clearly see that NATO's involvement in Central Asia with its PfP Programs is limited than other regions like Central and Eastern Europe and Balkans. According to Bruno Coppieters, contrary to most other PfP Programs, it is not based on pre-existing common democratic norms, and only marginally on common security interests.¹³ For S. Frederick Starr, NATO is active

¹² Martha Brill Olcott, *Central Asia's Second Chance*, eds. Martha Brill Olcott and Anders Arslund, Washington: The Brookings Institution Press, 2005, p.2

¹³ Bruno Coppieters, 'Between Europe and Asia: Security and Identity in Central Asia' in *Security and Identity in Europe*, eds. Lisbeth Aggestam and Adrian Hyde-Price, London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 2000, p.198

through the PfP in the former Soviet Central Asia and through its ISAF in Afghanistan, but it has no strategy or overarching structure of engagement with the region.¹⁴ I think he refers to the comprehensive PfP program in Central Asia which is similar to the Greater Central Asia Project (GCAP), a mechanism dealing with all regional security challenges.

1.3 Argument

The thesis argues that although NATO is active in Central Asia with its PfP programs, its engagement with the Central Asian states is mainly motivated by its own global security priorities rather than promoting regional security cooperation in Central Asia. NATO's engagement in Central Asian security with its PfP programs was supplemented to help strengthen regional partners' national armies till September 11, while this has been focused on the partnership against terrorism and achievement of security and stability in Afghanistan since September 11. Thus, the cooperation on the security issues has been overlooked while the basic common values underpinning the Partnership itself have not been all implemented.

The theoretical approach of this thesis is based on the Neorealist approach to International Relations. Realism is a theory about international politics and it seeks to describe and explain the world as it is, rather than how we might like it to be. According to Realists, states are the primary actors based on the survival and self-help and the supreme political authority in the conflictual nature of the international politics. There is no natural harmony of interests between states in the international system, only a temporary and transient reflection of a particular configuration of a global power.¹⁵ For Realists, international realm is characterized by conflict, suspicion and competition between states and international conflicts can only be explained by focusing on the role of power and the most powerful Great Powers.

¹⁴ S. Frederick Starr, 'A Partnership for Central Asia', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 4, Jul/Aug 2005

¹⁵ Scott Burchill, 'Realism and Neo-realism' in *Theories of International Relations*, eds. Scott Burchill, Richard Devetak, Andrew Linklater, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit and Jacqui True, New York: Palgrave, 2001, p.74

The argument of this thesis is in line with the Neorealist approach to International Relations, which focuses on the systemic level in international politics. Structural incorporation of the systemic level into the scientific study of international relations is essential for explaining NATO's focus on its global rather than regional priorities in Central Asia. According to Waltz, international politics may be thought of as a system with a precisely defined structure. Structural theory depicts that the character of the units in the system are identical or all states in the international system are made functionally similar by the constraints of structure. However, states differ in their capabilities although they are functionally similar. States face same tasks, but they differ in the abilities to perform them. The capacity of each state to pursue and achieve common objectives varies according to their placement in the international system, and specifically their relative power.¹⁶ The distribution of power is a key explanation to behavior of states in the international system.

Waltz's neorealist approach enables us to see how the structure of the system, and variations in it, affect the interacting units and the outcome they produce. International structure emerges from the interaction of states and then constrains them from taking certain actions while propelling them toward others.¹⁷ For this reason, states must look to their own security and survival in a competitive realm. Conflict is endemic to state interrelations and cooperation with rivals or allies is fundamentally temporary and contingent – dependent on changing circumstances.¹⁸ For Waltz, they exhibit similar institutional features and are socialized into the international system through a combination of cooperation and imitation. There will be a change in the nature of institutions as structures vary. In this sense, for Waltz, foreign policy-making cannot be independent of the structure of the system.

¹⁶ Ibid., p.92

¹⁷ Kenneth Waltz, 'Realist Thought and Neorealist Theory', *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 44, No. 1, 1990, p.29

¹⁸ Edward A. Kolodziej, *Security and International Relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p.137

Neorealism provides an explanation why the foreign policies of nation-states are similar despite their very diverse internal natures. Waltz gives the example of superpower behavior, the Soviet Union and the US which constituted different internal political and social orders, to refute the argument that it is possible to explain the condition of international politics from the internal composition of states. For him, behaviors of these two superpowers were similar; their pursuit of military power and influence, their competition for strategic advantage and the exploitation of their respective spheres of influence were strikingly parallel. The explanation of their pursuing of similar foreign policy maybe found in the systemic constraints on each state rather than their internal composition. These systemic forces homogenize foreign policy behavior by interposing themselves between states and their diplomatic conduct.¹⁹

Within this theoretical approach, the thesis explains that the Central Asian states are made functionally similar by the constraints of the prevailing security environment in the world. In this sense, it also tries to explain how the structure of the international system in the post-Cold War Era affects Central Asian states' foreign policy in security issues. Moreover, with regard to cooperation between Central Asian states and NATO, as neorealists assume, it shows that the conflict endemic to state interrelations and cooperation with rivals or allies is fundamentally temporary and contingent – dependent on changing circumstances.

1.4 Chapters of the Thesis

This thesis comprises four main chapters. After the introduction chapter, second chapter examines the regional security challenges in post-Soviet Central Asia. It analyses terrorism, drug trafficking, border problems and other new security threats whose consequences are felt within and beyond the region. It also analyzes the instability in Afghanistan which poses serious threats to Central Asia and beyond.

¹⁹ Scott Burchill, 'Realism and Neo-realism' in *Theories of International Relations*, eds. Scott Burchill, Richard Devetak, Andrew Linklater, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit and Jacqui True, New York: Palgrave, 2001, p.90

This chapter is devoted to discuss these post-Soviet security challenges analyzing them in details; background, the connections between them, their impact on regional security and their current position and potential in Central Asia. Finally, it discusses cooperative responses to prevent post-Soviet security challenges by Central Asian states themselves and with the help of external powers and structures as well.

The third chapter discusses NATO presence and its PfP program in Central Asia in the context of the regional security. The chapter examines NATO's vision of security and its objectives with PfP program in Central Asia. In this context, it focuses on the instruments of NATO's PfP programs arranged for cooperation with partners in military and non-military fields. It examines a number of PfP instruments such as Partnership for Peace Framework Document, Partnership for Peace Invitation, Planning and Review Process (PARP) and Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP). The last part of this chapter analyses the importance of the NATO's PfP Programs for Central Asian republics; the reasons why they join NATO's PfP and the importance of PfP Programs within the context of the regional security.

The fourth chapter examines NATO's PfP programs in individual Central Asian states focusing on the priorities of each partner's cooperation with the Alliance. This chapter discusses NATO's PfP programs in individual Central Asian states, examining NATO's progress in building relationship with individual countries of Central Asia and the level of individual Central Asian states' involvement in PfP Programs. It analyzes the priorities of each individual Partner's cooperation with NATO in the context of national security affairs. This chapter mainly explains why Kazakhstan is considered as the most active Partner, where Uzbekistan is the PfP member only in name for now and Turkmenistan cooperates with the Alliance limited with Afghan issues. Similarly, it explains Kyrgyzstan's and Tajikistan's priorities for joining PfP, whose cooperation with NATO were essential and limited respectively.

The fifth chapter analyses the PfP programs and increasing NATO involvement in Central Asian security since 2001. This chapter analyses cooperation between NATO

and the Central Asian Partners on fight against international terrorism in the aftermath of the September 11. It also analyses Central Asian states' support for NATO-led ISAF since 2003. This chapter is devoted to discuss the NATO Istanbul Summit in 2004 and its implications on Central regional security. Finally, this chapter examines the Andijan events and its impact on NATO's relations with Uzbekistan.

Finally, the concluding chapter will discuss the main findings of the thesis.

CHAPTER 2

REGIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES IN CENTRAL ASIA

In this chapter, the post-Soviet security challenges in Central Asia will be explored. The chapter will discuss the post-Soviet security challenges in the region by analyzing their background, the connections between them, and their impact on regional security in Central Asia. Finally, the chapter will examine the cooperative responses to cope with the post-Soviet security challenges by Central Asian states themselves and with the help of external powers. Throughout this chapter 'transnational threats' and 'non-traditional threats' will be used instead of these new security threats.

2.1 Post-Soviet Transnational Security Challenges in Central Asia

Central Asia has been facing serious challenges since 1991 because of the increased drug trafficking, terrorist incursions, instability in Afghanistan and other new security threats having social, political and economic consequences in the region. This have been combined with the territorial problems, inherited from Russian Empire and USSR's artificial division of territories, letting drug smugglers, militants pass fragile borders and control the transborder activity using the gaps in the national border security systems.

Drug trafficking has destructive effect on societal, economic and political issues of any state. In general sense, drugs threaten societies through addiction, crime, and disease and it exacerbates corruption in already weak states, impairing their economic and political functioning. Through its linkages to insurgency and terrorism, it is an increasing threat to regional and international security in a traditional,

military sense.²⁰ Thus, drug trafficking has impact on ‘hard security’ as well as ‘soft security’.

Nowhere is the damning effect of the drug trade on multiple aspects of security more visible than in Central Asia.²¹ Two important points should be noted why drug trafficking expanded in post-Soviet Central Asia. First, geopolitical factors and geographical conditions are suitable for drug dealership in Central Asia. Second, amid weak state institutions, poverty in rural areas, and chaotic privatization processes in the post-Soviet space, drug dealership is one of the ways to quick accumulation of capital.²²

Although post-Soviet Central Asia is not a major producer of heroin, it is widely used as a transit route for drug smuggling from Afghanistan moving towards Russia, Eastern Europe and then Western Europe, leaving harsh consequences in Central Asia. Weaknesses in border security system provide favorable opportunity for drug traffickers to smuggle drug through Central Asia. Moreover, as opium cultivation increased in Afghanistan, the role of Central Asia for drug trafficking has increased. Some of the heroin is smuggled via multiple methods of transportation across neighboring Central Asia states, such as the mountainous Afghan-Tajik border, which is very difficult to patrol, and then on through other post-Soviet states.²³ Today, of the six main routes for the shipment of drugs to Europe and the United States, four pass through the Central Asian states; Kandahar – Herat – Turkmenistan – CIS – Europe; Kandahar – Balkh – Jaujan – Uzbekistan – CIS – Europe; Konduz-Khatlonskaia oblast of Tajikistan – Russia – Europe; Peshawar-Chitral

²⁰ Svante E. Cornell and Niklas L.P. Swannstrom, ‘The Eurasian Drug Trade: A Challenge to Regional Security’, *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 53, No. 4, July-August 2006, p.10

²¹ Ibid.

²² Erica Marat, ‘Impact of Drug Trade and Organized Crime on State Functioning in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan’, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No.1, 2006, p.96

²³ Nicole J. Jackson, ‘The Trafficking of Narcotics, Arms and Humans in post-Soviet Central Asia: (Mis)perceptions, Policies and Realities’, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 24, No. 1, March 2005, p.40

(Northwestern Pakistan) – Afghan Badakshan – the Gorno – Badakshan autonomous oblast (Tajikistan) – Kyrgyzstan – CIS – Europe.²⁴

According to data compiled by the European Commission, 65% of all Afghan narcotics transits through Central Asia. For Interfax News Agency, 75% of Afghan narcotics are smuggled through the region. Nowadays, large opium production and processing opium into heroin has reached to the northern provinces of Afghanistan close to the Central Asian states. Therefore, the elimination of drug trafficking in Central Asian states in near future largely dependent on the elimination of the drug cultivation in Afghanistan. With the massive migration of the Central Asian population to Russia and Kazakhstan in search for better labor markets, Afghan drugs also became predominantly transported to and via Russia and Eastern Europe.²⁵ Most importantly, because of the appropriate transit location of Central Asia, the number of people working in drug smuggling as well as in drug consumption is increasing. Unfortunately, the region does not suffer from only Afghan drug, but also increase of the opium cultivation in some countries of the region. The production of opiates and marijuana is expanding in Issyk Kul and Osh oblast in Kyrgyzstan, southern Kazakhstan, and the mountainous Badakhshan region in Tajikistan.²⁶

Social consequences of drug trafficking in Central Asia are destructive. Drug trafficking has caused rise in HIV cases and drug related crime in the region. During the last decade opiates consumption in post-Soviet Central Asia increased by 6 times, this is the highest rate in the world.²⁷ According to the same source, about 1 percent

²⁴ *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 17 March 2001, cited in Sultan Akimbekov, 'Conflict in Afghanistan: Conditions, Problems, and Prospects' in *Central Asia: Gathering Storm*, ed. Boris Rumer, New York: M. E. Sharpe Inc, 2002, p.86

²⁵ Erica Marat, 'Impact of Drug Trade and Organized Crime on State Functioning in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan', *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No.1, 2006, p.96

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Sergey Golunov, 'Border Security in Central Asia: Before and After September 11' in *Facing the Terrorist Challenge – Central Asia's Role in Regional and International co-operation*, eds. Anja H. Ebnother, Maj. Ernst M. Felberbauer and Martin Malek, Vienna: Akademiedruckerei Landesverteidigungsakademie, 2005, p.101

of population at the age of 15 and more are drug addicts. According to the official statistics, the largest proportion of opiates consumers in the total population live in Kyrgyzstan (2,3%), Kazakhstan (1,5%) and Tajikistan (1,3%).²⁸ In this sense, prevention of drug smuggling in Central Asia plays a vital role to decrease drug consumers and establish strong and healthy nations in the region.

The economic and political impact of the drug trade on state functioning is inevitable in Central Asian states, especially weak states, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. This has created severe corruption problem across the region at all levels, especially among low-paid government officials in law enforcement. Even, high level officials have also been involved in the trafficking of drugs, raising the question of whether systemic criminal infiltration into state agencies is taking place.²⁹ Briefly, because drug trade involves greater number of various backgrounds, from businessmen and political figures to farmers, labor migrants, and labor guard, determination and elimination of drug smuggling is difficult task for Central Asian republics.

It is a fact that Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are mostly influenced by drug trafficking can be observed from the ratio of crimes connected with drug trafficking compared to other types of crime. In mid-1990s, the civil war destroyed Tajikistan economically and politically letting drug trade and organized crime increase sharply. At the same time, the impact of the drug trade and organized crime on state functioning in Tajikistan was alarming. Involvement of criminal political and military figures in the state politics created competition among drug dealers over control of drug-routes, border areas, means of transportation and local population engaged in smuggling.³⁰

²⁸ World Drug Report 2004 (Draft), Multimedia version. N.Y.: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2004: 21-22 cited in Sergey Golunov, 'Border Security in Central Asia: Before and After September 11', p.101

²⁹ Svante E. Cornell and Niklas L.P. Swanstrom, 'The Eurasian Drug Trade: A Challenge to Regional Security', *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 53, No. 4, July-August 2006, p.19

³⁰ Erica Marat, 'Impact of Drug Trade and Organized Crime on State Functioning in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan', *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No.1, 2006, p.104

The conflicts in Tajikistan and its insufficient control of drug trafficking from Afghanistan made Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan especially cautious. In 1998 the Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev identified three main security problems that Kyrgyzstan faced as a result of the civil war in Tajikistan: the expansion of the drug business and trafficking; the increase in Tajik refugees; and the spillover of radical religious groups into the Kyrgyz territory.³¹

Although the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) incursions of 1999 and 2000 were ostensibly waged in the name of the creation of a caliphate in the Fergana valley, a strong body of evidence suggests that they are, in fact, best explained by more mundane motivations, especially the drug trade.³² According to the experts, IMU militants' location was suitable to control the drug trade from Afghanistan to Central Asia. Moreover, the US, Russia, China as well as regional and international organizations operating in Central Asia state that there are links between radical Islamic groups and trafficking activities. Although there is no strong evidence that there are direct links between these armed groups and trafficking activities, their fear is apparent. I think their fear comes from that if the IMU militants are involved in drug trafficking issues this will threaten not just the security of Central Asia but also the security of neighboring countries, even Europe and the US.

It is widely accepted that, in the past, the IMU was heavily involved in the drug trafficking and its organization was attacked in 2001 during the US-led war in Afghanistan. A key fear often expressed by the members of the international community is that if extremist Islamic groups do regain a significant hold on trafficking activities, they, or other political groups, will then try to promote instability and to take control over large parts of Central Asian states – as the FARC guerillas have in Columbia – in order to provide safe havens for their illegal

³¹ Asad Sadulloyev, 'Kuda Vedut Narkovozhdhi?' (Where Do Narcobaron Lead?), *Centrasia*, November 16 2003, www.centrasia.org (January 25 2006), *cited in* Erica Marat, 'Impact of Drug Trade and Organized Crime on State Functioning in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan' in *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2006, p.104

³² Svante E. Cornell and Niklas L.P. Swannstrom, 'The Eurasian Drug Trade: A Challenge to Regional Security', *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 53, No. 4, July-August 2006, p.20

activities.³³ To conclude, drug trafficking affects Central Asian security through three main factors; impending public health crisis, criminalization of states, and through funding extremism and insurgency.

The weaknesses of the borders and slow demarcation process are the reasons why the five former Soviet republics have suffered from transnational threats. Transnational groups took the advantage of the weakening of border control and increasingly used the huge space for illegal transactions, building up channels for illegal transit operations such as smuggling of drugs, weapons and radioactive substances, illegal immigrants and militant extremists.³⁴ Often these groups' activities are more effectively and better organized than those of the national security forces and their cooperation more efficient than the one between the states of the region.³⁵ Hence, strengthening of borders plays significant role for security of Central Asia.

Actually, these states have begun to create border control system and custom services right after their independence. However, their dependency on the Russia's help was obvious. In meetings with CIS Heads of State in December 1993, the Central Asian leaders signed bilateral agreements with Russia for military and technical cooperation, agreeing with Russia to protect 'external' borders of the CIS.³⁶ Only in 1999, Kyrgyzstan decided to establish border guard and Russian operational group guards would help in coordinating and assisting in the creation of Kyrgyz guard system. Russian border guards left in the same year.

³³ Nicole J. Jackson, 'The Trafficking of Narcotics, Arms and Humans in post-Soviet Central Asia: (Mis)perceptions, Policies and Realities', *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 24, No. 1, March, 2005, p. 45

³⁴ Sergey Golunov, 'Border Security in Central Asia: Before and After September 11' in *Facing the Terrorist Challenge – Central Asia's Role in Regional and International co-operation*, eds. Anja H. Ebnother, Maj. Ernst M. Felberbauer and Martin Malek, Vienna: Akademiedruckerei Landesverteidigungsakademie, 2005, p.91

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Rustam Burnashev, 'Regional Security in Central Asia: Military Aspects' in *Central Asia: Gathering Storm*, ed. Boris Rumer, New York: M. E. Sharpe Inc, 2002, p.114

Like Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan also decided to remove Russian border guards in the same year, while they were present in Tajikistan in Tajik-Afghan borders till 2005. While Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan could develop mechanisms to control borders and territory in response to drug trafficking, Tajikistan lacked even the basic instruments to carry its sovereign entity as a state. In the mid 1990s, conflicting regional gangs in Tajikistan and increasing turnovers from drug trafficking, in combination with the Tajik government's inability to control most of its mountainous territory made Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan especially cautious about security along their southern borders with Tajikistan.³⁷ The incursions of IMU in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in 1999 and 2000 respectively proved to what extent borders are fragile for transboundary threats.

After 11 September, strengthening of the border security became important for regional security. Its main priority was the suppression of transborder activity of extremists and criminal groups and sorting out residuary territorial problems that would reduce the risk of instability in the region.³⁸ Most disputed border areas settled, however, the borders of Uzbekistan with Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, and the border issues between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan remain not settled. With the withdrawal of the Russian border troops, the national border troops are more helped by the US, EU and NATO and other international organizations.

The US has been working on strengthening Central Asian borders since the late 1990s, although after the events of 11 September its primary focus shifted to military involvement.³⁹ Most EXBS program (US State Department's Export Control and Border Security) funding in Central Asia during fiscal years 2000-2005 delivered

³⁷ Erica Marat, 'Impact of Drug Trade and Organized Crime on State Functioning in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan', *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2006, p.104

³⁸ Sergey Golunov, 'Border Security in Central Asia: Before and After September 11' in *Facing the Terrorist Challenge – Central Asia's Role in Regional and International co-operation*, eds. Anja H. Ebnother, Maj. Ernst M. Felberbauer and Martin Malek, Vienna: Akademiedruckerei Landesverteidigungsakademie, 2005, p.95

³⁹ Nicole J. Jackson, 'The Trafficking of Narcotics, Arms and Humans in post-Soviet Central Asia: (Mis)perceptions, Policies and Realities', *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 24, No. 1, March, 2005, p. 47

basic equipment and training to customs officials and border guards to secure borders and detect nuclear material transits.⁴⁰ Following with the withdrawal of Russian Border Guards from the Tajikistan-Afghanistan border in July 2005, the US has helped Tajikistan to secure its borders and fight drug trafficking and weapons proliferation by budgeting approximately \$33 million in fiscal year.⁴¹ A significant help was provided by NATO for the development of the Central Asian border guard services. Nevertheless, the strengthening of the border security, probably, became one of the factors which helped avoid the repetition of the events in Kyrgyzstan in 1999 and 2000.⁴² However, the continuous illegal transactions such as drug trafficking within and through Central Asia prove that the border security in Central Asian countries still remains to be weak.

2.2 The Threat of Terrorism and Religious Extremism

The Central Asian republics have faced serious threats from religious extremist movements in the post-Soviet period. The first signs of these movements observed in Uzbekistan right after the independence, when protestors, among them Tohir Yuldashev who helped Adolat (Justice) Party and became later the head of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), wanted Islam to have a role in politics struggled to establish an Islamic state of Uzbekistan. After the Uzbek government banned Adolat in March 1992, Yuldashev and his followers fled to Tajikistan where they fought for the Islamic opposition during the 1992-97 civil war.⁴³ Jumaboi Ahmadzhanovich Khojaev, under the adopted name of Juma Namangani, soon became the IMU's

⁴⁰ Daniel Fred, 'A Strategy for Central Asia', *The DISAM Journal of International Security Assistance Management*, Winter 2006, p.100

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Sergey Golunov, 'Border Security in Central Asia: Before and After September 11' in *Facing the Terrorist Challenge – Central Asia's Role in Regional and International co-operation*, eds. Anja H. Ebnother, Maj. Ernst M. Felberbauer and Martin Malek, Vienna: Akademiedruckerei Landesverteidigungsakademie, 2005, p.95

⁴³ Richard Weitz, 'Storm Clouds over Central Asia: Revival of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)?', *Studies and Conflict and Terrorism*, 27, 2004, p.466

charismatic military strategist. When the Tajik combatants accepted a compromise peace accord on 27 June 1997, the disillusioned Yuldashev and his followers joined forces with Osama bin Laden in neighboring Afghanistan.⁴⁴

The IMU, which is a coalition of Islamic militants from Uzbekistan and other Central Asian states who oppose the current Uzbek government and whose main goal to establish Islamic state in Uzbekistan, was formally established in 1998 and its first incursions took place in 1999. The explosion of six bombs on February 16, 1999 in Tashkent, in what may have been an attempt to assassinate President Islam Karimov, killed 16 people and injured more than one hundred.⁴⁵ The governments' main buildings were targeted and this posed serious threat to country' stability. Government accused IMU and Hizb-ul-Tahir and other unofficial Islamic groups. This incursion lead to Uzbek government's accusations of Turkey and Tajikistan supporting these extremists and the relations between Uzbekistan and these countries got worsened.

Since the bombings, the IMU has been regarded as the key terrorist organization operational in Central Asia posing serious threat to regional security and in 2000 the US has added the IMU in its list of terrorist organizations. Uzbek government efforts quickly shifted from co-option to repression as a result of the 1999 attacks by the militant group, Islamic movement of Uzbekistan (IMU).⁴⁶ The government arrested suspected IMU members and the members of the other Islamic radicals. However, the IMU insurgence repeated in 2000. Some of them reportedly advanced to within

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Abdummanob Polat, 'The Islamic Revival in Uzbekistan: A Threat to Stability?' in *Islam and Central Asia: An Enduring Legacy or an Evolving Threat?*, eds. Roald Sagdeev and Susan Eisenhower, Washington DC: Center for Political and Strategic Studies, 2000, p.47

⁴⁶ Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), cited in Jessica N. Trisco, 'Coping with the Islamist Threat: Analyzing Repression in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan', *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 24, No. 4, December 2005, p.374

60 miles of Tashkent in August 2000 before being driven off by Uzbek security forces.⁴⁷

The IMU's incursions took place not only in Uzbekistan, but also in Southern Kyrgyzstan. The Islamist threat was not acknowledged in Kyrgyzstan until the 1999 IMU attacks when Kyrgyz troops had to be mobilized after militants seized a number of villages near the Tajik border.⁴⁸ The summer came, the IMU militants descended from Tajik mountains to Kyrgyz lands to prepare attack on Uzbek Ferghana valley. As they moved down through the mountain passes of the Altaisky mountain range into the ill-defined borders of Kyrgyzstan, the rebels captured a number of Kyrgyz villages, taking hostages both villagers and four Japanese geologists who happened to be traveling through the area at the time.⁴⁹ After the negotiations, foreign hostages were released and the militants were allowed to go Afghanistan through territory of Tajikistan.

According to many, Tajikistan is a haven for the IMU and the militants actualize incursions from Tajik lands to Ferghana Valley of Uzbekistan and Southern Kyrgyzstan. Moreover, the fragility in a country and IMU's contacts with Tajik power has led IMU to establish bases in Tajikistan and implement incursions against neighboring countries. Most importantly, extreme bad social conditions, high level of corruption and lack of opportunities for the development of civil society and democracy created many thousands of potential supporters of a radical IMU.⁵⁰ This provided IMU desire to establish base in Ferghana valley in 2000 to recruit militants so that it can wage long wars in the valley, fortunately, the danger was prevented.

⁴⁷ Gregory Gleason, 'The Politics of Counterinsurgency in Central Asia', *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 49, No. 2, March/April 2002, p.10

⁴⁸ Jessica N. Trisco, 'Coping with the Islamist Threat: Analyzing Repression in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan', *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 24, No. 4, December 2005, p.380

⁴⁹ Gregory Gleason, 'The Politics of Counterinsurgency in Central Asia', *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 49, No. 2, March/April 2002, p.10

⁵⁰ Abdummanob Polat, 'The Islamic Revival in Uzbekistan: A Threat to Stability?' in *Islam and Central Asia: An Enduring Legacy or an Evolving Threat?*, eds. Roald Sagdeev and Susan Eisenhower, Washington DC: Center for Political and Strategic Studies, 2000, p.49

The US war against terrorism in Afghanistan in 2001 destroyed, although the number is not known, many IMU militants who fought alongside Taliban. As a result, as unconfirmed media reports say that Juma Namangani was killed, and IMU has suffered enormous casualties in the fighting and also interrupted its financial support from the Taliban and Al-Qaeda.⁵¹ According to one of the scholar, it is unlikely that US operations in Afghanistan has destroyed all IMU bases located in Afghanistan. Even, the US military leaders themselves have commented that they will continue to track down IMU elements.⁵² This means some of militants are still believed to survive and they may be waiting the future opportunities to repeat incursions in the region.

Since 1999 attacks, the IMU's largest operations, the explosions and fighting in Uzbekistan that begun 29 March, killed at least 47 people and many were injured. Although the explosive devices involved resemble those employed in 1999, the IMU attackers, some of whom were women, for the first time operated as suicide bombers.⁵³ During July attacks, the IMU launched suicide attacks to the US Embassy, the Israeli Embassy and the Office of the General Prosecutor, killing three Uzbek security guards and wounding eight civilians. Despite suffering years of vigorous Uzbek government counterterrorism efforts since 1999, the 2004 attacks and fighting in Uzbekistan did prove that IMU exists and they are capable of conducting terrorist operations, which it has adopted new tactics including using suicide bombers. The attacks caught by the Uzbek security services by surprise and they rapidly suppressed the March-April 2004 assault, and the July 2004 suicide strikes had little immediate political impact.⁵⁴ These events showed that the IMU is alive but not enough strong to attack as it did in the past.

⁵¹ Poonam Mann, 'Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan: Will it Strike Back?', *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 26, No. 2, April/June 2002

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Richard Weitz, 'Storm Clouds over Central Asia: Revival of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)?', *Studies and Conflict and Terrorism*, 27, 2004, p. 481

⁵⁴ Ibid., p.465

Although Central Asian governments' efforts to eliminate this extremist group, critics argue that the conditions that helped create and sustain the IMU remain unchanged in the region. These include the harsh policies of the Central Asian regimes against unofficial Islam, repression any kind of political opposition, failure of democratic reforms, increasing level of unemployment, poverty, perennial government corruption and decreasing economic opportunities.⁵⁵ Solving domestic problems and meeting the needs of the local people in the region would be best solution to prevent IMU incursions from the root.

For me, any kind of individual government economic policies to decrease poverty and the level unemployment in Central Asian countries in a short period of time would be best solution to prevent not just the IMU recruits from people but also the drug trafficking business in Central Asia. Militarily, they can cooperate with each other efficiently to provide regional security in Central Asia. It is a fact that Central Asian countries are not powerful enough to fight with these militants. They cooperate with the external actors and international organizations in regional security issues; however, this cooperation should not be limited to only conflict and crisis management. In order to able to destroy the roots of the IMU, the regional countries should improve the socio-economic conditions in the region and establish individual national armies that can prevent and suppress the militants' attacks any time.

2.3 Instability in Afghanistan

Instability in Afghanistan has profound effects on Central Asian security and it remains as one of the regional challenge for Central Asia for a long time unless stability comes to the country. First, Afghanistan's importance to the Central Asian republics comes from its geographic situation. Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have borders with Afghanistan sharing 1200 km border, meaning security in the region cannot be considered without Afghanistan. Second,

⁵⁵ Poonam Mann, 'Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan: Will it Strike Back?', *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 26, No. 2, April/June 2002

Afghanistan has historical and cultural links with Central Asia. Today, members of all nationalities of the Central Asia are represented in the Afghan population, dominantly Tajiks and Uzbeks. The Tajiks, Uzbeks and Turkmen of Afghanistan are essentially of the same ethnic stock as the titular nationalities to the north of the Amu Darya; indeed many families of all three of these northern ethnic groups of Afghanistan migrated there from Fergana valley and other regions only as recently as the 1920s and 1930s, after the turmoil of the Russian Revolution and Civil War in the USSR.⁵⁶

Began with overthrow of the Afghan President Muhammad Daud by Popular Democratic Party of Afghanistan of Afghanistan (PDPA) in 1978, the conflict turned into civil war among the Afghan themselves with the withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1989. The imminent collapse of the Najibullah's communist government in 1992 posed serious threat to the national and religious minorities in Afghanistan. This coup did not lead to the reestablishment of a unitary Afghan state and schism was apparent in Afghanistan. With the election of Rabbani as the temporary president of Afghanistan instead of Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, the Pashtun leader of the Liberation Front of Afghanistan, the decentralization of political power became permanent.⁵⁷ The main military structure of the former government in Kabul and in Northern provinces was inherited by Tajik and Uzbek community. At the same time, the most influential Pashtun leader Gulbiddin Hekmayat was seeking to achieve control over Kabul right up to the appearance of the Taliban movement in 1994. Thus, the conflict and civil war in Afghanistan led to the disintegration of the state and impact on Central Asian states. Moreover, the Tajik civil war had gained momentum in those years causing great destruction and refugees in the country.

The consequences of these two events proved that there is interaction and interdependence of events in Afghanistan and Central Asia. One way measuring this

⁵⁶ A. Hyman, 'Afghanistan and Central Asia' in *Security Politics in the Commonwealth of Independent States*, ed. Mehdi Mozaffari, New York: St. Martin's Press Inc, 1997, p.122

⁵⁷ Sultan Akimbekov, 'Conflict in Afghanistan: Conditions, Problems, and Prospects' in *Central Asia: Gathering Storm*, ed. Boris Rumer, New York: M. E. Sharpe Inc, 2002, p.74

may be the flow of weapons between militants or mujahidin groups in northern Afghanistan and the opposition parties in Tajikistan, as well as drug trafficking.⁵⁸ Another way is observing the flow of refugees, across both sides of the Amu Darya: of Tajiks into northern Afghanistan and of Afghans to Uzbekistan.⁵⁹ Thousands of Afghan refugees have fled to the north mostly from families of former civil servants, army officers and other employees of the PDPA regime and they live in Central Asian cities in Tashkent and other cities of Uzbekistan or in Moscow. Also, 60000 Tajik refugees from Tajikistan's civil war crossed the Amu Darya River in 1992, seeking refuge in the areas around Kunduz and Maimana in Afghanistan.

The seizure of Kabul and Jalalabad by Taliban in 1996 and the establishment of order by Taliban by ousting Burhauddin Rabbani and establishing the Taliban supreme leader Mullah Mohammad in power in Afghanistan posed serious threats to the security of Central Asia. The Taliban sought to reestablish Afghan statehood under Pashtun dominance and to prevent the division of the country into separate realms under the control of leaders from the national minorities.⁶⁰ However, opposition to Taliban remained active after the seizure. The Uzbeks controlled several north-central provinces and the Tajiks controlled areas of northeast, and they were united in opposition to the Taliban.

For their part, newly independent states of Central Asia needed a political shield that would ensure stability and would assume responsibility for preserving status quo vis-à-vis Afghanistan. The meeting in Almaty on 4 October 1996 gave a real impulse to the formation of a unified anti-Taliban coalition in northern Afghanistan, an area seen as a buffer zone separating the newly independent states of Central Asia from an unwelcome influence, and as the main precondition for the stability of the of the

⁵⁸ A. Hyman, 'Afghanistan and Central Asia' in *Security Politics in the Commonwealth of Independent States*, ed. Mehdi Mozaffari, New York: St. Martin's Press Inc, 1997, p.129

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Sultan Akimbekov, 'Conflict in Afghanistan: Conditions, Problems, and Prospects' in *Central Asia: Gathering Storm*, ed. Boris Rumer, New York: M. E. Sharpe Inc, 2002, p.71

regional security system.⁶¹ By 2000, the Taliban exercised authority throughout the Afghanistan, except for parts of the Panshir valley. Most importantly, Taliban has been accused of having relations with Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda. In October 1999 the United States and Russia jointly sponsored UN SC Resolution 1267, demanding that the Taliban authorities extradite Osama bin Laden.⁶² However, Kabul refused to cooperate and as a result UN imposed sanctions against Afghanistan in November 1999. In December 2000, the United States and Russia sponsored Security Council Resolution 1333, imposing even more comprehensive sanctions.⁶³

Opium cultivation in Afghanistan and its trafficking through Central Asia is another major threat to society, economy and the politics of states in the region. Much of the drug trade originates from Afghanistan and cause domestic and regional military conflicts in Central Asia are founded by the organized crime due to the drug trade. By the late 1990s, production had reached an average of more than 3000 tons yearly, a level sustained ever since, with the exception of 2001, when the Taliban government's eradication briefly led to a large shortfall in production to only 185 tons.⁶⁴ However, following the 'Operation Enduring Freedom' in 2001 and the demise of the Taliban regime, production levels were immediately restored to pre-eradication levels.

To sum up, secure and stable Afghanistan is important for five Central Asian states because of the complex nature of the ethnic composition and drug cultivation which can easily affect the current security regime of the region. To achieve this, system of

⁶¹ Ibid., p.81

⁶² United Nations Security Council Resolution 1267 of October 15, 1999, S/RES/1267 (1999) cited in Gregory Gleason, 'The Politics of Counterinsurgency in Central Asia', *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 49, No. 2, March/April 2002, p.10

⁶³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1333 of October 15, 2000, S/RES/1333 (2000) cited in Gregory Gleason, 'The Politics of Counterinsurgency in Central Asia', *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 49, No. 2, March/April 2002, p.19

⁶⁴ Svante E. Cornell and Niklas L.P. Swannstrom, 'The Eurasian Drug Trade: A Challenge to Regional Security', *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 53, No. 4, July-August 2006, p.10

governance, social order, industry and infrastructure should be restored as soon as possible so that situation in Afghanistan no longer pose threats to Central Asia. For this mission, after September 11, the United States decided to conduct the military campaign in Afghanistan. During this campaign, NATO played vital role cooperating with the Central Asia states. As an Organization, NATO is in charge of the peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan and it has operated military bases in Central Asia crucial for the military campaign in Afghanistan. Moreover, it took over International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan in August 2003 and its support is being undertaken in different forms.

2.4 Efforts of Central Asian States to Promote Security in the Region

As security threats have gained momentum, cooperative security dynamics have also been developed in the region. These are security structures established and sponsored by Central Asian states to promote Central Asian security cooperation to deal with the regional security challenges identified in previous subtopics. These include the Central Asian Economic Community (CAEC) or Central Asian Economic Union (CAEU), '6+2' group of 'neighbors and friends' of Afghanistan.

The Central Asian Economic Community (CAEC), originally initiated as the Central Asian Union (CAU) in 1994 by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, was the most important conflict prevention structure. In December 1995 the CAEC resolved to form a joint Council of Defense of Ministers, tasked with the consideration of regional security and defense coordination, including the coordination of military exercises, air defense and defense supplies, and decision was taken to create the tripartite peacekeeping battalion, Centrasbat.⁶⁵ The Council of Defense Ministers was responsible cooperation with NATO Partnership for Peace initiative that was initiated in 1996, even if the success can be disputed owing to a small level of engagement from Uzbekistan and very little substantial impact apart from joint

⁶⁵ Roy Allison, 'Structures and Frameworks for Security Policy Cooperation in Central Asia' in *Central Asian Security: the New International Context*, eds. Roy Allison and Lena Jonson, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2001, p. 221

training.⁶⁶ This is also explained with the internal weakness of the Central Asian states and their lack of a common security threat.

Although Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) incursion in 1999 provided a common security threat, CAEC member states were in a dilemma like who and how act against these militants of IMU. As a result, in August 1999 the foreign and defense ministers and heads of national security of the CAEC issued a joint declaration on the activity of militants in the south of the Kyrgyzstan and came to the conclusion that terrorism and extremism were becoming international and represented a threat to all states in the region. At the meeting in April 2000, presidents of the CAEC states signed an agreement concerning fighting terrorism, extremism and trans-border crime.

The 2000 incursions in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan tested to what extent the CAEC was organized and consolidated. At a summit meeting in Bishkek in August in 2000, the four presidents called on Russia to join the antiterrorism agreement they had signed four months previously and appealed to the CIS Collective Security Council to map out action to counter the terrorist threat.⁶⁷ This indicated that the Islamist security challenge is more likely to rally the CAEC states behind Russian/CIS security structures rather than to consolidate a separate CAEC military/security identity.⁶⁸ However, Uzbekistan was the CAEC state which has argued most strongly for independent efforts by the Central Asia states at bolstering their security. President Islam Karimov stated in his speech in 2000 that, 'If we are not able to provide security for our populations and the countries of the region ourselves, no one will help us from the outside. We must look to our own resources, especially through

⁶⁶ Niklas Swanstrom, 'The Prospects for Multilateral Conflict Prevention and Regional Cooperation in Central Asia', *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 23, No. 1, March 2004, p. 44

⁶⁷ Inside Central Asia, issue 321, 17-23 April 2000, cited in Roy Allison, 'Structures and Frameworks for Security Policy Cooperation in Central Asia' in *Central Asian Security: the New International Context*, eds. Roy Allison and Lena Jonson, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2001, p. 222

⁶⁸ Roy Allison, 'Structures and Frameworks for Security Policy Cooperation in Central Asia' in *Central Asian Security: the New International Context*, eds. Roy Allison and Lena Jonson, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2001, p. 222

reinforcing the armed forces and border guards.⁶⁹ This statement explains why Uzbek small units were sent to take part in Centrasbat-2000 in September 2000 hosted by Kazakhstan.

CAEC, which was renamed as Central Asia Cooperation Organization (CACO) in 2001, member states discussed the possible ways to prevent influx of Afghan drug and economic impact of the drug to the region when old drug trafficking appeared as a serious threat in 2003 again. However, the lack of coordination and due to the link between drug trade, corruption and national economies, the result has been discouraging. If to conclude, from a preventive perspective, the CACO has done little and the primary consequences have been conflict and crisis management.⁷⁰

'6+2' group of 'neighbors and friends' of Afghanistan, the framework for Central Asian cooperation, was proposed by Uzbekistan in 1997 consisting of six countries bordering Afghanistan – China, Iran, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan – with Russia and USA. It had built a structure to assist to trans-regional conflict prevention whose goal to prevent and settle the Afghan conflict. I think, the successful completion of organization's goal would decrease the level of the threat posed by Afghanistan to Central Asian states. At the Tashkent conference in July 1999, the group has issued and signed declaration on fundamental principles of peaceful settlement of the conflict in Afghanistan. Most importantly, the members asked United Nations Drug Control (UNDCP) to help in reducing illicit drugs coming from Afghanistan. A high level meeting of the '6+2' group on Afghanistan at United Nations headquarters approved a Regional Action Plan on September 13, outlining concrete steps to stem the flow of drugs from Afghanistan.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 221

⁷⁰ Niklas Swanstrom, 'The Prospects for Multilateral Conflict Prevention and Regional Cooperation in Central Asia', *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 23, No. 1, March 2004, p. 44

⁷¹ Todd Diamond, 'The Six-Plus-Two Group Unveils Anti-Trafficking Action Plan for Afghanistan', *Eurasia Insight*, 15 September 2000, Available at <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav091500.shtml>, Accessed on 15 October 2006

According to this plan, member states came to the conclusion that neighboring countries should make efforts to strengthen law enforcement and criminal justice system at national and regional level. The Regional Action Plan also says that the participating states will strongly encourage the factions in Afghanistan to make serious and verifiable efforts to carry out eradication efforts. If to criticize the achievements of the organization from my side, the organization was not successful both in settling the conflict and decreasing the level of drug cultivation in Afghanistan. We witnessed that the Afghan conflict continued till the Operation Enduring Freedom and Allied military intervention in 2001. The conflict and drug cultivation had been posing serious threats till these military operations. That means although organization struggled, we see no concrete results in accomplishing its goal in the country.

To conclude, the cooperation between CACO states was limited due to the weaknesses of Central Asian states and their efforts were limited with conflict and crisis management. Similarly, '6+2' group cooperation was hindered by the reluctance of the Central Asian states to cooperate intra-regionally and the lack of a common strategy. For instance, Turkmenistan, the sixth country that shares a border with Afghanistan, declined to endorse the report, stating that it prefers to have its anti-narcotics efforts with Afghanistan financed on a bilateral basis.⁷² To my mind, if these cooperative efforts were successful in every field, then Central Asian states would never witness the extremist incursions like in 1999 and 2004 suicide attacks and drug trafficking at this level.

2.5 External Involvement in Regional Cooperation in Central Asia

There are structures aiming to promote security in the region, most of them supported by regional and external powers. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) supported by Russia, without which their existence and contribution to regional security in Central

⁷² Ibid.

Asia is open to question. Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is permanent intergovernmental international organization created by Russia, China and four Central Asian states except Turkmenistan and whose one of the main goal to make joint efforts to maintain and ensure peace, security and stability in the region. It is also worth noting the role of the regional and international bodies such as EU, OSCE and NATO.

During CIS prime ministers meeting on October 1997, the main issues on CIS agenda were conflict resolution, peacekeeping and organized crime. A year later, CIS foreign ministers discussed the same issues and agreed on a draft program on developing military cooperation up to 2001. Although only on February 1999 terrorism was intensively discussed with economic cooperation and free trade zone, the issue of terrorism has not been on CIS agenda till the car bombs in Tashkent and Batken events in southern Kyrgyzstan. Thus, although terrorism had been on the Russian agenda at CIS meetings during Yeltsin's presidency, Putin made it a top-priority issue and the Batken events opened a 'policy window' and used it to move full-scale common anti-terrorist struggle into the CIS arena, primarily into Central Asia.⁷³ Also, Central Asian leaders agreed with Putin's framework to develop multilateral security cooperation within the CIS and the CST. Since then, terrorism at the top, transnational threats such as drug trafficking and arms smuggling became the main agenda for CIS.

Following the incursion to Kyrgyzstan in 1999, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan offered their units for the joint command-and-staff exercise CIS Southern Shield 2000 exercise. The second exercise, which was aimed against an incursion by extremists from the direction of Afghanistan, involved combat training and interaction not only of armed forces, but also of security services, border troops and interior troops. In April 2000, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan agreed

⁷³ Lena Jonson, *Vladimir Putin and Central Asia: the Shaping of Russian Foreign Policy*, London: I.B. Taurus and Co Ltd, 2004, p.64

to create a CIS Anti-Terrorist Centre.⁷⁴ The most recently, in August 2005, the CIS organized a major command staff exercise called 'Anti-Terror 2005' in western Kazakhstan.

In the case of Collective Security (CST), since its establishment on 15th May of 1992, it had no practical dimension till 1999-2000 in CIS areas of Central Asia and other areas, simply because of the lack of the organizational framework and procedure of the cooperation. In 1999, the Treaty was prolonged for five years when Republic Armenia, Republic of Belarus, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation; Republic of Tajikistan signed the Treaty where Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan withdrew from it.

May 2000 Minsk session was a turning point because its institutions have been set and it was arranged under the Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Most importantly, in August 2001, a tangible factor of multilateral integration, especially in dealing with international terrorists, was the establishment of a Collective Rapid Deployment Force (CDRF) in Central Asia fully equipped battalion each from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan, with their own Command and Headquarters, including a permanent task force in Bishkek.⁷⁵

Russia's efforts to enhance cooperation between member countries have led to renaming the CST in May 2002 as Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). In October 23 2003, Russia's air base was opened in the framework of the CSTO at Kant in Kyrgyzstan. According to the Kyrgyz officials, as they claimed before the opening of the Kant base, opening of Kant base will markedly enhance security in Central Asia, a region that is facing a steady increase in radical Islamic activity. After the successful CSTO anti-terrorist exercises in Kyrgyzstan 2004, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov announced Moscow plans to develop its airbase at

⁷⁴ Roy Allison, 'Structures and Frameworks for Security Policy Cooperation in Central Asia' in *Central Asian Security: the New International Context*, eds. Roy Allison and Lena Jonson, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2001, p. 221

⁷⁵ V. Nikolaenko, 'Collective Security Treaty: Ten Years Later', *International Affairs: A Russian Journal of World Politics, Diplomacy and International Relations*, Vol.48, No. 3, 2002, p.

Kant. According to Army General Vladimir Mikhailov, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Air Force, by the end the 2004 Kant will consist of around 700 personnel, including 200 civilians, and the air fleet will grow to 20 units, including Su-27 fighters, Su5 ground attack aircraft, L-39 training craft and Mi-8 helicopters.⁷⁶

Despite these developments, a critic criticized that anti-terrorist exercises held in Kyrgyzstan showed little awareness of divergent terrorist tactics. They were modified against large groups of terrorist moving from their territory in which they are struck from the air, but not against the divergent terrorist tactics. CSTO's CRDF has engaged in several major antiterrorist exercises, Rubezh-2004 and Rubezh-2005, with the participation of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to practice their tactics against terrorist incursions. Together with terrorism, counter narcotics trafficking has become the major objective of the CSTO. Since 2003, the intelligence, law enforcement, and defense agencies of the member states have jointly conducted annual 'Kanal' operations to intercept drug shipments from Afghanistan through the region's porous borders.⁷⁷ Moreover, the CSTO has established a working group to strengthen Afghanistan's law enforcement and counter-narcotics efforts.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which was first established as Shanghai Five in 1996, had a goal to resolve border disputes, especially the border disputes coming from pre-USSR history to now between China and Central Asian states. Fortunately, the Shanghai Five did succeed in resolving border disputes except for some areas of China-Russia and China Tajikistan and this has effected stable relations between member states and regional stability positively. Moreover, at the second Summit of the Shanghai Five in 1997, they agreed on reducing the military forces in the border areas, only after September 11 they increased border troops to

⁷⁶ Roger Mcdermott, 'Russia Strengthens Its Airbase in Kyrgyzstan', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 1, No. 71, 11 August 2004, Available at http://jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=401&issue_id=3044&article_id=2368391, Accessed on 16 December 2006.

⁷⁷ Richard Weitz, 'Terrorism in Eurasia: Enhancing the Multilateral Response', *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2006, p. 13

combat separatism and terrorism. During the Shanghai Five Bishkek Summit in August 1999, the parties shifted their emphasis on collective efforts to combat religious and separatist extremism and the international flow of drugs and to problematic parts of their joint borders. The summer terrorist incursions to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in the same year forced them to focus more on these issues.

The title of the ‘Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism, and Extremism’, signed at the organization’s founding Summit in June 2001, highlights the priorities of the SCO.⁷⁸ A final agreement was signed concerning the setting up of the Anti-Terrorist Centre in Bishkek, although the question of financing remained difficult and was not fully resolved.⁷⁹ It also opened Regional Antiterrorism Structure (RATS) in Tashkent operating since 2004 to coordinate studies of regional terrorist movements, exchange information about terrorist threats and provide advice about counterterrorist policies. Moreover, the parties have undertaken joint initiatives to combat drug trafficking and organized crime to prevent major source for terrorism. Most recently, Uzbekistan hosted multilateral exercise called ‘East-Antiterror-2006’.

EU’s policy toward Central Asia is composed of supporting stability and democratic organizations, promoting economic reform and addressing the ecological problems. For 2006, the European Commission has allocated only 66 million Euros to help all five Central Asian governments reduce poverty, expand regional cooperation, and support ongoing administrative, institutional, and legal reforms.⁸⁰ Similarly, current OSCE projects in the region include curbing illicit trafficking in drugs and small arms, and countering terrorist financing and other transnational criminal activities.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 12

⁷⁹ Lena Jonson, *Vladimir Putin and Central Asia: the Shaping of Russian Foreign Policy*, London: I.B. Taurus and Co Ltd, 2004, p.113

⁸⁰ EU Aid for Central Asia to Fight Poverty in *Iran News Agency*, January 2 2006, cited in Richard Weitz, ‘Terrorism in Eurasia: Enhancing the Multilateral Response’, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2006, p. 13

⁸¹ Richard Weitz, ‘Terrorism in Eurasia: Enhancing the Multilateral Response’, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2006, p. 14

Their main focus directed to eliminate social, economic and political reasons of the security threats in Central Asia. I think, although the help provided by EU and the OSCE seems to be small, it helps to reduce the level of security threats by decreasing the number of people involved.

NATO has developed special relations with Central Asian states in the context of the regional security. Within the framework of the Partnership for Peace (PfP), with the support of NATO, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan created Central Asian Battalion (Centrasbat) in 1996. The tasks were supposed to keep the fragile peace in Tajikistan and prevent the Afghan conflict from spreading into Central Asia as well as strengthening the military-to-military relationship and improving regional security in Central Asia.⁸² The cooperation has been expanded on regional security after the tragic September 11 events and NATO Istanbul Summit in 2004.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed the post-Soviet security challenges in Central Asia. It can be said that the regional security challenges pose serious threats to the region and have social, political and economic consequences in the region. Moreover, the weaknesses of the borders and the slow demarcation process provide opportunities for transnational groups to pass fragile borders and control the transborder activity using the gaps in the national security border systems. However, due to the weaknesses of the regional states, the cooperative responses and efforts were limited with conflict and crisis management as in the case of the CACO. This has led external structures and powers involvement in regional security cooperation. NATO has developed its relations with regional states with its PfP program, designed to expand political and military cooperation between the Alliance and the partner states. In the third chapter, NATO and its PfP program in Central Asia will be examined.

⁸² Global Security, 'Centrasbat'. www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/centrasbat.htm, 26 June 2003 cited in Niklas Swanstrom, 'The Prospects for Multilateral Conflict Prevention and Regional Cooperation in Central Asia', *Central Asian Survey*, 23(1), March 2004, p. 47

CHAPTER 3

NATO AND ITS PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE (PfP) PROGRAM IN CENTRAL ASIA

This chapter explores NATO and its PfP program in Central Asia in the context of the regional security. The chapter also evaluates the relations between NATO and its Central Asian partners since the NATO's decision to launch its PfP Program at the Brussels Summit in 1994. In this context, the chapter will explore NATO's vision of security and objectives with its PfP program in Central Asia. The chapter also discusses NATO's PfP instruments in Central Asia as well as the importance of PfP programs for the regional states.

3.1 NATO's Vision of Security in Central Asia

NATO's vision of security in Central Asia comes from the NATO's transformation process which begun right after the end of the Cold War. This process first was initiated with the idea to expand NATO's role from collective defense organization to collective security organization. The collective defense alliance, which was mainly functioned to defend Europe from the threat of Soviet invasion, would be transformed to collective security alliance to meet the security challenges of this world. Then, it has been hastened with the introduction of the PfP at the Brussels Summit in 1994. For one of the PfP supporter, with the introduction of the PfP, the Alliance wishes to foster security in Central Asia as part of its strategy of building partnerships with emerging democracies, meeting new security challenges and promoting stability throughout the Euro-Atlantic area.⁸³ According to Warren Christopher and William J. Perry,

⁸³ Osman Yavuzalp, 'On the Front Line', *NATO Review*, Winter 2001/20002, p.24

The Alliance needs to adapt its military strategy to today's reality; the danger to the security of its members is not primarily potential aggression to their collective (NATO) territory, but threats to their collective interests beyond their territory. Shifting the Alliance's emphasis from defense of members' territory to defense of common interests is the strategic imperative. To deal with such threats, Alliance members need to have a way to rapidly form military coalitions that can accomplish goals beyond NATO.⁸⁴

In this context, we can see that it has become essential for NATO to enhance its relations with its Central Asia partners 9/11 events. Following September 11 attacks to the United States of America and the ensuing campaign against terrorism have brought into focus the importance of Central Asia to Euro-Atlantic security and the need for closer cooperation between NATO and its Central Asian Partners – not just within the context of the current crisis, but beyond.⁸⁵ During his visit to Kyrgyzstan in 2003, NATO General Secretary Lord Robertson said that 'the terrorist attacks of 11 September fundamentally changed our security perceptions. It was understood that our security was linked closely to security in remote areas.'⁸⁶

Although it seems NATO is active in Central Asia after the 9/11 events, the Alliance was cooperating with the Central Asian states in military and non-military issues before 9/11 events. For instance, militarily, NATO and three Central Asia states, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, agreed on the establishment of the Central Asian Battalion (Centrasbat) in late 1995 to carry out joint military exercises in the framework of the Partnership for Peace (PfP). Centrasbat exercises took place in participation with Central Asian Partners between 1997 and 2000 years. During the news conference at the Kyrgyz Foreign Ministry in 2000, NATO Secretary – General Lord Robertson stated all the sides' serious concerns about the security in Central Asia. He stated the NATO's mission in the region. According to him, 'Increasing religious extremism, terrorism and drug trafficking are serious concerns for NATO. My visit to the countries of Central Asia will attach importance to the cooperation

⁸⁴ Warren Christopher and William J. Perry, 'NATO's True Mission', *New York Times*, Column 1, October 21, 1997, p.

⁸⁵ Osman Yavuzalp, 'On the Front Line', *NATO Review*, Winter 2001/20002, p.24

⁸⁶ Speech by NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson during his visit to Kyrgyz Republic, 12 July 2003, *NATO Speech*, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/s030712a.htm>, Accessed on 7 February 2007

between the Alliance and the countries of this region. NATO supports common measures by the countries of Central Asia to combat terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking. NATO's main aim is to assist and give aid to ensure stability and security in the region.'

However, NATO presence and its PfP program activities in Central Asia has been facing challenges from third parties. For NATO documents, the basic objective of NATO's PfP is to strengthen and extend peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond. NATO's mission in Central Asia, with its PfP Programs, is to expand political and military cooperation between the Alliance and regional states and promote security and stability in the region. Moreover, Alliance officials have argued that no country should view the PfP as threatening, and repeatedly point out that the program emphasizes activities such as peace-support operations, humanitarian intervention and search-and-rescue procedures.⁸⁷

Russians watched with concern as the security cooperation between Central Asian states and NATO countries developed first of all within the framework of the PfP program and later through bilateral agreements with individual NATO members.⁸⁸ According to the Russian actors, NATO activities of any type are simply against Russia's interests. According to PfP supporters, contrary to Russian argument, NATO's mission in this context is to drive home the point that its activities are not directed against anyone; furthermore, that by increasing regional security in Central Asia and other former Soviet regions, NATO's programs actually increases rather than decrease Russia's security.⁸⁹ However, with the dominance of power ministries over Russian foreign and security policy-making this point is unlikely to be accepted easily in Moscow. To NATO's point of view, nevertheless, Moscow's opposition should not be taken as an obstacle to NATO's efforts to increase regional security.

⁸⁷ Robin Bhatti and Rachel Bronson, 'NATO's Mixed Signals in the Caucasus and Central Asia', *Survival*, Vol.42, No. 3, Autumn 2000, p. 139

⁸⁸ Jonson, Lena. *Vladimir Putin and Central Asia: The Shaping of Russian foreign Policy*, London: I. B. Tauris and Co, 2004, p. 49

⁸⁹ Svante Cornel, 'NATO after Enlargement: PfP Shifts Emphasis to Central Asia and the Caucasus', *NIASnytt*, 2004, p. 11

I think Russia's reaction to NATO's presence in Central Asia comes from Russia's fear of losing traditional 'backyard'. Russia does not want to lose Central Asia where it enjoyed political, economic and cultural hegemony for a long time in the history. It was only watching when NATO's PfP Centrasbat exercises were held in Central Asia between 1997 and 2000; however, it decided to cooperate with Central Asian states after 9/11 events when an increasing US and NATO military presence in Central Asia. We can clearly see that Russia has enhanced its relations with Central Asian states both within the framework of the CSTO and SCO after 9/11 events. Even, in October 2003, Russia opened its first military base at Kant in Kyrgyzstan and outside Russian Federation within the framework of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)

China also stated its skeptical opinions about NATO presence and its PfP programs in Central Asia. Although China has not expressed a clear opinion on NATO expansion and the participation of Central Asian states in PfP Programs, it somehow opposes NATO's move to the region. China viewed Centrasbat as inimical to Chinese interests. A senior policy planner at a Beijing foreign policy think tank has argued that 'NATO's move eastwards was an example of Christian expansion which was psychologically threatening to China and which could lead eventually to the clash of civilizations.'⁹⁰ To my mind, this think tank has argued in this way because NATO's move eastwards may become a threat for regime in China in the future. Another claim was stated as, 'closer military ties between NATO and the Central Asian states will not promote the elimination of 'hot spots' in the region, but rather aggravate military confrontation.'⁹¹ Here, the closer cooperation between NATO and Central Asian states maybe a reason conflict between NATO and SCO or NATO and Russia and China.

⁹⁰ 'China's Worry About America' in *Foreign Report*, no.2, 465, 25 September 1997 cited in Robin Bhatti and Rachel Bronson, 'NATO's Mixed Signals in the Caucasus and Central Asia', *Survival*, Vol.42, No. 3, Autumn 2000, p. 139

⁹¹ Xing Guangcheng, 'China's Foreign Policy toward Kazakhstan' in *Thinking Strategically: the Major Powers, Kazakhstan and the Central Asian Nexus*, ed. Robert Levgold, Massachusetts: Cambridge, 2003, p.111

According to the PfP supporters, two key principles underpin PfP vis-à-vis third parties. First, NATO's PfP Program is not directed against the interests of any third party. Second, it does not seek to substitute or duplicate other cooperative initiatives but rather to complement them, as NATO has always respected the specific interests and regional considerations of its Partners.⁹² Thus, for one of the PfP supporter, NATO supports regional cooperatives in which Central Asian Partners participate such as the SCO and it respects the relations that have been built between Russia and Central Asia because of the historical, geopolitical, social and economic reasons. Similarly, Lord Robertson, during his visit to Central Asia in 2000, stated that 'partnerships need not to be exclusive. It is in the interest of all to cooperate to project security and stability throughout the region.

Although NATO officials state in this way, we can witness that there is misunderstandings between NATO and Russia. Russia simply does not want NATO to move eastwards, especially Central Asia. I think if NATO's intention to change Central Asia as NATO wants, it might not be only affect the relations between Russia and NATO, but also the relations between Russia and Central Asia. Russia simply does not want NATO to close come its territories it had enjoyed privileges in the past.

3.2 Objectives of NATO's PfP Program in Central Asia

Based on the practical cooperation and commitment to democratic principles that underpin the Alliance itself, the purpose of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) is to increase stability, diminish threats to peace and build strengthened security relationships between individual Partner countries and NATO, as well as among Partner countries.⁹³ Similarly, as it is stated at the Brussels Summit (1994), the basis of a PfP is a bilateral relationship between NATO and each one of the Partner countries increase stability, diminish threats to peace, and build strengthened security

⁹² Osman Yavuzalp, 'On the Front Line', *NATO Review*, Winter 2001/20002, p.25

⁹³ 'Security through Partnership', *NATO Publications*, 2005, p.10

relationship. The PfP was designed to promote civilian control of the military; enable joint operations with NATO peacekeeping and humanitarian missions; encourage transparency in defense planning and budgeting; and open communications among PfP countries.⁹⁴

The process of transformation of NATO, which has started right after the end of the Cold War, has been intensively developed with the establishment of the PfP. As part of NATO's transformation, the Alliance sees itself as more than just a military organization and has taken an increasing interest in the promotion of democracy, fundamental freedoms, human rights and the rule of law.⁹⁵ During his trip to Kyrgyzstan in 2004, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer stated that: 'These values not only for the Allies but also our Partners. The more we share these fundamental values, the stronger our Partnership will be. In turn, we will stand stronger against the threats to our security, like terrorism.' Also, Partnership policy aims to help Partner countries with democratic reform and the establishment of effective institutions, including the difficult talks of bringing security services and military establishments under effective democratic control. In this sense, the Alliance aims to cooperate with Central Asian states sharing the fundamental values and the common values that underpin Partnership for Peace (PfP).

To my mind, since NATO started relations with NATO within the framework of PfP, it has not cooperated on the issues like promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Most probably, NATO is afraid that any kind of internal intervention to Central Asian domestic policies may destroy the Alliance's cooperation with the Central Asian states on other fields like military or scientific. Therefore, we witnessed that NATO officials have always stressed that we share the fundamental values but not intervening in Central Asian domestic policies.

⁹⁴ Robin Bhaty and Rachel Bronson, 'NATO's Mixed Signals in the Caucasus and Central Asia' *Survival*, Vol.42, No. 3, Autumn 2000, p. 131

⁹⁵ General Rapporteur Vitalino Canas, 'NATO and Kazakhstan', 21 October 2005, p.17, Available at www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?-Shortcut=678, Accessed on 12 February 2007

Within the framework of PfP, NATO's mission in Central Asia is to provide peace and security in the region through cooperation in military and non-military fields. According to NATO documents, the nations of the partnership will participate with NATO in a range of military activities, including joint military planning, training, and exercises as well as search and rescue missions, disaster relief, peacekeeping, and crisis management.⁹⁶ In military field, the cooperation between Central Asia and NATO are established in fields such as joint military exercises and assistance in modernizing the equipment, weaponry and communications of the armed forces of the countries. Most importantly, Central Asia countries recognize the importance of joint military exercises with the Alliance and they participate in military exercises through the PfP and bilateral military cooperation.

According to Rustam Burnashev, NATO's military policy in Central Asia has four main components: establishment of direct military contacts; assistance in democratic transformations (civil military relations, civilian control, and defense management and accounting); expansion of cooperation (training, doctrines, and equipment); support for security measures (nonproliferation and control over weapons).⁹⁷

As indicated in the precious paragraph, NATO's PfP program privilege partner countries to cooperate in non-military fields too. Central Asian partners cooperate in areas such as natural disasters, environmental protection and scientific and technological research. For instance, Central Asian partners are sensitive to natural disasters like earthquakes and flood, so they cooperate in finding the ways protecting the cities and the population located in high-risk zones. Planning for such civil emergencies and preparing the way for civil-military cooperation in disaster response operations is being facilitated by participation in workshops and activities organized within the framework of the Partnership for Peace (PfP).⁹⁸ In this field, the special

⁹⁶ Joseph Kruzal, 'Partnership for Peace and the Transformation of North Atlantic Security' in *NATO in the Post-Cold War Era: Does it Have a Future?*, eds. S. Victor Papacosma and Mary Ann Heiss, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995, p. 340

⁹⁷ Rustam Burnashev, 'Regional Security in Central Asia: Military Aspects' in *Central Asia: Gathering Storm*, ed. Boris Rumer, New York: M. E. Sharpe Inc, 2002, p.114

⁹⁸ Osman Yavuzalp, 'On the Front Line' in *NATO Review*, Winter 2001/20002, p.25

courses organized in Kyrgyzstan in 1996, in Uzbekistan in 1999 and in Kazakhstan in 2001.

Within the framework of the PfP program, the Alliance aims to cooperate with Central Asian Partners in many fields, but the crucial point of the Alliance is not an issue of membership or no membership. NATO's PfP goal has been modified to offering participating states the possibility of strengthening relations with NATO countries, without the promise of eventual NATO membership.⁹⁹ The only aim of NATO with its PfP Programs to transform regional security picture with or without membership.

However, PfP Invitation Document indicates that active participation in the PfP will play an important role in the evolutionary process of the expansion of NATO. Moreover, PfP, as the Secretary General, Manfred Wornier remarked, can and will lead to NATO membership for some countries though this need not be a goal for all those who participate.¹⁰⁰ We witnessed significance of the PfP in the enlargement of NATO of 1999 and 2004 when Central and Eastern Europe countries became the members of NATO.

PfP is building political and military bridges between NATO member countries, between NATO members and non-members, but also among non-members.¹⁰¹ According to Svante Cornell, this in itself increases security in the regions where there are symptoms of potential conflicts. PfP accelerates military reform in Partner countries, while simultaneously having a positive effect in general on political development and accountability. For him, through training programs and participation in peacekeeping missions and exercises, PfP is helping to foster a new

⁹⁹ Robin Bhatti and Rachel Bronson, 'NATO's Mixed Signals in the Caucasus and Central Asia', *Survival*, Vol.42, No. 3, Autumn 2000, p. 131

¹⁰⁰ Yuksel Inan and Islam Yusuf, 'Partnership for Peace', *International Affairs*, Vol.4, No.2, June-August 1999

¹⁰¹ Svante Cornel, 'NATO after Enlargement: PfP Shifts Emphasis to Central Asia and the Caucasus', *NIASnytt*, 2004, p. 11

generation of military officers whose thinking differs markedly from the Soviet military mentality of their predecessors.¹⁰² I think he meant here that these PfP exercises will help military officers how to deal with new regional security challenges emerged after 1990s. We witnessed that the old military officers with Soviet military mentality are not enough experienced and powerful to deal with these new threats such as drug trafficking and terrorism.

In response to its determined effort to promote cooperation with the region, NATO wants Central Asian Partners to do all their efforts to actively participate in PfP Programs. They have to identify what they see as their principal security concerns and their priorities for cooperation with the Alliance in the spirit of the PfP. More fundamentally, they have to show the necessary political will, to press ahead with political and economic reforms, to streamline their military establishments, and to work together with their neighbours to address regional problems such as drug smuggling and human trafficking.¹⁰³ Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, during his speech in Kyrgyz Republic stated that ‘it is in all our interest now to build on this existing cooperation between us, to expand it to new areas, where all countries of Central Asia can benefit from advice and assistance, and where NATO has valuable experience to share.’

According to many scholars, NATO’s PfP programs in Central Asia do not differentiate the PfP programs in Balkans and the Caucasus, however, NATO’s engagement in Central Asia is at the minimum level and demand driven than compared to those regions. If to compare the PfP programs in Central Asia with the PfP programs in Caucasus, the three partners namely Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan already cooperates with NATO within the framework of the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), a program which enhances cooperation with NATO that has already been achieved within the framework of the PfP program. In Central

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Speech by NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer during his visit to Kyrgyz Republic, 19 October 2004, *NATO Speech*, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s041019b.htm>, Accessed on 7 February 2007

Asia, only Kazakhstan cooperates within the framework of IPAP while the others haven't implemented it yet.

To conclude, NATO's engagement in Central Asia with its PfP Programs has three certain strategic objectives in the region. Generally, these involve firstly, achieving stability and security in Afghanistan; secondly, implementing defense reforms that contribute to broader democratic reform; and, thirdly, boosting a modernization of Central Asian militaries that could allow interoperability with NATO forces in peacekeeping operations.¹⁰⁴ In this sense, I think that the peculiarity of NATO's PfP in Central Asia is the policy that it pursues to promote security and stability in individual republics and in Central Asia as well. Whether the Alliance is successful or not in pursuing following objectives and peculiarity will be discussed in following chapters.

3.3 Instruments of NATO's PfP Program in Central Asia

NATO Heads of State and Government launched PfP during the NATO's Brussels Summit in 10-11 January 1994. As it is stated in the PfP Invitation Document, this new program goes beyond dialogue and cooperation to forge a real partnership – Partnership for Peace (PfP). Moreover, this Partnership was established as an expression of a joint conviction that stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic Alliance can be achieved only through cooperation and common action.¹⁰⁵ They

¹⁰⁴ Acting Rapporteur Rafael Estrella, 'Central Asian Security: The Role of NATO', 14 September 2006, p. 6, Available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?SHORTCUT=990>, Accessed on 17 April 2007

¹⁰⁵ The states wishing to join the Partnership for Peace (PfP) are first invited to sign a Framework Document that describes the basic principles and undertakings on which Partnership for Peace (PfP) is founded: The Paragraph 2 states that 'Protection and promotion of freedoms and human rights, and safeguarding of freedom, justice, and peace through democracy are shared values fundamental to the Partnership. In joining the Partnership, the member States of the North Atlantic Alliance and the other States subscribing to this Document recall that they are committed to the preservation of democratic societies, their freedom from coercion and intimidation, and the maintenance of the international law. They reaffirm their commitment to fulfill in good faith the obligations of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights; principles of the Charter Declaration on Human Rights; specifically, to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial or political independence of any State, to respect existing borders and to settle disputes by peaceful means. They also reaffirm their commitment to the Helsinki Final Act and all subsequent

therefore invite the other states participating in the NACC and other CSCE countries able and willing to contribute to this program, to join with them in this partnership.¹⁰⁶ Instruments of NATO's PfP program to accomplish its objectives are given in the PfP Framework Document.

Partnership for Peace Framework Document indicates in paragraph 3 that the nations of the Partnership subscribing to this document will cooperate with North Atlantic Treaty Organization in pursuing the following objectives: facilitation of transparency in national defense planning and budgeting processes; ensuring democratic control of defense forces; maintenance of the capability and readiness to contribute, subject to constitutional considerations, to operations under the authority of the UN and/or the responsibility of the CSCE; the development of cooperative military relations with NATO, for the purpose of joint planning, training, and exercises in order to strengthen their ability to undertake missions in the fields of peacekeeping, search and rescue, humanitarian operations, and others as may subsequently be agreed; the development, over the longer term, of forces that are better able to operate with those of the members of the North Atlantic Alliance.

As indicated in Paragraph 4 of the PfP Framework Document, partner states subscribing to this document are expected to prepare Presentation Document identifying the steps they will take to achieve political goals of the Partnership and the military and other assets that might be used for Partnership activities. According to the Presentation Document, NATO will propose a program of partnership exercises and other activities consistent with the Partnership objectives. Then, based on this program and its Presentation Document, each subscribing state will develop with NATO an Individual Partnership Program (IPP).¹⁰⁷ NATO will assist them, as

CSCE/CSCE documents and to the fulfillment of the commitments and obligations they have undertaken in the field of disarmament and arms control', Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b940110b.htm>, Accessed on 27 November 2006.

¹⁰⁶ Partnership for Peace Invitation, Brussels, 10-11 January 1994, *Press Communiqué*, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c940110a.htm>, Accessed on 27 November 2006.

¹⁰⁷ Paragraph 5 of the Partnership for Peace Framework Document; 'In preparing and implementing their Individual Partnership Programs (IPP), subscribing states may, at their own expense and in Agreement with the Alliance, as necessary, relevant Belgian authorities, establish their own liaison

appropriate, in formulating and executing their Individual Partnership Programs. Most importantly, NATO will consult with any active participant in the Partnership if that Partner perceives a direct threat to its territorial integrity, political independence, or security. This offers a channel for consultations with the Alliance on possible future crisis and on ways in which they might be defused.¹⁰⁸

Planning and Review Process (PARP) is another instrument to accomplish partnership objectives in partner countries. To ensure that Partner forces able to operate with NATO militaries in peacekeeping operations, guidance on interoperability or capability requirements is provided under a PfP Planning and Review Process.¹⁰⁹ The PARP helps Partner countries develop effective, affordable and sustainable armed forces and promotes wider reform in defense issues.

Having witnessed the successful Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative in the first years, the Alliance decided to enhance the role of the Partnership. In mid-1997 in Sintra, Portugal, the member countries of the NACC and participating countries of the PfP, determined to raise to a qualitatively new level of their political and military cooperation, building upon the success of NACC and PfP, have decided to establish a Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council.¹¹⁰ The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) will be a new cooperative mechanism which will form a framework for enhanced

office with NATO Headquarters in Brussels. This will facilitate their participation in NACC/Partnership meetings and activities. They can also make available personnel, assets, facilities and capabilities necessary for carrying out the Partnership Program', Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b940110b.htm>, Accessed on 27 November 2006.

¹⁰⁸ Yuksel Inan and Islam Yusuf, 'Partnership for Peace', *International Affairs*, Vol.4, No.2, June-August 1999

¹⁰⁹ Paragraph 7 of the Partnership for Peace Framework Document; 'develop with the other subscribing states a planning and review process to provide a basis for identifying and evaluating forces and capabilities that might be made available by them for multinational training, exercises, and operations in conjunction with the Alliance forces; promote military and political coordination at NATO Headquarters in order to provide direction and guidance relevant to Partnership activities with the other subscribing states, including planning, training, exercises and the development of doctrine', Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b940110b.htm>, Accessed on 27 November 2006.

¹¹⁰ Basic Document of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, Sintra, Portugal, 30 May 1997, *NATO Basic Texts*, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b970530a.htm>, Accessed on 4 December 2006.

efforts in both an expanded political dimension of partnership and practical cooperation under PfP.¹¹¹ The objectives of new enhanced PfP would be as follows; to allow Partners to develop direct relationship individually or in smaller groups with the Alliance; to allow Partner countries in decision making processes related to activities in which they participate and decide themselves the level and areas of cooperation with NATO.

The Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) is another NATO instrument open to countries that have the political will and ability to deepen relationship with the Alliance. Launched at the Prague Summit in 2002, IPAPs are to enhance cooperation with NATO that has already been achieved within the framework of the PfP program. All partner states can initiate IPAP enabling them to prioritize, harmonize, and organize all aspects of NATO-Partner relationships via the EAPC and PfP.¹¹² On the one hand, IPAP provides an opportunity for the Partner states to address their particular circumstances and interests, it serves as another mechanism for the Alliance to support and advise interested partners on the other. The Plans developed in the framework of the IPAP are developed on a bi-annual basis and NATO will provide its focused, country-specific assistance and advice on reform objectives that interested partners might wish to pursue in consultation with the Alliance.¹¹³

With regard to Central Asian states, the cooperation between Central Asian Partners and NATO is implemented with Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and PfP. The EAPC, a multilateral collective forum for holding the consultations, plays vital role in expanding cooperation between NATO and Partners. For instance, Kyrgyzstan regularly participates in all EAPC/NATO yearly sessions organized on the level of foreign ministers and the Heads of the State and Government of the Member States and Partners States.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Roger N. McDermott, 'Kazakhstan's Partnership with NATO: Strengths, Limits and Prognosis', *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No.1, 2007, p. 9

¹¹³ Ibid.

Four of the Central Asian states, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan were among the states to sign Partnership for Peace (PfP) Document in 1994, only Tajikistan joined PfP in 2002. Since they joined, Central Asian Partners have been participating in PfP within the framework of the Partnership Invitation Document explained in previous paragraphs. They proposed their presentation documents which included the each partner's priorities in joining PfP. Although each partner's level of involvement in PfP programs differs, they always stated the importance of PfP programs for their security issues.

We can see in the following paragraphs that NATO's PfP provide different kinds of advantages that Central Asian states can enjoy. However, due to every partner's political situations, the cooperation between the Alliance and Central Asian partners differentiates from one partner to other. We can only see that all partners in Central Asia actively cooperate with NATO only on the fight against terrorism and Afghan conflict.

In late 1995, both NATO and Central Asian leaders agreed to form the Central Asian Peacekeeping Battalion (Centrasbat), one of the seven regional units organized under the Partnership for Peace (PfP).¹¹⁴ Centrasbat was formed by the Central Asian Economic Cooperation (CAEC) Council of Defense Ministers with the support of NATO's PfP and the USA in 1996. The tasks were supposed to keep the fragile peace in Tajikistan and prevent the Afghan conflict from spreading into Central Asia as well as strengthening the military-to-military relationship and improving regional security in Central Asia.¹¹⁵ Since then, a number of annual exercises have taken place and the US military has actively cooperated with Centrasbat in areas such as crowd control and counter narcotics techniques. The first Centrasbat exercise took place in 1997 and consecutive exercises took places in the coming years too till 2000.

¹¹⁴ Lyle J. Goldstein, 'Making the Most of Central Asian Partnerships', *Joint Force Quarterly*, Summer 2002, p.83

¹¹⁵ Niklas Swanstrom, 'The Prospects for Multilateral Conflict Prevention and Regional Cooperation in Central Asia', *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 23, No. 1, March 2004, p. 47

Although Planning and Review Process (PARP) was initiated in 1994 to assist Partner countries' militaries to become increasingly interoperable with NATO and to open new opportunities for modernization of their Armed forces, Central Asian Partners joined PARP as the later participants. Kazakhstan joined the PARP in May 2002 and it believes that participation in PARP will help make selected units interoperable with those of Allied countries and increase mutual understanding.¹¹⁶ It also aims to expand participation in PARP to include its counter terrorism capabilities and wider equipment interoperability. Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan joined PARP after 11 September and they also benefit from it. NATO PARP experts have assisted Uzbekistan in the reform of the Defense Ministry's top command structure. For instance, Uzbek military were trained at the NATO's PfP Center in Ankara, Turkey.

In the case of the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), for now, Kazakhstan is the only Central Asian NATO Partner country engaged in the IPAP ratifying the official document. Kazakhstan and NATO, after the consecutive discussions in the format of the 26 plus 1, agreed on draft IPAP and this plan was approved by the Kazakh Parliament in 2006. The cooperation between the Alliance and Uzbekistan had started to expand within the framework of the IPAP till the Andijan events in 2005. For example, developing IPAP on terrorism, Uzbekistan assorted special forces units belonging to the defense and interior ministries, as well as the National Security Service (SNB), have received training from US, British and Turkish military advisors.¹¹⁷

The NATO Science Program is another instrument for the Alliance which brings scientists from NATO member and Partner countries together to share knowledge and to cooperate in the advancement of science. Besides promoting international

¹¹⁶ 'Kazakhstan and NATO: General Overview, Available at <http://www.kazakhstanembassy.be/DisplayPage.asp?PageId=123>, Accessed on 13 February 2007.

¹¹⁷ 'US and NATO Security aid to Uzbekistan comes under Scrutiny', *Eurasia Insight*, 2005, Available at http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav071305_pr.shtml, Accessed on 27 February 2007.

cooperation essential to the progress of science, this program serves to promote peace by fostering trust and understanding and by forging enduring links between scientists throughout the Euro-Atlantic world.¹¹⁸

‘The Virtual Silk Highway’ is a project agreed within the framework of the NATO Science Program and was equivalent of 40% of the NATO computer networking budget. This project is a computer networking project; it is designed specifically to facilitate the exchange of information between academic and educational institutions in the Caucasus and Central Asia with peers in the rest of the world by providing basic and reliable Internet connectivity.¹¹⁹ Now, through ‘The Virtual Silk Highway’ project, NATO is providing access to the Internet by satellite to the five countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan. The Silk project provides an example how Security through Science Program of NATO has joined forces with other international organizations to achieve common goals.¹²⁰ For instance, the European Union (EU) is involved in the Silk Project, which provides grant-financed technical assistance to 13 countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia to enhance transition process. For instance, the Virtual Silk Highway facilities help the EU to provide courses for language, health care and hardware for computer classes for Turkmenistan.

Other NATO-sponsored science projects in Central Asia include pilot study on environmental decision-making, launched in February 2001, involving Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan; projects addressing radioactivity problems at the former nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk in the Sarzhai region of Kazakhstan; and initiatives to tackle pollution in the Aral Sea.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ ‘The Virtual Highway Project’, *NATO Publications*, May 2003, Available at http://www.nato.int/docu/virtual_silk_highway/html_en/virtual_silk_highway07.html, Accessed on 12 April 2007.

¹¹⁹ Robert Janz, ‘Virtual Silk Highway’, 16 August 2002, p.1, Available at <http://www.silkproject.org/taskforce/STFdocs2002/STF-45a.pdf>, Accessed on 13 January 2007

¹²⁰ ‘Security through Science Projects in Turkmenistan’, *News and Events*, 18 October 2006, Available at <http://www.nato.int/science/news/2006/n060409a.htm>, Accessed on 29 March 2007.

¹²¹ Osman Yavuzalp, ‘On the Front Line’, *NATO Review*, Winter 2001/2002, p.25

3.4 Importance of NATO's PfP Program for Central Asian States

Central Asian States have their own interest vis-à-vis cooperation with NATO in the framework of the PfP programs. As it is stated in the second chapter, first and foremost, Central Asian states are not enough strong to fight such threats like terrorism and illicit drug trafficking. Therefore, it is important for regional states to cooperate with the Alliance both in political and military terms and accept the help provided by NATO. Moreover, developing good relations with the Alliance, within the framework of PfP Programs, regional states can establish effective system of security against prevailing threats in wider region.

The important thing is that regional Partners are not striving for membership in NATO. They are interested in cooperation with NATO within the framework of PfP Programs primarily for military and to certain degree political reasons. Their motivation is that they want gain experience, advice and assistance from NATO member countries to improve the capabilities of their armed forces and they are eager to build up the military infrastructure necessary to combat terrorism, religious extremism and drug trafficking.¹²²

Since now, no NATO officials and the Central Asian officials have commented on the possible membership of the Central Asian states to NATO. I don't think that this will be issue of politics unless NATO's partners in Caucasus, which are very close to present NATO territory, become the member of the Alliance. Therefore, it seems Central Asian states will get membership in coming ten or twenty years.

NATO has also provided some kind of support to strengthen the security system along their borders in Central Asian states. The Alliance has contributed to the development of Central Asian border guard structures, especially training of border guard services. The Alliance has provided assistance which involves material such as border monitoring equipment, patrol boats and the other necessary equipments.

¹²² Acting Rapporteur Rafael Estrella, 'Central Asian Security: The Role of NATO', 14 September 2006, p.5, Available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?SHORTCUT=990>, Accessed on 17 April 2007

During his trip to Dushanbe in September 2003, the former General Secretary of NATO, George Robertson, announced that the Alliance together with the OSCE intended to open a training centre for Central Asian frontier guards in Tajikistan.¹²³ This type of help provided by NATO will enhance security against outside threats especially religious extremism and drug trafficking.

The most important assistance would be rendered by the Alliance in mid-1990s were technical and organizational assistance for the creation of national armed forces and it was supposed that these forces would be able to participate in peacekeeping operations. In order to train such forces, the 'Centrasbat' international exercises with the participation of Kazakhstan's, Kyrgyzstan's and Uzbekistan's divisions were carried out regularly.¹²⁴ The Centrasbat exercises, which took place within framework of the PfP between 1997 and 2000, have greatly developed militaries of regional states.

Since Centrasbat was established, from the NATO member countries, the most active contribution of the Central Asian armed forces has been made by USA, Turkey and Germany. In 1997, the battalion participated in an US-sponsored Partnership for Peace (PfP) Program, organized by NATO. On August, the Central Asian nations of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan trained at Fort Bragg in North Carolina as a part of an eight nation joint exercises that was going to be conducted in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan on September 1997. Having boarded in North Carolina, 500 soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division and paratroopers from Central Asia flew 6700 miles before jumping into Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

On December 12, 1997, a meeting was held in Tashkent between military experts from NATO, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, at which the results of the

¹²³ Sergey Golunov, 'Border Security in Central Asia: Before and After September 11' in *Facing the Terrorist Challenge – Central Asia's Role in Regional and International co-operation*, eds. Anja H. Ebnother, Maj. Ernst M. Felberbauer and Martin Malek, Vienna: Akademiedruckerei Landesverteidigungsakademie, 2005, p.99

¹²⁴ M. Rustemov, 'Regional Security Problems in Central Asia and NATO' in *Sotrudnichestvo NATO i Stran Sentralnoy Azii v Kontekste Regionalnoi Bezopasnosti v XXI veke: Realii i Perspektivy*, 2005, p.36

military peacekeeping exercises 'Centrasbat 97' were reviewed.¹²⁵ A year later, Centrasbat 98 exercises, in which the objects of the exercises to identify the problems, took place in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in September 1998. It involved 160 soldiers from the US Army's 10th Mountain Division holding joint training exercises with more than 450 military personnel from Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Russia and Turkey.¹²⁶ This Centrasbat 98 exercise, multinational military exercise conducted in the spirit of the NATO's PfP was organized to teach these three regional states how to work with other nation's militaries and North Atlantic Treaty Standard.

The Centrasbat 99 was organized in seminar format to provide NATO and Partner nations to share their ideas, methods and techniques used in peacekeeping/humanitarian operations. A year later, although Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan were reluctant to take in Centrasbat 2000 exercises due to the military conflicts in the South of the countries, they did participate enhanced Centrasbat 2000 exercises held in near Almaty, Kazakhstan in 2000. Work has continued to assist countries in the region to reform their Soviet-style militaries to learn to operate with those of NATO, and to pursue programs to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction, oppose proliferation, and resist fundamentalist encroachment from the South.¹²⁷ The commander of US Central Command (CENTCOM), General Tommy Franks, attended Centrasbat 00 and stated their awareness of unfolding events in neighbor Afghanistan; 'Afghanistan is a failed state and is destabilizing to this entire region. We remain concerned about the export of extremism...'

Some critics argue that apart from few exercises there were no lasting preventive effects of the cooperation. Moreover, they state that these joint exercises were held

¹²⁵ Xing Guangcheng, 'China's Foreign Policy toward Kazakhstan' in *Thinking Strategically: the Major Powers, Kazakhstan and the Central Asian Nexus*, ed. Robert Levgold, Massachusetts: Cambridge, 2003, p.110

¹²⁶ Elizabeth Sherwood – Randall, 'Building Cooperative Security Ties in Central Asia', *Stanford Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Fall-Winter 2002, Available at http://www.stanford.edu/group/sjir/3.2.06_sherwoodrandall.html, Accessed on 5 January 2007

¹²⁷ Ibid.

for the interests of some states such as US and Turkey. However, it would not have been possible to initiate Centrasbat like this without the explicit assistance of NATO's PfP. For one of the supporters of the Centrasbat, these exercises were special importance in helping the Uzbekistan to counter security threats such as the IMU.

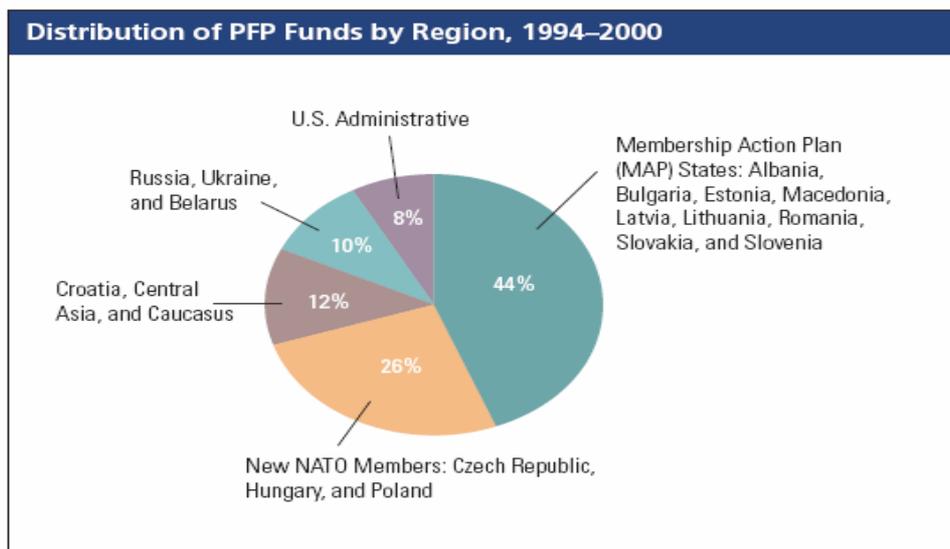
Nevertheless, the Centrasbat exercises held in the spirit of NATO's PfP proved to be fruitful for Central Asian states and NATO. First, the Kazakh battalion (Kazbat) was established in 2000, drawing experiences from Centrasbat exercises took place in previous years. As a humanitarian support, Kazbat officers were sent to Iraq in 2003 for mine clearance and water purification. Second, I think the contribution of Central Asian states to military campaign in Afghanistan was the result of the NATO's accomplished good relations with the regional states. Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and to a lesser extent Tajikistan, provided bases which proved crucial for the military campaign and successful overthrow of the Taliban regime.

The spillover of effect of the instability in Afghanistan is another very important factor why Central Asian states see NATO's PfP programs important for Central Asian states. As it is examined in the second chapter, the presence of Taliban and al-Qaeda, and opium cultivation in Afghanistan are the major causes of concern for the regional countries. Because these threats have not only negative implications in Afghanistan, they also increase political instability in neighboring countries.

It should also be noted the importance of PfP Trust Fund for Central Asian states. The Alliance has also contributed to regional states to cope with the consequences of defense reform financing through PfP Peace Trust Funds. A General Accounting Office (GAO) study on the PfP program notes that less than 12 percent of the more than \$590 million between 1994 and 2000 appropriated to assist foreign military went to Central Asian nations, with the vast majority going to new NATO members and East European applicants.¹²⁸ Although this statistics seems to be small, PfP Trust

¹²⁸ Lyle J. Goldstein, 'Making the Most of Central Asian Partnerships', *Joint Force Quarterly*, Summer 2002, p.87

Fund has provided important financial assistance to defense reform in Central Asia. For instance, Trust Fund helped to destroy the last remaining stockpile of anti-personnel landmines in Tajikistan in spring 2003. Similarly, a project is in action in Kazakhstan to destroy 27000 small arms, light weapons and Man Portable Air Defense System (MANPADS).



Source: Lyle J. Goldstein, 'Making the Most of Central Asian Partnerships', *Joint Force Quarterly*, Summer 2002, p.87

Figure 2: PFP Trust Fund Share by regions: 1994-2000

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed NATO and its PFP program in Central Asia in general. Within this context, it has become clear that NATO's vision of security in Central Asia comes from the idea of transformation of the Alliance. With the introduction of the PFP in 1994, cooperation between NATO and the regional states has been enhanced. In this chapter, the cooperation between NATO and Central Asian states within the framework of the PFP has been examined. The fourth chapter will be devoted to discuss the evolution of the NATO relations with the individual regional states in details.

CHAPTER 4

NATO'S PfP PROGRAMS IN INDIVIDUAL CENTRAL ASIAN STATES

This chapter starts from the premise that NATO is a security organization which has significant military and political power to provide assistance to its partners. With its PfP program, compared to other security structures, NATO could pursue various security policies in individual partner countries in Central Asia. In this contact, this chapter will explore the evolution of the cooperation between NATO and the individual regional states within the framework of the PfP. The chapter also examines the priorities of each partner state –namely Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan- in promoting cooperation with the Alliance

4.1 NATO's PfP Program in Kazakhstan

The relations between Kazakhstan and NATO started with the visit of the Secretary General Manfred Wornier to Almaty in November 1992 and visit of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to Brussels in February 1993. The national strategy established by Nursultan Nazarbayev in April 1992 suggests that NATO members will lend their experience to defense related issues and the prevention of regional conflicts within the framework of North Atlantic Cooperation Council.¹²⁹ After Kazakhstan's joining to PfP, Kazakh government stated that Kazakhstan is fully satisfied with the guarantees of security by nuclear powers, and considers NATO as a useful and reliable partner.¹³⁰

¹²⁹ Nursultan Nazarbayev, *Strategiya Stanovleniya I Razvitiya Kazakhstana kak Suverennoego Gosudarstvo*, Alma-Ata: RGJI Daur, 1992, p.50 cited in Doulatbek Khidirbekoghli, 'U.S. Geostrategy in Central Asia: A Kazakh Perspective', *Comparative Strategy*, Vol.22, No.2, April-June 2003, p.161

¹³⁰ Asker Kusmanulu, Nurlan Seitimov. 'NATO: Politika v Kontekste Geopoliticheskikh Realiy Izmenivshegosya Mira' in *Sayosat*, April 1997, p.87 cited in Doulatbek Khidirbekoghli, 'U.S.

Kazakhstan considers cooperation with NATO through PfP important to its national security and a contribution to security and stability in the Central Asian region and sees the Euro Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) as the crucial interface between the Alliance and Partners, providing for confidence building and transparency, and, should crisis occur, for the coordination of joint action.¹³¹ Kazakhstan expects that through closer cooperation with the Alliance, it will gain experience, advice and assistance from NATO countries to enhance the capabilities of its armed forces and improve the military infrastructure necessary to combat terrorism, religious extremism and drug trafficking, thus contributing to strengthening control of its borders and improving its security.¹³² Within the framework of PfP, Kazakhstan cooperates with NATO in defense policy and strategy, defense technology, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and environmental protection.

The cooperation has been developed within the framework of the PfP since 1994 has been enhanced in the aftermath of the September 11. During his visits, Robert Simmons praised Kazakhstan's decision to develop IPAP that will tailor the Kazakhstan's relations with the Alliance. Finally, Kazakhstan has finished the approval process for the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) at the beginning of 2006, although the real difficulties are expected to occur during implementation.¹³³ The IPAP agreement between Kazakhstan and NATO is the first one agreed between NATO and a Partner nation in Central Asia. In this sense, if we compare Kazakhstan's level of partnership with the Alliance, Kazakhstan is considered as the most active NATO partner among Central Asian states so far.

Kazakhstan signed PfP Framework Document on 27 May, 1994 and in December submitted its Presentation Document to NATO that defines the priorities of the

Geostrategy in Central Asia: A Kazakh Perspective', *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 22, No. 2, April-June 2003, p.161

¹³¹ 'Kazakhstan and NATO: General Overview' Available at <http://www.kazakhstanembassy.be/DisplayPage.asp?PageId=123>, Accessed on 13 February 2007

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Acting Rapporteur Rafael Estrella, 'Central Asian Security: The Role of NATO', 14 September 2006, p. 6, Available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?SHORTCUT=990>, Accessed on 17 April 2007

cooperation and main goals of the Partnership. These were as follows: planning and budgeting of the national defence; ensuring democratic control of defense forces; joint planning and cooperative exercises in order to strengthen their ability to undertake missions in the fields of peacekeeping and humanitarian operations; training personal staff for defense forces.

Within the Framework of the PfP Programs, the main priority for NATO and Kazakhstan is military cooperation and education. The Security and Status of Security Agreement (SOFA) Agreements, which provided the protection of secret information in the Framework of the PfP Programs and the military status of Partner countries in case of military trainings, were signed between Kazakhstan and NATO on July 31, 1996. It has actively participated in Centrasbat exercises together with Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Kazakh Battalion (Kazbat) was created in 2000 by drawing experiences from Centrasbat exercises. Although Kazbat was not deployed in Afghanistan, it was the first Former Soviet Republic and only Central Asian country to deploy its peacekeeping unit beyond the region in support of ongoing stabilization and humanitarian operations in Iraq in 2003.

In the framework of the PfP, Kazakhstan and the United States, with the participation of other Central Asian countries and Russia, hold annual military exercises and maneuvers that took place in Qapchagay, Almaty Province in 2001. Since Kazakhstan joined the PfP Programs, more than 200 Kazakh officers took part in different courses, seminars, meetings conducted both in NATO member countries and NATO Partner countries. Many representatives of the military command staff were trained in military institutions at the NATO schools in Rome and Oberammergau and at the George Marshal Center in Germany. Some has got acquainted with different aspects of the organization and operation of armed forces in NATO member countries. Kazakhstan opened military language institute and later became a regional education center within the framework of the PfP. For one PfP supporter, access to this institute by other officers from other Partner countries in Central Asia may provide a stimulus promoting NATO's work in the region and

facilitating the expansion of the current bilateral security programs offered to Kazakhstan by NATO's members.¹³⁴

In the aftermath of the September 11, Kazakhstan has supported military campaign in Afghanistan and NATO-led ISAF since 2003. At the NATO Summit in Prague in November 2002, Nazarbayev spoke about cooperation on Afghan problems, the war against terrorism and drug trafficking, and the creation of a NATO Information Center in Kazakhstan.¹³⁵ As a result, within the framework of the memoranda signed between Kazakhstan and the Alliance, it has provided its airspace and airfields for ISAF aircrafts for operational and emergency purposes and currently it is a transit country for NATO-led ISAF. Since 'Operation Enduring Freedom' was launched in 2001, more than 1500 over flights and several emergency landings have been realized over the territory of Kazakhstan.

If we analyze the Kazakh authorities' statements, it is clear that they attach great importance to the NATO military campaign in Afghanistan. As one Kazakh authority stated Kazakhstan supports ISAF and the coalition forces stabilization efforts in Afghanistan because regional security in Central Asia depends on their success in Afghanistan. According to the Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, Kassymzhomart Tokayev, Kazakhstan supports the efforts of the international coalition in Afghanistan, including NATO-led ISAF Operation and stands ready to be involved in the international process in the country.¹³⁶ For Nursultan Nazarbayev, being the member of anti-terrorist coalition, Kazakhstan from the very first day supported the war against terrorism in Afghanistan and Kazakhstan airspace was open and is open for the flights of NATO planes, and thousands of NATO planes have flown through the territory of Kazakhstan and our country is used as a transit country and now

¹³⁴ Roger N. Mcdermott, 'Kazakhstan Opens Military Language Institute', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 2, No. 171, September, 2005

¹³⁵ Doulatbek Khidirbekoghli, 'U.S. Geostrategy in Central Asia: A Kazakh Perspective', *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 22, No. 2, April-June 2003, p.162

¹³⁶ Transcript of Address by Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Kassymzhomart Tokayev to the North Atlantic Council, Brussels, 4 October 2006, *NATO Speeches*, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2006/s061004a.htm>, Available at 13 February 2007.

Kazakhstan wishes to be a part of economic rehabilitation and rebuilding of Afghanistan.¹³⁷

In June 2002, Kazakhstan was the first Central Asian Partner country to join the Planning and Review Process (PARP), which would provide new opportunities for the modernization of its Armed Forces. At the defense ministers' session of the EAPC in December 2001, Former Defense Minister Mukhtar Altynbayev stated that Kazakhstan took practical decision about joining the PARP which will allow us to increase the level of relations with NATO. For Kazakhstan, participation in PARP was aimed to achieve 16 different Partnership goals, mainly achievement of interoperability and preparation of units for peacekeeping operations. Kazakhstan was the first state in the region to join the Operational Capability Concept (OCC) on January 6, 2004 oriented military cooperation between Kazakhstan and NATO, self-assessment of units according to OCC procedures and improved interoperability while conducting combined operations with NATO units.

In July 4, 2003, Ministry of Defense signed the Memorandum of Understanding between NATO Maintenance Supply Organization (NAMSO) and Kazakhstan on Logistic Support Cooperation. Priority goals within the Memorandum are utilizing rocket fuel components, disposing small arms and ordnance, and clearing unexploded ordnance storages.¹³⁸ Moreover, the project will decrease current arms and ammunition surplus and enhance ecology in the country. During Soviet rule, 4% or more than 100 thousand square kilometers of Kazakhstan territory used for military testing.

Within Individual Partnership Program (IPP), there were more than 700 Kazakh servicemen trained with various cooperation programs both with NATO and other

¹³⁷ Press Briefing with the NATO Secretary General Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, *NATO Speeches*, 4 December 2006, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2006/s061204a.htm>, Accessed on 1 April 2007

¹³⁸ Presented by the Major General Bulat Sembinov, 'Cooperation of the Republic of Kazakhstan with NATO. Training and Education Aimed at Achieving of Interoperability for Participation in NATO Exercises and Operations', Available at <http://pforum.isn.ethz.ch/docs/06EF598D-FD7A-431C-43D1BB6CAADBFB5.ppt>. Accessed on 10 April 2007

nations under the auspices of partnership in 2004. Kazakhstan has planned 140 events for 2005 that is more than twice as much as compared to 65 events in 2004.¹³⁹ NATO special representative for Central Asia Robert Simmons visited Kazakhstan in March 2005 and met with Minister of Foreign Affairs, Defense Minister, and Minister for Civil Emergency and Deputy of the Security National Council. During his second visit to Kazakhstan in October, 2005, Robert Simmons proposed that NATO's PfP project could include setting up a team in 2007 to react to disasters, including those that resulted from the use of weapons of mass destruction or major terrorist incidents.¹⁴⁰ During his speech, he thanked the Kazakh authorities for their support to NATO Allies' operations in Afghanistan by granting overflight rights. He also denied that NATO does not intend to open its bases in Kazakhstan or in the Caspian Sea. He confirmed in an interview in Almaty that 'Currently there are no sites and bases of NATO in Kazakhstan, and I do not see any need to change this situation.'¹⁴¹

The cooperation between Kazakhstan and NATO was not limited with security and military matters, but bilateral cooperation has been expanded in scientific matters too. In the spring of 2002, NATO and the Kazakh government, represented by the Ministry of Science and Education, held a joint meeting in Almaty on financing the science program of Kazakhstan.¹⁴² Within the framework of NATO Science for Peace Program, it has established close contacts with scientists from NATO member states too. Moreover, it is taking part in soft security NATO-sponsored regional Virtual Silk Highway Project.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Roger N. Mcdermott, 'Kazakhstan's Partnership with NATO: Strengths, Limits and Prognosis', *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No.1, 2007, p. 12

¹⁴¹ 'NATO Representative Says No Bases Planned for Kazakhstan' in *Interfax-Kazakhstan*, October 4 2005, cited in Roger N. Mcdermott, 'Kazakhstan's Partnership with NATO: Strengths, Limits and Prognosis', *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2007, p. 11

¹⁴² Doulatbek Khidirbekoghli, 'U.S. Geostrategy in Central Asia: A Kazakh Perspective', *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 22, No. 2, April-June 2003, p.161

NATO-sponsored project has brought scientists for the measurement and the study of the contamination at the Semipalatinsk test site, an area used for nuclear test between 1949 and 1989. The Semipalatinsk project brought the scientists together from the United Kingdom and Kazakhstan, scientists from Middlesex University in London, Al-Farabi Kazakh State National University in Almaty, the Institute of Radiation Safety and Ecology in Kurchatov and the Institute of Nuclear Physics in Almaty and the help was also provided by University College in Dublin aimed to examine the contamination levels across some 600 square kilometers of the 22000 square kilometer site.¹⁴³

This project aims to measure the level of radioactive contamination located in the north-west of the village in Sarzhal in Semipalatinsk having a population of 2000. This area was used for hydrogen bomb explosion in 1953 and lies close to the Delegan Mountains, where of the 239 of the 456 underground nuclear tests were carried out during Soviet Period. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), after serious of tests it conducted, confirmed in 1997 that the site represents serious risk to the health of some individuals and population groups and NATO decided to fund 3 year research which began in 1999 and it was currently was the largest of 97 projects supported by NATO's Science for Peace Program. This contaminated area selected for the NATO study was used for grazing by domestic animals before the creation of the nuclear test site and it was hoped that one of the outcomes of the study will be the reclamation of the contaminated lands for safe grazing in the future.¹⁴⁴

It can be concluded that Kazbat and IPAP are two determinants why Kazakhstan is considered as the most active partner in Central Asia. Kazakhstan's professional peacekeeping unit Kazbat was established on 31 January, 2000 and since then has cooperated with NATO and the United States on training, military-to-military exchanges and interoperability. Most importantly, the Kazbat's high-tech equipment was donated by NATO allies and major goal of Kazakhstan's cooperation with the

¹⁴³ 'Monitoring Contamination in Kazakhstan', *NATO Review*, Vol. 49, No.3, Autumn 2001, p.22

¹⁴⁴ 'Radioactive Contamination in Kazakhstan', *NATO Update*, 14 January 2001, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2002/01-january/e0114b.htm>, Accessed on 4 April 2007

Alliance is to achieve interoperability of Kazbat. The battalion is an extremely complex organism, which continues to evolve as training, exercises and equipment improve in line with the officially stated policy of achieving NATO interoperability.¹⁴⁵ Kazbat is located at Kapshagai in the 70 km north of Almaty and 100% staffed with professional serving on contracts.

Since its creation, the US has supported the battalion in different forms, providing military-to-military training, exchange visits and joint exercises. Turkey has assigned a team of instructors for several months, provided equipment to the battalion and engaged in joint tactical exercises. Similarly, the support has been provided by the United Kingdom, establishing Self-Access Language Center (SAC) in Kapshagai and taking part in joint exercises such as 'Steppe Eagle' in July 2003.

It was feared to send Kazbat to Afghanistan in 2002 because it lacks operational experiences; however, Kazakhstan stated its readiness to become more active in the global war on terrorism. On May 2003, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev decided to send Kazbat peacekeepers to Iraq in support of on-going stabilization and humanitarian operations in Iraq. 27 members of the battalion were deployed and tasked with humanitarian duties including mine clearance and water purification, as part of the international division under Polish command.¹⁴⁶ They have proven to be capable of carrying on water purification and mine clearing in short time.

Kazbat unit has cleared away more than 400000 explosives and continues fulfilling successfully its missions and for Alтынbayev, these detachments helps in solving another important problem; achieving interoperability.¹⁴⁷ Secretary General Lord Robertson visited Kazakhstan in the same year and thanked Nursultan Nazarbayev and Kazakh Parliament for the decision to send troops to Iraq for the pos-war

¹⁴⁵ Roger N. McDermott and Col. Igor Mukhamedov, 'Kazakhstan's Peacekeeping Support in Iraq', *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, 28 January, 2004

¹⁴⁶ General Rapporteur Vitalino Canas, 'NATO and Kazakhstan', 21 October, 2005, p.17, Available at www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?-Shortcut=678, Accessed on 12 February 2007

¹⁴⁷ Roger N. McDermott and Col. Igor Mukhamedov, 'Kazakhstan's Peacekeeping Support in Iraq', *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, 28 January, 2004

reconstruction process in the country. Since Kazbat engineers were deployed to Iraq in 2003, they have destroyed more than 4 million pieces of deadly ordnance and cleared scores of sources of water.

Since 2005, when the impetus shifted toward training the Iraqi forces, Kazakh soldiers have trained more than 200 Iraqis in mine disposal and 20 local in water purification techniques.¹⁴⁸ Although Kazbat peacekeepers suffered from one casualty, Kazakhstan has continued to support reconstruction process in Iraq. In September 2006, Kazakhstan conducted rotation of Kazbat soldiers and now a new group continues its mission in Iraq.

After these successful operations and trainings, in 2006, Kazakhstan has expanded its Kazbat to brigade level combining several battalions and proved Kazakhstan's readiness to take part in greater international peacekeeping responsibilities. In a statement announcing the creation of Kazbrig, Kazakhstan's Defense Minister stated that 'Kazbrig has greater capabilities to fulfill peacekeeping tasks in the light of the experience already gained. The new peacekeeping brigade is fully equipped according to NATO standards and its engineer and medical components have been strengthened.'¹⁴⁹

Kazbrig is equipped with strong sapper and medical components and it has a larger share of English Speaking officers and soldiers than Kazbat. Some officers and soldiers are prepared by Kazakh Institute of Foreign Languages and some are trained at facilities in US and European members of NATO. During Press Briefing at NATO Headquarters, Nursultan Nazarbayev stated that 'the Kazbat takes part in joint military exercises, international exercises and NATO exercises, and the soldiers and officers are equipped and trained according NATO standards. And the Kazakhstan Battalion has grown up to the size of the brigade, so I think we will cooperate in this field with NATO so that the soldiers and officers of that brigade can participate as

¹⁴⁸ 'Kazbat Becomes Kazbrig as Kazakhstan Seeks Greater International Peacekeeping Responsibilities', *Kazakhstan News Bulletin*, Vol. 6, No. 44, p.1

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

fully fledged members of peacekeeping operations in the future and this is important for both Kazakhstan and the officers and soldiers of the brigade.

With regard to IPAP, Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer visited Kazakhstan in October 2004 and he emphasized the successful cooperation between Kazakhstan and NATO in the PfP Framework and proposed to upgrade the PfP Partnership to IPAP. A year later, NATO Parliamentary Assembly (PA) members visited Kazakhstan and they were informed by Kazakh authorities that Kazakhstan is ready to develop Individual Partnership Program (IPP). This delegation understood that Kazakh authorities expect, through closer cooperation with the Alliance developing IPAP, to gain experience, advice and assistance from NATO countries to enhance the capabilities of its armed forces and improve the military structure necessary to combat terrorism, religious extremism and drug trafficking, thus contributing to strengthening the control of its borders and improving its security.¹⁵⁰

The basic conceptual of approaches of Kazakhstan towards IPAP was presented by the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Askar Shakirov at the 'NATO + Kazakhstan' session held in Brussels on June 23, 2005. On September 22-23, in the session of the Politico-Military Steering Committee in the format of 'NATO + Kazakhstan' at the NATO Headquarters in Brussels, the parties discussed area for cooperation with the IPAP such as security sector reform, modernization of Kazakhstan's armed forces, terrorism, drug trafficking and border safety, science and environment, civil emergency planning, regional and international security cooperation.

Robert Simmons visited Kazakhstan on October 2005 and held meetings with the Kazakh authorities and in all discussions he praised Kazakhstan's important decision to participate in the IPAP. Finally, IPAP was studied and prepared for the final ratification by PMSC in the framework of the 'NATO + Kazakhstan' on January 2006 and it was ratified and enacted on 31 January, 2006. Having ratified the IPAP,

¹⁵⁰ General Rapporteur Vitalino Canas, 'NATO and Kazakhstan' 21 October, 2005, p.17, Available at www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?-Shortcut=678, Accessed on 12 February 2007

Kazakhstan was the first Central Asian country to assume the full status of a NATO Partner country. For NATO representatives, Kazakhstan has the best IPAP among Partner countries and, like Sweden and Finland, Kazakhstan has become strong partner of NATO. The Alliance representative stated that ‘Kazakhstan did not have enough defense budgets to ensure planning. We can help Kazakhstan with analysis and planning in the defense sphere.’

The IPAP provides for the development of the long-term planning process in Kazakhstan’s defense sector so that the country can take part in combat activities with NATO forces.’¹⁵¹ Most importantly, the IPAP agreed between Kazakhstan and NATO will be an instrument of strengthening cooperation between both sides in combating terrorism, exchange information on legislative initiatives, supporting policy of good neighborliness and cooperation with other international organizations.

Within the framework of the IPAP, NATO intends to provide assistance in expanding public control over the country’s armed forces, particularly through the parliament’s control over the defense sphere, to promote civil military reform in Kazakhstan. With regard to Kazakhstan’s political reform, the IPAP provides for cooperation in fighting corruption; promoting human rights issues; supporting democracy; ensuring the supremacy of law; developing scientific research and the number of other areas.¹⁵²

Having established Kazbat and proposed IPAP with the help provided by NATO, Kazakhstan is considered as the most active partner in Central Asia. When compared to other partners in the region, it seems it has made many efforts to cooperate with NATO considering its political and military conditions.

¹⁵¹ Roger N. Mcdermott, ‘Kazakhstan’s Partnership with NATO: Strengths, Limits and Prognosis’, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No.1, 2007, p. 14

¹⁵² Roger N. Mcdermott, ‘Kazakhstan’s Partnership with NATO: Strengths, Limits and Prognosis’, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2007, p. 15

4.2 NATO's PfP Program in Kyrgyzstan

'From regional security to global peace' is the formula proposed by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, Askar Akayev.¹⁵³ For him, this is the path along which the process of international security, mutual understanding and cooperation among nations should develop in the future. Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev listed three goals of his country's cooperation with NATO: 'ensuring regional security, national security, and national development.'¹⁵⁴ The Kyrgyz Republic sees cooperation with NATO not only as beneficial to security and stability in the region, but also as a buttress for its internal political and economic reforms.¹⁵⁵ For the Alliance, the importance of Kyrgyzstan to NATO comes from its geographic location having border with powerful and dynamic partners of NATO, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Kyrgyzstan was one the four Central Asian countries to sign PfP Partnership Framework in 1994 and introduced the Presentation Document which contains the military and non-military spheres of cooperation with NATO. Since then, it has actively participated in various activities, especially PfP peacekeeping exercises with regional countries Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. It participated in all Centrasbat exercises took place between 1997 and 2000. During his interview, Chingiz Aitmatov stated the importance and inevitability of these exercises for Kyrgyz military. According to him:¹⁵⁶

It has been a good experience for our military personnel to see what kind of cooperation could be developed between NATO and Partner countries. Our military would like to do more and is trying to reach the standards widely accepted among NATO countries. Unfortunately, we do not have all the resources needed to improve our military and acquire new technologies. However, we are trying to build a more professional army, moving away

¹⁵³ Ambassador Djoumakadyr Atabekov, 'The Kyrgyz Republic and NATO: A Formula for Cooperation', *NATO Review*, No. 6, Vol. 44, November 1996

¹⁵⁴ Vladimir Socor, 'NATO Leader Makes Historic Visit to Central Asia', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 1, No. 112, 25 October 2004, Available at http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2368742, Accessed on 15 February 2007

¹⁵⁵ Ambassador Djoumakadyr Atabekov, 'The Kyrgyz Republic and NATO: A Formula for Cooperation', *NATO Review*, No. 6, Vol. 44, November 1996

¹⁵⁶ Vicky Nielsen's Interview with Chingiz Aitmatov: Diplomatic Writer, *NATO Review*, Spring 2002, p.22

from one that relies totally on conscripts and this has been an important development for us. Participation in the PFP has helped give our forces a better and more realistic perception of NATO.

Within the framework of PFP Programs, there are about 100 various projects in process and some were finished already. Prior to 1999, except Centrasbat exercises, Kyrgyzstan enhanced its cooperation with the Alliance on civilian relief efforts in case natural disasters occur. This cooperation has been expanded in antiterrorism military exercises in the aftermath the incursions of extremist groups of 1999 and 2000 to Batken region. Since then, NATO member countries have been providing assistances in military and financial terms.

Turkey has provided military and financial assistance to the Kyrgyz military with the approximate value of 3, 5 million US \$ since 1999.¹⁵⁷ According to bilateral agreement on March 2002, Turkey stated its readiness to provide military and technical assistance, with the amount of 1, 1 million US \$. On May 2002, France agreed to provide military-technical assets and equipments as a humanitarian help. Also, the amount of 11 Million US \$ financial assistance provided by the USA in 2002, this amount was increased in 2003.

The relations with NATO have been expanded after the tragic events of September 11 in the United States of America. Kyrgyzstan has provided its territory for the presence of the international coalition for the support fight against terrorism. Kyrgyzstan has been providing its Manas airport and airspace to the USA and the Allied intervention in Afghanistan since 2001. The NATO member troops and planes were deployed to the Manas airport many of whom belong to the USA. Since December 2001, NATO members' troops and planes have been present in turn for the support of 'Operation Enduring Freedom' and UN ISAF such as Norway, Denmark, Netherlands, France, Spain, Italy, and also Australia, New Zealand and South Korea.

¹⁵⁷ Murat Laumulín, 'Sentrálnaia Aziya I Zapad: Novyie Geopoliticheskie Realii', *Kazahstan v Globalnyh Prossesah*, No. 2, 2004, p. 114

The same kind of support has been provided by Kyrgyz side since NATO took over the NATO-led ISAF in 2003 by granting NATO Allies the use of Manas airport facilities for logistic support and overflight rights. The agreement between Kyrgyzstan and Netherlands allows F-16 to operate from Manas airport, located very close to the capital city, Bishkek. For now, about 1200 NATO troops are present at the Manas airport and in the future it is planned to increase the number to 3000 troops and 40 fighter and transport jets.¹⁵⁸

After the Andijan events, after which Uzbekistan gave US a six-month of time to vacate its bases located in the territory of Uzbekistan and prohibited the use of Uzbek territory as a transit route to Afghanistan for NATO. According to Robert Simmons, NATO and the USA will continue to use military bases in Central Asia to support military campaign in Afghanistan and they will increase their use of the Ganci air base at Manas airport Kyrgyzstan, Bishkek.

During his visit to Kyrgyzstan on September 2005, Robert Simmons held discussions with several members of the newly installed cabinet following the presidential elections. He praised the Kyrgyz authorities' decision to allow Uzbek refugees to move on third countries and thanked the Kyrgyz authorities for their support to NATO's stabilization efforts in Afghanistan, by granting NATO Allies the use of Manas airport facilities for logistic support and over-flight rights. Besides discussions with the Kyrgyz authorities, he met with the governor of the southern Kyrgyz region of Osh and addressed a conference on Security in Central Asia at the Technical University in that city.¹⁵⁹

During NATO delegation visit of 8-15 December, 2006, NATO representatives lectured on terrorism control to the officers of the Kyrgyz Ministry of Defense within the framework of the PfP. Moreover, they shared their ideas about new operations

¹⁵⁸ D. Kasymov, 'NATO i Sentralnaia Aziya: V Ojidanii Peremen' in *Sotrudnichestvo NATO i Stran Sentralnoy Azii v Kontekste Regionalnoi Bezopasnosti v XXI veke: Realii i Perspektivy*, 2005, p.95

¹⁵⁹ 'NATO Representatives Holds Talks in Central Asia', *NATO Update*, 29 Septmeber-7 October 2007, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/09-september/e0929a.htm>, Accessed on 2 March 2007.

and methods to fight against international terrorism, including the experience in Afghanistan. Defense Minister Deputy Kubanychbek Orozbayev stated that Kyrgyzstan might introduce a peace keeping squadron under the aegis of NATO. For him, Kyrgyzstan submitted its application to participate in NATO's PfP Programs and there is a 99% possibility that his country will enter it and Kyrgyzstan will form peacekeeping squadron, which will fully consist of Kyrgyz military officers.¹⁶⁰

Although Kyrgyz Republic is active participating in many PfP programs, Kyrgyzstan joined PARP in 2007 as a result of five-year-long political and expert consultations. The PARP program will provide technical and analytical support from NATO countries to Kyrgyzstan. By joining PARP, Kyrgyzstan will get evaluations and recommendations from international experts in the spheres of defense and security, construction of defense institutions and strengthening operational combinability between Kyrgyz military forces and international peacekeeping forces.¹⁶¹

4.3 NATO's PfP Program in Uzbekistan

Geopolitical position, which is located at the heart of Central Asia and has a border with Afghanistan, and the vital role played in the region via political, economic and cultural terms make Uzbekistan as the most important partner in Central Asia for NATO. Therefore, the cooperation between NATO and Uzbekistan, in the framework of the PfP Programs, is strategically important for the Alliance. Most importantly, Islam Karimov's intention to establish a powerful state, which is

¹⁶⁰ Igor Gorbachev, 'Defense Ministry Official: Kyrgyzstan might Introduce Peacekeeping Squadron under NATO's aegis', *Bishkek News Agency '24.kg'*, 29 September-7 October 2007, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/09-september/e0929a.htm>, Accessed on 2 March 2007.

¹⁶¹ Daniyar Karimov, 'Kyrgyzstan Enhances its Activity in NATO's Partnership for Peace Program', *Bishkek News Agency '24.kg'*, 29 September-7 October 2007, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/09-september/e0929a.htm>, Accessed on 2 March 2007.

independent to pursue its foreign policy, coincided with the Alliance strategic concept.¹⁶²

Uzbekistan had actively cooperated with NATO till May 2005 and the Alliance had supported Karimov's administration. Even, in mid-March 2005, Robert Simmons visited Uzbekistan, where he praised the results of Tashkent's engagement in NATO-led PfP, and pledged NATO support for Uzbek efforts to develop robust counter-terrorism capabilities.¹⁶³ However, currently, Uzbekistan is PfP member only in name and it does not send its representatives to NATO gatherings. NATO's relationships with Uzbekistan were restricted to minimum level as a result of the Andijan events in May 2005.

The top priority for Uzbekistan joining PfP has always been the development of Special Forces. For that purpose, Uzbekistan had been working with NATO member countries within the Framework of the PfP Programs, which offered Uzbek military access to some NATO training facilities, defense training courses. Uzbek military officers were trained at the NATO's PfP Center in Ankara, Turkey, where they receive advice on developing counter-insurgency doctrine, crisis management procedures and modernization of military logistics and medical services.¹⁶⁴ Special Forces were provided by Turkey for training of Uzbek army and National Security Service [*Sluzhba Natsional'noi Bezopasnosti* (SNB)] security services. Also, direct grants were provided by Turkey to purchase weapons, equipment and transport vehicles.

The same kinds of assistances were provided by the other NATO member countries. Uzbek young staff officers were trained by British experts. Moreover, they are also known to have received training courses in Germany and Norway. The intention of

¹⁶² D. Kasymov, 'NATO i Sentralnaia Aziya: V Ojidanii Peremen' in *Sotrudnichestvo NATO i Stran Sentralnoy Azii v Kontekste Regionalnoi Bezopasnosti v XXI veke: Realii i Perspektivy*, 2005, p.95

¹⁶³ 'US and NATO Security aid to Uzbekistan comes under Scrutiny', *Eurasia Insight*, 2005, Available at http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav071305_pr.shtml, Accessed on 27 February 2007.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

NATO and Uzbekistan to open 'Partnership for Peace Center' under Uzbekistan Air Forces Academy with the support of NATO did not work as a result of the 2005 Andijan events.

Like Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan was active participating in all PfP programs. Uzbekistan joined NATO PfP program on July 13, 1994, on which PfP Framework Document was signed by the Uzbek Foreign Minister Saidmuhtar Saidkasimov. It signed the Security Agreement with NATO on 16 August 1995 and it agreed on the IPP on 26 June 1996. As Kazakhstan did, it signed PfP Status of Security Agreement (SOFA) Agreement and its additional protocols with the Alliance on 20 July 1996. It had been participating in joint exercises, even provided military troops for some of them. Uzbekistan has participated in PfP exercises 'Cooperative Nugget' (1995), 'Cooperative Osprey' (1996) and 'Balance Ultra' (1996).¹⁶⁵ Centrasbat training exercises were held in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in 1997 and Uzbekistan participated in Centrasbat peacekeeping exercises too. Uzbek military units have participated in NATO-led military exercises after September 11 too; these are emergency response exercise, Ferghana-2003, hosted by Uzbekistan itself; a large multilateral military exercise, Strong Resolve-2002, hosted by Poland.

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, Uzbekistan politically supported military campaign in Afghanistan and the NATO-led ISAF since 2003. During his speech at the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in Prague on November 22, 2002, Uzbek President Islam Karimov stated that:¹⁶⁶

The tragic events of 11 September 2001 and the monstrous terrorist acts, recurring in different parts of the world and claiming innocent civilian lives, bring an understanding of security's indivisibility; it is only with concerted efforts that we can confront and neutralize this insidious deadly menace. Today international terrorism is blending with drug trafficking that feeds the former and takes the shape of a fully-fledged narco-aggression. The ever growing drug production and the largest transit rout in Afghanistan are particularly alarming.

¹⁶⁵ Farkhad Tolipov and Roger N. Mcdermott, 'Uzbekistan and the US': Partners Against Terrorism', *The Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 2, No. 4, Summer 2003, p.10

¹⁶⁶ Speech by Islam Karimov, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, at the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, *NATO Speeches*, 22 November 2002, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s021122a.htm>, Accessed on 22 February 2007

Uzbekistan accords great significance to stepping up interaction in security issues between NATO member states and the countries of Central Asia.

Following the September 11, Karshi-Khanabad (K-2) airport was granted to the USA and NATO forces for the military campaign in Afghanistan. The Uzbeks granted US forces base rights at K-2 airport as a transit point into Afghanistan and the eventual allied intervention in the country destroyed much of the IMU's infrastructure and appears to have killed its military leader, Juma Namangani.¹⁶⁷

The same kind of support had been provided by Uzbekistan to NATO-led ISAF operations in Afghanistan since 2003. Vladimir Norov, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, emphasized the importance of the NATO-led ISAF at the EAPC Foreign Minister' Meeting in 2003 and stated that NATO's leading role in ISAF promotes the security of Central Asian countries and allows them to accelerate efforts aimed at deepening democratic processes in the region.¹⁶⁸ According to the agreement between Germany and Uzbekistan, military airfield in Termez located near the border of Afghanistan provides an air bridge to Kabul and northern parts of Afghanistan.

After the Uzbek government's crackdown in Andijan in May 2005, EAPC issued a statement condemning "the reported use of excessive and disproportionate force by the Uzbek security forces" and calling for an independent international inquiry.¹⁶⁹ However, Uzbekistan refused international inquiry and asked the USA to close its airbase at Karshi-Khanabad and restricted the use of Uzbek territory as a transit country for the NATO forces for operations in Afghanistan. Naturally, this worsened the relations between NATO member countries and Uzbekistan that had been

¹⁶⁷ Acting Rapporteur Rafael Estrella, 'Central Asian Security: The Role of NATO', 14 September 2006, p. 7, Available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?SHORTCUT=990>, Accessed on 17 April 2007

¹⁶⁸ Speech by Vladimir Norov, Foreign Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, *NATO Speeches*, 5 December 2003, Available at <http://www.hq.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/s030604b.htm>, Accessed on 22 March 2007

¹⁶⁹ Richard Weitz, 'Renewing Central Asian Partnerships', *NATO Review*, Autumn 2006, p.

enhanced since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Thus, NATO's relationship with Uzbekistan is more or less 'on hold' policy after the tragic Andijan events in May 2005. For now, Uzbekistan pursue an empty seat policy at most of the NATO meetings, simply Uzbek government does not send its representatives to NATO gatherings. Even, Uzbek government refused the appointment of NATO liaison officer. The Andijan events was a some kind of a tool that tested the relations between NATO and Uzbekistan which were established under NATO principles in Post-Soviet Republics; support and promotion of democracy.¹⁷⁰

4.4 NATO's PfP Program in Tajikistan

Because of the internal unstable situation, civil war between 1992 and 1997 and the instability after coalition government came to the power, Tajikistan was the last country to join PfP. PfP Framework Document was signed on 20 February 2002 by the Ambassador of Tajikistan, Mr. Sharif Rahimov, during a meeting at NATO's Headquarters with the North Atlantic Council. Tajik President, Emomali Rakhmanov, visited NATO on 25 March and he discussed specific proposals and the key issues affecting security in Central Asia with NATO Secretary General, General Lord Robertson. He emphasized the drug trafficking as a major threat and an area in which Tajikistan was need of international organizations' support such as NATO.

Minister of Defense of Tajikistan, Sherali Khairullaev at the EAPC Defense Ministers meeting on 7 June 2002, indicated the key areas that Tajikistan wanted to cooperate with NATO. For him, Goals of Civil Emergency Planning in the frame of EAPC and PfP are prohibition of mines using, their destruction and cooperation aimed on natural disasters would be the basis for the development of cooperation with NATO. Minister of Defense considers the following trends as an appropriate to develop cooperation with members of the EAPC.¹⁷¹ These trends are participation in

¹⁷⁰ D. Kasymov, 'NATO i Sentralnaia Aziya: V Ojidanii Peremen' in *Sotrudnichestvo NATO i Stran Sentralnoy Azii v Kontekste Regionalnoi Bezopasnosti v XXI veke: Realii i Perspektivy*, 2005, p.97

¹⁷¹ Speech by Col. Gen. Sherali Khairullaev, Minister of National Defense of Tajikistan at the EAPC Defense Minister Meeting, *NATO Speeches*, 7 June 2002, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020607q.htm>, Accessed on 13 February 2007.

fight against international terrorism; elaboration of joint program aimed on mines cleaning; peacekeeping issues; environmental protection; training programs.

Tajikistan participates in IPP Programs in a very limited way simply because it does not have a larger pool of officers. Therefore, Tajikistan has developed its relations with the Alliance within the Framework of PfP in security issues. Joining of Tajikistan to the Partnership for Peace in 2002 was good for NATO and Tajikistan itself due to unstable situation in neighboring Afghanistan. The military campaign and peacekeeping forces would help enhance relations between Tajikistan and Afghanistan and destroy ongoing threats such as religious extremism and drug, human and the arms trafficking.

In the aftermath of the 9/11, signing bilateral agreements, Tajikistan allowed US and the French forces to use its airspace and airfields for the campaign in Afghanistan. Although it was the last Central Asian country to join PfP, it was the first country to sign ISAF agreement with NATO. On 20 October 2004, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer signed together with Tajik foreign Minister Talbak Nazarov in Dushanbe a host nation support and transit agreement with Tajikistan in support of NATO's ISAF mission in Afghanistan

France is operating military base in Tajikistan although it has been reduced after the Parliamentary elections in Afghanistan. For now, 200 French troops and several aircraft are used for NATO-led operations in Afghanistan. According to Tajikistan's Foreign Ministry, NATO's contingent will stay in the ex-Soviet Central Asian country until the stability is restored in neighboring Afghanistan. First Deputy Foreign Minister Saimumin Yatimov said; 'We have no treaty on the NATO contingent's presence at the airport of Dushanbe, and the length of their deployment will depend on the stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan. We are part of the Anti-Terrorism Coalition, and stability in Afghanistan is in our country's best interest.'¹⁷²

¹⁷² 'Tajikistan Says NATO to Stay until Afghanistan is Stable', *RIA Novosti*, 19 January 2007, Available at <http://en.rian.ru/world/20070119/59357859-print.html>, Accessed on 25 March 2007

4.5 NATO's PfP Program in Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan was one of the four Central Asian countries joining PfP in 1994 and on 10 May, 1994 the PfP Framework Document was signed by Boris Shikmuradov, Vice Prime Minister of Turkmenistan. Although its 'permanent neutrality' recognized by the United Nations in 1995, Turkmenistan has been participating in PfP activities, not related to military interoperability. He identified the NATO's role in Central Asia as following; not to invade the region, but to prevent conflicts in the region; and to enhance cooperation between the Alliance and his country, considering the situation of Turkmenistan's status of permanent neutrality.¹⁷³ During Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer's visit to Turkmenistan in 2004, he sought Turkmenistan's support for next NATO-led ISAF operations which aimed extend its mandate to the west of the Afghanistan around Herat province located near Turkmen border. President Saparmurat Niyazov agreed to negotiations toward a military agreement for NATO forces for Afghanistan, albeit Turkmenistan's status of permanent neutrality. For Saparmurat Niyazov:¹⁷⁴

Our region is a very complicated one, with such countries as Afghanistan and Iran. Conflicts may beak out, and NATO's role is to prevent them. We are not and have never been worried by NATO's enlargement. Turkmenistan will remain neutral in world affairs but will help NATO-led force, trying to restore peace in Afghanistan.

Similarly, at the EAPC meeting in Foreign Ministers' session with invitees on 2 December 2003, Turkmen Minister of Defense Colonel-General A. Mammatgeldiyev said Turkmenistan pays great attention to the improvement of social position in Afghanistan and stressed that this factor positively influence the stabilization of situation in this region. Right after the 9/11 events, Turkmenistan has provided its territory and airspace for transportation of humanitarian aid, about 60% of the overall amount of humanitarian transportation is carried out across the territory of

¹⁷³ D. Kasymov, 'NATO i Sentralnaia Aziya: V Ojidanii Peremen' in *Sotrudnichestvo NATO i Stran Sentralnoy Azii v Kontekste Regionalnoi Bezopasnosti v XXI veke: Realii i Perspektivy*, 2005, p.99

¹⁷⁴ Vladimir Socor, 'NATO Leader Makes Historic Visit to Central Asia', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 1, No. 112, 25 October 2004, Available at http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2368742, Accessed on 15 February 2007

Turkmenistan.¹⁷⁵ Also, United States has been benefiting from the transit passage since late 2001. For scholars, most importantly, geographic location and the rich resources of energy make Turkmenistan as the most attractive actor after the stabilization efforts in Afghanistan in the establishment of the geopolitical zone from Caspian Sea to the Atlantic Ocean.

Turkmenistan participates only in the Individual Partnership Program (IPP) processes; however, it generally does not take part in military interoperability exercises. Due to its 'permanent neutrality recognized by the United Nations, Turkmenistan does not offer any asset or infrastructure within the framework of PfP, as did Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The current regime in the country makes it unlikely that it will enhance relationship with NATO in the framework of PfP. The fundamental aim of NATO PfP Program's defense reform is the separation of military and civilian spheres and Turkmen leadership has stated its support for this idea in the past, however, because Turkmen government uses a large conscripted military as a domestic surveillance tool that it is unlikely to willingly dismantle anytime soon.¹⁷⁶

During his visit to Turkmenistan on 18 January, 2001, Secretary General Lord Robertson met Turkmen President Saparmurat Niyazov and Defense Minister Batyr Sardjaev, and lectured at the Turkmen National University and proposed increased cooperation between Turkmenistan and NATO, specifically in the areas of coping with the aftermath of natural disasters and scientific cooperation.¹⁷⁷ For Robertson, such cooperation within the Framework of the NATO's PfP Program would not

¹⁷⁵ 'Speech by Colonel-General A. Mammatgeldiyev Minister of Defense of Turkmenistan at the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council meeting in Foreign Minister's session with invitees', *NATO Speech*, 2 December 2003, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/s031202i.htm>, Accessed on 28 March 2007.

¹⁷⁶ Acting Rapporteur Rafael Estrella, 'Central Asian Security: The Role of NATO', 14 September 2006, p. 7, Available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?SHORTCUT=990>, Accessed on 17 April 2007

¹⁷⁷ 'NATO Secretary General Visits Turkmenistan', *Turkmenistan Daily Digest*, 19 January 2001, 14 September 2006, Available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?SHORTCUT=990>, Accessed on 17 April 2007

threaten Turkmenistan's neutral status. A year later, NATO Civil Emergency Planning department, Supreme Headquarters of Europe, Civil-military cooperation department and the Ministry of Defense of Turkmenistan conducted the Regional Civil Emergency Planning and civil-military cooperation seminar in Ashgabat. More than 50 participants from the Ministry of Defense of Turkmenistan, Civil Emergency institutions, different civil ministries and also representatives from some European countries and US took part in this seminar.

In 2004 Turkmenistan hosted NATO's Virtual Silk Route project Council session in Ashgabat, organized by the Supreme Science-Technical Council under Turkmen President. NATO representatives, leading scientists from Europe, Asia and America, and also officials from the Turkmen Foreign Ministry and the Ministry for Culture and Information participated in session in which eight countries from Central Asia and the Caucasus were the participating in the project marking another stage of expanding high speed access to the Internet launched a year ago.¹⁷⁸

Turkmenistan cooperates with another NATO Security through Science Program so called Science for Peace (SfP) project on the 'Study of Radioactive Waste Disposal Sites in Turkmenistan.' Through Science for Peace (SfP) NATO collaborates with Turkmenistan in the safe handling of radioactive waste, a by-product iodine and bromine production facilities near by the Caspian Sea.¹⁷⁹ This project also includes the implementation of a radiochemical laboratory in Ashgabat, the installation and operation of equipment for protection and the training of Turkmen personnel.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter shows that the level of participation in PfP Programs in Central Asia varies from country to country. This is because how they see the advantages of PfP programs for their national strategy and regional security. This chapter has examined

¹⁷⁸ 'NATO's Virtual Silk Route Project Council Meets in Turkmenistan', *Pravda.ru*, 14 May 2005, Available at http://newsfromrussia.com/world?2004/05/14/53910_.html, Accessed on 28 March 2007

¹⁷⁹ 'Security through Science Projects in Turkmenistan', *News and Events*, 18 October 2006, Available at <http://www.nato.int/science/news/2006/n060409a.htm>, Accessed on 29 March 2007

the NATO's PfP Program in individual Central Asian states since they joined PfP. Throughout the chapter, it is obvious that the cooperation between NATO and Central Asian states has been expanded as a result of the September 11 events. The fifth chapter will discuss NATO's PfP program and increasing NATO involvement in regional security since 2001.

CHAPTER 5

NATO'S PfP PROGRAMS AND NATO'S GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PRIORITIES IN CENTRAL ASIA SINCE 2001

The terrorist attacks to the United States of America on 11 September 2001 have led NATO Allies to focus on Central Asia due to its increasing strategic importance. This chapter will examine to what extent NATO's PfP programs contribute to NATO's global and regional security priorities in Central Asia since 2001. To this purpose, the chapter evaluates the cooperation between the Alliance and Central Asian states concerning the fight against international terrorism as well as NATO's ISAF operation. The chapter will also examine the implications of the NATO Istanbul Summit in 2004 and the Andijan events in 2005 for regional security in Central Asia.

5.1 September 11 and the Fight against Terrorism in Central Asia

The terrorist attacks to the United States of America in 2001 have greatly changed the security environment in the world. These tragic events caused NATO to invoke Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty for the first time in the history of the Alliance. According to the Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty:

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one and more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of the individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations...¹⁸⁰

Thus, the tragic events resulted with the increased interest and involvement in Central Asian security affairs. With the framework of the agreements between

¹⁸⁰ The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C., 4 April 1949, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/treaty.htm>, Accessed on 25 May 2007

individual republics, NATO member countries' forces have been deployed at Manas airport in Kyrgyzstan, at the Karshi-Khanabad and Kokaidy airbases in Uzbekistan, and Dushanbe and Kulyab airports in Tajikistan. As a result, according to the statistics, about 9000 for 'Operation Enduring Freedom' operations and 4000 troops deployed within the framework of ISAF operations in Afghanistan.¹⁸¹ Thus, the Alliance has emerged as an institutional actor in Central Asian security affairs.

At the North Atlantic Council Meeting on 21 November 2002 in Prague, the Heads of State and Government decided to upgrade their cooperation with the EAPC/PfP countries. They have introduced new practical mechanisms, such as Individual Partnership Action Plans, which will ensure a comprehensive, tailored and differentiated approach to the partnership, and which allow for support to the reform efforts of Partners.¹⁸² Moreover, they encouraged Partners, including strategically important Central Asian countries, to take the advantage of these mechanisms. Significantly, they welcomed Partners to do their all efforts to combat terrorism through the Partnership Action Plan against terrorism. Through the Partnership Action Plan, EAPC States will identify, organize, and systematize ongoing and new EAPC/PfP activities, which are of particular relevance to the international fight against terrorism.¹⁸³ Moreover, the EAPC states would consider the establishment of PfP Trust Funds to assist individual member states in specific efforts against terrorism, which may be particularly relevant to Partners from Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Balkans.

During his visit to Kazakhstan, Lord Robertson stated the importance of Central Asia in a changed security environment for the fight against international terrorism, which

¹⁸¹ Rustam Burnashev, 'Dinamika Prisutsvii NATO v Sentralnoi Azii: Geneologicheski Analiz' in *NATO I Sentralnaia Aziya: Regionalnaia i Nasionalnaia Bezopasnost i Strategicheskoe Partnerstvo*, 2005, p.159

¹⁸² Prague Summit Declaration, 21 November 2002, Prague, *NATO Press Releases*, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2002/p02-127e.htm>, Accessed at 26 January 2007

¹⁸³ According to the Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism, Prague, 22 November 2002; the principal objectives of Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism and the specific action items under this Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism are given in the same document, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b021122e.htm>, Accessed on 4 December 2006

is the most dangerous threat to the Europe and the United States. We face common threat and we have to fight together. Similarly, during his visit to Kyrgyzstan, he was asked why NATO is need of Kyrgyzstan and he answered that ‘partnership with Kyrgyzstan is very important to destroy threat of international terrorism and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. He added that the Alliance is doing all its efforts for the promotion of security and we want Central Asian Partners to do what is left for them.’

With regard to the Central Asian states, they also appeared to be ready to cooperate with the Alliance in creating stable environment in the wider region, in Central Asia and Afghanistan. For their part, past several terrorist incursions in the region and the concern of the spillover effects of the unstable situation in Afghanistan to the region were the main reasons why regional states actively supported fight against Terrorism and military campaign in Afghanistan.

Thus, in the immediate aftermath of 11 September, the countries of the Central Asia joined fellow members of the EAPC in unconditionally condemning the attacks and pledging to undertake all efforts to combat the scourge of terrorism.¹⁸⁴ In the framework of the ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’, they have been supporting the military campaign in Afghanistan and offering various degrees of support and territorial access. Uzbekistan, which has the largest Muslim population in Central Asia, along with the most extremist groups, went further by offering the US and its allies the ability to station ground forces and equipment at one of the its air bases.¹⁸⁵

Kyrgyzstan also supported the campaign providing Manas airport located near Bishkek for the US and the Coalition. Approximately, 2000 soldiers were located at the base, although the agreement allowed for as many as 5000 soldiers. In mid-March 2002, the Kyrgyz Parliament followed its previous decision with approval of a

¹⁸⁴ Osman Yavuzalp, ‘On the Front Line’, *NATO Review*, Winter 2001/20002, p.24

¹⁸⁵ Jennifer, D. P. Moroney. ‘Western Approaches to Security Cooperation with Central Asian States: Advancing the Euro-Atlantic Security Order in Eurasia’ in *Security Dynamics in the Former Soviet Bloc*, eds. Graema P.Herd and Jennifer D.P Moroney, London: Routledge Curzon, 2003, p.170

one-year deployment at Manas of troops from Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, Spain and Turkey.¹⁸⁶ The French troops joined the operations in Afghanistan while technical and logistical support to the anti-terrorist campaign was provided by the other NATO countries located at the base. For US Air Staff Head General Michael Mousley, NATO's air base in 'Manas' is not permanent just like other bases in Central Asia. He added that NATO airbase will be shut down after military operation in Afghanistan and Iraq are over.

Tajikistan signed bilateral agreements with the US and France to allow its airspaces and airfields. After Tajikistan joined PfP in February 2002, the cooperation with NATO countries and the US has been enhanced. Although Western military presence in Tajikistan was small (150 US troops at the most, and in September 2002; and 500 French at the most, and 150 in September 2002), the strategic situation in the country shifted markedly.¹⁸⁷ As it was stated in the previous chapter, despite its status of permanent neutrality, Turkmenistan supported the military campaign in Afghanistan and it has been providing transit passage for US and the allied humanitarian relief cargos to Afghanistan since late 2001.

By 2002, Kazakhstan was supplying humanitarian aid to Afghanistan and politically supporting 'Operation Enduring Freedom' by granting overflight rights to coalition aircrafts and providing three fields for emergency landings.¹⁸⁸ Although Kazbat's soldiers were not sent to Afghanistan due to the lack of operational experience and with the experience of Soviet-Afghan war fresh in mind, but the Kazakh government stated its interest in becoming active partner in the global war on terrorism. Moreover, in 2003, Kazakhstan was the first former Soviet republics to deploy its peacekeeping unit in Iraq in the framework of PfP in support of ongoing stabilization and humanitarian operations. 27 members of Kazbat were deployed and tasked with

¹⁸⁶ Jonson, Lena. *Vladimir Putin and Central Asia: The Shapng of Russian foreign Policy*, London: I. B. Tauris and Co Ltd, 2004, p. 89

¹⁸⁷ *Asia Plus*, 24 September 2002, cited in Lena Jonson, *Vladimir Putin and Central Asia: The Shapng of Russian foreign Policy*, London: I. B. Tauris and Co Ltd, 2004, p.91

¹⁸⁸ General Rapporteur Vitalino Canas, 'NATO and Kazakhstan', 21 October 2005, p.17, Available at www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?-Shortcut=678, Accessed on 12 February 2007

humanitarian duties including mine clearance and water purification, as part of the international division under Polish command.¹⁸⁹

5.2 NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan

The UN mandated ISAF's mission in Afghanistan, which was created on December 2001 Bonn Conference after the ouster of the repressive Taliban regime and has been operating since 2003, is to assist the Afghan authorities in effort to bring peace and stability to the country and to prevent it from being used again as a base for terrorists. Based on the December 2001 Bonn Conference, as reflected in UN Security Council Resolution 1386, the Alliance will remain in Afghanistan with ISAF for as long as it takes to achieve these objectives to help Afghanistan emerge from nearly four decades of authoritarian rule, foreign occupation and civil war.

Within this framework, NATO forces were deployed in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and other transit agreements were concluded with Central Asian Partners for the support of the ISAF and 'Operation Enduring Freedom' military operations in Afghanistan. Having been ISAF operations were continued under the aegis of UN for two years, NATO took the charge of ISAF in 2003. The ISAF came under NATO command –the first and ever – NATO military operation outside of Europe and gradually expanded its operations from Kabul to most of Afghanistan's 34 provinces and currently about 32000 U.S and Allied forces are engaged in security assistance and counterinsurgency under NATO command, while another 8000 coalition troops are involved in counterterrorist operations.¹⁹⁰ Alongside with its Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and providing assistance to Afghan National Army, drug smuggling was in the NATO's agenda, by which regional states have been suffering for many years.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Barnett Rubin, 'Saving Afghanistan', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 1, January/February 2007

After NATO has taken over the ISAF in 2003, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer stated in several speeches the importance of partner countries to battle with new threats like terrorism. According to him, 'A key element of NATO's reorientation to address new threat is to make better use of the partnership relations that we have developed over the past decade. The new challenges to our security know no borders. Meeting these challenges, and defeating them, requires the closest possible international cooperation.' Similarly, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, during his speech on November 11, 2004 he stated that 'We need Central Asian nations to play an important role in supporting the ISAF operation because we need the lines of communication – to say in military terms – and transit agreements with the Central Asians, to see that what can adequately run the ISAF operation in Afghanistan.' According to Richard Weitz, by taking charge of ISAF, NATO has become engaged in a long term project to promote security and stability in Central Asia.¹⁹¹

The fact that Central Asian partner countries play crucial role for Afghanistan mission is evident in the participation of these countries in ISAF led by NATO. In response to NATO's enhanced role in Central Asia, the Alliance has been supported by Central Asian states politically as well as practically. Partners in Central Asia have been playing vital role in ensuring the logistic supply of ISAF forces as equipment must cross several Partner countries before arriving in Afghanistan and relationships developed through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) have laid the basis for Allies to draw up bilateral agreements for the transit of material across these states and basing of forces and supplies on their territory.¹⁹²

The agreement between Germany and Uzbekistan provides the use of the military airfield in Termez, located near the border Afghanistan, and helps ensure an air bridge to Kabul and northern parts of Afghanistan, where agreement between Netherlands and Kyrgyz Republic allows Dutch F-16 fighter aircraft to operate from the Manas airport in Bishkek. Similarly, the agreement between France and

¹⁹¹ Richard Weitz, 'Renewing Central Asian Partnerships', *NATO Review*, Autumn 2006

¹⁹² 'Security through Partnership', *NATO Review*, 2005, p.21

Tajikistan allows France logistic hub in Dushanbe. For NATO, this type of assistance being provided by Partners to ISAF is one of the reasons why Partnership is so important for the Alliance.

5.3 Central Asia as a ‘Special Focus’ for NATO Istanbul Summit

The NATO-Central Asian cooperation gained a new dynamic after the NATO Istanbul Summit in 2004; a decision taken to put ‘special focus’ on Central Asian countries. To enhance the Euro-Atlantic Partnership, the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the North Atlantic Council at the 2004 NATO Istanbul Summit, they affirmed the Central Asia’s increased importance in a changing international environment and put a ‘special focus’ on engaging with their partners in the strategically important region of Central Asia. After the accession of seven former partners to NATO, Alliance refocused on Central Asia to carry on its long term strategy to enhance stability across the Euro-Atlantic area by encouraging and supporting reform in Central Asian states. Significantly, at this Summit in Istanbul, international terrorism, extremism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction were declared the three major threats to international security. To fight such threats effectively, they clearly stated that the strengthening of the alliance’s cooperation with the Central Asian states was crucial. ¹⁹³ Moreover, at the NATO Istanbul Summit, they welcomed the decision by Uzbekistan to develop Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO constituting a significant step in that country’s efforts to develop closer Partnership relations with the Alliance. ¹⁹⁴

NATO has assigned a special representative and a liaison officer for Central Asia. On 15 September 2004, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Sheffer announced the appointment of Robert F. Simmons as his special representative for Central Asia and for Caucasus. In his new position, Mr. Simmons will be responsible for

¹⁹³ Roger N. Mcdermott, ‘Kazakhstan Lays Legal Basis for Deeper Cooperation with NATO’, *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, 2 November 2005, p.10

¹⁹⁴ Istanbul Summit Communiqué, 28 June 2004, *Press Release*, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p04-096e.htm>, Accessed on 26 January 2007

establishing high level working contacts with regional leaders in order to support NATO's objectives and he will also offer advice to Partners on the appropriate Partnership instruments that might use to enhance cooperation with NATO.

Since he was appointed, he has made some regular visits to Central Asia to explain NATO programs in the region, the ways how can they best use them and the Alliance's contribution to regional security. In March 9-15, 2005, he visited Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan for the first time to the region since he was introduced by Jaap de Hoop Scheffer to the leaders of the regional countries of Central Asia during a visit of October 2004. During his visit, in both countries he met with the Kazakh and Uzbek authorities, parliamentarians and students. In all discussions, they recognized that the Alliance and the countries of Central Asia face the common threats such as terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, failed states and illicit drug trafficking and that NATO can assist the countries of the region to develop the capabilities to deal with these threats.¹⁹⁵ At the meetings, he also informed authorities on Alliance's decision to expand NATO-led ISAF to the west of the country with new Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and to support upcoming parliamentary elections. He praised their decision to develop IPAP, in which both countries would outline their specific individual goals for their relations with the Alliance in areas such defense reform, and defense institution building and interoperability. From 29 September to 7 October of the same year, he traveled to Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan and discussed with high-level government officials how to improve cooperation with NATO in the framework of the PfP. During his both visits, he thanked the local authorities for their support NATO's engagement in Afghanistan.

The liaison officer would play a crucial role in the development of the relations, implementation of NATO's cooperation and assistance programs in the region, and it was decided to station liaison officer at a regional headquarters in Almaty,

¹⁹⁵ Special Representative for Caucasus and Central Asia Visits Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, *NATO Update*, 9-15 March 2005, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/03-march/e0309a.htm>, Accessed on 24 April 2007

Kazakhstan. The liaison officers enable the Alliance to interact more closely with Partner government ministries and other agencies in order to explore NATO's opportunities for closer cooperation with other organizations in contributing to regional peace and stability.¹⁹⁶ Then, in 2005, NATO has also announced that it has appointed Tugay Tuncer as its special representative on communication and cooperation with Central Asian countries and he will be based between Astana and Almaty, liaising with the Kazakhstani and other regional governments.

Following the 2004 NATO Istanbul Summit, the Alliance would give priority to in Central Asian countries implementing the existing and new cooperation programs, in particular Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP), Partnership Action Plan on Defense Institution Building (PAP-DIB), Planning and Review Process (PARP) and Partnership Action Plan on Terrorism (PAP-T). NATO also would pay special attention to the individual needs of the those Central Asian Partners who have demonstrated the willingness and commitment to participate in these programs, would provide enhanced training and education, and would strive to help them manage the consequences of defense reform, including through the PfP trust fund mechanism.¹⁹⁷ PAP-DIB would offer Allies and Central Asian and other Partners a common political and conceptual platform for bilateral and multilateral cooperation in developing efficient and democratically responsible defense institutions.

The importance of Afghanistan was also stated at the NATO Istanbul Summit. As it is stated in Communiqué, contributing to peace and stability in Afghanistan is NATO's key priority. NATO's aim is to assist to establish secure and stable Afghanistan, with a broad based, gender sensitive, multi-ethnic and fully representative government, integrated into the international community and

¹⁹⁶ Remarks by General Henault, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee to the Silk Road Seminar in Turkey, 17 July 2006, *NATO/IMS Opinions*, Available at <http://www.nato.int/ims/opinions/2005/s050628e.htm>, Accessed on 4 December 2006

¹⁹⁷ The Euro-Atlantic Partnership – Refocusing and Renewal, Istanbul, June, 23, 2004, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b040623e.htm>, Accessed on 26 January 2007

cooperating with its neighbors.¹⁹⁸ According to the Communiqué, the establishment and sustainment of peace in Afghanistan is essential to the Afghan people and to the Alliance's shared struggle against terrorism.

It was also stated that secure and stable Central Asia is on NATO's agenda too. NATO aims to promote security and stability in Central Asia bringing security and stability in neighbor Afghanistan which is considered as the main country feeding transnational threats. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer in his speech on November 11, 2004 warned that without deeper involvement by the international community in the fight against drug production and drug trafficking in Afghanistan, NATO's ability to ensure the country's stability will be limited and he underlined the strategic role of the Central Asian Partners to play in the fight against terrorism and he envisions closer cooperation with these states.¹⁹⁹

Actually, Central Asian states were the first to draw the world's attention to the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan, and the potential risk to international security and as early as 8 September 2000 – a year before the attacks on the United States – Uzbek President Islam Karimov warned the General Assembly that:²⁰⁰

Afghanistan has turned into a training ground and a hotbed of international terrorism and the continuing war in Afghanistan stands as a threat to the security of not only the states of the Central Asian region, but to the whole world.

In this sense, the Heads of the State and Government have decided to expand NATO-led ISAF in Afghanistan, which has already been supported by Central Asian partners since its functioning in 2003, through several more Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and Alliance's support for the upcoming elections. The Alliance would provide appropriate support within ISAF's mandate to the

¹⁹⁸ Istanbul Summit Communiqué, June 28, 2004, *NATO Press Release*, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p04-096e.htm>, Accessed on 26 January 2007

¹⁹⁹ Nikola Krastev, 'NATO Chief Affirms Expansion of Security Force in Western Afghanistan', *Eurasia Insight*, 2004, *NATO Press Release*, 28 June 2004, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p04-096e.htm>, Accessed on 26 January 2007

²⁰⁰ Osman Yavuzalp, 'On the Front Line', *NATO Review*, Winter 2001/20002, p.24

Afghan authorities in taking resolute action against the production and trafficking of narcotics.²⁰¹ Since its functioning, the ISAF has been assisting in disarming the militias and securing weapons. At the Summit, the Heads of State and Government stated their preparedness to help the Afghan government to build a better future together with 'Operation Enduring Freedom', the UN Mission to Afghanistan and other international organizations and called on Afghanistan's neighbors to contribute to this effort.

Following the NATO Istanbul Summit, NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer visited five Central Asian states. The visit' main goals were threefold: demonstrating NATO's understanding of Central Asia's importance to Euro-Atlantic security, encouraging the region's countries to intensify bilateral cooperation with the Alliance in the Partnership Framework, and obtaining transit passage rights for NATO forces to Afghanistan via Central Asian countries.²⁰² Moreover, the visit, which was accompanied by Robert Simmons, was aiming to review the implementation of NATO's PFP, PARP and IPAP Programs with Central Asian countries.

5.4 The Andijan Events and NATO

The conflict between protestors and the Uzbek government in Andijan on May 13, 2005 caused many deaths although the number of victims is still uncertain. From the Uzbek perspective, when armed men collected in Andijan, a city in the densely populated Ferghana valley, the Uzbek government declared it was a terrorist outbreak and responded with force.²⁰³ Western governments claimed Uzbek

²⁰¹ Istanbul Summit Communiqué, June 28, 2004, *NATO Press Release*, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p04-096e.htm>, Accessed on 26 January 2007

²⁰² Vladimir Socor, 'NATO Leader Makes Historic Visit to Central Asia', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 1, No. 112, 25 October 2004, Available at http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2368742, Accessed on 15 February 2007

²⁰³ Gregory Gleason, 'The Uzbek Expulsion of US and Realignment in Central Asia', *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 53, No. 2, March-April 2006, p.50

government's response as a disproportionate use of force and violent event. Non-governmental organizations and Western governments called for an independent inquiry, but the Uzbek government conducted its own negotiations and refused outside help, making an exception only for a Russian inquiry.²⁰⁴

During the NATO Parliamentary Assembly meeting in Ljubljana called for an international investigation into the violent events in Andijan and urged the Uzbek government to assist international officials carrying it out. According to the declaration on Uzbekistan adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly, in the event that the Uzbek government refuses an international inquiry, the Assembly recommends that: the participation of Uzbekistan in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) of NATO and the Partnership for Peace (PfP) member states should be reconsidered; all NATO nations reconsider and eventually suspend any support to the Uzbek armed force.²⁰⁵

However, Uzbek government responded to NATO's request by requiring eviction of US forces at the K-2 base and introducing restrictions on the use of its territory and airspace agreed between Uzbekistan and the Allies. The official statement made by during the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit in Astana, 2005, at which the Russia, China and most Central Asian countries called on the United States and its Allies to set up a timetable for a military withdrawal from the region. By Mid June 2005, Islam Karimov wanted US to close its bases located in the territory of Uzbekistan and prohibited the use of Uzbek territory as a transit route to Afghanistan for NATO forces from January 1, 2006.²⁰⁶

Naturally, this led the Alliance to difficulties in military campaign and fight against terrorism in Afghanistan. Because these bases played vital role for operations in

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ 31 May 2005 – Declaration on Uzbekistan adopted by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Ljubljana, Slovenia, May 31, 2005, Available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?SHORTCUT=706>, Accessed on 6 June 2007

²⁰⁶ D. Kasymov, 'NATO i Sentralnaia Aziya: V Ojidanii Peremen' in *Sotrudnichestvo NATO i Stran Sentralnoy Azii v Kontekste Regionalnoi Bezopasnosti v XXI veke: Realii i Perspektivy*, 2005, p.97

neighboring Afghanistan, NATO is need of other bases located in Turkey, Diego Garcia and the Manas airport in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Although US base K-2 in Uzbekistan was closed, the United States eventually secured continued permission to use the military facilities and airspace in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan to support operations in Afghanistan.

The Andijan events in 2005 and its consequences has caused NATO-Uzbek split and has made NATO to reconsider its presence within the framework of the PfP in Central Asia. The Uzbek government's MAY 2005 crackdown in Andijan revealed the fragility of the Alliance's relations with the country's of the region and NATO needs a new initiative to enhance its position in Central Asia.²⁰⁷ It became evident to what extent NATO relations with Central Asian Partners have been developed in the context of the NATO's PfP fundamental principles; support and promotion of democracy.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has examined NATO's cooperation with Central Asian states in the aftermath of the September 11. Throughout this chapter, it was shown that both NATO and Central Asian states have similar interests in the fight against terrorism and the military campaign in Afghanistan. This explains the active cooperation between the Alliance and the Central Asian states in the aftermath of the September 11. During NATO Istanbul Summit in 2004, the Alliance affirmed the Central Asia's increased importance in a changing international environment. Since then, the cooperation between NATO and the Central Asian states seems to be growing, with the exception of Uzbekistan.

²⁰⁷ Richard Weitz, 'Renewing Central Asian Partnerships', *NATO Review*, Autumn 2006

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the NATO's PfP Programs in Central Asian countries by focusing on the evolution of NATO's relationship with Central Asian states within the framework of the PfP programs. First, the thesis has provided a short overview of the post-Soviet security challenges in Central Asia, then it has analyzed NATO's progress of building relationship with the countries of Central Asia. The questions why NATO has found itself constrained in cooperating with five Central Asian republics and how it has developed its relations with them before and after September 11 have been discussed in detail.

The chapter two has been devoted to examine regional security challenges in the post-Soviet Central Asia. The Central Asian states have suffered from the post-Soviet transnational security challenges which have had the profound negative impact on political and economic transition and whose consequences are felt far beyond the region. Drug trafficking has multiple aspects of impact on Central Asian 'hard security' as well as 'soft security' in the region. That is, drug trafficking affected the regional security through three main factors; impending public health crisis, criminalization of states, and through funding extremism and insurgency. The weaknesses of the border security and slow demarcation process have given opportunity to the number of illegal transactions such as smuggling of drugs, weapons and radioactive substances, illegal immigrants and militant extremists.

The IMU incursions in 1999 and 2000 in Uzbekistan and in 1999 in Kyrgyzstan were the signs that regional countries had to reconsider with regard to terrorism and extremism in Central Asia. Although it is known that the US war against terrorism in Afghanistan in 2001 killed its leader Juma Namangani and many members, the 2004 incursions have proved that the IMU still exists and the members are capable of

conducting terrorist operations within the region. The establishment of secure and stable Afghanistan plays vital role for Central Asia because of the geographic location, complex nature of the ethnic composition and drug cultivation and the ongoing conflicts in the country which can easily affect the current security regime of the region.

However, the cooperative dynamics of regional states have been hindered by some reasons. The weaknesses of Central Asian led to less cooperation between CACO members and their efforts were limited with conflict and crisis management. The reluctance to cooperate intra-regionally and the lack of a common strategy hindered the cooperation between members '6+2' group. This has led the involvement security structures in Central Asian security supported by Russia, China and the West. Besides CIS, SCO, EU, OSCE, NATO pursued special engagement policy within the context of the regional security.

In chapter Three, I have analyzed the NATO's engagement policy in Central Asia with its PfP Programs within the context of the regional security. The Alliance's purpose in Central Asia with its PfP Programs is to increase stability, diminish threats to peace and build strengthened security relationships between individual Partner countries and NATO, as well as among Partner countries. NATO's PfP programs in Central Asia are not different from its PfP Programs in other regions; however, they are at the minimum level compared to those regions. The Alliance has clear objectives; these are achieving stability and security in Afghanistan, implementing defense reforms that contribute to broader democratic reform and boosting a modernization of Central Asian militaries that could allow interoperability with NATO forces in peacekeeping operations.

In the spirit of the PfP Programs, the cooperation between NATO and the Central Asian countries has been developed in the context of the national and regional security and the strategic partnership. Following the signing of the PfP Framework Document, Central Asian Partners have cooperated both in military and non-military fields. The cooperation between NATO and Central Asian partners has been

intensified especially after the tragic events of September 11. The success of NATO's PfP instruments to achieve its objectives in Central Asia varies from country to country due to their level of participation in PfP Programs. The importance of NATO's PfP Programs for Central Asian Partners is inevitable due to their lack of national powerful militaries and effective regional security system. Their motivation comes from that they want gain experience, advice and assistance from NATO member countries to improve the capabilities of their armed forces and they are eager to build up the military infrastructure necessary to combat terrorism, religious extremism and drug trafficking. Because regional Partners frontiers are porous, they want to strengthen the security system along their borders with the help of the Alliance.

In Chapter Four, I have examined the NATO's PfP Programs in individual Central Asian countries; Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. The level of participation in PfP Programs changes from country to country. Kazakhstan is fully satisfied with the guarantees of security by nuclear powers, and considers NATO as a useful and reliable Partner. It was the only country able to establish Kazbat in 2000 and to decide to participate in IPAP in 2006 because it actively participates in all PfP programs in military and non-military areas, Kazakhstan is considered as the most active Partner among Central Asian Partners. Cooperation with NATO is essential for Kyrgyzstan because it lacks strong military that can guarantee its security within the region. In this sense, Kyrgyzstan sees cooperation with NATO not only as beneficial to security and stability in the region, but also as a buttress for its internal political and economic reforms. This was evident in Kyrgyzstan's participation in Centrasbat exercises and anti-terrorism military exercises and NATO member countries' assistances militarily and financially in the aftermath of the incursions of extremist groups to Batken region and September 11. Like Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan had also been actively participating in PfP Programs since it joined PfP in 1994 and the top priority for Uzbekistan joining PfP had always been the development of Special Forces. Uzbekistan joined PARP and cooperated with NATO members in military fields for training its Special Forces. However,

currently, as a result of the tragic Andijan events in May 2005, NATO's relationships with Uzbekistan were restricted to minimum level.

Tajikistan participates in PfP Programs in a very limited way and cooperates with NATO in security issues. Tajikistan cooperates with NATO to put an end to the conflict in Afghanistan, being the first country to sign ISAF agreement with NATO. Like Tajikistan, Turkmenistan also cooperates with the Alliance in a limited level. Turkmenistan does not offer any asset or infrastructure within the framework of PfP , however, it actively supports the NATO-led ISAF despite its permanent neutrality recognized by the United Nations.

The Chapter Five examined NATO's PfP Programs and its increasing involvement in Central Asian security in the aftermath of the September 11. The tragic events of September 11 have caused NATO to invoke Article 5 of the NATO Treaty in the history of the Alliance. As a result, this has led NATO to focus on strategically important region of Central Asia. The Alliance has emerged as an important actor in Central Asian security. The Central Asian states unconditionally condemned the attacks and pledged to undertake all efforts to combat the scourge of terrorism. The extremist threat facing Central Asia and instability in Afghanistan were the main reasons why they supported the USA's and its Allies' military campaign in Afghanistan. The same kind of support has been provided by Central Asian Partners since NATO took over the ISAF in 2003.

As a result of these events, the Alliance affirmed Central Asia's importance in changing security environment and decided to put a 'special focus' at the NATO Istanbul Summit in 2004, after which appointing special representative and liaison officer for the region regulate and develop its relations with Central Asian Partners. At the Summit, the Alliance would enhance its relations with regional Partners within the framework of the PARP, IPAP, PAP-T and PAP-DIB and did succeed with certain Partners. However, following the Andijan events in 2005, it became evident to what extent NATO relations with Central Asian Partners have been developed in the context of the NATO's PfP fundamental principles. The Andijan

events, Uzbekistan asked for closure of the US military base in Uzbekistan, prohibited the use of Uzbek territory as a transit route to Afghanistan for NATO. As a result, the Andijan events have forced the Alliance to reconsider its presence within the framework of the PfP in Central Asia.

In this sense, it is clear that the cooperation on the global security has been overlooked while the basic common values underpinning the Partnership itself have not been all implemented in the Central Asian states. NATO always stresses the importance of the Central Asia for current global security and its PfP program fills the gap only in security affairs. In order to promote regional security cooperation, NATO should act as a regional actor in the region within the framework of the PfP Programs.

NATO cannot act effectively in the region where there is limited progress towards democracy and rule of law. This was evident in Uzbekistan case after the Andijan events in 2005, after which NATO had to reconsider its presence in Central Asian countries. Therefore, within the framework of the PfP, the Allies should work to establish more comprehensive NATO presence in the region based on its fundamental principles.

It is clear that there are many overlapping multilateral activities to fight with prevailing threats in the region. Therefore, cooperation and coordination among regional and global actors should be enhanced when addressing these security threats affecting the region. To reduce the overlapping multilateral activities, these institutions and their member governments should deepen the dialogue and the ties among them. In this case, NATO should develop good relations with SCO and the CSTO, the most active regional actors in Central Asia. Thus, as many PfP supporters have stated, NATO's role in Central Asia would not be seen as being in competition with existing regional security structures and partners, but in complementing them.

To sum up, this thesis shows that NATO is active in Central Asia with its PfP programs. However, its engagement with the Central Asian states is mainly

motivated by its own global security priorities rather than promoting regional security cooperation in Central Asia. It is seen that NATO member countries were helping Central Asian states to strengthen their military capabilities till September 11. However, after September 11, NATO's engagement in Central Asia has been focused on the partnership against terrorism and establishment of the secure and stable Afghanistan.

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