

## Strategy of NATO in central Asia and Caucasia

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**Abstract:** NATO after cold war decided to develop its relationship with the states in central Asian and Caucuses. The NATO viewed the region as strategically significant for the West. At the same time, there were several other reasons, which motivated the NATO to expand its activities in the region. The views in Russia are drastically different depending on the type and level of relations with NATO. Some believe NATO a threat and some talk about the necessity of membership in NATO. In general, Russia considers NATO activities posed a threat as it was during cold war period. In other hand, some of NATO policies are to pass the red line of Russian security such as its expansion toward east and acceptance of some countries.

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### Introduction :

It seems that newly independent republics of Central Asia and Caucasus are in sought of convergence with European- American structures. The main concern for these countries is security and stability. These republics known as small and weak states intend to eliminate their internal and international shortfalls and susceptibilities in the form of regional collaborations framework. The fear from predominance of Russia has caused these countries tend toward western countries in order to preserve their territorial integrity and domestic stability. The Azerbaijan republic has announced its tendency to grant a base to NATO and US in Absheron Island. On the other side, the strategic and geo-economics status of the region has created NATO interests in Caucasus and central Asia and also motivated to maintain their in their sensitive region.

Therefore NATO started its creeping move to extend toward east to central Asia and Caucasus, in two ways: establishing north Atlantic cooperation council (NACC) and enforcing the plan participation for peace (PFP). But it is natural that the process of extension of NATO toward central Asia and Caucasus has opponents too: Russian Republic, because the presence of NATO will have a negative influence on national security of Russian Republic.

To guarantee independence and secure national interests, Central Asian countries and Caucasus would be interested in gaining membership in intraregional organizations. All states in Central Asia and Caucasus have become members of cooperation of security and in Europe organization, or have commenced cooperation with military unions such as North Atlantic treaty Organization (NATO) within the programs such as participation for peace, which will pave the way for their membership in the long term, so that the level of present relationships of central Asian republics and

Caucasus with NATO are regarded in strategic level. On the other side, the members of NATO under leadership of US, as vanguard of development of democratic in its western concept, have tired to impose the vacuum power in Central Asia and Caucasus as a result of Soviet Union break up, in the region by promotion and development of their desired pattern, and increase their global power and influence in this way.

In this paper, we are seeking to study policy of NATO in central Asia and Caucasia.

### 2-NATO's Strategy in Central Asia and Caucasia

NATO strategy in the important region of central Asia and Caucasus should be followed within the framework of new strategy of this organization based on issuance of political ideas to the region. Undoubtedly, expansion of NATO presence in regional changes of central Asia and Caucasus and more participation of the states of this region in the military plans will lead to the enhanced role of these organizations in regional crises and security equations in the future of the region.( Javedneya, 2001)

It seems that as regards special new security tasks that NATO is bound to undertake in Central Asian Region and Caucasus, the following considerations are emphasized:

- The interests of the west in this region will be supplied in the next decade through stability and reducing independence of the governments of this region on Russia.
- The biggest threat to the states of this region is internal threat.
- NATO should become active in reconstruction of armed forces of the countries of this region.

- It is mandatory to establish balance between the resources and objectives of NATO members because the interests are limited.
- Russia should be explained that helping the countries of this region is not contradictory to its interests.
- NATO should respect the concerns of Russia in the region.
- Regarding lack of standards required for republics of central Asia and Caucasus in NATO, the management of this organization, providing a suitable bed and strategy for cooperation with these republics are necessary to realize short term political objectives (the ground of membership of these states in NATO). (Uosafei, 2000)

Although expansion of NATO presence in this region is a more tangible threat to Russia, but the issues introduced as the basis of cooperation among these states with NATO including terrorism, extremism, mass slaughter weapons, ... are among the policies of the west based on hegemonic viewpoints of US to unconditionally impose its political views against its competitors in geostrategic regions such as Central Asia, which is usually the place of dispute among NATO member states with immediate regional neighboring states of Central Asia namely, Iran, China and Russia. Rich sources of oil and gas in Caspian Sea which are expected to be the third field as regards enriched interests in this regard, and also appropriate geographical status of this region have all caused all international and regional players heed to it, and every day more tensions and competitions are expected in this region.

On the other side, western states particularly US are in seek of excuses to realize their military presence in this area and NATO is among the stimulators that follows this objective in this way. It is obvious that in these conditions, even the smallest event will give the required pretext to these states to justify presence of NATO for the crisis. (Mojtehadzade , 2001)

### **3-Cooperation of Central Asian Republics and Caucasus with NATO**

The eastward expansion of the NATO since the collapse of the Soviet Union has had a notable impact on each of the post-Soviet States. During the Cold war NATO has one and only purpose military which was to protect the Russian influence spreading to the West. But when Cold War ended, NATO changed its mission and continued to exist as an organization promoting democracy and security in Europe. This new mission also meant that NATO should enlarge itself and invite new members to participate in this organization. When NATO decided to enlarge, a set of requirements was given, that the countries should fulfill in order to

become part of NATO. So at first it was only a military organization, an alliance against the Soviet military threat. But after the Cold War and the dissolution of the Warsaw pact and the Soviet Union, NATO was restructured in as organization which stands to safeguard the freedom and security of its member countries by political and military means.( NATO Homepage, The Alliance's strategic concept ,2009)

Eastern European states and the republics remaining from Soviet Union asked for complete releasing from the help of east and the soviet, after cold war. They had to pay costs for expansion of strong ties that existed among them. These costs manifested in the form of political problems particularly economic and tribal issues. Hence these states were a sanctuary for solving the disputes. Providing plans such as partnership for peace plan and or north Atlantic collaboration council by NATO was on timely basis. Hence they strongly asked for partnership in these types of plans to take help from the west. Hence the main and important cause could be sought in their wish for reducing and mostly stopping dependence on Russia.

Disintegration of social political systems and the process of democratization of communities and societies entail the help of Europeans and Westerns. The Europeans considered one of the reasons of expansion of NATO toward the east strengthening and expanding west democratic norms. This has attracted many eastern European states and Caucasus regions and central Asia in the form of CIS member states to the said strategy.(Sherbayani , 2009)

Transition from focused socialist economic system to economic system in the market are among the policies of socialist states, and this would not be achieved unless through cooperation of western states. Also the population combination of some states particularly CIS states and various items such as Slavs and Russians caused security and political issues. Some minorities particularly Russians were interested in establishing ties in the previous level with Russia and this was contradictory to the general policies of states and the goal of leaders. Therefore preserving security and preventing from internal conflicts and clashes are among other factors of accepting NATO plans. Of course with lapse of time, the states released from east camp and the Europeans and the NATO came to the conclusion that it is not possible to make stability unless with active partnership of Russia because regarding the similarities between Russian Federation and these types of states, Russia may understand their military-economic and political security more than any other state. Therefore before anything, it is necessary to attract partnership and collaboration with Russia. On this basis, the central Asia and Cucussia ministry of foreign affairs considered collaboration with North

Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) among the basic priorities of the foreign policy of this state. (Bagheri , 2000)

Central Asian states and Caucasia have different reasons for establishing relationship with NATO.

### **3-1- Fear from Predominance of Russian Domination**

The falling down of Soviet Union caused Russian federation face a new set of its surrounding countries. The word “near abroad” is quite understandable to refer to these republics in the internal and foreign policy of Russia. For many Russians, it is not acceptable to imagine these republics as independent national units. Presence of 25 million Russians in the surrounding republics is one of the major aspects of relations of Russia and other remains of Soviet Union disintegration and has maximized the importance of region for Russia. Also political instability in Central Asia and Caucasus and development of tribal clashes is one of the main concerns of Russia. These countries have numerous territorial and border disputes with each other, and each of them can disrupt the peace and security in the region. Therefore, providing security is one of the major considerations of Russia in Central Asia and Caucasus. This may provide the ground for expansion of influence of foreign powers in the region although Russia has considered vital interests for itself in its surrounding regions. on the other side, economic problems and extensive shortfalls in republics have caused them deprived from the power of appropriate maneuver. The security problems of republics have detected their reliance on Russia for security. These countries have made all effort to remove their extensive dependence on Russia and have developed commercial and economic ties with European and US states to reduce their reliance on Russia. None of these countries could be compared with Russia as concerns military power as they rely on it for their weapons. For this reason, to reduce dependence and establish balance, these countries considered collaboration with NATO members and its creative programs such as membership in North Atlantic Cooperation Council and “the partnership project for peace. (Kolahi , 1996)

### **3-2- Inability in Providing National Security**

Newly independent countries of Central Asia and Caucasus have never enjoyed an independent political structure in its today concept (national government) in their political life. (Shirazi & Mohammadreza ,1999) One of the problems facing these countries after disintegration of Soviet Union was the issue of security and defense arrangements. As these republics were under military and political and economic dominance of Moscow for a long time, there

was a question after independence as how to achieve new defense structures and security arrangements. Also these states faced other problems such as profound economic crises, lack of independent foreign policy, the period of transfer to open market, weak governments, lack of democratic conditions and civil elements. On the other side, these countries tend to overestimate their foreign threats to their national security so as to remove their security problems arising from military, political, economic, tribal nationalism and demographic inequality, through attracting support of intraregional organizations such as security organization and Europe cooperation organization or by establishing ties with military unions such as NATO and take steps for convergence and integration with European system. (Afshordi ,2001)

### **3-3 Potential Conflicts in this Region**

Before disintegration of Soviet Union, the borders between republics and political and administrative units of Caucasus were mainly based on the tribal and racial territories. Despite the African colonial countries which after independence accepted the same borders as during their colonialism and minimized the border conflicts, one of the main reasons of conflict between the units in Caucasus were the borders after the disintegration of Soviet Union Tribalism could be regarded as one of the main factors of instability and crisis in Caucasus. (Rondelin, 1998), The demographic texture of this region is such that the politicization of tribes and sects could pave the grounds for continuous crises in the region. We should not ignore that the new establishment nature of civil foundations, organization of the affairs with the communism thinking system, and the competition of regional and international powers are among other factors of instability. The other reason of duration and lengthening of crises in the region is that in Caucasus about 50 tribal-sectional groups of three great families of Caucasus, Indo-European and Alta live with great tribal distinctions. As we explained before the Gharabagh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan which was one of the longest tribal battles in Soviet Union, the separatism crisis of the people of Abkhazia region and southern Ostia in Georgia have caused insecurity and instability in the Caucasus region. (Vaaezi, 2002), With regard to above facts, the main issue in this region is the issue of security and stability. These republics could not rely on their financial resources and defend their territorial integrity and governance of their country in confronting the potentially internal, interregional or intraregional (Russia) threats. The problems of this insecure region are stagnant conflicts, and the threat of aggression by Russia. For this reason, compatibility with euro Atlantic structures was a kind of foreign policy objective of the region, and political elites think

that Europe has something to present in the region. The participation of these republics in the innovative programs of NATO such as the participation program for peace which is called as the ground of membership in NATO is evaluated for maximizing security and stability coefficient. (Nematizargaran, 2001)

### 3-4 - Political Islam

One of the potential sources of political instability of Muslim republics of Soviet Union after independence was Islam. Many analysts believe that strengthening of Islamic fundamentalism among central Asian nations is so much that it will lead to establishment of new Islamic institutes. (Kohen , 2001)

The leaders of republics fear from the influence of political Islam. The elites of central Asia and Caucasus, which are basically secular, oppose the interference of Islam in the politics and view Islam as a threat for preserving the political system of central Asian and Caucasus republics because political Islam is a clear current which its control is difficult. Whereas it is very much likely that the extremist Islamist groups are capable of organizing and preserving the traditional ground, who are ready to resort to aggression to realize their goals, therefore; they are regarded as a serious threat against security and stability which could immediately influence national borders and the entire region. Hence controlling them is the program of some leaders of Central Asia such as Uzbekistan. Therefore the leaders of central Asian republics and Caucasus which consider Islam as one of the biggest threats against regional security and stability, have a positive opinion of cooperation with security and military unions or organizations of the west such as NATO (where they could be member in the future) in order to control or neutralize the political Islam for strengthening peace and stability. (Vaezzadeh , 2010)

### 4- NATO Programmers towards Central Asia and Caucuses

With the fall down of Soviet Union, a condition was provided so that NATO could expand its security region. To realize this goal, NATO resorted to three ways: one creating "North Atlantic Cooperation Council" and second enforcing the plan "participation for peace" and finally with the individual collaborations of the states with NATO since 2005. (Haydari , 2003)

The philosophy of the plans and its strategic and long term purposes of NATO summarized as following:

1. Getting central Asian states and Caucasus involved in Europe security affairs by the acceptance of their cooperation and providing common consultation in the time of threat.
2. The information exchange and military cooperation development.

Central Asia countries expanded its military relationships and contacts with NATO after this activity and received significant aides by NATO in order to reform its military forces. Also, this country has allocated one ship to NATO research activities in Caspian Sea. In the framework of this plan, NATO will study the underground resources of Caspian.

3. A background to peace keeping operation in critical situation.  
There countries tend to expand its relationship with western countries to release from Russian dominance. Its relationship with NATO is more complicate, because it stresses on making a military- political union with Russian confederation in one hand and concurrently, it tends to have cooperation with NATO on other hand.
4. Strengthening regional stability for the benefits and purposes of the West. (Hunter , 1996)

The view of some governments in central Asia and Caucasus region is on the basis of this issue that they can reach to two major purposes by joining them in cooperation plan:

1. Lessening the military dependency of these countries on Russia.
2. Renovation of the military equipment of considered countries and reinforcement of the national sovereignty. (Sherbayani , 2009)

Thus in 1996 Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan did not support the Russia proposal as to the reforms in military forces in commonwealth countries to make a common military structure and they intended to make a peace keeper force to leadership UN in company with the Kirghizstan. By presence of three republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia , they cooperated in cooperation plan to NATO peace and they did not anticipate that any of these countries may intend to leave the common security system in commonwealth countries, the exit of Russian military forces from Caucasus and establishment of the military base of NATO in the region so rapidly. In general, after the fall of Soviet, three republics in south Caucasus and five republics in central Asia concentrated on incomplete and limited concept of independency and considered it as the only release equation from the Soviet dominance and some of them such as Azerbaijan and Georgia described development as the tendency toward west and more agreement with western structures. (Shirazi & Majidi , 1999)

After the collapse of the Soviet Union NATO tried to remake its image in Eastern Europe developing a new cooperative relationship with Russia and its

former allies. Thus, the Atlantic Alliance launched a series of cooperative initiatives (NACC, EAPC, etc.) intended to make it appear like a peaceful organization rather than an aggressive one. When the Partnership for Peace emerged, an important regional division became apparent. (Priego, 2008)

The key point of NATO's interest in the central Asia and Caucasus was the September 11 terrorist attacks. After being attacked by Al-Qaeda, NATO decided to change its strategy towards the Greater Middle East. This region was importance for NATO and the US increased tremendously. For this reason, the Partnership for Peace Programme was redefined and the South Caucasus and Central Asia became crucial for the War on Terror launched by the US. Nevertheless, NATO's interest in the central Asia and Caucasus was also driven by other issues such as, transnational crime, separatism and its growing strategic importance as an energy corridor- ( Menagarishvili, 2000)

So this strategy allowed NATO to survive post-Cold War international changes, such as the rise of international terrorism and other international threats or the proliferation of WMD. NATO has benefited from the vacuum of power created after the breakup of the Soviet Union and allows NATO to be involved in a space traditionally dominated by Russia. (Priego, 2008)

### **5- Security Challenges of NATO in Central Asia and Caucasus**

This region faced disposition in security system after disintegration of soviet and independence of central Asian republics. On this basis along with the efforts of west for establishment of a security umbrella in this region, Boris Yeltsin faced a serious challenge through notifying opposition and dissatisfaction of Eurasian group toward foreign policy of US in the "near east" region. Under the pressures from the opponents of development of relations with west, Yeltsin proceeded with the convergence policy of economy and security with the former republics of soviet. Taking measure to establish a regional security system led by Moscow led to establishment of "mass security contract" among states (with the exception of Turkmenistan) in May 1992. Later years it changed to "mass security organization" contract. (Vade, 2002)

Since the end of 1990s, central Asian states and Caucasus expanded their activity with NATO PFP so that some consider PFP as a rival and substitute for CIS security system led by Russia. Countries such Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan who have always been interested in getting released from Russian security dominance, made more cooperation with NATO through direct protection of US and participated in the joint maneuvers with this organization. In general, countries which were at a time under dominance of the

Soviet Union and part of soviet soil, those who enjoyed more economic and military independence and had more extensive relationships with West are interested in cooperation with the international security system like NATO, European Security and Cooperation Organization, and European Council. These states made a block of Ukraine, Moldavia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan in 1990s, by which they declared their opposition to the efforts of Moscow to making a new security system in the region based on Russia. Ukraine was at a time the closest ally of Russia and declared its readiness to participate in NATO quick reaction force in 2015. Despite the interest of some states of this region to cooperate with NATO and membership in PFP for expansion of security collaborations after September 11 to fight Islamism and terrorism, PFP could not supply a security guarantee different from the membership conditions in NATO. In fact the activities of PFP are not apart from the new policies of NATO namely trying to make a "mass security" system. According to the opinion of security experts of the West such as "Rou Alison" the perspective of successful and extensive operations by PFP to preserve peace, establish and strengthen peace in this region is very unlikely. Shanghai collaborations treaty which was established in 1990s under the title of "Shanghai 5" with creativity of Russia and China to make trust between the two states and reduce security tensions in the region with membership of some states of Central Asia including Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kirgizstan, is like a regional system which opposes presence of other security allies like NATO. With membership of Uzbekistan in this treaty, "Shanghai cooperation organization" was established in 2002. Therefore it is observed that the security of central Asian region is still under the influence of Russia and Moscow has preserved its numerous military bases the largest of which is in Tajikistan. In fact Russia is the biggest hurdle for expansion of NATO activities in "mass security" aspect in central Asia. (Vaazzade, 2010)

### **6- Russia's Attitude of NATO**

Although Russia leaders have accepted more expansion of NATO and cooperate with NATO in framework of Russia-NATO council, but they believe that expansion of NATO is not necessary and this issue will not help boosting Euratlantic security. In Russia's view, other international organizations are competent to play the role of providing mass security that NATO had decided to increase its role in this regard in past years. (Kolahi, 1996)

The views in Russia are drastically different depending on the type and level of relations with NATO. Some believe NATO a threat and some talk about the necessity of membership in NATO.

Zapandics talk about the necessity of NATO membership, but nationalists oppose being integrated in NATO. In the new military doctrine of Russia published in February 2010, NATO was the first foreign military threats of this country, above promulgation of nuclear weapons and expansion of international terrorism. In Part. 1 of article 8 of this document trying to transfer the global duties to the military power of north Atlantic Treaty and discharging these duties contrary to the international law regulations, closing the military infrastructure of NATO member states to the borders of Russian federation were among the ways of expanding this treaty as a threat. Of course in paragraph 5 of article 19 of this document, expansion of relations with NATO to promote interaction in the field of international security has been the focus of attention. Looking at NATO in the foreign policy doctrine of Russia has been explained in this way: regarding realistic evaluation of the role of NATO organization, Russia believes that increasing development of interaction in the form of NATO-Russia council is very important. This has a positive influence on the possibility of prophecy and proving in Euroatlantic region, maximum use of political talk and scientific collaboration and solving the issues related to common terroristic threats, expansion of massacre weapons, regional crises, transfer of narcotic substances, and natural disasters due to manufacturing and technical activities. Russia will set its relations with NATO considering the degree of aptness of north Atlantic union for equal partnership, precise observation of international law rules and regulations, discharging the entrusted duties by members within NATO –Russia framework about insecurity and commitments related to military caution. Russia has negative outlook toward development of NATO particularly to the project of accepting Ukraine and Georgia as NATO members and approximating NATO military infrastructures to Russian borders which causes violation of the principle of equal security and leads to new dividing lines in Europe, which is not in conformity with the aim of heightening common work efficiency in finding answers to the real challenges of contemporary period. (Yary , 2010 )

Russia's foreign policy in Central Asia and Caucasus was flexible. central Asia has preserved its strategic importance for Russia. In general we may say that the policy of Russia has a dual nature in central Asia and Caucasus: on one side Moscow is in seek of a stronger presence in the region through Russia advocate classification. On the other side, it has allied with Atlantic world and is interested in accompanying NATO and the countries close to it through peace participation plans. This duality is rooted in rationalism of Russia. From one side, the new geopolitical values and the enthusiasm of Russia for being classified with

western countries is quite evident. On the other side there is a space for maneuvering and using various traditional Eurasian strategies (alliance with china) and also Atlanticism.

#### **7- Attitude of NATO towards Russia**

As the greatest contemporary military ally, NATO (at the present time this ally has 28 member states and 22 partner states in Euro Atlantic area) formed in 1949 to fight the military power of Soviet Union. In 60 years of age, NATO is still a powerful military union. This union has grown in the framework of US hegemony tools, has put behind many challenges. The stability of this military treaty is a remarkable phenomenon as regards knowing the contemporary international system although its existence philosophy, i.e. fighting the military power of soviet has finished. The change of geopolitical perspective of this organization led to notable changes inside NATO after disintegration of Soviet Union. To resume its life and promote its changed objectives, NATO had no way but to accept some changes and evolutions, so that in foreseeing the “New NATO strategy plan”, it has been stipulated: “NATO’s past performance could not be regarded as a guarantee for the future. From this time to 2020, this organization will have new challenges through new unexpected hazards such as multidimensional sophisticated operations, which are considered as quick interaction of a vital principle. New evolution in this organization is about reviewing NATO’s new strategic concept which could lead to institutionalizing the international strategy beyond geographical scope of the organization. This issue has been explained in foreseeing the new NATO strategy plan as: “establishment of NATO forces outside its border does not mean ignoring its fundamental objectives, but the fact is that in order to defend itself, NATO has to settle beyond its borders so as to act as an inhibiting factor. NATO’s existing strategic content was confirmed in 1999 in accordance with the security needs of the first decade following cold war. This strategy had been designed to promote ideas that have been realized today.

Increase of NATO operations since 1990s and consequently development of the area of presence of this organization beyond Atlantic-based traditional borders would necessitate attention to some requirements and more flexibility of this organization against Russia .The new strategy plan of NATO contains guidelines about when and where to use its resources outside the allies’ boundaries. Participation with Russia is the solution to a part of challenges facing the NATO, which had been included in the draft “New NATO strategy plan” for the years 2011 to 2020. “New Partnership Period” is a concept that has been focused in the New NATO strategy plan and has been defined as follows: “the content of new strategy plan

must consider this principle that NATO is moving toward 2020 and will not be government solely. Partnership in different forms will be a great part of daily task of member states. In order to get the most out of this, NATO must explain and deepen its relationships with key partners, establish relationships with new partners in appropriate places, and expand the scope of activities for partnership projects and behave toward each of partners and partnership projects according to the agreed conditions .( Gabo, 2010)

## 8- Conclusion

NATO tried to protect central Asia and Caucasia country against the yoke of Russia by its military and financial aids and prevent from new expansionism by Russian Emperor. Russia considered these measures against its security and stated that it will not allow US to invite these countries to NATO membership. On the other hand these measures of Russia and the fear of Caspian countries from their predominance compelled them to go toward West and NATO. Also the important sources of oil and its related issues such as pipeline in the region has become an object for rivalry between NATO and Russia this region. In the contemporary period, rivalry for access to economic sources has been intensified. Above other things, this is due to the fact that lack of access to these sources and natural gifts will have important economic consequences. Moreover, with regard to the present growth rate of energy which is foreseen 2% per annum, rivalry to access to these sources will increase notably in the coming years. On this basis, NATO have special attention to the issues related to access to the sources of life, particularly sources such as oil, which its transfer line passes through central Asia and caucuses that are either instable politically or the subject of dispute.

Russia has negative outlook toward development of NATO particularly to the project of accepting Ukraine and Georgia as NATO members and approximating NATO military infrastructures to Russian borders which causes violation of the principle of equal security and leads to new dividing lines in Europe, which is not in conformity with the aim of heightening common work efficiency in finding answers to the real challenges of contemporary period. Therefore, NATO was the first foreign military threats of this country, above promulgation of nuclear weapons and expansion of international terrorism.

In 60 years of age, NATO is still a powerful military union. This union has grown in the framework of US hegemony tools, has put behind many challenges. The stability of this military treaty is a remarkable phenomenon as regards knowing the contemporary international system although its existence philosophy, i.e. fighting the military power of soviet has finished.

Countries of Central Asia and Caucasus have

never enjoyed an independent political structure in its today concept (national government) in their political life. One of the problems facing these countries after disintegration of Soviet Union was the issue of security and defense arrangements. Also these states faced several problems such as profound economic crises, lack of independent foreign policy, the period of transfer to open market, weak governments, lack of democratic conditions and civil elements. On the other side, these countries tend to overestimate their foreign threats to their national security so as to remove their security problems arising from military, political, economic, tribal nationalism and demographic inequality, through attracting support of intraregional organizations such as security organization and Europe cooperation organization or by establishing ties with military unions such as NATO and take steps for convergence and integration with European system. Therefore the process of expansion of NATO to Caucasus and central Asia for the purpose of preserving independence of the states located in Eurasia is justified against the Russian dominance.

While analyzing the policy of NATO towards Central Asia and Caucasia in the post-cold war period, the most important scenario is the clash of interest between Russia and the US led NATO. In fact, the NATO's interest in the region was dictated both by economic, geo-political and strategic. On other hand, the states in Central Asia and Caucuses are also interested to join the NATO for varied reasons. This factor further promoted the interests of the NATO. As such, the NATO was successful in expanding to this region against the interest of Russia. At the same time, several global events forced Russia to cooperate with the NATO. However, the role of NATO in global politics will be shaped by its role in Central Asia and Caucuses.

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