



Hacettepe University Institute of Social Sciences  
Department of International Relations

## **CHINA-KYRGYZSTAN RELATIONS**

Alia Omuralieva

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2014

# CHINA-KYRGYZSTAN RELATIONS

Alia Omuralieva

Hacettepe University Institute of Social Sciences

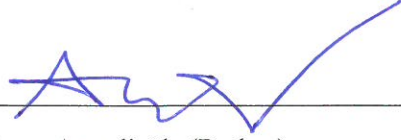
Department of International Relations

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Ankara, 2014

## KABUL VE ONAY

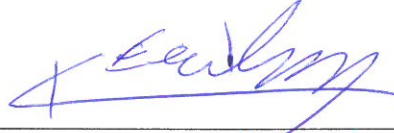
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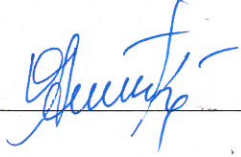
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Alia Omuralieva

*To my daughter Amina...*

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First of all I am sincerely thankful to my thesis advisor and teacher, Dr. Anar Somuncuoğlu, for her help and support in writing this thesis. Her valuable advises and sent literature helped me understand and develop the subject of this thesis.

Also I would like to extend my thanks to my lovely family: particularly to my father Kushubak Omuraliev who supported me and sent useful and interesting materials regarding my work from Kyrgyzstan; and to my husband Miram Turganov and my daughter Amina for their unconditional support, trust and patience...

## ÖZET

Alia Omuralieva. *Çin-Kırgızistan İlişkileri*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2014.

Sovyetler Birliğinin dağılmasıyla oluşan yeni bir uluslararası ortamda Orta Asya devletlerinin egemen olması, onların uluslararası ortamda birer bağımsız aktörler olarak ortaya çıkması gerçekten önemli değişimlere yol açmaktadır. Kırgızistan bir Orta Asya devleti olarak egemen olduğundan beri komşu ülkelerle dış ilişkilerini oluşturma çabasındadır. Kırgızistan'ın önemli komşularından biri Çin - dünyanın büyüyen süper gücüdür. Bu tez aslında bu iki devlet arasında son 20 yıl içerisinde gelişen ekonomik ve güvenlik ilişkileri detaylı olarak incelenmektedir.

Bu tezde Çin- Kırgızistan ilişkileri neorealizm teorisi kapsamındaki küçük devletlerin davranışları açısından incelenmektedir. Buna ek olarak Orta Asya'daki üç büyük güç olan Çin, Rusya ve ABD'nin daha fazla güç ve etki için mücadelesi saldırgan (offensive) neorealizm açısından değerlendirilmiştir. Bu kapsamda büyük üç gücün bir biriyle olan mücadelesi çoğunlukla Çin-Kırgızistan ilişkilerini şekillendirmektedir. Özellikle Çin, Orta Asya bölgesinde daha fazla etki ve güce sahip olmak için Kırgızistan'la hem ekonomik, hem güvenlik ilişkilerini geliştirmeye çalışmaktadır. Kırgızistan ise küçük devlet olarak üç büyük güçle ilişkilerini çok vektörlü dış politikayı amaç edinerek dengelemeye çalışıyor ve bir gücün ülkede daha fazla etki ve güce sahip olmasını engellemeye çalışıyor. Ancak yapılan araştırmalara göre Kırgızistan Çin ile ilişkilerinde küçük devlet olarak daha çok güçlü komşunun isteklerini kendi aleyhine gerçekleştirmek zorunda kaldığını görüyoruz (bandwagoning).

Bu tezin amacı genel olarak Orta Asya'daki üç büyük güç olan Çin, Rusya ve ABD'nin bir biriyle olan mücadelesinde Kırgızistan'la geliştirdikleri ilişkilere genel bakış yaparak bu ilişkilerin Çin ve Kırgızistan arasındaki ilişkileri nasıl etkilediğini görmek ve daha sonra detaylı olarak Çin-Kırgızistan ilişkilerinin güvenlik ve ekonomik boyutlarını inceleyerek Kırgızistan'ın neden büyük komşusu Çin'le yakından ilişki kurmaya çalıştığını anlamaktır. Bu yüzden tezin birinci bölümünde Kırgızistan'ın büyük güçlerle ilişkisi neorealizm teorisi kapsamındaki küçük devletlerin davranışı yönünde şekillenmesi ele alınmıştır. Buna ek olarak Kırgızistan'ın Rusya ve daha sonra ABD ile ilişkilerine genel bakış yapılmıştır. İkinci bölümde Çin-Kırgızistan arasındaki güvenlik ilişkileri incelenmiştir. Kırgızistan'ın bağımsızlığından itibaren Çin ile olan temel güvenlik sorunlarının nasıl giderildiği ve bu çözümler Kırgızistan'da siyasi açıdan ne tür sonuçlara yol açtığı incelenmiştir. Ayrıca ŞİÖ kapsamında Kırgızistan ile Çin arasındaki güvenlik ilişkilerinin nasıl geliştiği incelenmiştir. Üçüncü bölümde ise Çin ve Kırgızistan

arasındaki ekonomik ilişkiler güncel veriler ve istatistikler yardımıyla sunulmuş. ŞİÖ'nün ekonomik ilişkiler kapsamında ne tür faaliyetler gerçekleştirdiği ve bu bağlamda Çin ile var olan ekonomik ilişkilere nasıl etki ettiği irdelenmiştir. Sonuç bölümünde tezdeki üç bölümün vardığı sonuçlar değerlendirilmiştir. Ayrıca Kırgızistan'ın neden Çin ile yakından ilişkilerini yürütmeye çalıştığı tez sorusuna cevap verilerek bazı sonuçlara varılmıştır.

Bu çalışmanın uluslararası ilişkiler literatürüne Orta Asya'daki üç büyük güç Rusya, Çin ve ABD'nin güç çekişmesi arka planında Çin ve Kırgızistan arasındaki güvenlik ve ekonomik ilişkileri güncel olarak değerlendiren bir tez olarak yenilik katmasını ve bu bölge için yapılacak daha sonraki çalışmalara katkıda bulunmasını umut ederim.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:**

Çin, Kırgızistan, Uluslararası İlişkiler, Orta Asya, Ekonomi, Güvenlik, ŞİÖ, Rusya, ABD



## ABSTRACT

Alia Omuralieva. *China-Kyrgyzstan Relations*, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2014.

Disintegration of Soviet Union and together with that appearance of new independent actors on international arena in Central Asian region is really important change. Kyrgyzstan as one of the Central Asian states is in struggle to shape its foreign relation with its neighbor countries. One of the important neighbors of Kyrgyzstan is China- that is raising superpower in the World. Their economic and security relations for the past 20 years period are analyzed in details in this thesis.

In this study China-Kyrgyzstan relations are analyzed from the aspect of actions of small states in neorealist theory. In addition the competition of great powers for more influence in Central Asia as Russia, China and the USA are evaluated in the framework of offensive neorealism theory. In this context, the competitions of these three powers mostly affect and shape the relations between China and Kyrgyzstan. Especially China is establishing security and economic relations with Kyrgyzstan to gain more power and influence in Central Asia. Kyrgyzstan as the small state by following multi-vector foreign policy is trying to balance its relations with all three great powers and prevent too much influence of one great power to the country. But according to the researches we can see that in the relations with China Kyrgyzstan mostly has to bandwagon, in other words has to realize the interests of China at its own expense.

The aim of this thesis is to have the general view to the relations of three great powers as Russia, China and the USA with Kyrgyzstan in their struggle for more power in Central Asia and in this framework see how this affects the relations between Kyrgyzstan and China, then in details analyze the security and economic relations between China and Kyrgyzstan and in this context understand why Kyrgyzstan is establishing close, friendly relations with China since its independence. So in the first chapter was discussed the relations of Kyrgyzstan as the small state in neorealist theory with three great powers. In addition the relations of Kyrgyzstan with Russia and then with the USA also took place in this chapter. Second chapter covered the security relations between Kyrgyzstan and China. Particularly the main security issues that were highlighted since the independence of Kyrgyzstan and how the solutions of those issues affected the political life of Kyrgyzstan were discussed. Moreover, the evaluation of security relations between China and Kyrgyzstan in the framework of SCO was analyzed. In the third chapter economic relations between Kyrgyzstan and China was presented with the help of updated data,

schemes and statistics. Also economic activities of SCO and how those activities affected the relations between Kyrgyzstan and China were evaluated. In conclusion part the overall evaluation of all three chapters was given. Also the answer to the thesis question why Kyrgyzstan is establishing close and friendly relations with China was given by the reaching some conclusions.

I hope that this work will bring innovation to the international relation literature as the thesis that is analyzing China-Kyrgyzstan relations on the background of competition for more influence of three great powers as China, Russia and the USA in Central Asia and will add contribution to the future researches in this region.

### **Keywords**

China, Kyrgyzstan, International Relations, Central Asia, Economy, Security, SCO, Russia, the USA

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>CIS</b>	Commonwealth of Independent States
<b>CSTO</b>	Collective Security Treaty Organization
<b>ETIM</b>	East Turkestan Islamic Movement
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>HES</b>	Hydro-Electro Station
<b>HPP</b>	Hydropower Plant
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>IMU</b>	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>NWS</b>	Nuclear Weapon States
<b>NED</b>	National Endowment for Democracy
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>PRC</b>	Peoples Republic of China
<b>RATS</b>	Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure
<b>SCO</b>	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
<b>UNSC</b>	United Nations Security Council
<b>US</b>	United States
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>USAID</b>	US Agency for International Development
<b>USSR</b>	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
<b>WTO</b>	World Trade Organization
<b>XUAR</b>	Xingjian Uighur Autonomous Region

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## INTRODUCTION

The end of the Cold War changed the bipolar structure of the world where were ruling two poles of power as the Soviet Union and the USA. Instead of that multipolar structure of international arena came to the agenda and several states rose as powerful states, China is one of them. Nowadays China proved itself as economic power that has speedily rising economy. China situates in East Asia, has the total area of 9,596,961 km<sup>2</sup> and has borders with the East China Sea, Yellow Sea and South China Sea, locates between North Korea and Vietnam. Moreover, China has the biggest population in the world which account for 1,355,692,576.<sup>1</sup> China is one of the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) and has nuclear arsenals that is counted total for 240 estimated warheads and ranked as the fifth country among the other NWS.<sup>2</sup> Moreover China is strengthening its military power and has one of the leading budgets for defense spending, particularly in 2012 China spent \$106.4 billion for defense and in 2013 became the second country right after the USA according to the defense budgets.<sup>3</sup> Also China is the member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) which is the most influential organization in international relations that takes decisions in such issues as peacekeeping operations, sanctions to the states; regulate the military operations in conflict situations between states and inside the states.<sup>4</sup> In other words the UN Security Council is very powerful entity in modern international world that is responsible for peace and security around the world and China is the one of its five permanent members. Actually the world is

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<sup>1</sup> "China", The World Factbook, (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>), date of access: 16.05.2014.

<sup>2</sup> "Nuclear Weapons: Who Has What?", CNN, Sources: Federation of American Scientists, CIA World Factbook, Nuclear Threat Initiative, U.S. Census Bureau, December 18, 2012, (<http://edition.cnn.com/interactive/2013/03/world/nuclear-weapon-states/>), date of access: 22.04.2014.

<sup>3</sup> Miles Yu, "Inside China: Security Spending Tops Defense", *The Washington Times*, March 2012, (<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/mar/7/inside-china-security-spending-tops-defense/?page=all>), date of access: 31.07.2013; Laicie Heeley, "U.S. Defense Spending vs. Global Defense Spending", *The Center For Arms Control And Non-Proliferation*, April 2013, ([http://armscontrolcenter.org/issues/securityspending/articles/2012\\_topline\\_global\\_defense\\_spending/](http://armscontrolcenter.org/issues/securityspending/articles/2012_topline_global_defense_spending/)), date of access: 31.07.2013.

<sup>4</sup> Official web-site of United Nations Security Council, (<http://www.un.org/en/sc/>), date of access: 20.12.2013.

concerned with rapid rise of China, because China increased its military strength and very soon economically it will become the leading country in the world.<sup>5</sup>

The factor of rising China is very important for the entire world, but more important for the neighboring countries such as Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan is a small country that has achieved its independence only a little bit more than 20 years ago. Kyrgyzstan locates in the heart of Central Asia. This country has total area of 199,951 km<sup>2</sup>. Kyrgyzstan has borders with China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The population of this country is 5,604,212.<sup>6</sup> It is the former Soviet Union member and existed under the rule of Russian government more than a century. The first years of independence were very hard period when there were many social, economic, security problems inside the country.

Government of the country changed two times by the unrest of the people and social destabilization, as a result the first and the second Presidents fled the country. Every time there were economic and political crisis after those destabilizations that forced the country to take more economic assistance from Russia, China and the USA.

Nowadays Kyrgyzstan and China are cooperating in economic and security spheres, both of them are the members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). China and Kyrgyzstan are bordering countries and have many things to share as the neighboring countries. But their relations are unequal because China is very powerful and big country; however Kyrgyzstan is very small country that had its independence only for two decades. So their economic and security relations represent an example of great power-small country relations. There are lot of thesis and works in international relations framework regarding China and its relations with Central Asia, but there is no any thesis regarding China and Kyrgyzstan. So I hope this thesis will contribute to Central Asian studies. Writing this thesis gave me opportunity to learn more about my

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<sup>5</sup> Ed. by James A. Dorn, "China in the New Millennium: Market Reforms and Social Development", Washington D.C.: Cato Institute, , 1998, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> "Kyrgyzstan", The World Factbook, (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kg.html>), date of access: 16.05.2014.



home country Kyrgyzstan and its place on international arena, as well as the place of China and how its rapid rise has affected the situation in Central Asia.

The theme of this thesis is analyzing the region where the main differences took place after the end of the Cold War and disintegration of the Soviet Union. Particularly this study discusses one of the new emerged independent states in Central Asian region - Kyrgyzstan and its relations with China. These relations will be analyzed in accordance with neorealist theory, particularly offensive neorealism. The core of neorealism is anarchy in international relations; the state is the main actor and power is very important.<sup>7</sup> In other word anarchy in international relations explains why countries are in struggle to have more power than the other states. There is no any higher authority in international relations than the state, then if the one state is more powerful than the other countries then it can control the other states, can dominate them. So every state, especially powerful country that can effort it try to become more powerful so don't let the other state to achieve enough power to gain control above them. Also power and national interest is very important in this theory as every country is acting in its national interest, there is cooperation when those interests are the same and conflict when those interests differ.

According to offensive neorealist theory China will continue to raise its power to control other countries. In the literature was widely discussed *balancing* or *bandwagoning* action of the small states when they are confronted by the pressure of the great powers. As a small state Kyrgyzstan is continuing to maintain close diplomatic, economy and security relations with its powerful neighbor China.<sup>8</sup> Kyrgyzstan is acting as a small country in neorealist theory, as the country that have to cooperate with more powerful countries in the region as China, Russia and the USA and in this frame acting toward balancing or bandwagoning according to the situation. However, I argue that Kyrgyzstan in its diplomatic relations with China mostly has to bandwagon than

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<sup>7</sup> Kenneth Waltz, "Neorealism: Confusions and Criticisms", *Journal of Politics & Society*, ([http://archive.helvidius.org/2004/2004\\_Waltz.pdf](http://archive.helvidius.org/2004/2004_Waltz.pdf)), 2004, p.2, date of access: 12.01.2014.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen M. Walt, "Alliances: Balancing or Bandwagoning", *The Origins of Alliances*, pp.17-21, 27-32, New York: Cornell University Press, 1987, pp. 110-111.

balance, in other word has to accept the interests of China as a small state that cannot act differently to continue developing friendly relations with China.<sup>9</sup>

The first chapter elaborates the situation in Central Asia and influence of great powers as Russia and the United States to this region and particularly discusses how they affect China-Kyrgyzstan relations. For this purpose the theory of offensive neorealism and the basic concepts and origins of this theory will be presented. This part will help us better understand the relations of China and Kyrgyzstan in the light of competition for more influence between the United States, Russia and China in Central Asia.

The second chapter scrutinizes security relations between China and Kyrgyzstan and discusses the main aspects of security relations in Central Asia. Also border disputes between China and Kyrgyzstan, which has become a key issue for the security of Kyrgyzstan at the beginning of its relations with China, will be discussed as well. The importance of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in security relations and importance of this organization for Kyrgyzstan and China will be analyzed.

In the third chapter economic relations between Kyrgyzstan and China: the main economic strategies of China, its investments, the role of economic integration and Kyrgyzstan's response to economic integration will be broadly discussed.

This study attempts to find an answer to the question why Kyrgyzstan has established close neighboring relations and has actively cooperated in security and economic issues with China from the time of its independence. The answer to this question will be given in the conclusion part of this study after evaluation of the outcomes of research of the previous chapters.

From the time of independence of Kyrgyzstan China began diplomatic relations with Kyrgyzstan and began integration to all Central Asia. Nowadays China is strategic, economic and security partner of Kyrgyzstan and other regional countries such as Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. For this moment China has very

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<sup>9</sup> Mughanda Muhindo, Gaetano Calenzo, "Neorealism and International Subsystems of Small States: Insight from Sub-Saharan African countries' Interactions", *Interdisciplinary Political Studies*, Vol.1, No. 2, November 2011, p. 149.

friendly relations with Kyrgyzstan and other countries there, as well as Kyrgyzstan is gaining benefits in economic and security means, also China is making a lot of investments in Kyrgyzstan that is vital for the economy of this country. So for Kyrgyzstan it is better to conduct its friendly relations, improve its bilateral relations with China and still be vigilant and careful with such powerful neighbor.

As China has ambitions to become a superpower, then it is the right time for Central Asian states as Kyrgyzstan to analyze its relations with the rising power China and concern about domination of China in Central Asia.

# CHAPTER I

## KYRGYZSTAN BETWEEN THE GREAT POWERS

### 1.1. KYRGYZSTAN AS A SMALL STATE

China and Kyrgyzstan are neighboring countries located on the Eurasian continent. Both of them share the region of Central Asia. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union Central Asia has become a strategic region where have important interests such great powers as China, Russia and the United States. The new formation of several independent states in Central Asia attracted a lot of attention from international world. Because before this region was closed for foreign relations with other countries on international arena as Central Asia was part of the Soviet Union and was closed by the “iron curtain” of the Soviet regime.

Kyrgyzstan is one of five Central Asian countries that gained its independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Kyrgyzstan had hard times in building new independent country after living under the rule of the Soviet Union. Establishing friendly relations with neighboring states has become an important part of Kyrgyzstan’s activities to establish itself as a viable state.

China and Kyrgyzstan share common border for more than a 1000 km. Kyrgyz people and Chinese people have very deep rooted relations because they are sharing the same geography for many centuries from ancient past until today.<sup>10</sup>

After the advance of Tsarist Russia to present day Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan Russia and China became neighbors in Central Asia. Since that time up till 1991 China did not have direct relations with Central Asian people under Russian rule.

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<sup>10</sup> See in detail: Anvar Baytur, “Кыргыз тарыхынын лекциялары (Lectures of Kyrgyz history)”, Bishkek: Uchkun Press, 1992, p. 41, p.120.; Yuriy Hudyakov, «Kyrgyzy na prostorah Azii (Kyrgyzs on the vastness of Asia)», Bishkek: by the program of Transformation of liberal education in Kyrgyz Republic which is carried out by the Soros Foundation-Kyrgyzstan in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, 1995.; Viktor Butanaev, Yuriy Hudyakov «Istoriya Yeniseyskih Kyrgyzov (History of Yenisei Kyrgyzs)», Abakan: Khakass State University Press, 2000.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union provided opportunity for China to establish direct relations with Kyrgyz Republic and other Central Asian countries.

Before analyzing relations between China and Kyrgyzstan in details it will be useful to present the full picture of interrelations between the great powers that are active in Central Asia and analyze their interests in the region so we can see how it affects the relations of China with Central Asian countries and particularly with Kyrgyzstan. Analyzing the effects of Russian and the US policies toward the region will also help us to understand the position of Kyrgyzstan and its attitudes toward them.

Neorealism provides the most relevant framework to analyze interactions of such powers as Russia, China and the USA in such region as Central Asia. As one of the main neorealist writer John J. Mearsheimer wrote:

“...great powers are trapped in an iron cage where they have little choice but to compete with each other for power if they hope to survive.”<sup>11</sup>

Russia, China and the United States gathered in Central Asian region to become more influential and powerful. Central Asia is the region where they want to pose their interests, therefore have to compete with each other. Neorealism explains the interrelations between the great powers and their reason of struggle for more influence on the limited geography. Maybe to be powerful in Central Asia is not the “hope to survive”, but every great power has their interests in Central Asia which is highly important to every of them.

First of all we should mark that neorealism is quite new theory in international relations as it emerged in 1970 as the theory that puts some corrections to classical realism theory. If classical realism argues that the actions of state are based on the human nature then the neorealism doesn't take into consideration human itself, states are the main actors in neorealism. It was Kenneth Waltz who first brought neorealism as the critique to classical neorealism. He argues that the main reason is a “structure of the world”, therefore states act in the way of continuous power gaining and struggle for more

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<sup>11</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, “Structural realism”, Ed. Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, Steve Smith, “International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity”, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, p.72.

influence. Because international relations are a system with “structure” and it is constructed in such a way that if states doesn’t have power than they are weak and can’t pose their interests, they have to obey more powerful states.<sup>12</sup>

Therefore this theory is also widely called “structural realism”. This “structure” is the main reason of acts of great powers in Central Asia that we are discussing in this chapter. Russia, China and the United States are continuously trying to make their presence more vital for every of the country in this region so they can be more influential.

Neorealism is not only about more power on international arena. It also has two kinds which are defensive and offensive neorealism. In other words it is about how much power is enough for every country. In this point K. Waltz argued that countries are posing defensive neorealism, which means that states are aiming to have power that is enough for them. He said that countries don’t aim to have more power than they need, otherwise “system will punish them”, because more power leads to hegemony which is “foolhardy”.<sup>13</sup> On the contrary Mearsheimer argues that the main strategy of every state in neorealist theory to gain as much power as they can and that it is quite natural that every state is aiming hegemony. It is because the best security is to pursue as much power to ensure its own survival.<sup>14</sup> Mearsheimer also wrote that:

“The balance of power is mainly a function of the tangible military assets that states possess, such as armoured divisions and nuclear weapons...”<sup>15</sup>

In our case we can say that three great powers in their competition in Central Asia have the balance of power. Because Russia, China as well as the US are the nuclear states, they legally have the nuclear weapon and the members to Nuclear Weapon States (NWS). In this regard they are balancing each other as the states that have legal nuclear armament.

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<sup>12</sup> S. Burchill, “Realism and Neorealism”, S. Burchill, A. Linklater with R.Devetak, M. Patterson and J.True, “Theories of International Relations”, Melbourne: Deakin University Press,1996, p.83.

<sup>13</sup> Mearsheimer, “Structural realism”, p.72.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

The interactions between great powers can be explained in offensive neorealist framework and can be defined as struggle for power. They are not satisfied with the power that they already have, and try to get more power competing in Central Asian region. Neorealism explains these attempts of great powers by the presence of anarchy in international relations which is core structure of this theory.<sup>16</sup> In other words there is no higher authority in the international arena, so when there are disagreements between states no authority can regulate their relations. States themselves are trying to do that, therefore the side which is powerful becomes the right one because it has more power; it can force the other side to accept its interests. Therefore every state is trying to gain more and more power so the other state cannot order it what to do.

The other important point that Mearsheimer pointed out:

“...states latent power refers to the raw potential it can draw on when competing with rival states...They can also do so by increasing the size of their population and their share of global wealth...”<sup>17</sup>

In other words, great powers are in the attempt to raise their potential to compete with other powers. Such factors as the share of the global wealth and rise the population size are for strengthening that potential for competition. In this regard Central Asia is attractive for competing great powers as the source of global wealth which is abundant with natural resources as oil, gas, gold etc. After the collapse of the Soviet Union Central Asia became open to the influence from the outside and its natural resources, especially energy, gas, uranium, agricultural and water resources became easier to reach. The existence of energy resources is very important trump card in the international arena. The presence of abundant natural resources strongly influences the shaping of the foreign policies of great powers toward the regions that have them. In this regard Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are the main holders of reach oil, natural gas and uranium resources. Whereas Kyrgyzstan has large potential of hydropower energy, huge deposits of gold, big amount of water resources as the land locating in upstream of the main rivers of the region and as the mountainous land where

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<sup>16</sup> Burchill, “Realism and Neorealism”, p. 87.

<sup>17</sup> Mearsheimer, “Structural realism”, p.73.

thousands of underground clean water sources and glaciers are located.<sup>18</sup> Moreover this region is also has high potential as a transit region through which China wants to establish the New Silk Road in order to reach large markets of Europe and the South Asia.

The explanations of small states' actions are also important for us in this case of study, because we are analyzing Central Asian region where the local countries are the newly independent "small" states in the international arena. It is natural that the actions of great powers in this region directly affect the actions of "small" states. To better understand the actions of small states we should pay attention to the different policies in neorealism as *autonomy seeking policy* and *influence seeking policy*.<sup>19</sup> As small states are not so powerful as great powers they actually try to follow influence seeking policy. According to the neorealist writer Volker Rittberg in influence seeking policy states are trying to gain more cooperation with other states as the way to gain more influence and "resulting policy outcomes in their own interests". In relations with great powers small states seek "voice opportunity".<sup>20</sup> In other words small states acting in such way to raise its voice and influence in the international arena and the only right way to do so for the less powerful states is to cooperate with great powers. For example Mughanda Muhindo and Gaetano Calenzo in their article regarding small states in Africa argue that small states as they are weak try to establish alliances with great powers, so they can have friendly relations with them for own security and development.<sup>21</sup> Walt defines two types of behavior of small states in the face of threat. According to him small states establish alliances with great powers for *balancing* "... to protect themselves from states or coalitions whose superior resources could pose a threat..." or for *bandwagoning* when the states align with the source of danger and accept the will of the powerful state to

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<sup>18</sup> Valentini K.L., Orolbaev E.E., Abylgazieva A.K., "Water problems of Central Asia", *International Strategic Research Institute Under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic*, Bishkek, 2004, p.5-6.

<sup>19</sup> Ed. Volker Rittberg, "German Foreign Policy Since Unification: Theories and Case Studies", The United Kingdom: Manchester University Press, 2001, p. 47.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Muhindo, Calenzo, "Neorealism and International Subsystems of Small States: Insight from Sub-Saharan African Countries' Interactions", p. 149.



save its close relations with it.<sup>22</sup> Moreover Denny Roy in his article regarding the same balancing and bandwagoning behavior of small states analyzed behavior of Southeast Asian countries and China that mostly suits to the situation in Central Asia and particularly to the relations of Kyrgyzstan with great powers, one of which is also China. In addition to Walt he classified balancing as *low intensity balancing* when state maintaining constructive relationship with targeted state and *high intensity balancing* when relationship between balancing state and targeted state is withstanding and prevented by political tensions.<sup>23</sup>

Kyrgyzstan is the clear example of action of small state in neorealist construction. This country has very interesting location and is the strategic country that has direct border with China and has strong influence of Russia that also locates not so far from borders of Kyrgyzstan. Also Central Asia became strategic region for the world security and peace after 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States. Therefore the strategic location of Kyrgyzstan attracted third big power the United States of America that situated its military forces in Kyrgyzstan. So because of the geopolitical location of Kyrgyzstan all three powers are interested to establish close relation with Kyrgyzstan to gain more power in this region. All of the three powers Russia, China and the USA have embassies in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan. So Kyrgyzstan has close diplomatic relations with them and this relation growing to economic and security relations as well. Of course it is not easy to have equally good relations with every of that great powers. Especially in the condition when those great powers actively competing with each other. However, according to its official discourse Kyrgyzstan is aiming multi-vector foreign policy, which means having close relations with several countries on international arena, because of its small capabilities. For example the country cannot refuse economic assistance and support of all the three regional powers in the current condition of its economy. Proclaimed multi-vector policy provides an opportunity to maneuver between powerful countries. This approach is effective way to supplement the budget of the country. From the other hand security concerns and attempts to balance strong influence

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<sup>22</sup> Walt, "Alliances: Balancing or Bandwagoning", p.110.

<sup>23</sup> Denny Roy, "Southeast Asia and China: Balancing or Bandwagoning?", *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs*, Vol. 27, No. 2, August 2005, p. 306.

of Russia after disintegration of the Soviet Union also became the reason of multi-vector foreign policy of Kyrgyzstan.<sup>24</sup>

According to the Table 1 we can see the huge difference between Kyrgyzstan and three great powers. Kyrgyzstan is really small in the means of budget, defense spending, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and even according to the area of the country and population size. We can certainly say that Kyrgyzstan is the small state that is facing the complicated relations with three great powers.

**Table 1:** The comparison of Kyrgyzstan and three great powers Russia, China and the USA (2012-2013)<sup>25</sup>

Varieties	China	Russia	The USA	Kyrgyzstan
<b>Total territory (km<sup>2</sup>)</b>	9.598.094	17,098,242	9.629.091	199,951
<b>Population size</b>	1.347.350,000	143.056,000	317.000,000	5.477,000
<b>GDP</b>	\$8.227.103	\$2.014.775	\$16.244.600	\$6.475 billion
<b>Budget</b>	\$2.251 trillion	\$450.3 billion	\$3.517 trillion	\$2.458 billion
<b>Defense spending</b>	\$126 trillion	\$76,600 trillion	\$612,5 trillion	\$3,205 billion

<sup>24</sup> A.G. Bolshakov, “Многовекторность внешней политики Киргизии в контексте изменения конфликтности на постсоветском пространстве (Multi-vector foreign policy of Kyrgyzstan in the context of changes in conflictness on post-Soviet space”, (n.d.) *Journal ПОЛИТЭКС (POLITEKS)*, (<http://www.politex.info/content/view/698/30/>), date of access: 09.04.2014.

<sup>25</sup> “Countries of the world by area”, *One World Nations Online*, ([http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/countries\\_by\\_area.htm](http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/countries_by_area.htm)); “Population Figures by Country”, *One World Nations Online*, (<http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/population-by-country.htm>), date of access: 22.04.2014; “GDP ranking”, The World Bank, 09.04.2014, (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/GDP-ranking-table>), date of access: 22.04.2014; “Budget”, The WORLD FACTBOOK, 2013, (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2056.html>), date of access: 22.04.2014; “Defense Spending by Country”, *Globalfirepower (GFP) Strenght in Numbers*, 2013, (<http://www.globalfirepower.com/defense-spending-budget.asp>), date of access: 22.04.2014; Anna Yalovkina, “Расходы на соцсектор в 14 раз превысят бюджет обороны и реального сектора (Expenditure on social sector 14 times higher than the defense budget and the real sector)”, *Vecherniy Bishkek*, 13.11.2012, ([http://www.vb.kg/doc/205567\\_rashody\\_na\\_socsektor\\_v\\_14\\_raz\\_prevysiat\\_budjet\\_oborony\\_i\\_realnogo\\_sektora.htm](http://www.vb.kg/doc/205567_rashody_na_socsektor_v_14_raz_prevysiat_budjet_oborony_i_realnogo_sektora.htm)), date of access: 22.04.2014.

## 1.2. KYRGYZSTAN- RUSSIA RELATIONS

Russia is the historical dominant power in this region. Central Asia was part of Russia since the end of the XIX century when it was Tsarist Russia. Particularly in 1858 China, which was at that time Qing Dynasty, and Tsarist Russia delimited areas between them.<sup>26</sup> As a result lands which are now called Central Asian region became the part of Tsarist Russia, then continued being under the rule of Russia during the Soviet Union period. And only on 31<sup>th</sup> August 1991 Kyrgyzstan proclaimed its independence and in the same year on 25<sup>th</sup> of December the Soviet Union totally disintegrated.

Central Asia is in the strategic interest of Russia. As this region was part of the Soviet Union not so long ago Russia still sees Central Asia as the region that must be under its direct influence. In other words for becoming a powerful country Russia first of all should keep under its strong influence all Central Asian countries as the region of the former Soviet space and direct neighborhood of the Russian Federation, and then to pose itself as the great power in the international arena. Moreover, Russia is historical partner of Kyrgyzstan and still we cannot say that Kyrgyzstan is totally independent from Russia. Russia has big influence in Kyrgyzstan and to the Kyrgyz government. Maybe because of that rent for the US troops annually is nearly \$200 million for today, but the rent of the Russian troops that also locates in Kyrgyzstan is only \$4,5 million.(!)<sup>27</sup>

Foreign policy of Russia toward Central Asia during the first years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union was not active. In other words Central Asian states were not in the priority of Russia for the first three years after the formation of the Russian Federation, Russia thought that there is no need to pay extra attention to this region as this region was under the rule of Russia for many years, that this region

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<sup>26</sup> We will discuss this issue of border delimitation between Tsarist Russia and Qing Dynasty and its consequences to the relations of Kyrgyzstan and China in details in the “Security Relations” chapter, pp. 51-63.

<sup>27</sup> “Плата за размещение российской базы в Кыргызстане составит \$4,5 млн в год (Fees for the Russian military base in Kyrgyzstan will be \$ 4.5 million per year), *Central Asian News*, 22.03.2013, (<http://www.trend.az/regions/casia/kyrgyzstan/2131816.html>), date of access: 01.11.2013.

already has strong ties with Russia and will be under its influence.<sup>28</sup> Instead of that Russia was busy with the decisions how to place new formed the Russian Federation in the international arena. Even before the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in August 1991 during the meetings of democratic forces in Moscow Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Kozyrev proclaimed new way of foreign policy orientation of Russia according to which the USA and the other Western democratic countries became “natural friends and in the short time allies”. Strategic partnership was proclaimed by Kozyrev as the main way of cooperation with the West.<sup>29</sup> Russia stood on the way of liberal democratic development. But soon Russia understood that the West is not going to be “friends” with Russia, they still see Russia as the “enemy”. Confirmation of this was the strengthening the position of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and its expansion into Europe, while Russia was expecting that NATO will be disbanded at the end of the Cold War due to the fact that the Soviet Union collapsed.<sup>30</sup> But instead NATO expanded toward the borders of Russia. Russia’s expectation of strong and friendly ties with the West and “strategic partnership” didn’t realize. Liberal democrats in Russia were expecting that new formed the Russian Federation by its orientation to the West and choosing liberal democratic development would make them “close ally” of the United States and the European countries, but they were disappointed by the “harsh reality of the world politics” where power played the key role in international relations.<sup>31</sup> Moreover Kozyrev’s “new foreign policy of Western development” was strongly criticized in Russia and opposition was claiming that this foreign policy was in contradiction with Russian interests. So in

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<sup>28</sup> Oleg Chazov, “Интересы и политика России в Центральной Азии в новых геополитических условиях (Interests and policies of Russia in Central Asia in the new geopolitical conditions)”, *Observer* 5/2012, pp. 45-46.

<sup>29</sup> “Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации (Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation)”, 1992 // Внешняя политика и безопасность современной России (Foreign and Security Policy of modern Russia) (1991–1998). Readings in two volumes. Т. 2. Documents / Prep. By Т. А. Shaklein. М.: МОНФ, 1999, p. 17.

<sup>30</sup> “Россия и НАТО (Russia and NATO)”, ““Зебра полосатая” во взаимоотношениях между Россией и НАТО (“Striped zebra” in relations between Russia and NATO)”, *Независимое Военное Обозрение (Independent Military Review)*, №16 2009, (<http://www.milresource.ru/index-nato.html>), date of access: 10.03.2014.

<sup>31</sup> V. I. Mihailenko, “История внешней политики Российской Федерации: больше вопросов, чем ответов (History of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation: more questions than answers)”, *Materials of international conference. Volume 1/ ed. By R.G. Pihoi/ Ekaterinburg-Moscow: Academic Project*, 2007, (<http://www.ural-yeltsin.ru/usefiles/destiny/Mikhailenko.doc>), date of access: 15.12.2013.

1993-1994 years Russia began to change its foreign policy and looked to its nearest neighboring countries which were Central Asian countries.

Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) was established at the dawn of the formation of the Russian Federation.<sup>32</sup> It was established because of Russian security concerns in the post Soviet area as well as for the purpose to sustain influence in the region. During the Soviet Union this region was closed and security of all the Union was provided by Moscow, but now when every former member country became independent they were free to act by themselves to provide security to their own countries. Therefore in order to establish security and sustain its preponderance in the region Russia took initiative in its own hands and put on the table Collective Security Treaty that should be signed by the countries of the region for the establishment of cooperation between them for the security of the whole region and every country there. As a result on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1992 Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Russia signed Collective Security Treaty. Later in 1993 Azerbaijan, Georgia and Belarus also signed this Treaty. According to Collective Security Treaty that contains 11 articles member countries have to cooperate in security issues of the region, they cannot attack the other member country and have to solve all the problems by peaceful ways, also in the case of an attack to one of the member countries on its request other member countries shall immediately provide necessary help, including military one, and other supports that are in their disposal.<sup>33</sup> This Treaty was signed for 5 years and after every 5 years was prolonged by the member countries for another 5 year term. In October 2002 the Treaty was transformed to the full-fledged international organization CSTO. According to the Charter of CSTO this step was done “for the full development of Member States of the Treaty and ensuring of their safety, sovereignty and territorial integrity”.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> “Декларация государств -участников Договора о Коллективной Безопасности (Declaration of states -parties to the Treaty on Collective Security)”, *Official web-site of CSTO*, 10.02.1995 ,(http://www.odkb.gov.ru/b/aza.htm), date of access: 10.03.2014.

<sup>33</sup> Collective Security Treaty, May 15 1992, (http://www.odkb-csto.org/documents/detail.php?ELEMENT\_ID=1897), date of access: 07.11.2013.

<sup>34</sup> Charter of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, October 7, 2002, http://www.odkb-csto.org/documents/detail.php?ELEMENT\_ID=1896, date of access: 07.11.2013.

By the establishment of CSTO Russia again gain control in one of the most important issue as the security in its strategic region Central Asia. CSTO has important place in the relations of Central Asian countries between each other and since its formation became one of the important factors of security issues in the region.

The membership to CSTO is important for Kyrgyzstan as it is directly relates with the relations of Kyrgyzstan with Russia. As a small state Kyrgyzstan tries to have friendly relations with all great powers and Kyrgyzstan is continuing its close relation with the most powerful state in the region– Russia. Kyrgyzstan really relies on Russia and that Russian armies can save Kyrgyzstan from the threat outside or inside the country.<sup>35</sup> Therefore Kyrgyzstan accepted the offer of Russia and gave permission to open the military air base on its territory. This step was done by Russia because it was not pleased and mostly was concerned with the rising influence of the USA in the region that is also locating military air base on the territory of Kyrgyzstan. So in 2003 Russian military air base that was later taken in the scope of CSTO was opened in Kant region not so far from the capital Bishkek. This air base is the air component of the Collective Rapid Deployment Forces of the Central Asian region. It performs tasks to ensure the security of the territory and airspace of the CSTO member states. When this air base was opened it was decided that on the air base constantly will be found 10 to 15 Russian aircraft "Su-27" and "Su-25", military transport aircrafts and helicopters, as well as up to 500 Russian servicemen.<sup>36</sup> For today there are deployed 10 aircraft and 14 helicopters Su-25, Su-27, training aircraft L-39, Mi-8 and also 250 service members and their families are situating there.<sup>37</sup> Russia has plans in near future to open second air base in

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<sup>35</sup> Evgeny Troitskiy, "Turmoil in Kyrgyzstan: A Challenge to Russian Foreign Policy", *The Swedish Institute of International Affairs*, No 8, 2012, p. 8.

<sup>36</sup> "Президенты России и Киргизии приняли участие в открытии российской военной авиабазы вблизи киргизского города Кант. (Presidents of Russia and Kyrgyzstan took part in the opening of a Russian military airbase near the Kyrgyz city of Kant.)", Official web-site of Russian President, 23.10.2003, (<http://archive.kremlin.ru/events/chron/2003/10/54431.shtml>), date of Access: 23.04.2014.

<sup>37</sup> "Авиационная база России в Канте (Russian air base in Kant)", Supplemental information, ITAR TASS, 22.10.2013, (<http://itar-tass.com/spravochnaya-informaciya/739744>), date of Access: 23.04.2014.

the South part of Kyrgyzstan and this initiative is also had warm response from the government of Kyrgyzstan.<sup>38</sup>

As the recent practice shows CSTO couldn't help when Kyrgyzstan first time for the whole period of its membership asked for support during the June 2010 conflict in the South of Kyrgyzstan. Russian President Dmitri Medvedev responded to this request of Kyrgyz government that such reaction of CSTO is not stipulated in Charter or in any other agreements of the organization.<sup>39</sup> However, later on the Communique Session of the CSTO on 23<sup>rd</sup> September of 2013 in Sochi was decided that for the efficiency of the organization in such situation of the threat of destabilization in the member countries will be developed special effective system of collective response to emergency situations. Also on that session was reaffirmed commitment of the member states to further strengthen joint CSTO collective security system and improve its efficiency.<sup>40</sup>

There is no doubt that CSTO is under full control of Russia and this organization is additional advantage for Russia to be influential and dominating power in Central Asia, whereas neither China nor the United States has such an organization that would provide them with additional power in such an important field as security. If in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Russia has to conduct its acts with China, here in CSTO Russia holds all the control in its hands and other members just follow Russia. Furthermore, Russia is also actively using CSTO in its competition with China and the USA in the region, and at the same time for limiting the military presence of the USA in Central Asia. In this regard during the 2011 meeting of CSTO members in Moscow parties signed the "Protocol to place military facilities on the territory of the member states" according to which from that time the resolution of other parties are needed to

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<sup>38</sup> "Киргизия согласилась на российскую военную базу в обмен на \$2 млрд (Kyrgyzstan agreed to the Russian military base in exchange for \$ 2 billion, Polit.ru, (<http://www.polit.ru/news/2009/08/03/warbase/>), 03.10.2009.

<sup>39</sup> Valentin Bogatyrev, "Почему Кыргызстан не видит альтернатив ОДКБ (Why Kyrgyzstan doesn't see CSTO alternatives)", *Information and Analytical Centre "Перспектива" (Perspective)*, №6 November/December 2012, (<http://www.ia-centr.ru/expert/15213/>), date of access: 09.11.2013.

<sup>40</sup> "КОММЮНИКЕ сессии Совета коллективной безопасности Организации Договора о коллективной безопасности Сочи, 23 сентября 2013 года (COMMUNIQUE session of the Collective Security Council of the Collective Security Treaty Sochi, September 23, 2013)", official web-site of CSTO, 23.09.2013 ([http://odkb-csto.org/documents/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=2722](http://odkb-csto.org/documents/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=2722)), date of access: 23.04.2014.

place military facilities of the non-member country on the territory of the member state.<sup>41</sup> In other words all the member countries to CSTO have to give permission to place military troops or facilities of non-member country; otherwise the member country doesn't have the right to permit their deployment. There is no doubt that this Protocol was firstly addressed to Kyrgyzstan that still has the US military troops on its territory. By this Protocol Russia excluded the possibility of future deployment of military forces of the third states without its permission in Central Asian countries. We can say it is the important step in neorealist theory of Russia in its competition with China and the USA in Central Asia, because after the 2014 summer withdrawal of the USA troops as it is expected from Kyrgyzstan further placement of military forces of regional powers will be realized only under full control of Russia.

The other important tool of Russia's influence to Central Asia is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). It is not under the full control of Russia, but still attending in one more organization with Central Asian states and another big power China is additional advantage for influence in this region for Russia.

The SCO is the regional organization that has the former Soviet Union countries as Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan plus China as members. The SCO established in 2001, but before this organization existed as the Shanghai Five- that was a group of countries established in 1996 for regulating border issues between China, Russia and Central Asian states. This border issue had old roots and was regarding the border delimitation between the Russian Empire and Qing Dynasty in the end of the XIXth century. According to China this delimitation was "unequal" because Qing Dynasty was weak at that period and the Russian Empire forced to sign those "unequal treaties" for the delimitation of the lands that nowadays belonged to independent Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Russia. These border claims of China began during the Soviet Union period, but were unsuccessful- the Soviet Union didn't accept those claims. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union China this time

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<sup>41</sup> "Протокол о размещении объектов военной инфраструктуры на территориях государств – членов Организации Договора о коллективной безопасности (Protocol for the placement of military facilities on the territory of the member- states of the Collective Security Treaty)", 20 December 2011, Official web-page of CSTO, ([http://odkb-csto.org/documents/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=1682](http://odkb-csto.org/documents/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=1682)), date of access: 10.03.2014.



addressed those border claims to newly established Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and the Russian Federation. By the initiative of China in 1996 was established the Shanghai Five community by the membership of China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Russia. Finally in the end of 1990's border issues were regulated. After the aim of the Shanghai Five was realized when China could return its "claimed" lands back and security agreements had been reached, particularly in 1996 the Shanghai Agreement on Confidence Building in the Military Field in the Border Area and in 1997 Agreement on Mutual Reduction of Military Forces in the Border Areas were signed by the member countries<sup>42</sup>, group should be closed. But realization of Russia the rising geopolitical and strategic importance of Central Asia and at the same time the opportunity of cooperating with rival neighbor China in one bunch persuaded Russia for the extension of the Shanghai Five in a new form, at a higher level as an organization. At the same time for China the cooperation with Central Asian countries and close communion with the mighty neighbor Russia helped China to regulate its relations with competing country, especially when Russia and China could build friendly, diplomatic relations after so many years of "cold tensions" in the past. Needless to say, that for Central Asian countries like Kyrgyzstan extending cooperation with two powerful forces in the region and the ability to operate on an equal footing with them, even if this equality was only on paper, was extremely important and quite beneficial in the time when they were building their international relations as independent states. As a result on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2001 former members of the Shanghai Five with the addition of new member Uzbekistan formed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization that has higher status than the Shanghai Five.<sup>43</sup>

The primer aim of the SCO was the security of the region and security in every of its member countries. As written in declaration this organization is based on the relations of good-neighborliness, mutual trust and friendship among the participants, moreover it would help to improve security and stability in the region and promote common

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<sup>42</sup> "Declaration on the Establishment of Shanghai Cooperation Organization", 15.06.2001, (<http://www.sectsc.org/RU123/show.asp?id=83>), Official web-page of SCO, date of access: 04.11.2013.

<sup>43</sup> Chjao Huashen, "Китай, Центральная Азия и Шанхайская Организация Сотрудничества (China, Central Asia and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization)", *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 2005, p.7.

development. Also declaration underlines that predecessor of the SCO the Shanghai Five “met the needs of humanity and the historical trend of peace and development after the Cold War period, revealed potential for good, unity and cooperation through mutual respect and mutual trust between states belonging to different civilizations and different cultural traditions”.<sup>44</sup> In short member countries wanted to continue cooperation and bring their relations to the new level. However it was intention of two big powers – China and Russia to gain more control and power in the region through this organization. Particularly Russia’s aim is to stop the influence of the West, especially the USA, to this region, so Russia is trying to balance West influence by the uniting with China in one organization. On the other side its difficult relations with China during the Soviet Union should be ended and in the new multipolar world it is better to be ally with its competing power that locates in the same region. So the SCO serves for Russia as the arena for cooperation with China and shifting balance of power in the region. Many analysts see in that cooperation with China in the framework of the SCO as the competition with NATO, in other words competition with the United States.<sup>45</sup>

Russia is still the most important security partner of Kyrgyzstan. Besides their cooperation in CSTO and the SCO they have military partnership since the independence of Kyrgyzstan. Particularly in 1993 Russia and Kyrgyzstan signed Agreement on Cooperation in Military Field according to which parties retain existing relationship for the production and supply of weapons, military equipment etc.<sup>46</sup> In other words Russia saved its status of the main exporter of military weapons and equipments to Kyrgyzstan after its independence. This protocol is still in force as it is profitable for Kyrgyzstan to import military weapons and equipments that country for this moment cannot produce itself without any duties, taxes and other charges.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> “Declaration on the Establishment of Shanghai Cooperation Organization”, Official web-page of SCO, (<http://www.sectsc.org/RU123/show.asp?id=83>, 15.06.2001), date of Access: 04.11.2013.

<sup>45</sup> Alyson J. K. Bailes, Pál Dunay, Pan Guang, Mikhail Troitskiy, “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization”, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Policy Paper No. 17, May 2007, p. 11.

<sup>46</sup> “Договор между Российской Федерацией и Кыргызской Республикой о сотрудничестве в военной области (Agreement between the Russian Federation and Kyrgyz Republic on cooperation in the military field)”, 5 July, 1993, (<http://www.referent.ru/1/24960>), Article №3, date of access: 13.03.2014.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., Article №6.

Moreover Russia is providing military and technical aid to Kyrgyzstan. For example in 2012 Russian Federation granted to the military forces of Kyrgyzstan machinery and equipment for military purposes that cost in total \$1.1 billion.<sup>48</sup> Also during the visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to Kyrgyzstan in September 2012 was signed agreement with the President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambaev that strengthened cooperation of two countries in security issues for the near future and one more time proved the status of Russia for Kyrgyzstan as the main security partner. According to the agreement all the Russian military bases on the territory of Kyrgyzstan including air base at Kant airport, testing base of Russian Navy in Issyk-Kul at the Koy-Sary cape and on peninsula Kara-Bulun which is the highest testing base in the world, Navy communication center in the west of Chu oblast and autonomous seismic point near Maili-Suu that are autonomous will be united in one Joint base of the Russian Federation since 2017.<sup>49</sup> It is clearly stated in the agreement that this Joint military base has the aim of maintaining peace and stability in the region, is defensive in nature and is not directed against the third countries. Parties decided that annual payment for this Joint military base will be \$4.5 million US dollar. As we can see Russia is guaranteeing its military presence at heart of Central Asia- Kyrgyzstan that will strengthen position of Russia as the most important power in the region. Moreover after the expected removal of the US forces from Kyrgyzstan Russia will be the single power that has military bases on the territory of Kyrgyzstan and the future location of military forces of the third countries will be under control of Russia in the framework of the protocol that was signed with the member countries of CSTO in 2011. As for Kyrgyzstan this Joint military base will be important aspect of security of the country and annual payment will support the budget of the country after the US military troops will not exist in post 2014 period as a renter on the territory of Kyrgyzstan.

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<sup>48</sup> Parliament of Kyrgyz Republic Zhogorku Kenesh, “Мониторинг СМИ в сфере международных отношений на 25 декабря 2012 года (Monitoring of the media in international relations for 25.12.2012)”, ([http://kenesh.kg/RU/Articles/14058-Monitoring\\_SMI\\_v\\_sfere\\_mezhdunarodnyx\\_otnoshenij\\_na\\_25\\_dekabrya\\_2012\\_goda.aspx](http://kenesh.kg/RU/Articles/14058-Monitoring_SMI_v_sfere_mezhdunarodnyx_otnoshenij_na_25_dekabrya_2012_goda.aspx)), date of access: 09.11.2013.

<sup>49</sup> Aleksandr Tuzov, “База не простая: авиасейсмоморская! (Base is not simple: aviaseysmonaval!)”, Вечерний Бишкек (Vecherniy Bishkek), 24 December 2012 №191 (10555), (<http://members.vb.kg/2012/12/24/otrkyt/3.html>), date of access: 13.03.2014.

Economic relations between Russia and Kyrgyzstan also deserve special attention. For the healthy development of economic relations after disintegration of the Soviet Union Russia and Kyrgyzstan decided to establish trade missions of the other side on their territories and signed appropriate agreement on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1992.<sup>50</sup> According to that agreement parties opened in the capitals of both countries trade missions of the other side that are mainly serves for the promotion, development and expansion of trade and economic relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kyrgyzstan. Particularly these missions helping in assisting individuals and legal entities for the establishment of direct economic ties, in implementation of industrial cooperation, in establishment of joint ventures and the development of other possible forms of economic activities. Actually in the first years of independence the economy of Kyrgyzstan was very dependent to the economy of Russia. There is no wonder for that as during the Soviet Union period the economies of the member countries were interrelated. The industry and all the production lines of the member countries were bound to each other and especially to the structural and institutional legacy of the Soviet era. So after the disintegration of the Soviet system most of the factories stopped work in Kyrgyzstan because the sources of raw materials were coming from the other former member countries or from Russia and mostly due to the lack of financial support, easily extractable energy resources and minerals.<sup>51</sup> Therefore in the first years of independence the main trade partner of Kyrgyzstan was Russia. However, the bilateral trade between Russia and Kyrgyzstan decreased 26 times from 8.2 to 0.3 billion dollars in 1992-2003 and annual volume of trade were within 200-350 million dollars. Since 2003 the bilateral trade between Russia and Kyrgyzstan revitalized and rose 6 times from annual 273 to 1635 million dollars. But in 2009 due to the negative impact of the global crisis

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<sup>50</sup> “Соглашение между Правительством Российской Федерации и Правительством Республики Кыргызстан о взаимном учреждении торговых представительств (Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic on the mutual establishment of trade missions)”, Web-version of legislation of CIS countries, ([http://base.spininform.ru/show\\_doc.fwx?rgn=25674](http://base.spininform.ru/show_doc.fwx?rgn=25674)), date of access: 14.03.2014.

<sup>51</sup> R. Mogylevsky, A. Omorova, “The Kyrgyz Republic”, Center for Social and Economic Research in Kyrgyzstan (CASE-Kyrgyzstan), (n.d.), ([http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/capacity/output\\_studies/roa87\\_study\\_kgz.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/capacity/output_studies/roa87_study_kgz.pdf)), date of access: 23.04.2014.

the Russian-Kyrgyz trade turnover decreased for %27- from \$1.6 to \$1.2 billion.<sup>52</sup> In the following years the trade turnover significantly increased and in 2011 reached \$1.7 billion which is %27.8 higher than in 2010. In 2011 trade turnover reached \$1 678 943.4 which is %27.1 of the share of total annual turnover of Kyrgyzstan.<sup>53</sup> In 2012 it reached \$2 billion which is %20 higher than in 2011.<sup>54</sup> In 2013 Russia took the first place in terms of trade amount of Kyrgyzstan with foreign countries, particularly the amount of trade between them amounted to \$2 billion 193.8 million and increased in comparison with 2012 by %28.<sup>55</sup> As we can see recently the trade turnover between Kyrgyzstan and Russia is increasing from year to year and Russia has firmly consolidated its position as the main foreign trade partner of Kyrgyzstan. Also Kyrgyzstan is planning to enter to the Custom Union that will allow the country to establish more close economic cooperation with Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus. Preparation began in 2011 and for this moment special group of experts was established to solve the technical issue for this important economic step. As the President of Kyrgyz Republic Almazbek Atambaev noted this accession will bring new opportunities for the economy of the country, particularly it will allow the economy of Kyrgyzstan to develop and raise its production capacity, not only concentrate on the re-exporting of the goods.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> V. Paramonov, A. Stokov, O. Stolpovskiy, “Российско-кыргызское энергетическое взаимодействие. Часть 1. (Kyrgyz-Russian energy cooperation. Part 1)”, (<http://www.ceasia.ru/energetika/rossiysko-kirgizskoe-energeticheskoe-vzaimodeystvie.-chast-1.html>), date of access: 13.03.2014.

<sup>53</sup> Report of the Minister of Economy Temir Sariyev on regional conference «Влияние на Центральную Азию присоединения России к ВТО (Impact on Central Asia for Russia's accession to the WTO), Internet portal of CIS, (<http://www.e-cis.info/news.php?id=4533>), date of access: 17.03.2014.

<sup>54</sup> D. Mamontova, “В 2012 году товарооборот между Кыргызстаном и Россией составил 2 миллиарда долларов (In 2012, the trade turnover between Kyrgyzstan and Russia amounted to \$ 2 billion)”, K.News, 22.04.2013, ([http://www.knews.kg/politics/30900\\_v\\_2012\\_godu\\_tovarooborot\\_mejdu\\_kyrgyzstanom\\_i\\_rossiey\\_sostavil\\_2\\_milliarda\\_dollarov/](http://www.knews.kg/politics/30900_v_2012_godu_tovarooborot_mejdu_kyrgyzstanom_i_rossiey_sostavil_2_milliarda_dollarov/)), date of access: 24.04.2014.

<sup>55</sup> “По итогам 2013 года Россия занимает первое место по объему товарооборота Кыргызстана с зарубежными странами (By the end of 2013 Russia ranked first in terms of trade with foreign countries of Kyrgyzstan), KABAR, 19.02.2014, (<http://kabar.kg/rus/economics/full/71839>), date of access: 24.03.2014.

<sup>56</sup> “Алмазбек Атамбаев: «Таможенный союз откроет для Кыргызстана новые возможности» (Almazbek Atambayev: "The Customs Union will open up new opportunities for Kyrgyzstan"), 03.04.2013, (<http://kabar.kg/economics/full/52547>), date of access: 24.04.2014.

Investment sector is another field of economic cooperation between Russia and Kyrgyzstan. However, in the first decade of independence of Kyrgyzstan there were no any serious investments from Russia. Parties mostly cooperated in trade turnover. This was mainly caused by the fact that Russia was more interested in the resources of gas, oil and uranium in that period that Kyrgyzstan doesn't have in such amounts to attract investors. Therefore, Russia has largely cooperated in this field with Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan that have serious amounts of them. Also unstable political situation of Kyrgyzstan was not attractive for the potential investors from Russia. Investment flow in Kyrgyzstan from Russia revived in the early 2000s with the growth of interest of Russia in the energy resources. In this context, investment in Kyrgyzstan as to the country with significant hydropower source was economically expedient for Russia.<sup>57</sup> Kyrgyzstan is the country with the significant hydropower potential and is counted as the third largest country with hydropower resources in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) after Russia and Tajikistan. Hydro potential of Kyrgyzstan is estimated at 142 billion kWh of electricity. For today Kyrgyzstan uses no more than 10% of this potential. Thus, even at this stage hydropower energy provides about 80-90% of electricity production in the country. In 2009-2010 Russia's largest hydro company "RusGidro" refined the optimal placement and technical- economic indicators of priority of the placement of hydropower plants in the upper reaches of the river Naryn which is the biggest river in Kyrgyzstan with the largest amount of water.<sup>58</sup> The first discussions regarding the investments in the building of the hydropower plant on Naryn River began in 2009 with the government of Kyrgyzstan in the face of the President Kurmanbek Bakiyev. However, the realization of this project continued after the stabilization of the country after 2010 unrests and change of the government. As a result on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2012 government of the Russian Federation and the government of the Kyrgyz Republic signed an agreement on the construction and operation of the hydropower stations Upper Naryn cascade. This document was

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<sup>57</sup> Muratalieva Nargiza, "Россия в Центральной Азии: Анализ Модификации Интересов (Russia in Central Asia: Analysis of Modification Interest)", *Время Востока (Eastern Time)*, 25.04.2014, (<http://easttime.ru/blog/rossiya-v-tsentralnoi-azii-analiz-modifikatsii-interesov/4633>), date of Access: 27.04.2014.

<sup>58</sup> "Верхне-Нарынский каскад ГЭС (Upper Naryn cascade HPP)", RusGidro, (n.d), (<http://www.rushydro.ru/press/FA55B5C/87244.html>), date of access: 28.04.2014.

provided for the construction of in total four hydropower plants on the Naryn river: Akbulunskiy Hydropower Plant (HPP), Naryn 1- HPP, Naryn 2- HPP and Naryn3-HPP. On 12<sup>th</sup> June 2013 was held a ceremony of pouring the first cube of concrete in the foundation of the first of the four stations with the participation of the President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev.<sup>59</sup> The construction of these hydropower stations is very important for the energy sector of Kyrgyzstan that will allow the country to become less dependent to the gas resources that is exported from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. In the gas issue in Kyrgyzstan Russia also realized serious steps and offered to buy KyrgyzGaz for the nominal price \$1 with its all debts. As a result Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev on July 9, 2013 signed a decree № 1170-р "On the agreement on cooperation in the field of transportation, distribution and sale of natural gas on the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic", which means that the Russian government approved the purchase of "Gazprom" of 100% share of "KyrgyzGas" for \$1 U.S. dollar. The government of Kyrgyz Republic and the director of "Kyrgyzgaz" Turgunbek Kulmurzayev explained this step as the measure to provide gas for the country for the lower prices. If the biggest gas company in Russia and in the world "Gasprom" will operate "KyrgyzGaz" then Kyrgyzstan can export gas from Russia for the lower prices than from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Also "Gasprom" in the next 5 year will invest 20 billion rubles in modernization and reconstruction of the gas industry in Kyrgyzstan. This project envisages the development of the gas industry in all the regions of the country, also will be realized such facilities as supply and storage of gas on the territory of Kyrgyzstan, construction, reconstruction and maintenance of gas transmission and distribution systems, underground gas storage facilities and other infrastructure of gas complex of Kyrgyzstan. So the gas system in the country will be maintained and operated by the Russian company "Gasprom" for the next 25 years term.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Bolotbek Tashtanaliyev, "За одним долларом "Кыргызгаза" придут инвестиции в 20 миллиардов рублей (After one dollar for "KyrgyzGas" will come investment of 20 billion rubles), Gezitter.org, Source: Newspaper "Kyrgyz Tuusu", 22.07.2013, ([http://www.gezitter.org/economics/22227\\_za\\_odnim\\_dollarom\\_kyrgyzgaza\\_pridut\\_investitsii\\_v\\_20\\_milliardov\\_rublej/](http://www.gezitter.org/economics/22227_za_odnim_dollarom_kyrgyzgaza_pridut_investitsii_v_20_milliardov_rublej/)), date of Access: 27.04.2014.

Also Russia is making serious investments to Kyrgyzstan in recent years. Particularly First Deputy Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic Djoomart Otorbayev is calling Russia as the systematic and fundamental partner of Kyrgyzstan and marked that amount of direct investments of Russia to Kyrgyzstan rose three times in 2013 and Russia became the first country according to the amount of direct investments to Kyrgyzstan in 2013 which is amounted to \$70.5 million dollars.<sup>61</sup>

Also Kyrgyzstan imports fuel products for \$1.1 billion dollars a year from Russia.<sup>62</sup> In other words nearly all the fuel products are imported from Russia. Therefore Kyrgyzstan is dependent to the price policies for fuel products of Russia to Kyrgyzstan and Russia can easily manipulate the decisions of the Kyrgyz government by changing the prices to the fuel products as it was before the 2010 unrests in Kyrgyzstan when Russia was not pleasant with the Bakiyev government and raised export fees to the refined petroleum to Kyrgyzstan that lead to the rise of the prices for the fuel oil in the country,<sup>63</sup> which in turn caused the dissatisfaction of the people against the government of Bakiyev. Thus, the economic relations of Kyrgyzstan and Russia today are closely intertwined. Russia has a huge impact on Kyrgyzstan's economy and uses it for political purposes in relations with Kyrgyzstan.

Newly developed independent states of Central Asia have a lot of thing common with Russia. In other words it is the “soft power” of Russia that has still great influence to Central Asian countries. Distinguished Service Professor at Harvard University and American political scientist Joseph Nye in his book defined soft power as:

“...the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country’s culture, political ideals, and policies.”<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> “Джоомарт Оторбаев: «Россия — наш друг, системный и фундаментальный партнёр» (Djoomart Otorbaev: Russia is our friend, systematic and fundamental partner”, Interview of First Deputy Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic to the newspaper «Дело №...», 11 March, 2014, (<http://www.gov.kg/?p=32516>), date of access: 17.03.2014.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Andrew E. Kramer, “Before Kyrgyz Uprising, Dose of Russian Soft Power”, The New York Times, April 18, 2010, ([http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/19/world/asia/19kyrgyz.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/19/world/asia/19kyrgyz.html?_r=0)), date of access: 10.02.2014.

<sup>64</sup> Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “Soft Power: The Means To Success in World Politics”, The USA: Public Affairs, 2004, p.10.



Russia is broadly using its “soft power” to turn events to its advantage. Russia’s soft power concept is different from that definition. As Tsygankov arguing Russia is seeking to preserve its imperial power through its soft power, in other words Russia is using soft power in its foreign policy for restoring an imperial control.<sup>65</sup>

The new competition environment in Central Asia with two other powers as China and the United States just strengthens the need of Russia to use its soft power as the trump card. Even Russian Council on International Affairs in its analytic report of 2013 suggested that Russia should strengthen its position in Central Asian countries by making a big emphasis on "soft power", which would help to ensure a more "high profile" of Russia in the region.<sup>66</sup>

If we will measure the current situation of Russian "soft power" in Central Asia, then we can see the following picture. First of all government officials of Central Asian countries got their educations in Russian universities. They also have “Soviet minds” of thinking and ruling, moreover they were educated to pose the interests of the Soviet Union.

Russian language is one of the most important components of Russian soft power in Central Asia.<sup>67</sup> Because Russian language is still one of the main languages of communication between people in the countries of Central Asia together with their own languages. Particularly in Kazakhstan 84% of population speak Russian language, in Kyrgyzstan 50%, in Uzbekistan 41%, in Tajikistan 33% and in Turkmenistan %18.<sup>68</sup> Moreover Russian language has official status in Kyrgyzstan and in Constitution of

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<sup>65</sup> Andrei P. Tsygankov, “If Not By Tanks, then by Banks? The Role of Soft Power in Putin’s Foreign Policy”, *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 58, No. 7, November 2006, p. 1081.

<sup>66</sup> Russian Council on International Affairs, “Интересы России в Центральной Азии: содержание, перспективы, ограничители (Russia's interests in Central Asia: the content, perspectives, constraints)”, № 10, 2013, p. 47, ([http://russiancouncil.ru/common/upload/RIAC\\_Central\\_Asia.pdf](http://russiancouncil.ru/common/upload/RIAC_Central_Asia.pdf)), date of access: 10.12.2013.

<sup>67</sup> Dmitri Trenin, “Russia and Central Asia: Interests, Policies and Prospects”, Rajan Menon, “Central Asia- view from Washington, Moscow and Beijing”, New York: M.E. Sharp Inc., 2007, p. 80.

<sup>68</sup> “В Центральной Азии больше всего по-русски говорят в Казахстане (In Central Asia Russian is the most spoken in Kazakhstan)”, News Portal of Kazakhstan *Nur.kz*, (<http://news.nur.kz/294175.html>), date of access: 16.12.2013.

Kyrgyz Republic it is especially noted that:

“The Kyrgyz Republic guarantees the preservation, equal and free development and functioning of all Russian and other languages that are used by population.”<sup>69</sup>

Also in the same article it is noted that:

“Not allowed restricting the rights and freedoms of citizens on the basis of ignorance or lack of fluency of state language”<sup>70</sup>

This means that Russian language can be used instead of state language which is Kyrgyz language in case if the citizen doesn't know the Kyrgyz language. So the government officially uses Russian and all the official documents in the country can be prepared both in Kyrgyz and in Russian languages.

Also Russian media is actively presented in these states by television, radio, newspapers and books. For example in Kyrgyzstan the majority of newspapers, magazines and radio stations are in Russian; newspapers such as “Vecherniy Bishkek”, “Delo №...”, “Slovo Kyrgyzstana”, “Komsomolskaya Pravda”, “Dengi i Vlast”, “Obshestvenniy Reiting”, “Dlya Vas” etc.<sup>71</sup> The main Russian radio stations in Kyrgyzstan are: “Love Radio”, “Europa Plus”, “Hit FM” etc.<sup>72</sup> Moreover plenty of books and weekly magazines are printed in Russian language all over the Central Asia and especially in Kyrgyzstan. So for Russia it is much easier to communicate and find ways of cooperation with Kyrgyzstan rather than for China or for the United States and for the people of Kyrgyzstan - Russia is closer than China or the United States. This is one of the important factors of Russian dominance in Kyrgyzstan.

Furthermore, Russian minority is largely presented in Kyrgyzstan and in the whole Central Asia. If in 1989 in Kyrgyzstan there was %21.53, in Kazakhstan %37.82, in Uzbekistan %8.35, in Turkmenistan %9.48, in Tajikistan %7.62 of Russian

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<sup>69</sup> Constitution of Kyrgyz Republic, Article 5, Part 2, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1993.

<sup>70</sup> Constitution of Kyrgyz Republic, Article 5, Part 3, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1993.

<sup>71</sup> “Печатные издания (Printed Publications)”, Public association “Журналисты (Journalists)”, (<http://journalist.kg/mass-media/pechatnyie-izdaniya/>), date of access: 16.12.2013.

<sup>72</sup> “Телевидение, радио, газеты, журналы Кыргызстана на русском языке (Television, radio, newspapers, magazines of Kyrgyzstan in Russian)”, *Information Portal Russian-Club.net*, (<http://www.kyrgyzstan.russian-club.net/smi.html>), date of access: 16.12.2013.

population.<sup>73</sup> With disintegration of the Soviet Union there was massive flow of Russian people to the Russian Federation. Although there were decline of Russian population nevertheless still for the 2012 in Kyrgyzstan there was %8.6, in Kazakhstan %21.89, in Uzbekistan %3, in Turkmenistan less than %2 and in Tajikistan it is about % 0.5 of total population.<sup>74</sup> The large Russian minority presence in Central Asia forces Russia to have them in account when building foreign policy with Central Asian countries, so the local government adopts loyal policy toward them. Also the Russian Federation adopted special law in 1999 called “State Policy of the Russian Federation concerning compatriots abroad” that aims to protect its compatriots that live abroad. Regarding that law the Russian Federation aims to give state support and assistance to compatriots in accordance with generally recognized principles and norms of international law, international treaties and the legislation of the Russian Federation, as well as the legislation of foreign states where those compatriots live.<sup>75</sup> In addition to that Russian government adopted special state program for assisting the voluntary resettlement of compatriots living abroad to the Russian Federation. This program offers such reliefs to compatriots as law taxes, simplified registration and taking official citizenship etc.<sup>76</sup> This program is primarily adopted by the Federal Migration Service of Russia for improving the country's demography.

On the other hand since the independence of Kyrgyzstan a lot of Kyrgyz people went to Russia to find better work, as well as from other Central Asian countries as Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Their remittances obtain serious part of the budget of their home

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<sup>73</sup> “Всероссийская перепись населения 1989 года (Union Population Census of 1989)”, Demoscope Weekly, ([http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/sng\\_nac\\_89.php?reg=12](http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/sng_nac_89.php?reg=12)), date of access: 27.04.2014.

<sup>74</sup> “Сколько русских осталось в Центральной Азии?(How many Russians left in Central Asia?)”, *Electronic Edition of Strategic Culture Foundation*, (<http://www.fondsk.ru/news/2007/11/20/8509-8509.html>), date of access: 16.12.2013.

<sup>75</sup> “Федеральный Закон О Государственной Политике Российской Федерации в Отношении Соотечественников За Рубежом (Federal Law On State Policy of the Russian Federation in concerning compatriots abroad), 24 May 1999 № 99-ФЗ, (<http://www.mid.ru/bdcmp/ns-dgpch.nsf/1a268548523257ccc325726f00357db3/8440d36903c217a4c3257776003a73f5!OpenDocument>), date of access: 27.04.2014.

<sup>76</sup> “Государственная программа по оказанию содействия добровольному переселению в Российскую Федерацию соотечественников, проживающих за рубежом (State program to assist the voluntary resettlement to the Russian Federation of compatriots living abroad)”, *Федеральная Миграционная Служба (Federal Migration Service)*, (<http://www.fms.gov.ru/programs/fmsuds/>), date of access: 27.04.2014.

countries and the guest workers size is rising from year to year. According to the statistics nearly 800 thousand workers from Kyrgyzstan live in Russia, this size is rising very fast. And their total remittances are \$1.6 billion dollars yearly which is very good addition to the economic condition and budget of Kyrgyzstan.<sup>77</sup> Most of them want to stay in Russia permanently and move their families there and ask for citizenship. This is because of comparatively better living conditions and higher salaries than in their home countries. From the other side, the presence of guest workers in Russia positively affecting economy of Russia, as guest workers work for the lower salaries than the citizens of Russia. Also Russia is using this situation with the guest workers in its migration policies for affecting the decisions of the local government for its own interests by adopting more loyal or harsh policies toward the guest workers. For example in 2011 two Russian pilots- citizens of the Russian Federation were arrested in Tajikistan accusing for smuggling and violation of flight rules. As the measure to make pressure to the government of Tajikistan Russian government adopted measures of frequent checks of migrant workers from Tajikistan and some of them were even deported from Russia.<sup>78</sup> So in this regard Kyrgyzstan also has to adopt loyal foreign policy with Russia so the rights and living conditions of its guest-workers could be better.

All these factors make Russia-Kyrgyzstan relations very close. And we can certainly say that these relations will be even closer in the light of the last agreement between Russia and Kyrgyzstan to build the biggest hydropower plant in Kyrgyzstan that shows the seriousness of intention of Russia toward developing relations with Kyrgyzstan.<sup>79</sup> For Kyrgyzstan the relations with Russia also very important and vital, along with the economic interests the security relations will develop very fast in near future in the face of removal of the US NATO forces from Afghanistan.

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<sup>77</sup> “В России живет 800 тысяч гастарбайтеров из Кыргызстана (In Russia lives 800,000 guest workers from Kyrgyzstan)”, News site “Mir24”, August 2011, <http://mir24.tv/news/society/4197040>, date of access: 09.09.2013.

<sup>78</sup> Muratalieva Nargiza, “Россия в Центральной Азии: Анализ Модификации Интересов (Russia in Central Asia: Analysis of Modification Interest)”, *Время Востока (Eastern Time)*, 25.04.2014, (<http://easttime.ru/blog/rossiya-v-tsentralnoi-azii-analiz-modifikatsii-interesov/4633>), date of Access: 27.04.2014.

<sup>79</sup> Elvira Temir, “Сегодня стартует реализация проекта Верхне-Нарынского каскада ГЭС (Today starts the realization of the project Upper-Naryn cascade)”, Daily newspaper of Kyrgyzstan “*Vechniy Bishkek*”, 12.06.2013, (<http://www.vb.kg/231733>), date of access: 12.06.2013.

On the other side, Russian political analyst Aleksei Malashenko in his article argues that Russia cannot provide stability alone in Central Asia, but even if Russia will take up this task, it will ensure that the Central Asian states will agree to a partial waiver of their sovereignty. So he suggested that it makes sense for the governments of Central Asian countries to refer to the "third" external forces which are China and the United States.<sup>80</sup>

### 1.3. KYRGYZSTAN – THE USA RELATIONS

The United States recognized the independence of all newly formed Central Asian countries at the end of 1991 and offered diplomatic relations firstly to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan as the countries that were following responsible security and democratic policies. Diplomatic relations with the remaining Central Asian countries were established by the mid-March of 1992.<sup>81</sup> However, it is hard to talk about well defined foreign policy of the USA toward this region during 1991-1993. First of all this is because the US was unprepared for unexpected independence of Central Asia and also the US didn't have experts who properly knew this region.<sup>82</sup> Secondly, in realizing its policies in Central Asia the United States followed the way of friendly cooperation during these years with Russia in this region, as Russia also chose the way of close cooperation with the USA and European countries in its foreign policy in 1991-1993. In other words, the USA wanted to balance the influence of Russia to Central Asia in that period and did it through the way of cooperation with Russia.<sup>83</sup> The main reason of that was the global security concern of the USA regarding the issue of eliminating nuclear weapons on post-Soviet space and this could be made through cooperation with Russia.

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<sup>80</sup> Aleksei Malashenko, «Интересы и шансы России в Центральной Азии: Москва не в состоянии оказывать значимое влияние на внутривнутриполитическую ситуацию в странах Центральной Азии (Interests and the chances of Russia in Central Asia Moscow is not in a position to have significant impact on the internal situation in the countries of Central Asia)», *Carnegie Moscow Center, Journal Pro et Contra*, January-April 2013, p. 23.

<sup>81</sup> Eugene Rumer, "The United States and Central Asia", Rajan Menon, "Central Asia- view from Washington, Moscow and Beijing", New York: M.E. Sharp Inc., 2007, p. 18.

<sup>82</sup> Jim Nichol, "Central Asia's New States: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests", *CRS Issue Brief*, 19<sup>th</sup> December 1996, (<http://www.fas.org/man/crs/93-108.htm#most>), date of access: 23.01.2014.

<sup>83</sup> Shireen T. Hunter, "Central Asia Since Independence", London: Praeger Publication, 1996, p. 158.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union Kazakhstan inherited huge nuclear capabilities - the fourth in the world in its capacity. Therefore Washington wanted the elimination of nuclear weapons in Kazakhstan and to take under control activities related to nuclear energy production. The USA began discussions regarding eliminating of this nuclear weapon or transportation of them to Russia. As a result the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev renounced nuclear warheads, signed the Lisbon Protocol on 22 May 1992 regarding the returning of nuclear weapons to Russia. In 1994, Kazakhstan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States signed a Memorandum on Security Assurances in connection with the accession of Kazakhstan to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In 1996 strategic bombers were withdrawn from Kazakhstan to Russia. In the same year both Divisions of Russian Strategic Missile Forces that were located in Kazakhstan were withdrawn to Russia. Finally in July 2000, the last former Semipalatinsk test site tunnel for nuclear testing was destroyed.<sup>84</sup> As we can see the first policy toward Central Asia, particularly to Kazakhstan, regarding global security concern of the US was successfully realized.

In the first years of independence of Central Asian countries the foreign policy of the USA was one sided. In other words newly established countries of this region needed support and especially economic aids as most of the things in the country were reconstructing again. The USA used this situation in its foreign policy to become closer to Central Asia. For example Kyrgyzstan in its first years of independence needed real support in economic development, policy building strategy shaping etc. The USA mostly helped in these issues giving Kyrgyzstan economic aid, military support and assistance, support in democratization of the country.<sup>85</sup> In the below tables we can see economic aids of the USA to Kyrgyzstan in the 1990s.

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<sup>84</sup> “От чего отказался Казахстан? Ядерное оружие, рубль, Вице-президент и пять областей (From what refused Kazakhstan? Nuclear weapons, the ruble, Vice-President and five areas), *News Portal of Kazakhstan ZAKON.KZ*, (<http://www.zakon.kz/4591929-ot-chego-otkazalsja-kazakhstan-jadernoe.html>), date of access: 23.01.2014.

<sup>85</sup> Rumer, “The United States and Central Asia”, p. 21.

**Table 2:** U.S. Budgeted Assistance to Kyrgyzstan by Objective and Year, FY1992-  
FY2001<sup>86</sup>

(millions of current dollars)

Objective	FY1992	FY1993	FY1994	FY1995	FY1996	FY1997	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001
Economic Growth	0.91	7.5	50.16	14.45	11.94	11.88	11.53	17.36	12.63	11.2
Governing Justly & Democratically	0.55	3.54	7.75	5.92	4.21	5.11	8.38	9.42	9.21	12.8
Investing in People	0.47	2.34	3.98	2.76	4.1	4.03	3.42	3.75	4.32	3.68
Peace & Security	0.0	0.7	0.05	0.09	1.28	1.5	3.27	3.79	7.25	6.55
Humanitarian	11.1	94.14	28.42	21.21	42.1	1.33	23.69	26.8	16.32	4.82
Cross-Cutting & MCC & Program Support	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.02
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.03</b>	<b>108.22</b>	<b>90.36</b>	<b>44.43</b>	<b>63.63</b>	<b>23.85</b>	<b>50.29</b>	<b>61.12</b>	<b>49.73</b>	<b>43.07</b>

As we can see from this table the USA in the 1990's provided quite tangible economic aids to Kyrgyzstan in the spheres of democratization, developing justice, economic growth etc. These aids were done to become closer to this region and more importantly to somehow limit the influence of Russia, because if regional countries will be stronger in economic and political means then Russia's control over the region would be broken.<sup>87</sup>

The change in foreign policy of Russia when it turned from its West oriented foreign policy in 1993 and proclaimed its priority to neighboring countries of the post-Soviet area also forced the United States to review its priorities in this region, because more stronger foreign policy of Russia to this region threatened the interests of the USA in the same region. These interests of the USA in Central Asia can be summarized in two main objectives; to reduce and control the real and possible effectiveness of Russia and China in this region and ensuring comfortable access to rich energy resources of Central Asia.<sup>88</sup> Active involvement of Russia to Central Asia would make difficult for the US to gain easy and comfortable access to energy resources of this region, as the aim of

<sup>86</sup> Jim Nichol, "Kyrgyzstan: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests", Congressional Research Service, August 30 2013, p. 29, Source: Derived from U.S. Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Europe and Eurasia.

<sup>87</sup> Jim Nichol, "Central Asia's New States: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests", *CRS Issue Brief*, 19<sup>th</sup> December 1996, (<http://www.fas.org/man/crs/93-108.htm#most>), date of access: 23.01.2014.

<sup>88</sup> M. Akif Kireççi, "Amerika Birleşik Devletlerin Orta Asya Politikaları ( Central Asia Policy of the United States)", Ankara: Ahmet Yesevi International Turkish-Kazakh University, 2011, p. 34.

Russia is also to establish control over the region's energy reserves. China as the rapidly developing production country that needs more and more energy reserves for its speedily developing economy and population also has great interests in energy reserves of neighboring Central Asia.<sup>89</sup>

Therefore for reaching its aims in Central Asia the US had adopted more active foreign policy and since mid of 1994 the USA began to realize its aim to gain power and become more influential in Central Asia. Particularly the US Deputy Secretary Strobe Talbott in his speech on the U.S.- Central Asia Business Conference marked the strategic importance of Central Asia to the USA calling it "...a gateway to three regions that are of great strategic importance to the United States: to the east lie China and the rest of Asia; to the south lie Iran, Afghanistan, and the Islamic world; to the west and north lie Russia and Europe..." Also he underlined that Central Asia is a region of vast natural and human resources that offers the potential for the prosperity of its own people and benefits for American entrepreneurs to do business there. In other words he noted the aim of the USA to be sure that American business is competitive in Central Asia – that the US will not lose in the global competition with other countries who have begun serious efforts to develop business ties to the region.<sup>90</sup>

Continuing its active policy in Central Asia the USA agitated the membership of regional countries to western organization such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), NATO Partnership for Peace program and etc.<sup>91</sup> These activities of the USA was concerned with the regional and global security, that if the regional countries will adopt democracy, market economy and participate in western organizations then they would avoid anti-western orientations and activities that endanger the international and regional peace.

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<sup>89</sup> Erkin Ekrem, "Çin'in Orta Asya Politikaları (Central Asia Policy of China)", p. 22.

<sup>90</sup> Strobe Talbott, "Promoting Democracy and Prosperity in Central Asia," U.S. Department of State Dispatch, (Vol. 5, Issue No. 19, 1994), p. 280.

<sup>91</sup> Jim Nichol, "Central Asia's New States: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests", CRS *Issue Brief*, 19<sup>th</sup> December 1996, (<http://www.fas.org/man/crs/93-108.htm#most>), date of access: 23.01.2014.



In the beginning of the 2000s the policy of the USA toward Central Asia became more powerful. This is first of all because of the terrorist attacks to the USA on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 that became turning point not only for the USA, but for the rest of the world. The security sense all over the world changed when Islamic terrorists financed by fugitive Osama bin Laden from Al-Qaeda terrorist organization hijacked planes with passengers and crashed those planes one by one to the twin skyscrapers of the World Trade Organization in the heart of New York. More than 3000 people were killed in skyscrapers of the World Trade Organization and also 125 people were killed as a result of the crash of another plane in Washington DC and 45 passengers of the plane of United Flight were killed when the plane crashed in rural field in western Pennsylvania.<sup>92</sup> As a result the USA began the war against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan suspecting that the organizer of that terrorist attacks Osama bin Laden was hiding there.

This event totally changed the situation in Central Asia, because Central Asia also became involved in that war against terrorism when Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan gave the permission to place the US military troops on their territories; Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan opened their air space for the US military planes for their anti-terrorist activities.<sup>93</sup> The role of Central Asia for the USA changed from that time. If before Central Asia was the region of mostly economic ambitions including interest in energy resources and region where it was competing with Russia and China, then from 2001 Central Asia gained new status in foreign policy of the USA as the region of high security concern that locates near Afghanistan and as a key region in its success in the war against terrorism.

Central Asian countries condemned the terrorist attacks in New York and gave support to anti-terrorist activities of the USA. This was firstly because Central Asian countries perceived a threat from Afghanistan. In 1999 and 2000 terrorist organization Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) attacked Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. After 1999 IMU

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<sup>92</sup> "9/11 Attacks", *articles, videos, pictures and facts regarding the USA history*, (<http://www.history.com/topics/9-11-attacks>), date of access: 29.01.2014.

<sup>93</sup> Boris Rumer, "The powers in Central Asia", *The Strategic Institute for Strategic Studies*, "Survival", Volume 44 Number 3, Autumn 2002, p.57.

has found a shelter in Afghanistan. Furthermore, trafficking of drugs from Afghanistan to Russia and then to Europe through the Central Asian territory also posed threats for the regional countries.<sup>94</sup> Therefore, the anti-terrorist activities of the USA in the region and its intervention to Afghanistan were welcomed by the regional countries. And maybe the one of the important reason of willingness of regional countries to cooperate with the USA was the wish to balance the influence and power of Russia. Because in the light of the terrorism threat in Central Asia Russia was the single country that regional countries could rely as the provider of security, but with the appearance of the USA as the alternative security provider made the USA main competitor of Russia in security issue in the region.

Kyrgyzstan became the first Central Asian country that gave permission to American troops to deploy on its territory for the anti-terrorist activities in the framework of the war in Afghanistan. So on 4th December 2001 Kyrgyzstan and the USA signed an agreement regarding granting the part of the Manas airport to deploy troops and equipment by air that will take part in operations in Afghanistan. This agreement was concluded for a year and could be prolonged automatically by the agreements of both sides. At first the American air base in Manas airport was named after firefighter Peter Ganci who died during the terrorist attacks in New York while rescuing victims of the attacks, later the USA renamed its military air base in Kyrgyzstan to “Transit Center at Manas”.<sup>95</sup> In the same year Uzbekistan provided its Karshi-Khanabad air base, known as K2 and opened its air space to the USA troops, as Uzbekistan itself was suffering from the IMU terrorist activities which was based in Afghanistan. Tajikistan from its side gave permission to use in total three of its air bases which are Kulob, Kurgan-Tepe and Hodjent. Kazakhstan, because of its close relations with Russia and Turkmenistan

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<sup>94</sup> Fiona Hill, “Contributions of Central Asian Nations to the Campaign Against Terrorism”, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Subcommittee on Central Asia and South Caucasus Testimony*, December 13, 2001, (<http://www.brookings.edu/research/testimony/2001/12/13terrorism-hill>), date of access: 01.02.2014.

<sup>95</sup> “Авиабаза Манас на территории Киргизии (Manas airbase in Kyrgyzstan)”, *News Portal Itar-Tass Russia's Information Telegraph Agency*, (<http://itar-tass.com/info/751517>), date of access: 29.01.2014.

because of its neutrality policy, contented themselves by opening only their airspace to U.S. aircrafts.<sup>96</sup>

Entrance of the USA to the region with its military purposes in the beginning of the 2000s and the fact that the regional countries gave strong support to the US war against terrorism sharply changed the balance of power in the region between Russia, China and the USA. If before the influence of Russia was strong in the means of security, then after 2001 the prestige of Russia as the regional power was undermined in the light of new situation of military presence of the USA. In the late 1990s Russia was actively cooperating with China, and these two powers unified firstly in the Shanghai Five then in the SCO to reduce the influence of the USA and actively engaged through this organization in security and economic issues of the regional countries that gave them opportunity to control the situation in Central Asian countries.<sup>97</sup> Russia was maintaining its traditional dominance here. China after establishing economic relations in this region, by using its main tool as the rising economic power in the world, steadily was raising there its political influence as well.<sup>98</sup>

But from the beginning of anti-terrorism campaign of the USA in Central Asia the situation totally changed for Russia and China too. Russia as well as China had to give support to anti-terrorism war of the USA in the light of terrorism threat in the region which was also potential threat for both of the powers. Especially China that was very concerned with its sensitive Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR)<sup>99</sup> “war on terror” gave support to the USA as this war also would solve its security problems in the

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<sup>96</sup> International Crisis Group (ICG), “Central Asian Perspectives on 11 September and the Afghan Crisis”, *Asia Briefing*, № 9, 28 September 2001, (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/central-asia/B009-central-asian-perspectives-on-11-september-and-the-afghan-crisis.aspx>), date of access: 05.02.2014.

<sup>97</sup> Bates Gill, “Shanghai Five: An Attempt to Counter U.S. Influence in Asia?”, *Newsweek Korea*, May 4, 2001, (<http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2001/05/04china-gill>), date of access: 02.02.2014.

<sup>98</sup> Boris Rumer, “The powers in Central Asia”, p. 57.

<sup>99</sup> See in details: Edoardo Camilli, “China: The Securitization of the Uyghur Issue and Its Geopolitical Implications”, *ESISC Briefing*, 12.02.2014.; Charlotte Langridge, “Security Dilemma and Securitization in China’s Uyghur Issue”, *International Security Observer*, 07.08.2013.

region by cutting support for East Turkistan Movement from Central Asia, Al-Qaeda and Afghanistan.<sup>100</sup>

The new status of the USA in Central Asia gave it opportunity to become even closer to regional countries. Economic aids from the USA to countries of Central Asia rose in the light of opening several air bases there. Especially operation of Manas air base made relations between the USA and Kyrgyzstan closer and the economic aid increased several times than it was in the 1990s. In the table below we can examine the economic aid of the USA to Kyrgyzstan during the 2000s and see total aids since 1993 until 2010.

**Table 3:** U.S. Budgeted Assistance to Kyrgyzstan by Objective and Year, FY2002-FY2010 (and Totals, FY1992-FY2010)<sup>101</sup>

(millions of current dollars)

Objective	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	Total (FY1993 - FY2010)
Economic Growth	19.76	14.33	14.79	13.75	12.28	12.07	10.3	39.13	26.53	312.49
Governing Justly & Democratically	14.92	13.43	14.02	14.31	9.89	15.12	15.38	12.17	14.82	190.97
Investing in People	5.56	7.06	7.18	5.82	5.66	7.48	6.45	7.02	7.48	92.54
Peace & Security	38.62	11.28	12.33	17.44	13.27	18.78	37.57	42.23	48.62	264.62
Humanitarian	4.76	5.29	5.97	3.42	0.87	0.75	0.61	7.92	16.05	315.57
Cross-Cutting & MCC & Program Support	10.84	2.45	0.97	0.5	1.48	17.06	0.92	3.26	4.03	45.52
Total	94.47	53.85	55.25	55.23	43.44	71.25	71.23	111.74	117.52	1,221.71

As we can see from the table above the financial support from the USA to Kyrgyzstan reached serious sums given the size of Kyrgyz economy.

As I stated before, soon after the independence Kyrgyzstan proclaimed multi-vector foreign policy. That is why the first President of Kyrgyzstan Askar Akayev balanced relationship with the United States and Russia by allowing Russia's military troops to

<sup>100</sup> Aleksei Malashenko, «Интересы и шансы России в Центральной Азии (Interests and the chances of Russia in Central Asia)», *Carnegie Moscow Center, Journal Pro et Contra*, January-April 2013, p.24.

<sup>101</sup> Jim Nichol, "Kyrgyzstan: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests", *Congressional Research Service*, August 30 2013, p. 30, Source: Derived from U.S. Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Europe and Eurasia.

deploy in Kant air base in 2003, which is only several kilometers away from American military troops that are locating in Manas air base. From the other side Kyrgyzstan established close relations with the third regional power China, especially cooperated in economic field that could be explained by the acute need of the Kyrgyz economy in China's financial investments. Akayev's attempts to align Kyrgyzstan with China through "Silk Road diplomacy" made relations with China and Kyrgyzstan even closer and allowed China also to be influential and close to the local government.<sup>102</sup>

Many experts and politicians suspect that it was the USA that contributed to the organization of the "Tulip Revolution" in Kyrgyzstan in 2005, as well as the "Rose Revolution" in Georgia in 2003 and "Orange Revolution" in Ukraine in 2004.<sup>103</sup> In all of those "revolutions" Presidents of those countries that were strongly supporting side of Russia were overthrown by protestors, as well as Eduard Shevardnadze in Georgia, Viktor Yanukovich in Ukraine and Askar Akaev in Kyrgyzstan. We should note that there is some truth in these suspicions, as it was American non-governmental organizations (NGO) that have played great role in realizing those "revolutions".

Since 2003 National Endowment for Democracy (NED) that was financed by the USA worked in Kyrgyzstan and realized its activities toward democratization of the country. In this regard opening of State Department its own independent printing house in Bishkek has played the great role in gaining force of the opposition newspapers, which became the main tool in tuning the public opinion against the policy of Akayev administration. Moreover in 2003-2004 Kyrgyzstan received \$26.5 million for the "democratic reforms", which is the huge sum for the country with population of nearly 5 million people.<sup>104</sup> With such measures NED in short time gained absolute control of Kyrgyz civil society, as the most of the civil societies in Kyrgyzstan were financed by the US foundations or by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and

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<sup>102</sup> Sreeram Chaulia, "Democratization, NGOs and "Colour Revolutions"", *Open Democracy*, 19 January, 2006, ([http://www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-institutions\\_government/colour\\_revolutions\\_3196.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-institutions_government/colour_revolutions_3196.jsp)), date of access: 05.02.2014.

<sup>103</sup> Ariel Cohen, "Bush Administration Welcomes the Kyrgyz Revolution", *Euroasianet*, March 28, 2005, (<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav022905.shtml>), date of access: 06.02.2014

<sup>104</sup> Michael Barker, "Regulating Revolutions in Eastern Europe", *Third World Traveler*, November 1, 2006, ([http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/NED/NED\\_EasternEuropeElections.html](http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/NED/NED_EasternEuropeElections.html)), date of access: 30.04.2014

at least 170 NGO's in Kyrgyzstan the aim of which were developing or promoting democracy were created and sponsored by the USA.<sup>105</sup>

The Bush administration has warmly responded to the government change as a result of “revolution” and greeted the new government in the face of the Kurmanbek Bakiyev. Particularly American Ambassador Steve Young met with Bakiyev right after the end of revolutionary events on 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2005 for the discussions the ways of free and fair elections in the following months.<sup>106</sup> As a result with the strong support of the USA Bakiyev became the new President of Kyrgyzstan.

However, after Georgia and Ukraine active involvement of the USA through its NGOs to the internal issues of Central Asian countries has created an adverse reaction and made alert governments of regional countries. After “Tulip revolution” in Kyrgyzstan the governments of neighboring Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan were worried about the spread of unrests to their countries too. However unrest in Andijan province of Uzbekistan was brutally suppressed by the President Karimov. Taught by bitter experience of his former colleague Akayev, Karimov feared the same fate and took harsh measures against the uprising. As a result hundreds of people were killed during those events. Human rights groups suspect 500 or more killed people, however Uzbek government insisted that 187 people were killed who were mostly militants. The USA and other Western countries called for the detailed international investigation of this bloody event that happened in May 2005. But Karimov harshly snapped that request and this in turn was the beginning of tensions with the United States as a result of which in July 2005 the Karimov administration demanded the withdrawal of American troops from the Karshi-Khanabad base within 6 months. Moreover, on the SCO Astana summit in 2005 where parties decided that the US troops have to leave the territories of the member states in short time also became the push for the Uzbek government to have such decision.<sup>107</sup> As a result the US troops left the air base in Uzbekistan in November

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<sup>105</sup> Sreeram Chaulia, “Democratization, NGOs and “Colour Revolutions””.

<sup>106</sup> Ariel Cohen, “Bush Administration Welcomes the Kyrgyz Revolution”.

<sup>107</sup> Hu Qihua, “SCO summit flexes anti terror muscles”, CHINA.daily, 07.06.2005 ([http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-07/06/content\\_457477.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-07/06/content_457477.htm)), date of access: 09.02.2014.

of the same year.<sup>108</sup> Thus, America has lost one of its main partners in the region that served to further rapprochement with Kyrgyzstan and concentration of military forces in Manas. In this light Bakiyev administration also began to displace American forces from its territory requiring leave Manas Airport by explaining it with the low pay for the rent. As a result the USA in its attempts to save the air base that was strategic for its operations in Afghanistan raised the annual financial assistance of the US to Kyrgyzstan from \$40 million to \$150 million dollars in grants and financial assistance, including rent for Manas. The appropriate agreement was signed on July 14, 2006 between the parties.<sup>109</sup>

The weakening of strategic position of the US in the region to some extent was due to the anti-American activities of China and Russia in the framework of the SCO. Because in course of time China understood that the war on terrorism wasn't effective in diminishing the "terrorist activities" as Chinese government call the Uighur's activities in its XUAR. Moreover, China began to perceive threat and distrust about the real aims of the US presence in the region after the use of the USA its war on terrorism as the cover to begin the war against Iraq in 2003. Also China began to suspect that the location of the American military forces not so far from its borders was its strategy to encircle China.<sup>110</sup> Russia also repented that gave support to military location of the USA in Central Asia when understood that the military presence of the USA in the region was its strategy to exist for the long time in the region and that its location will not end soon. In this regard China and Russia revived the SCO activities and were trying to change the balance of power which changed not in their favor after 2001. Particularly in 2004 the SCO members gathered in the capital of Kyrgyzstan Bishkek where they discussed such issues as trade, science, technology and more importantly terrorism threat and signed appropriate agreements for cooperation in these fields.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> "Last US Plane Leaves Uzbek Base", *BBC News*, 21 November 2005, (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4457844.stm>), date of access: 09.02.2014.

<sup>109</sup> "Авиабазы Манас на территории Киргизии (Manas airbase in Kyrgyzstan)", *News Portal Itar-Tass Russia's Information Telegraph Agency*. 14.11.2013.

<sup>110</sup> Chieng-peng Chung, "The Shanghai Co-operation Organization: China's Changing Influence in Central Asia", *The China Quarterly*, 2004, p. 997-998.

<sup>111</sup> Valentinas Mite, "Shanghai Cooperation Organization Signs Agreement in Bishkek", *Eurasianet*, September 24, 2004, (<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/pp092504.shtml>), date of access: 08.02.2014.

Confrontation to America's presence in the region from China and Russia and attempts to remove it gained strength in the next SCO summit on July 5, 2005 in Astana, where member countries called for the US military forces to put the timeframe for withdrawing its forces from the territories of member states, that they are not content with the active impact on security issues of non-regional powers on their territories.<sup>112</sup> In other words China and Russia openly stated that they are not pleased with the presence of the USA in Central Asia and used for that SCO as the tool.

Pressure on member states of Russia and China through the SCO to end the military presence of the USA on their territories forced Kyrgyzstan to resume discussions regarding closing the American air base in Manas. Particularly Russia applied enormous pressure and tried to encourage Kyrgyzstan by promising to provide \$2 billion dollars of credit for that. During the visit of the President Bakiyev to Moscow this issue regarding the credit of \$2 billion dollars for the construction of Kambarata-1 hydro-electric station (HES) and for the settlement of the government debts was discussed and it seems that the government of Kyrgyzstan made its final decision regarding the withdrawal of the US troops from its territory.<sup>113</sup> President of the country Bakiyev signed the law according to which the US military troops had to leave the air base until 18 August 2009. However, the USA offered the new negotiation according to which the military air base will be changed to Transit Center for the delivery of non-military loads to Afghanistan for the forces of the international coalition against terrorism. The appropriate agreement was signed on 22 June 2009.<sup>114</sup> Thus the USA again managed to maintain its presence in Kyrgyzstan.

Such a dual game of Bakiyev this time irritated Russia. And there is no wonder that in the overthrow of Bakiyev government in 2010 unrests in Kyrgyzstan Russia played important role. Particularly Russian televisions continuously were criticizing the

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<sup>112</sup> Hu Qihua, "SCO summit flexes anti terror muscles".

<sup>113</sup> Sergey Rasov, "Goodbye, «Манас»! Goodbye, Америка? (Goodbye "Manas"! Goodbye, America?)", *information-analytical portal Respublica*, 27.06.2013, (<http://www.respublika-kz.info/news/politics/31265/>), date of access: 30.04.2014.

<sup>114</sup> "Авиабаза Манас на территории Киргизии (Manas airbase in Kyrgyzstan)", News Portal Itar-Tass Russia's Information Telegraph Agency, 14.11.2013.



policies of Bakiyev administration and that his family was actively involved in corrupt financial operations.<sup>115</sup> Also before that unrests Russia raised export fees to the refined petroleum to Kyrgyzstan that lead to the rise of the prices for the oil in the country. Moreover, Russia had stopped some bank operations.<sup>116</sup> With such measures Russia has suspended support to Kyrgyzstan which in turn increased the discontent of the people by the government of Bakiyev which lead to the harsh unrests in the beginning of April 2010 and Bakiyev government were overthrown. Russia directly recognized the provisional government with the temporary President Roza Otunbayeva. The new President Almazbek Atambaev, that was elected in 2011 after period of provisional government ended, once entered on his post announced that the American base in Kyrgyzstan will be closed at the expiration of the contract in the summer of 2014 and due to the withdrawal of the US NATO forces from Afghanistan. Thereby Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan Erlan Abdyldaev handed the note to U.S. Ambassador Pamela Spratlen that on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2014 intergovernmental agreement on the deployment of the US military forces at the Manas airport will end.<sup>117</sup>

Thus, the USA positions in Central Asia weakened since 2005 with active efforts of China and Russia. By unifying in the SCO these two regional powers succeeded in recent years to undermine the influence, power and positions of the USA in the region while their positions became stronger and more influential in Central Asia.

Continuous pressure on Kyrgyzstan from Russia, China and the United States, their attempts to achieve their interests and more influence in the region have big impacts on the political, economic and security situation inside the country and its foreign policy. Therefore Kyrgyzstan has to accurately maneuver between these three great powers and manage not to turn its back to neither of them to save the stability and prosperity in the country.

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<sup>115</sup> Simon Tisdall, "Kyrgyzstan: a Russian Revolution?", *The Guardian*, 8 April, 2010, (<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/apr/08/kyrgyzstan-vladimir-putin-barack-obama>), date of access: 10.02.2014.

<sup>116</sup> Andrew E. Kramer, "Before Kyrgyz Uprising, Dose of Russian Soft Power", *The New York Times*, April 18, 2010, ([http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/19/world/asia/19kyrgyz.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/19/world/asia/19kyrgyz.html?_r=0)), date of access: 10.02.2014.

<sup>117</sup> "Авиабазы Манас на территории Киргизии (Manas airbase in Kyrgyzstan)", News Portal Itar-Tass Russia's Information Telegraph Agency, 14.11.2013.

## CHAPTER II

### SECURITY RELATIONS

#### 2.1. CHINESE SECURITY INTERESTS IN KYRGYZSTAN

Central Asia has a strategic importance for China and this interest in this region has ancient roots from the periods when China was ruled by the dynasties. The main policy of the great empires as China was gaining power by expansion to the neighboring lands. For China in the mid of III century the neighboring lands was modern Central Asian territories where nomadic tribes of Western Göktürks, Eastern Göktürks, Uyghurs, Mongol tribes, Balhae, Khitan, Tibetan Empire, Kashmir, Pyu, Chenla, Kyrgyz people etc. were living. The fact of expansion of China can be seen by the Great Chinese Wall that was built in 3 BC. This wall was constructed to secure the North Western borders of China. The continuous fights between nomadic tribes of the step with Chinese people forced Chinese people to secure themselves by building long wall. Particularly this wall was built against the Turkic and Mongol intrusions from the north-west of China.<sup>118</sup> Nowadays this wall is known as the Great Wall of China. It is known as longest construction ever made which is 6 325 km long. However, nowadays the Great Wall is locating near the capital Beijing which is far from the modern west borders of China. As we can see from the map in Table 3 since the construction of the Great Chinese Wall the boundaries of China expanded very much.

**Table 4:** Map of the Great Wall of China and The Modern Borders of China<sup>119</sup>



<sup>118</sup> Joseph O'Neill, «The Great Wall of China», Minnesota: ABDO Publishing Company, 2009, p. 9-11.; “Çin Seddi Neden Yapılmıştır (Why was constructed the Great Chinese Wall), (<http://www.ensonhaber.com/cin-seddi-neden-yapilmistir-2013-04-30.html>), date of access: 17.05.2014

<sup>119</sup> Source: “Great Wall of China History&Facts”, (<http://www.china-mike.com/china-tourist-attractions/great-wall-china/history-facts/>), date of access: 30.04.2014.

However, the further expansion of China toward Central Asian lands in the VII century was interrupted by the battle of Talas. Particularly the army of Tang dynasty faced the united armies of Turks and Arabs on the banks of the Talas River in present-day Kyrgyzstan near the border of Kazakhstan. Yagma and Qarluq Turks that did not want to enter to the sovereignty of China that was expanding toward their lands in Central Asia asked for help from Arabs that were advancing from Asia to the East. In July 751 the Chinese army and the united army of Arabs and Turks had war in Talas. The fights vigorously continued five days, at the end of the fifth day the army of Qarluqs heavily attacked Chinese army. As a result the Chinese army commander Kao Hsien-chih himself was one of the few who hardly escaped, Chinese in the war in total gave fifty thousand dead and twenty thousand prisoners. After this defeat until the XVII century China could not expand toward the Tyan-Shan Mountains and West Turkistan got rid of danger, which was aimed by the Chinese before the Talas battle.<sup>120</sup> This battle had serious political consequences for China as Central Asia was prevented from entering the Chinese sovereignty and stopped political and cultural influence of China to Central Asia. Until the XVII century when China began delimitating lands of Central Asia with the Russian Empire China did not expand toward Central Asia, but was mostly busy with the local fights with the nomadic tribes from the west and north-west parts of China. In XVIII century particularly in 1759 China invaded East Turkestan. But Uighurs in East Turkestan organized many revolts against the Chinese governing. After the successful revolt in 1863 state was established that has 16 years life. In 1876 with the support of the British Empire Chinese again attacked East Turkestan and in 1884 the country had been recaptured. China cannot suppress the uprising started in 1931 and asked help from the USSR and the rebellion was suppressed with the help of the Soviet Union in 1933. Then again in 1944 Uighurs managed to establish an independent state, but this state has been handed over to Chinese rule in 1949.<sup>121</sup> So from that time the important part of Central Asia- the East Turkestan remaining under the rule of China.

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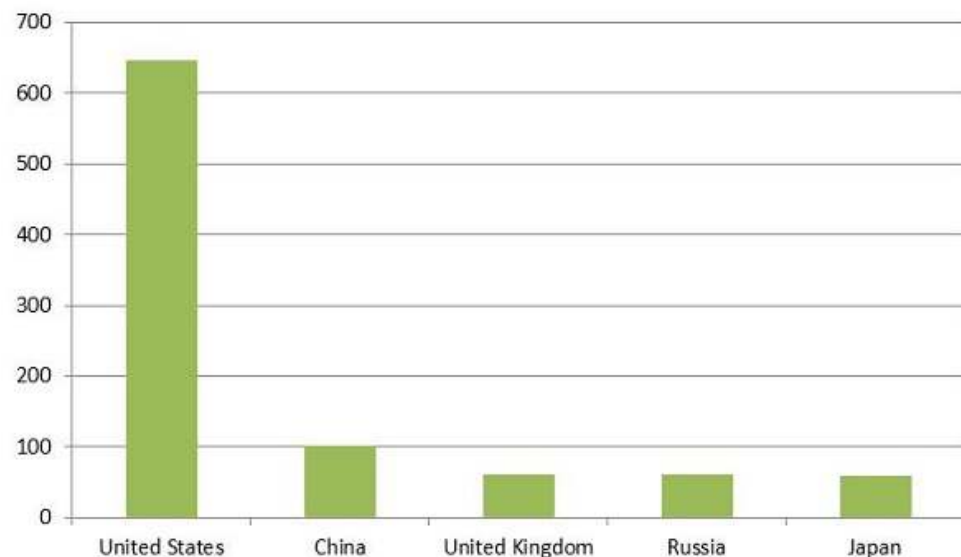
<sup>120</sup> Nesimi Yazıcı, "İlk Türk-İslam Devletleri Tarihi (First Turkish-Islamic States History)", Ankara University Faculty of Theology, Publication No: 192, Ankara, 1992, p.16.

<sup>121</sup> İbrahim Ali Uçar, "Asya'nın Kalbi Doğu Türkistan (East Turkestan is the heart of Asia)", Kardelen No:76, April/June 2013, (<http://www.kardelendergisi.com/yazi.php?yazi=1522>), date of access: 05.05.2014.

Nowadays China is the raising superpower that is official holder of nuclear weapon as one of the five Nuclear Weapon States. The economy of the country is speedily rising that allows China to expand its influence to the neighboring Central Asian countries by establishing economic cooperation which is vital for the newly established independent countries such as Kyrgyzstan. Also China is raising its military strength from year to year and for today it is one of the leading countries with the highest defense spending. In this regard let us look at the table with the top five budgets for defense spending all over the world. Because the power of the country first of all defined by its budget to the defense expenditure.

**Table 5:** Top Five Defense Budgets of 2013<sup>122</sup>

(Budget authority in billions of current U.S. dollars)



As we can see the USA has the leading budget for security spending and mostly the amount for security, defense and military care in total doubled since 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001. If in 2001 the security spending of the USA was \$290.5 billion, in 2011 this amount raised until \$526.1 billion which is in total show the increase for %43.<sup>123</sup> In

<sup>122</sup> Laicie Heeley, "U.S. Defense Spending vs. Global Defense Spending", The Center For Arms Control And Non-Proliferation, April 2013, ([http://armscontrolcenter.org/issues/securityspending/articles/2012\\_topline\\_global\\_defense\\_spending/](http://armscontrolcenter.org/issues/securityspending/articles/2012_topline_global_defense_spending/)), date of access: 31.07.2013.

<sup>123</sup> "U.S. Security Spending Since 9/11", *The peoples guide for the Federal Budget*, (<http://nationalpriorities.org/analysis/2011/us-security-spending-since-911/>), date of access: 31.07.2013.

2012 China spent \$106.4 billion for defense which is %11.2 higher than in previous year.<sup>124</sup> For comparison the USA spent \$645.7 billion in 2012 together with nuclear weapon activities and the war in Afghanistan.<sup>125</sup> This fact one more time proves that since the rioting of terrorism countries became more alert that is shown in the amount of their defense and security spending. China has the second biggest budget for defense spending right after the USA. Naturally Kyrgyzstan cannot compete with such big powers as the USA and China, because Kyrgyzstan is small country that has much less population of 5.5 million people which is approximately 60 times less than in USA and more than 250 times lesser than in China.<sup>126</sup> Also territory of Kyrgyzstan is smaller than of the USA or China which are in the top of the largest countries in the world according to their territories. In this regard Kyrgyzstan has smaller spending for security as the whole budget for 2012 year was determined as \$1.751 736, therefore only a certain percentage from that sum could be allocated for security and defense issues of the country.<sup>127</sup>

Kyrgyzstan is important country in security issue of China as the country that has direct border to its problematic region namely Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR), where the large Uighur ethnic groups live as the national minority under the rule of Chinese government. The Xinjiang region was added to Chinese territory in 1759 after Qing Dynasty occupied that territory. Uighurs are Muslim and Turkic speaking nation. China claims that Uighurs are part of Chinese nation and that Xinjiang territory belonged to China “since ancient times”.<sup>128</sup> However Uighurs there think that they are part of Uighur nation. The fact that Kyrgyz people built their own country, as well as

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<sup>124</sup> Miles Yu, “Inside China: Security Spending Tops Defense”, *The Washington Times*, March 2012, (<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/mar/7/inside-china-security-spending-tops-defense/?page=all>), date of access: 31.07.2013.

<sup>125</sup> Laicie Heeley, “U.S. Defense Spending vs. Global Defense Spending”, April 2013.

<sup>126</sup> National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, “20 years of Independence of the Kyrgyz Republic”, *publication of National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic*, Bishkek, 2011, p. 4.

<sup>127</sup> National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, “Кыргызстан Цифраларда (Kyrgyzstan in Numbers)”, *publication of National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic*, Bishkek 2012, p. 223.

<sup>128</sup> Gardner Bovingdon, “The Uighurs: Strangers on Their Own Land”, New York: Columbia University Press, 2010, p. 3.

Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmens and became independent in neighboring countries just strengthens the desire of Uighurs to become independent. They made several unrests and protests to become independent from China in the past. Uighurs that live on the territories of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are giving support to Uighurs on Xinjiang territory. So Xinjiang region where take place continuous rebels of Uighurs that wants their independence from China is very sensitive region for the integrity and safety of China.

In Kyrgyzstan live approximately 35.000 Uighurs. In Kazakhstan their number reaches 200.000 and in the whole Central Asia according to some sources total number of Uighurs are 500.000.<sup>129</sup> Therefore China had to pay close attention to Central Asia, control the situation and prevent support from Uighurs that live in neighboring states.

Furthermore, Kyrgyzstan had 2 serious “revolutions” in the last 10 years, which resulted with the change of the government; also there was bloody unrest of ethnic conflict in Osh in 2010 between ethnic Uzbeks and ethnic Kyrgyz people that live there. China is concerned with such kind of unrests and social destabilization in neighboring country that has direct border to XUAR. Because such social destabilizations as in Kyrgyzstan which were aimed to change government of the country can be the bad inspiration for Uighurs to claim their rights for independent republic as they already did several times before.<sup>130</sup> For China it is very important to manage security and stability in this region as it is directly related with the integrity and stability of the whole China. Also it is very important for China to strengthen its relations with Central Asian countries because China sees this region as sensitive region to its security mainly because it is the connection corridor between source countries of terrorism as Afghanistan and Iraq.

China has long common border with Central Asia, which means if there will be any problem with the security issue it will directly spread to China. Also Kyrgyzstan is

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<sup>129</sup> Selçuk Çolakoğlu, “Çin’in Orta Asya Politikası (China’s Central Asia Policy)”, *M. Turgut Demirtepe, “Orta Asya & Kafkasya Güç Politikası (Power Policy of Central Asia & Caucasus)”*, Ankara: International Strategic Research Organization (USAK), 2008, p.162.

<sup>130</sup> Preeti Bhattacharji “Uighurs and China’s Xinjiang Region”, *The Washington Post*, August 2008.

newly independent state and therefore unstable, has corruption, has weak criminalized political establishments, social services and security forces.<sup>131</sup> Which means in the face of danger Kyrgyzstan has a little to do, so the threat can spread to neighbor countries and this is direct danger for China. So the primary concern of China regarding Central Asian region is the security and development of XUAR that shares long and common border with Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.<sup>132</sup> Therefore in security policies in this region China has to actively cooperate with those bordering countries.

During the Soviet Union period Sino-Soviet relations were tense because of the areas of disputes along their borders. The Soviet Union and China even had serious military clashes in 1969 because of the Zhenbao Island or with the other name Damanskii Island. Since then both of the sides stationed large and heavily armed troops in the border areas. The issue of disputes regarding Damanskii Island was solved after military clash in 1969. But there were still some dispute areas that were unsettled during the Soviet Union period and those unsettled border issues after disintegration of the Soviet Union came to the agenda of the newly established countries Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan with which China now is sharing borders and military concentration in these countries on the border areas remained from the Soviet Union time.<sup>133</sup> In this regard there should be made security agreements between these countries and China to stabilize the situation in border areas. So in the framework of border security with neighboring countries China reached an agreement on border troop deployment. Border security concerns were regulated between China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan by the signing of the Treaty on Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1996. This agreement was important in the means of clarifying the issues that bordering countries will not attack each other, none of these countries will take as military target the other country, the scale of military exercises will be limited, every country will inform the other side if it will conduct military actions within 100

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<sup>131</sup> International Crisis Group, "China's Central Asia Problem", *Asia Report №244*, 27 February 2013, p.1.

<sup>132</sup> Ramakant Dwivedi, "China's Central Asian Policy in Recent Times", Central Asia Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Volume 4, No. 4 (2006) p.139.

<sup>133</sup> Qingguo Jia, "The Success of the Shanghai Five: Interests, Norms and Pragmatism", (n.d.), (n.p), (<http://www.comw.org/cmp/fulltext/0110jia.htm>), date of access: 03.04.2014.

kilometers from the border, will invite the other sides to the military exercises that will include usage of live ammunition.<sup>134</sup> In 1997 parties also signed the Treaty on Reduction of Military Forces in border regions which included such important security issues as deploying military forces in border regions to a level of good neighbor relations, do not seek military superiority and do not attack the other side on the borders, reducing the military personnel, exchange of information regarding military forces.<sup>135</sup>

The latest concern in security issue of all countries in this region is the 2014 withdrawal of the US NATO military troops from Afghanistan.<sup>136</sup> This military troops controlling situation in there and prevent danger from spreading to the whole region, as well as somehow stopping terrorist activities from further development. Discussion about withdrawal of these troops concerns Central Asian countries, Russia and China as well. Because this time countries in the region have to be alert and strengthen their borders and maintain security in the region by themselves. Also China is concerned with the military presence of the US military troops and the deployment of Russian military base in the framework of CSTO on the territory of Kyrgyzstan. Location of military forces of two main competing powers of China not so far from its borders, in the area of its strategic interest as Central Asia concerns China very much.

Also China has political interest in Central Asia, wants to be influential in this region. China see Central Asia as its “backyard” that must be well-kept and safe.<sup>137</sup> Energy abundance and a lot of mineral and other resources that extremely needs Chinese

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<sup>134</sup> Huasheng Zhao, “Central Asia in China’s Diplomacy”, Rajan Menon, “Central Asia- view from Washington, Moscow and Beijing”, New York: M.E. Sharp Inc., 2007, p.139.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid, p. 140.

<sup>136</sup> Phil Stewart, “US NATO Officials expect approval or Afghan Troop Deal”, *News Site “Reuters”*, October 22, 2013, (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/22/us-usa-afghanistan-idUSBRE99L15G20131022>), date of access: 16.11.2013.

<sup>137</sup> International Crisis Group, “China’s Central Asia Problem”, p. 15.



growing industry is another reason for active cooperation with Central Asian states. Therefore China is trying to maintain influence and power in Central Asian countries as investor and donor.

One of the most important reasons for diplomatic and political activities of China in Central Asian countries as in Kyrgyzstan can be the competition with the other powerful countries as Russia and the United States for dominance in Central Asian region. China has to be powerful and influential in the neighboring and strategic region as Central Asia so it can achieve power in other parts of the world for becoming superpower.

## **2.2. BORDER CLAIMS OF CHINA TO KYRGYZSTAN**

One of the important reasons of close attention of China to Central Asian region and development of relations with newly established independent countries right after achievement of their sovereignty is the border claims to this region that began long before the establishment of the Soviet Union. China claimed that some part of lands that lead to the border with China of modern Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan belong to China, that these lands were separated from China as a result of “unequal treaties”.

If we will look back to history, the delimitation of lands, which also affected the lands that created the situation with the division of lands between Kyrgyzstan and China, occurred in the end of the XIX century between two big regional powers Qing Dynasty and the Russian Empire. Central Asian region was in high interest of both powers. Two big powers posed their interests there. Finally Qing Dynasty and Russian Empire decided to divide the region between them.<sup>138</sup> However, in the end of the 1800s the economy and military power of Qing Dynasty was weaker compared with the West and the Russian Empire. So the Russian Empire used this moment and forced Qing Dynasty to sign “unequal treaties”. Three “unequal treaties” Aigun (1858), Peking (1860), and Tarbagatai (1864) were concerted between Qing Dynasty and the Russian Empire

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<sup>138</sup> M. Imanaliev, “On the concept of relationships between Kyrgyzstan and China”, 2002, p. 2.

according to which the lands were separated between them.<sup>139</sup> According to those treaties the Russian Empire annexed Amur basin and Vladivostok, some lands in modern Central Asian region from Pamir and Kashgar, also some islands from Siberian region.<sup>140</sup> As a result Kyrgyz lands, particularly the North Kyrgyz lands were put under the government of the Russian Empire in 1863. The South of Kyrgyz lands where the great woman-khan Kurmanjandatka ruled resisted entering for a long period and only in 1876 the South part of Kyrgyz lands accepted accession to the Russian Empire.<sup>141</sup> So the entire Kyrgyz lands were included to the Russian Empire.

Before the formation of the Soviet Union member countries did not have nation-states in the present borders. All the borders of the member countries were created inside the Soviet system and centralized Soviet government marked their boundaries. Actually these borders were accurately planned by the Soviet planners in the middle of the 1920s.<sup>142</sup> Member countries did not have any border control and custom rules, because all the countries belonged to one huge system which was a single country, and inside the union the security of every member country was provided by the government of the Soviet Union in Moscow. There were no visas between the member countries. Moreover, in the Soviet system one member country could lease the lands of the other country for long years. So after the disintegration of the Soviet Union there were a lot of land issues between former member countries to settle, divide and determine.<sup>143</sup> It was really hard to realize and settle all those issues without any conflict with the neighbor countries. Especially when in the Soviet Union all those countries worked for wellness and comfort of the Soviet center, all their borders, production lines, communication roads was interrelated and somehow all the member countries was bounded and

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<sup>139</sup> Bobo Lo, “Axis of Convenience: Moscow, Beijing, and the new geopolitics”, London: Brookings Institution Press, 2008, p. 21.

<sup>140</sup> Eric Hyer, “The Sino-Russian Boundary Settlement”, *IBRU Boundary and Security Bulletin*, Summer 1996, p.90.

<sup>141</sup> Begimaly Jamgyrchiev, “Кыргызстандын Россиянын составына оз ыктыяры менен кошулушу (Accession of Kyrgyzstan to Russia voluntarily)”, Frunze: Kyrgyzmambas Press, 1963, p. 17.

<sup>142</sup> Esenkul Usubaliev, Esen Usubaliev, “Проблемы Территориального Урегулирования и Распределения Водно-Энергетических Ресурсов в Центральной Азии (The Problems of Territorial Settlement and Distribution of Water and Energy Resources in Central Asia)”, Sweden: Publishing House CA&CC Press, 2002.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

dependent to each other.<sup>144</sup> For example in production of one machine some parts were produced in one country, the other parts and carcass was manufactured in other country.

So in the first years of independence the former Soviet Union countries, that established the new union of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), decided to save the free movement system between their countries. This decision led to “Bishkek Accord” visa-free agreement between all CIS member states except Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Ukraine. This agreement was first of all signed for the economic transformation and development of the countries in their first years of independence, so the interrelated economies of the former members could transform and free movement of goods, service and people could continue.<sup>145</sup> Unfortunately this decision with good intention was used for bad things as terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking and illegal immigration in the region, so the member countries as Russia had to protect itself and due to the security concerns decided to remove from “Bishkek Accord” visa-free agreement. After that remaining members also had to put visas between themselves, so the “Bishkek Accord” agreement had no more power.<sup>146</sup>

After long process of the settlement of border lines and disputes with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan also had to settle its international border disputes with China that was not former member of the Soviet Union, therefore it was unusual and this issue was regarding Kyrgyzstan’s foreign relations with powerful neighbor. In the border disputes with China was involved not only Kyrgyzstan, but also other states that also have common border with China as Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. Moreover China was putting forward this border issue long before the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

The process of accepting of the Soviet Union the “unequal treaties” that were concluded during governing of the Russian Empire, and acceptance that those lands “belonged” to China took long process that continued several decades. The reason for such claim

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<sup>144</sup> International Crisis Group, “Central Asia: Border Disputes and Conflict Potential”, *Asia Report № 33*, April 2002, p.2.

<sup>145</sup> Richard W. T. Pomfret, “The Central Asian Economies Since Independence”, New York: Princeton University Press, 2006, p. 200.

<sup>146</sup> ICG, “Central Asia: Border Disputes and Conflict Potential”, p. 3.

served the contract which has been called the agreement on the general principles for the settlement of issues concluded on May 31, 1924 between the Republic of China and the new government of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR), which was formed after the 1917 revolution and the overthrow of Tsarist government. In the third article of this agreement, both sides agreed to convene a conference in which they will cancel all conventions, treaties, agreements, protocols and contracts concluded between China and the Russian Empire, and replace them with new ones on the basis of equality, reciprocity and justice in the spirit of the declarations of the Soviet government.<sup>147</sup> Thus, in 1924, China has actually taken a position, which meant that it did not agree with the existing agreements on border, puts them in question and intends to re-examine all of them, as well as re-develop a new border treaty. Existing treaties on boundaries were in terms of the Chinese side, “unequal” and “unfair” and that “modern border line is the result of the military aggression of the former Tsarist government.” The Soviet representatives argued that the reasoning of the Chinese representatives of Russia's military aggression against China does not match with repeated official estimates contained in Chinese historical documents of different periods, which always stressed the peaceful nature of Russian-Chinese relations over the centuries. At the next meeting of delegates of both sides, the Soviet representative criticized China's position and offered to transfer the matter to the full delegates. On June 26, 1926 at the suggestion of the Chinese delegation the conference stopped working.<sup>148</sup>

Claims on the border issues from China resumed in 1964 during the governing of Mao Zedong, when China asked to recognize the border treaties as “unequal”. According to the new declaration formed after the founding of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) that previous agreements signed between China and foreign countries, should be revised, canceled, amended and re-signed. Chinese government has consistently advocated for their peaceful solution through negotiations of all the unresolved

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<sup>147</sup> Y. M. Galenovich, “Россия и Китай в XX веке: ГРАНИЦА (Russia and China in XX century: BORDER), ([http://www.e-reading.bz/bookreader.php/130971/Galenovich\\_-\\_Rossiya\\_i\\_Kitaii\\_v\\_XX\\_veke\\_granica.html](http://www.e-reading.bz/bookreader.php/130971/Galenovich_-_Rossiya_i_Kitaii_v_XX_veke_granica.html)), (n.d.), date of access: 20.11.2013.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

historical issues.<sup>149</sup> However, the position of the Soviet Union was firm regarding this border issues with China. On 15<sup>th</sup> September 1964 during the meeting with Japanese parliamentarians Khrushchev made a statement saying that "the territory of the USSR is historically established", "borders of the USSR are sacred and whoever dares to disturb them receive resolute rebuff from the representatives of all the peoples of the Soviet Union." Khrushchev also said that the Chinese emperors of the past were even more invaders than the Russian tsars, they occupied Mongolia, Tibet and Chinese Turkestan.<sup>150</sup> After this statement the Soviet Union strengthened its military forces in the border regions, because Chinese side began violation of the borders and these violations were provocative and well-organized. Chinese leaders openly stated about the possibility of the outbreak of hostilities and then China began military attacks toward the Soviet Union on the Damanskii Island. Particularly on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1969 on the Damanskii Island on the Ussuri River Chinese militaries open fire on the Soviet border guards and killed several of them. After several armed attacks on both sides the Soviet militaries used volley fire "Grad" as a result Chinese armed forces have been destroyed.<sup>151</sup> After such escalation of the relations both sides decided to start negotiating in a peaceful diplomatic means. But the claims of China were the same and the Soviet Union insisted that "far-fetched pretext of righting the "injustice" of past centuries" was unacceptable.<sup>152</sup> So in this discussion China again did not reach its aim. The next round of discussion began in 1969 and continued until 1978, but in 1979 ended without any result for China. In 1982 the relations between China and the Soviet Union warmed due to the speech of Brezhnev in Tashkent who was ruling the Soviet Union in those years.

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<sup>149</sup> Li Danhui, "Пограничные столкновения КНР и СССР в 1969 г.: причины и последствия (Border clashes of China and the Soviet Union in 1969: Causes and Consequences)", *"Вопросы современной истории Китая"* (*Questions of modern Chinese history*), №3, 1996, p. 8, (<http://www.damanski-zhenbao.ru/31.html>), date of access: 01.05.2014.

<sup>150</sup> "Начало и развитие пограничной конфронтации между Советским Союзом и Китаем (Beginning and development of the border confrontation between the Soviet Union and China)", *Холодная Война- Конфликты* (*Cold War- Conflicts*), (n.d.), ([http://www.coldwar.ru/conflicts/china/sino-soviet\\_border\\_conflict.php](http://www.coldwar.ru/conflicts/china/sino-soviet_border_conflict.php)), date of access: 02.05.2014.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Eric Hyer, "The Sino-Russian Boundary Settlement", *IBRU Boundary and Security Bulletin*, Summer 1996, p.91-92.

The Soviet Union decided to resettle Sino-Soviet relations due to Chinese new foreign policy orientation. Both of the sides went on the compromise and in 1982 some problematic areas were identified. During the ruling of Gorbachev in the Soviet Union the agreements on border issues speeded despite of the opposition of some ministers in the Soviet Union that border negotiations with China will weaken control of the Soviet Union over its borders. Finally in 1988 agreement on general principles was achieved in Sino-Soviet relations that in theory made possible the return its “lost” territories. In 1989 during the discussion between Gorbachev and Deng Xiaoping, Gorbachev underlined that internal political coercion made it possible to accept claims of China. This Gorbachev-Deng summit put end to the protracted conflict because of the “unequal treaties” between two countries.<sup>153</sup> The disintegration of the Soviet Union didn’t allow settling border issues in the framework of the ruling of the Soviet Union. So China had to claim the border issues to every independent state separately after establishment of new independent countries in Central Asian region.

The part of Kashgar Mountains Uzongu-Kuush that was annexed from Kashgar region during the Russian Empire which is the modern territory of Kyrgyzstan became disputable region between the Kyrgyz Republic and China in the beginning of the 1990s right after the independence of Kyrgyzstan.<sup>154</sup> It took long period for legal settlement of the Kyrgyz-Chinese border. Exchange of views on some areas including the complex area of Khan Tengri was held at different levels, up to the highest. After a lengthy discussion on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1996 the Kyrgyz Republic and the People's Republic of China signed the border agreement regarding the Kyrgyz-Chinese border and added a supplementary document in August 1999.<sup>155</sup> As a result from the territory that China claiming it had 30% according to mutual agreement which is 950 square kilometers

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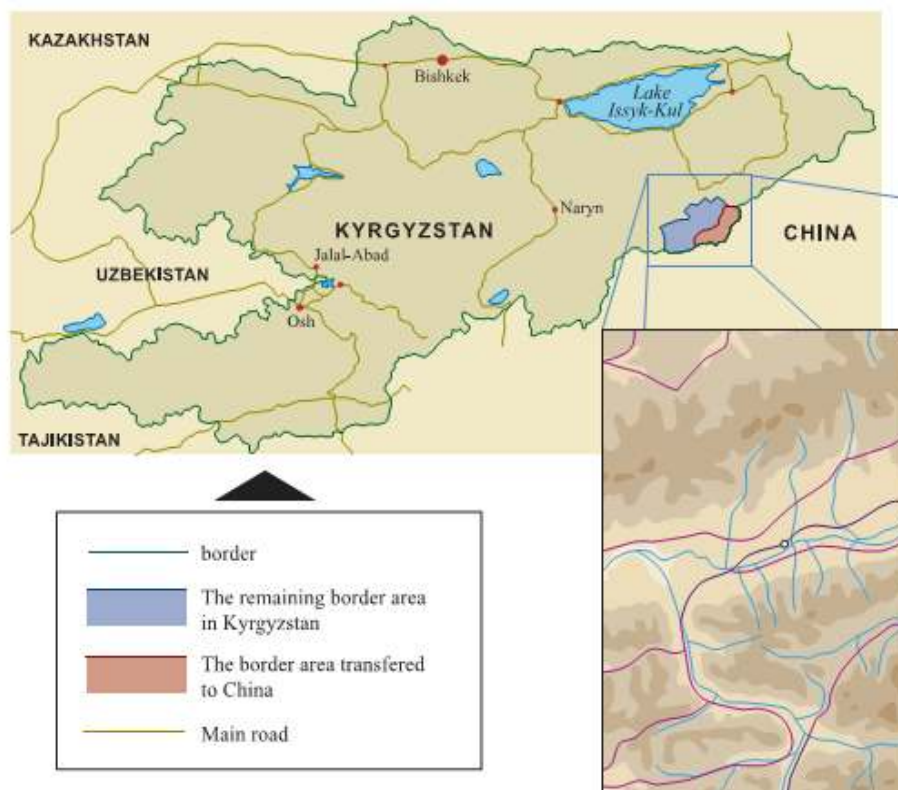
<sup>153</sup> Eric Hyer, “The Sino-Russian Boundary Settlement”, p.91-92.

<sup>154</sup> “Голосовавшие по Каркыре, продавшие Узонгу-Кууш (Those who voted on Karkyra and Sold Uzongu-Kuush), *gezitter.org*, February 21, 2013, ([http://www.gezitter.org/politic/18232\\_golosovavshie\\_po\\_karkyire\\_prodavshie\\_uzongu-kuush/](http://www.gezitter.org/politic/18232_golosovavshie_po_karkyire_prodavshie_uzongu-kuush/)), date of access: 15.11.2013; Maria Utyaganova, “Kyrgyzstan’s Border Riddle”, *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute*, CACI Analyst, 23.05.2001.

<sup>155</sup> Y. M. Galenovich, “Россия и Китай в XX веке: ГРАНИЦА (Russia and China in XX century: BORDER), (n.d.).

while the rest 70% remained as the territory of Kyrgyzstan.<sup>156</sup> According to that document Kyrgyzstan was agreeing to give 35 000 hectares of mountain territory and additional 90 000 hectares from Naryn and Issyk-Kul region including river in the Bedel area. This area had an access to watershed and to the sources of glacier water which is very important for water starved China. Here below we can see the map of whole territory of Kyrgyzstan with the marked territories that were given to China.

**Table 6:** Territory that was given to China <sup>157</sup>



In September 1994 was signed the agreement on the Russian-Chinese border on its western part that was ratified by Russia in July 1995.<sup>158</sup> Kazakhstan regulated its border issues from the claimed territory as 56 percent for Kazakhstan and 44 percent for China in 1998. Tajikistan in 2002 completed border negotiations as giving to China only 1000 km<sup>2</sup>, while China was claiming for 20 000 km<sup>2</sup>. This negotiation called “mutually

<sup>156</sup> ICG, “Central Asia: Border Disputes and Conflict Potential”, p. 17-1.

<sup>157</sup> Iwashita Akihiro, “A 4,000 Kilometer Journey along the Sino-Russian Border”, *Sapporo: Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University*, 2004, p. 108.

<sup>158</sup> Y. M. Galenovich, “Россия и Китай в XX веке: ГРАНИЦА (Russia and China in XX century: BORDER), (n.d.).

acceptable compromise” that resulted in “fifty- fifty” approach.<sup>159</sup> As a result the territory and border issues with China were resolved that opened the way for friendly and mutually beneficial relations.

Delimitation of Kyrgyz-Chinese border in the first years of independence of Kyrgyzstan had very big impact on political life of the country. Kyrgyzstan was not ready to give away lands from its territory to China. In other words in the period of building national identity after achieving independence where notions as “our land”, “our people”, “our culture” had high importance for the people and in that period setting also border demarcation with China that meant giving the part of the country’s land was hard for Kyrgyzstan. Giving the lands to China raised wide range of discussions and opposition from population after publishing this news in the mass media.<sup>160</sup> In their eyes lands of their ancestors was given for free to other country. But these polemic discussions among the population of Kyrgyzstan were because they did not know the details and historical background of the border issue. Mass media in that period widely discussed this issue with experts and the representatives of the government to shed the light to that border problem. For example Head of the Department of Regional Problems of the Prime Minister Office of the Kyrgyz Republic Salamat Alamanov in his interview widely explained how the border part around Uzongu-Kuush was resolved, that both sides tried to resolve this problem by diplomatic way working through their experts that analyzed the area and maps and finally came to the decision that %30 of the polemic region Uzongu-Kuush will be given to China and %70 will remain as the territory of Kyrgyzstan. And both sides were aiming peaceful resolution of the issue for the further friendly development of the relations.<sup>161</sup> The other expert Corresponding Member of National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic Djunushaliev critiqued deputies

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<sup>159</sup> Iwashita Akihiro, “A 4,000 Kilometer Journey along the Sino-Russian Border”, p. 109.

<sup>160</sup> Nazgul Mamytova, “Узбекистан пользуется 1500 гектарами нашей земли: На своей земле заискиваем (Uzbekistan uses 1,500 hectares of our land: Ingratiating on our own land)”, Newspaper “Aikyn Sayasat”, № 25, 05.04.2011, p.2, ([http://www.sanjyra.kg/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=218%3A-1500-&catid=40%3A2009-05-11-01-53-53&Itemid=68&lang=ru](http://www.sanjyra.kg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=218%3A-1500-&catid=40%3A2009-05-11-01-53-53&Itemid=68&lang=ru)), date of access: 03.05.2014.

<sup>161</sup> V. Temirbaev, “Пограничные споры — кратчайший путь к конфронтации и агрессии (Border disputes - the shortest path to confrontation and aggression)”, *Свободный Туркменистан (Индепендент Туркменистан)*, 16.10.2002, (<http://www.erkyn.net/chronicle/border.html>), date of access: 03.05.2014.



of the Parliament who were radically opposing this border demarcation with China by raising discussions. He marked the historical background of this border issue that it was the old issue between the Soviet Union and China that was lasting for several decades. He also marked that for newly formed independent Kyrgyzstan unreasonable to have polemic border issue with its powerful neighbor, that the Kyrgyz Republic is not the Soviet Union, with all the possibilities and consequences.<sup>162</sup>

The polemic discussions around that border demarcation with China that raised outrage of the population was used by the opposition of the Akayev government. Particularly 15 deputies in the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic protested decision of the President Akayev regarding border issue with China saying that he did not give them opportunity to examine this issue and took the side of the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Law Azimbek Beknazarov who was actively opposing this decision. In his interview to radio “Azattyk” in 2001 he said that they were going to give impeachment to the President Akayev because according to the Constitution of Kyrgyzstan only the parliament has the right to change the borders of the country.<sup>163</sup> Opposition was insisting that several laws of the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic were violated in the process of signing international agreement with China. Particularly was violated the law regarding inviolability and integrity of the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic within its existing borders written in the 3<sup>rd</sup> article of the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic. According to that article only the Parliament by the election with a majority of not less than two thirds of all deputies can change the borders of the country. According to the opposition this condition was broken during the ratification process on December 26, 1997 of the Agreement between the Kyrgyz Republic and China state borders, because at least 23 deputies should vote in favor of ratification from the total 35 deputies, that day voted only 21 members of the 26 registered. Later in the protocol was written that 28 deputies took part in the vote and all of them voted in favor of ratification. Thus,

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<sup>162</sup> D. Djunushaliev, “Ответ противникам новой кыргызско-китайской границы (Answer to the opponents of the new Kyrgyz-Chinese border), *ЦентрАзия*, 04.05.2002, (<http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?Month=5&Day=4&Year=2002>), date of access: 03.05.2014.

<sup>163</sup> “Президенту грозит импичмент (President threatens to impeachment)”, *Radio “Svoboda”*, May 8, 2001, ([http://neweurasia.info/archive/2001/news/05\\_08\\_Impich.htm](http://neweurasia.info/archive/2001/news/05_08_Impich.htm)), date of access: 28.02.2014.

according to the opposition the ratification was illegal. The other claim of the opposition was regarding the article of the Constitution of changing borders that should not be made with the help of an international agreement, but by the special law. All these claims were used to begin the impeachment process to the President of the country.<sup>164</sup> However, giving impeachment to the President of the country is complicated issue and special parliament commission has to be established.

Beknazarov began to collect signatures for establishing that parliament commission. But he was arrested on 5<sup>th</sup> of January 2002 for the old issue of 1995 when he was an Investigator of Toktogul district of Jalal-Abad region. Grounds for the prosecution became the event in 1995 when Beknazarov refused to initiate criminal proceedings against Kamchybekov since decided that in a drunken brawl with a fatal outcome Kamchybekov was the defending party. In 2001 relatives of the killed Bukeyev filed an application for review of the case. After that Kamchybekov was sentenced to 8 years imprisonment. On 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 2002 relatives of the victim appealed to the prosecutor asking for the punishment of Beknazarov. Prosecutor of Jalal-Abad region Kudaibergenov, who was accused and officially submitted by Beknazarov to the Commission on the Ethics of civil servants under the President of the Kyrgyz Republics for the serious abuses and criminal on his post earlier in the same year, prepared special case for the accusation of Beknazarov for that issue in 1995, so Beknazarov was arrested. But opposition believed that the case of Kamchybekov has been artificially reanimated to punish Beknazarov for his activities against the President of the country.<sup>165</sup>

The arrest of Beknazarov provoked nationwide protests on 17-18 March of 2002 before the appointed court on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2002 regarding the case of Beknazarov. Population of Aksy region supported Beknazarov and protested his arrest and went for the protesting

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<sup>164</sup> Eldar Zeynalov, Vitaliy Ponomarev, “Аксыйские события (Aksy Events)”, Правозащита, *Report of CIS NGO Working Group for Conflict Prevention and Resolution*, 31.12.2002, (<http://www.memo.ru/d/953.html9>), date of access: 03.05.2014.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

to the government buildings in Aksy region. But the local policemen attacked them by guns, as a result 6 people died.<sup>166</sup>

This accident caused outrage throughout the country. And this was the first step to the Tulip Revolution, because opposition of the Akayev government used the outrage of the population all around the Kyrgyzstan with the border demarcation with China and later arrest of the Beknazarov and shooting of the policemen of 6 innocent civilians. All of these events were bounded between each other and served as a chain reaction that led to the uprising of the opposition that was supported by the discontented population which led to the massive unrests on 24<sup>th</sup> of March of 2005 on the central square in Bishkek where locates administrative building of the President Ak Uy. There were riots and clashes between police and protesters. Several government buildings and a lot of commercial units were destroyed and set on fire, especially those that belonged to the President's son Aidar Akaev, who was known as mafia in the country. As a result of the Tulip Revolution President Akayev fled the country and found political asylum in Russia, then resigned from presidency.

Of course we cannot say that border issue with China was the single reason of internal destabilization in Kyrgyzstan. As we have discussed in the previous chapter the USA made great effort through its NGOs to promote democracy and to support oppositional parties.<sup>167</sup> We can say that delimitation of borders with China became the key reason for the discontent of the population together with economic crisis, high unemployment that was used as the base for the preparation of Tulip Revolution. There is no doubt that people in Kyrgyzstan were dissatisfied with the whole government of Akayev, that there was corruption, most of the members of Akayev's family were included to the government, economic problems were rising – all of this also served as the reason for destabilization in the country. Nevertheless, opposition used this situation of land delimitation with China that were touching sensitive issue as “giving the lands of their homeland” that were appealing to nationalist sentiments of the population. So this

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<sup>166</sup> Avtandil Dobulbekov, “Аксы окуясына 10 жыл (10 years to the unrest in Aksy)”, *Super-Info*, №489, 16-22 March, 2012, (<http://www.super.kg/article/?article=14733>), date of access: 02.03.2014.

<sup>167</sup> See page: 39-40.

border issue with China became one of the key factors in social and political change in Kyrgyzstan that resulted in serious consequences for the whole region.

This border delimitation issue with China can be considered as bandwagoning situation between a great power and a small state. However, Kyrgyzstan was not the single country that had border issue with China after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. This border dispute has its roots in the Age of imperialism and not only Kyrgyzstan, but also Russia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan faced these border problems with China. These countries as well accepted Chinese vision of disputable lands and consequently negotiated with China over them. So Kyrgyzstan did not have the luxury just refuse to settle this issue, while Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and even Russia agreed to settle borders with China and signed appropriate agreements according to the same border claims of China. As Russia had to learn how to manage its relations with China from the position of lesser power, so Kyrgyzstan had to learn how to establish friendly relations with a potential regional hegemon.

As we can see the relations between China and Central Asian countries began by the security issue that is very important in the region where important changes took place after the collapse of the Soviet Union. For China the border issue is directly related to the territorial integrity of the country, security of its problematic region Xinjiang. After the collapse of the Soviet Union a new security situation emerged, where weak independent states that are not protected from the outside intrusions and different influence of other countries became new neighbors of China. This situation directly posed a threat to China. The border disputes were solved by division of disputed territory. One has to add that during the Soviet years this entire “disputed territory” was accepted as unalienable part of the Soviet Union. China began its relation by claiming “historical” territories in Central Asia and in reality by moving its borders toward Central Asia. China thinks that it made concession by accepting territories less than it was claiming at first.<sup>168</sup> In the case with Kyrgyzstan especially in the border part in Uzongu-Kuush China received %30 from total claimed territory whereas %70 remained

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<sup>168</sup> Sebastien Peyrouse, “China as a Neighbor”, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, Singapore: Johns Hopkins University-SAIS, p. 25.

as the territory of Kyrgyzstan. However in Kyrgyzstan this border issues raised the outrage of the population that has serious consequences due to the social destabilization and change of the government. At the end when border issues were solved between Kyrgyzstan and China have a perception of losing territories and compromising. Interesting point is that this very old border dispute could be solved only when region was free from the Soviet power. That also proves the bandwagoning situation in this issue, as during the Soviet Union period China wasn't successful with its claims and the Soviet Union did not accept those claims as it was more powerful than China, but after disintegration of the Soviet Union when appeared several independent countries in Central Asia that were weak small states, this time China "forced" these countries by using its position as more powerful country and small states could only bandwagon in this issue by accepting the border claims of China. So in this border issue China could put itself as the influential country that finally could return its lands without any conflict, conversely by the guarantee that they will have friendly relations and further cooperation.

### **2.3. SECURITY RELATIONS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE SCO**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is the first international organization that was established in the post- Soviet period with the membership of Central Asian countries and two regional powers as China and Russia. In this regard for the current moment it is important to clarify the importance of the SCO, its role and the future prospects. So what is the role of the SCO in international relations? What is the importance of the SCO for China and Kyrgyzstan? What is the role of the SCO in security issues of China? How does the SCO affect security relations of Kyrgyzstan and China? Is the SCO an anti-American organization?

First of all let us clarify what is the SCO, how was it built and what are its main issues. The predecessor of the SCO is the Shanghai Five framework of negotiations. We can say that establishment of the Shanghai Five was the establishment of mutual trust and solving of border disputes. Ceremony of signing the agreement of establishment of Shanghai Five was held on 26 April 1996 in Shanghai city of China by the meeting of

Presidents of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and China, therefore this community had the name Shanghai Five.<sup>169</sup>

In the framework of the Shanghai Five the following agreements regarding security issues were reached between the parties: on the meeting in 1996 parties all together signed Confidence Building in the Military Field in the Border Area. In 1997 they signed another Treaty on Reduction of Military Forces in Border Regions in a meeting in Moscow. The next meeting was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan in 1998, where the Shanghai Five achieved important changes. If before the aim of the Shanghai Five was solving the border issues where China presented one side as the claiming side and other members presented the other side, then in this meeting member countries decided that the Shanghai Five had to transform into a conversation among the five countries where every country will present itself. Moreover, new areas of discussion were added as the security issues on regional level and economic issues. Meeting in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan in 1999 covered the same issues as in previous meeting. Also important negotiation regarding border issue between Kyrgyzstan and China was achieved on this meeting, according to which problems along the 1000 km. long border between them were settled.<sup>170</sup> Fifth meeting was held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Peculiarity of that meeting was the attendance of the President of Uzbekistan as an observer which led to the later membership of Uzbekistan to the SCO as the sixth member country. Also on that meeting in Dushanbe the leaders of the participating countries have agreed to include in the scope of cooperation such issues as preventing the threat of war, joint exercises and maneuvers on the exchange of experience in various fields.<sup>171</sup>

In that time when there were a lot of border disputes between China and the former Soviet Union members and in addition between Central Asian countries it was highly important to legitimize the border demarcation disputes so every country can achieve its

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<sup>169</sup> “История развития Шанхайской организации сотрудничества (History of the development of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization)”, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Tajikistan, 04.10.2006, (<http://tj.china-embassy.org/rus/zt/shhzzz/t245402.htm>), date of access: 03.03.2014.

<sup>170</sup> Qingguo Jia, “The Success of the Shanghai Five: Interests, Norms and Pragmatism”, (n.d.).

<sup>171</sup> Chjao Huashen, “Китай, Центральная Азия и Шанхайская Организация Сотрудничества (China, Central Asia and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization)”, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005, p.6.

interest and the border disputes could not lead to any conflict between states. In this regard the Shanghai Five was very successful. Until 2000 year all border disputes with China were settled. As the aim of the Shanghai Five was reached then this community has to be closed or the structure and the main issues of it should be reshaped. So in the light of cooperation between the countries and rising security and economic issues in bilateral relations the member countries decided to reshape the Shanghai Five and broaden its activities. Moreover, China realized that through cooperation it can be closer to Central Asian countries, also existence of Russia in the same group helped China to regulate its relations with competing country. So on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2001 the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was established by five members of the Shanghai Five with the addition of sixth member Uzbekistan.<sup>172</sup> Issues of economy, security, regional cooperation, counter-terrorism activities were added to the agenda of the SCO.<sup>173</sup>

Let us discuss the main features of the SCO and why it is so important in Central Asian region. First of all the SCO is a regional structure the center of which locates in Central Asia. Central Asia itself locates in the closed region that is surrounded by different cultures and civilizations and this region has reach energy resources, mineral resources that attract interest of powerful countries all around the world. The SCO is a single organization that includes China, Russia and the Central Asian countries in one bunch. Two big regional powers China and Russia that are at the same time competing with each other allied in this organization for cooperation. Moreover these two big powers is the connection with the other parts of the world for Central Asian countries. The security issue in the region poses serious threat for all the member countries of the SCO, because of that all of them together facing the threat of terrorism, drug trafficking, smuggling etc. in the region. Therefore the SCO was established for control of geopolitical, economical and security issues of the region.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Chjao Huashen, CEIP, 2005, p.7.

<sup>173</sup> "Declaration on the Establishment of Shanghai Cooperation Organization", (<http://www.sectsco.org/RU123/show.asp?id=83>), date of Access: 04..03.2014.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

The most important feature of the SCO is the presence of China in it as the member country, because it is a single regional structure of international cooperation the member of which is China. China is not only one of the members, but important part that influences all the policies of the SCO, essence of the organization, the main themes of cooperation, strategic development, internal and external relations, and its image. After settlement of border issues China understood that cooperation and integration to Central Asia will be successful only if they will continue to cooperate in one single organization, because China does not have many common things to share with Central Asia, so cooperation with those countries through the SCO is very important for China. On the other hand the SCO is important tool to balance the powers of both Russia and the USA that are the competing powers of China for the influence in Central Asia.<sup>175</sup> Moreover, the presence of Russia in the organization give the opportunity to control competing power, control Russia's relations with Central Asian countries and have the right to discuss and take part in the main issues of this region. Also attending in one organization with Central Asian countries give China the opportunity to reach the energy reserves of this region that is very essential for the speedily developing Chinese industry.

On the other hand the SCO is the attempt of China to balance the rising power and influence of the United States by becoming an ally with Russia. After 9/11 events the United States settled its army forces very near by China at the heart of Kyrgyzstan which is very close to the Chinese border.<sup>176</sup> So China by allying with another regional power Russia used the SCO as a tool to limit the American power in this region. Because the USA began to meddle to the internal issues of the Central Asian countries and change the political situation in its own interest as it was in Kyrgyzstan in "Tulip Revolution" that happened in March 2005. So later in the same year China by the support of Russia took the step to limit the presence of the USA in the region. Particularly on 2005 Astana summit parties have stated their desire that the USA has to put deadline for the withdrawal of its military troops from the territory of the SCO

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<sup>175</sup> Ariel Cohen, "The Dragon Looks West: China and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization", The Heritage Foundation No 961, September 7 2006, p. 2.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.



member countries.<sup>177</sup> In other words protests against the presences of the US forces in Central Asia were openly announced. Here we have another example of bandwagoning of Kyrgyzstan as the small states toward China and another regional power Russia. As this protest was announced in the framework of the SCO as from the all members of organization; actually this was the positions and desire of two big powers China and Russia and the other members as the small states just had to accept the desire of two powers. So their pressure on Central Asian members to expel the US military forces through the SCO has yielded the fruits and Kyrgyzstan realized their wish, so according to the last statement of the Kyrgyz government regarding the US forces on its territory in 2012 the USA has to remove its forces in summer 2014.<sup>178</sup>

Furthermore, the SCO fully serves to the security interest of China in the region. Continuous terrorist attacks, drug trafficking through Central Asia and the most important sore point of China Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) where ethnic minority of Uighurs continuously organizing unrests against the Chinese government worried China a lot. With the independence of Central Asian countries, where large population of Uighurs lives, the unrest of Uighurs became more often. The fact that nations that also lived with them on the same geography during many centuries could get their independence and that other Uighurs that live on their lands are also enjoying independent life, when they have to live under the Chinese government that is depressing their rights and culture, more and more inspired them for the revolts.<sup>179</sup> But China is actively taking measures against these revolts in XUAR. Moreover after 9/11 terrorist attacks in the USA China managed to label one of the separatist groups East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) as a terrorist organization through the USA and the UN Security Council, because they were frequently attacking Chinese government

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<sup>177</sup> Hu Qihua, "SCO summit flexes anti terror muscles", 07.06.2005.

<sup>178</sup> "Авиабаза Манас на территории Киргизии (Manas airbase in Kyrgyzstan)", News Portal Itar-Tass Russia's Information Telegraph Agency, 14.11.2013.

<sup>179</sup> Martyna Veronika Duda, "Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. China's Strategy of Gaining and Maintaining Authority in its Western Province", MA thesis of University of Wrocław of the Department of International relations, Warsaw 2009, p. 30.

during the 1990s. China also insisted that this group has ties with Al-Qaeda.<sup>180</sup> In this means the SCO became one of the effective ways, as China with the establishment of the SCO added to the Shanghai Convention with agreement of other members 3 definitions as “terrorism”, “separatism” and “extremism”. And all of these three definitions mostly describe groups in XUAR that organize those revolts. Moreover, according to the declaration all members “shall cooperate in the prevention, detection and suppression of acts referred to those definitions”.<sup>181</sup> In other words China in the framework of the SCO Convention guaranteed that the member countries will not tolerate such groups and give support to them, but will actively fight with them, because Convention must be fulfilled by every member of the organization. This issue is also another bright example of bandwagoning of Kyrgyzstan in its relations with China. As the government of the Kyrgyz Republic for the developing friendly relations with its powerful neighbor has to act toward the interest of China and apply the policy of blocking nationalist activities of Uighurs in Kyrgyzstan that aims the independence of East Turkestan. Particularly in the beginning of the 1990’s Uighurs in Kyrgyzstan tried to register party for the Liberation of Eastern Turkestan, but the Ministry of Justice of Kyrgyzstan, refused to legalize the organization noting that it was "aiming the separation of neighboring state" which is China. Also Kyrgyzstan actively supporting the definition of “terrorists” toward Uighurs as in the middle of 1990’s Kyrgyz government accused them in wahhabism, even then tried to search their ties with the Islamic underground organization Hizb ut-Tahrir. Moreover, when there were terrorist acts in Osh city in the South of Kyrgyzstan in 1998 when there were a lot of victims on 12<sup>th</sup> March of 2001 Osh city court accused for that Chinese citizen of Uighur ethnicity. According to the investigation the convicts were the members of an international terrorist organization operating from Chechnya to Xinjiang.<sup>182</sup> The government of Kyrgyzstan was not pleased when in 28<sup>th</sup> July 2003 Uighur community held Kurultay

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<sup>180</sup> Preeti Bhattacharji, “Uighurs and China’s Xinjiang Region”, *The Washington Post*, August 1, 2008, (<http://www.cfr.org/china/uighurs-chinas-xinjiang-region/p16870>), date of access: 05.11.2013.

<sup>181</sup> “Shanghai Convention”, (<http://www.sectSCO.org/RU123/show.asp?id=82>), 15.06.2001, date of Access: 05.11.2013.

<sup>182</sup> Igor Grebenshikov, “Уйгуры в Кыргызстане (Uighurs in Kyrgyzstan)”, *Internet-newspaper ZONA KZ*, 18 April 2001, (<http://www.zonakz.net/articles/13629>), date of access: 05.04.2014.

(Congress) in Kyrgyzstan where they elected chairman of Uighur organization Ittipak. Chinese Embassy in Kyrgyzstan considers Ittipak as separatist organization. After that congress Ministry of Interior of Kyrgyzstan organized control of the documents in Ittipak office. The relations of Uighur diaspora and Kyrgyz government worsened after that congress.<sup>183</sup> Also in 2009 Kyrgyz authorities arrested Dilmurat Akbarov, the leader of the Ittipak Uyghur society, and his deputy Jamaldin Nasyrov accusing them for organizing demonstrations that were calling for an independent investigation into July 2009 riots in Xinjiang where nearly 500 Uighurs took part. This arrest was organized by the agreement between Kyrgyz government and Beijing police. Moreover, the Uighur diaspora in Kyrgyzstan was officially warned by the government of the country to avoid undermining Kyrgyzstan's relations with China.<sup>184</sup> The extradition of the Uighur activists to China is also widely practiced in recent years both by Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Thus, such Uighur activists as Hamit Mamat, Iliyar Zordan, Kasim Mahpid, Jalil Turdi, Baivaacha, Mamat Yasin, Mamat Sadik and others were extradited to China from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.<sup>185</sup> Last precedent associated with Uyghur happened on the border of East Turkistan and Kyrgyzstan on 23<sup>rd</sup> January of 2014, when a group of 11 people from Xinjiang illegally crossed the border and border guards of Kyrgyzstan shot them. Kyrgyz government called them “Uighur separatists” and their bodies were sent to China.<sup>186</sup> Thus, in this sensitive issue for China Kyrgyzstan fully bandwagons for saving good relations with China and has to accept the rules which serves to the interests of great neighbor. So the SCO fully serves to the security

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<sup>183</sup> Henryk Szadziewski, “The Uighurs, China and Central Asia”, Open Democracy, 26.06.2011, (<http://www.opendemocracy.net/henryk-szadziewski/uyghurs-china-and-central-asia>), date of access: 05.04.2014.

<sup>184</sup> Erica Marat, “Uighur Diaspora Faces Government Pressure in Kyrgyzstan”, *The Jamestown Foundation*, August 13, 2009, ([http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=35406#.U2ebUYF\\_v5Y](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=35406#.U2ebUYF_v5Y)), date of access: 05.04.2014.

<sup>185</sup> Rustam Mukhamedov, “Uighurs in Kyrgyzstan Under Careful Government Supervision”, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Analyst, 28.01.2004, (<http://old.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/1850>), date of access: 05.04.2014.

<sup>186</sup> Azer Hasret, “Kırgızistan sınırında Uygurlar’ın öldürülmesi (The killing of Uighurs in Kyrgyzstan border)”, Milliyet Gazetesi, 03.02.2014, (<http://blog.milliyet.com.tr/kirgizistan-sinirinda-uygurlar-in-oldurulmesi/Blog/?BlogNo=447257>), date of access: 05.04.2014.

ambitions of China and as we can see China managed to carry its own internal problems to the level of organization's problems.

Let us also discuss the view point of small members of the SCO as Kyrgyzstan and other Central Asian members to the creation of this organization. Becoming the member of this organization and their behavior in the SCO better described as the behavior of small states in neorealism. The SCO serves for both balancing and bandwagoning the relations of small states with two great powers China and Russia. They have the opportunity to balance the power of two big regional powers: hegemonic Russia and the rising China by attending to the SCO. These two powers competing for more influence in Central Asia so each of them wants to establish closer relation with Central Asian countries to gain more influence. However, in the framework of the SCO they are actively cooperating and Central Asian countries have the opportunity to balance their influence through the SCO. Moreover these small countries have the opportunity first time in modern politics "to take part in generating regional approaches to cooperation and security on an equal basis with the larger regional powers".<sup>187</sup> Of course being totally equal with great powers as China and Russia in one organization for the small countries is utopia for the current moment, all this equality is formal and occurs only in organizational documents. At least small countries have the opportunity to participate in formation of their own security and national issues. On the other side their membership to the SCO does not prevent them to develop their foreign relations with other great powers as the United States. Kyrgyzstan permitted to settle American Air Base on the Kyrgyz lands after the establishment of the SCO. Kyrgyzstan as the other Central Asian states continuing its bilateral relations with the United States, accepting its financial aids.<sup>188</sup> So it is the big advantage for Kyrgyzstan that as the member of the SCO can gain equal interests and pose its aims inside the organization. Also the SCO gives opportunity for cooperation with great powers and with its member countries, in the framework of the organization can take part directly in the project of the region, can have security umbrella of the SCO in border areas and support in fighting with

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<sup>187</sup> Alyson J. K. Bailes, Pál Dunay, Pan Guang, Mikhail Troitskiy, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization", *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, Policy Paper No. 17, May 2007, p. 11.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

terrorism. Moreover, through the SCO Kyrgyzstan can have access to the international arena as the member of the big regional organization and take part in the important discussions and decisions that affect Kyrgyzstan directly.

Security relations and cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and China in the framework of the SCO are developing steadily. Particularly it was initiative of Kyrgyz Republic to open Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) in the framework of organization. Because after Kyrgyzstan faced the terrorism threat in the 1999 and 2000 years when terrorist organization IMU attacked Kyrgyzstan in its South part the issue of terrorist threat became the acute issue in the security agenda of the country.<sup>189</sup> And on 25-28 September of 2002 were organized meeting with the representatives of member countries in Kyrgyzstan for launching the mechanism of RATS.<sup>190</sup> Before that terrorism issue was also one of the important issues and China was the initiator of putting this issue in the convention of the SCO as the issue of “three evils” which are “terrorism”, “extremism” and “separatism”, but from the creation of RATS this issue that concerned each of the member states gain new importance in the framework of separate structure in the organization. The aims of this structure is maintaining, organizing and holding anti-terrorism activities between the member countries.<sup>191</sup> Also Kyrgyzstan and China are holding from time to time anti-terrorist exercises in their border regions. The last exercise were held on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2013 in the border area “Torugart-road” under the name “The joint border operations – 2013” where were involved the latest techniques for holding border security. The representatives of the border agencies of Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, Pakistan and Iran as well as the Regional Anti-

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<sup>189</sup> Fiona Hill, “Contributions of Central Asian Nations to the Campaign Against Terrorism”, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Subcommittee on Central Asia and South Caucasus Testimony*, December 13, 2001, (<http://www.brookings.edu/research/testimony/2001/12/13terrorism-hill>), date of access: 01.02.2014.

<sup>190</sup> “Участие Кыргызской Республики в деятельности ШОС (Participation of the Kyrgyz Republic in the activities of SCO)”, *The official site under the chairmanship of the Kyrgyz Republic in the SCO (2012-2013)*, (<http://www.scosummit2013.org/uchastie-kr-v-shos/>), date of access: 04.03.2014.

<sup>191</sup> “О ПАТС (About RATS)”, *The official site under the chairmanship of the Kyrgyz Republic in the SCO (2012-2013)*, (<http://www.scosummit2013.org/uchastie-kr-v-shos/>), date of access: 04.03.2014.

Terrorist Structure of the SCO were invited as observers to that exercises.<sup>192</sup> As we can see security relations between China and Kyrgyzstan in the frameworks of the SCO is successfully developing as this issue is in the interests of both sides. For Kyrgyzstan as the newly established country is very important to maintain security inside the country and in border regions with the support and help of member countries to the SCO, especially with one of the regional powers as China. As for China the security issue especially in its border areas with Kyrgyzstan is in top of the agenda as it is the west border area where locates security sensitive XUAR region of China. Also Kyrgyzstan that shares 1000 km. common border with China is the door that opens to Central Asia because of that the threat from that door as terrorism, drug trafficking, smuggling etc. can come to China as well as from Kazakhstan and Tajikistan that also share common border with China. Therefore maintaining stability and security in the border areas with Central Asian countries in the framework of the SCO gives this issue extra importance as it is brought to the agenda of all member countries, formalize it and takes it to the regional level.

Since the establishment of the Shanghai Five there are discussions about that this group has anti-American direction. The unification of the leading competing powers of the United States as Russia and China could not be evaluated differently as calling it anti-American, especially not so long after the end of the Cold War. But we have to remember that the aim of the Shanghai Five primarily was the settlement of border disputes between China on one side and Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan on the other side. In other words there wasn't any anti-American thought as it was regarding regional border issue between the bordering countries. Perhaps tendency of anti-Americanism rose later after establishment of the SCO, because for the time of establishment of this organization in 2001 the USA became quite active in Central Asian region and its competition with Russia and China was gaining momentum. Therefore Russia and China unified in organizational level of the SCO that does not include the USA and one of the reasons for that might be their attempt to limit the

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<sup>192</sup> “Китай и Кыргызстан проведут совместные учения в рамках ШОС (China and Kyrgyzstan will hold joint exercises in the framework of the SCO)”, *TENGRINEWS*, (<http://tengrinews.kz/asia/kitay-i-kyrgyzstan-provedut-sovmestnyie-ucheniya-v-ramkah-shos-239537/>), date of access: 04.03.2014.

influence of the USA in the region. Especially after deployment of the US troops in Central Asia the attempts of China and Russia to limit the power and influence of the USA through the SCO became especially apparent. The bright examples of that is the pressure of China and Russia to the Central Asian states to withdraw American troops from their lands. This issue was formally raised on 2005 Astana summit of the SCO. Russia and China are using their status as the regional powers in the SCO too, and in discussions and especially in decision making processes of the organization putting their weight to the final decisions. Especially Russia made great effort and made pressure to the government of Kyrgyzstan after Bakiyev became President to withdraw the US troops from the territory of Kyrgyzstan. However, the pressure of Russia did not get any success. Central Asian member countries as Kyrgyzstan have friendly diplomatic, security and economic relations with the USA and certainly their membership to the SCO doesn't have any anti-American shade. On the contrary Kyrgyzstan is balancing its relations through the SCO by maintaining close cooperation in organization with China and Russia, and at the same time cooperating with the USA outside the organization. Shortly we can say that the SCO wasn't established as anti-American organization, but this organization is used by the China and Russia in their competition for more power and influence in the region and limiting the influence of the USA that is best described by the neorealist theory.

The SCO has bright future in the new dimension of international relations when fighting with terrorism became one of the important issues of security of every country. Especially in the face of 2014 the US NATO troops withdrawal from Afghanistan it should be the SCO that will organize security strategies for safety in the region. Also the growing interest to the SCO just strengthens this organization on international level. As we can see powerful countries of the region as India, Mongolia and Pakistan became the observers of the organization. The USA at first thought that the SCO is not very important and that it is just club for discussions, however today the USA gives the SCO more importance in its foreign relations toward the Central Asia. Moreover, it will be in favor of the Central Asian members that the SCO that balances the relations of two regional powers as China and Russia will become more active in security issues of the region.

In a century when terrorism, drug trafficking, smuggling etc. are gaining strength from day to day all over the world cooperation with the neighboring states and with powerful countries as China and Russia in one organization as the SCO is very important for Kyrgyzstan. Because Kyrgyzstan as newly established independent country has weak military forces and limited sources, therefore cannot fight against the main security threats of the region and maintain security of the country alone. Also the fact that problematic country in security issue as Afghanistan is very close to Kyrgyzstan is only increasing the importance of security issue. Therefore Kyrgyzstan also allowed military presence on the territory of the country of the USA and Russia. These military bases make Kyrgyzstan strategically important country in Central Asia. Furthermore, Kyrgyzstan is maintaining close cooperation in security and economic issues with China in the region. Moreover, there is possibility that China also will open its military base in Kyrgyzstan.<sup>193</sup> So Kyrgyzstan in its diplomatic relations tries to have friendly relations with all three giants as China, Russia and the USA and in this means successfully balancing its foreign relations with them, however as we can see in the relations with China Kyrgyzstan has to mostly bandwagon.

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<sup>193</sup> Ariel Cohen, "The Dragon Looks West: China and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization", The Heritage Foundation No 961, September 7 2006, p. 3.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **ECONOMIC RELATIONS**

When the Kyrgyz Republic peacefully separated from the Soviet Union and became independent country again it was very hard to adapt to the new rules of capitalism and market economy, especially after the centralized governing and control of all the economic issues during the Soviet Union period. Governing the economy of the country, developing the country and building economic relations with other countries by themselves on international arena was the new issue for Kyrgyzstan in the beginning of the 1990s, especially the issues of governing the economy of the country so they can live and develop like the other capitalist countries was hard for the newly established Kyrgyzstan. Now Kyrgyzstan could build its foreign relations as well as the economic relations with other country itself which could help to improve the economy of the country. So Kyrgyzstan has the aim to built independent and well developed economy and at the same time to establish free market economy in the country.

#### **3.1. THE PLACE OF KYRGYZSTAN IN THE WORLD ECONOMY**

It is not a wonder that the first countries with which Kyrgyzstan established relations were the neighboring countries as China. In that decade China improved itself economically and was trying to become influential power on international arena. The independence of bordering Central Asian countries open the new opportunities for China to establish with them direct relations as there was no the Soviet Union that can interrupt it. Being influential in neighboring Central Asia is the important issue for China and economic development strategies, financial support, investments that were vital in that decade for newly established independent states as Kyrgyzstan was only strategic step for the “...safeguard and safety of the backyard”.<sup>194</sup> In other words at the early stage of independence of Central Asian countries establishing economic relations

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<sup>194</sup> ICG, “China’s Central Asia Problem”, 27 February 2013, p.15.

was a step to become dominant power in this region. The economic relation with China is very important issue for Kyrgyzstan, having such big economic partner could positively affect the economy of the country. China for its part has its own interests in Kyrgyzstan as the source of raw material, mines of minerals and gold.

Kyrgyz people and China had relations from ancient times, but this direct relation was interrupted by joining Kyrgyz people to the Russian Empire. After the long period which lasted more than a century Kyrgyz people could establish independent country and establish direct relations with China. But now China was completely different from that China in ancient times. First of all we should mark that China is the most populous country in the world - the total population is about 1.3 billion people, which means one in every five people on earth is Chinese.<sup>195</sup> China according to the scale of the country's land is the third largest country after Russia and Canada. However the most important issue regarding China is its economy that is growing very fast. According to the World Trade Organization (WTO) statistics of 2013 October China is the second country in the world only after the European Union in total merchandise trade which is valued for \$2 048 714 million US dollar, when Kyrgyzstan has merchandise trade for only \$1, 893.8 million US dollar.<sup>196</sup> Also China is the world's fastest developing economy in the present age, having grown an average of 9.8% annually for the past 20 years.<sup>197</sup> With such measures it is expected that China soon will become a superpower in the world in all means, especially superpower in the world economy.

In this point at first we should evaluate the economic conditions of China and Kyrgyzstan in the world to better understand the situation of both countries. China is a country that has huge production capacity, export and import capacity together with billions of

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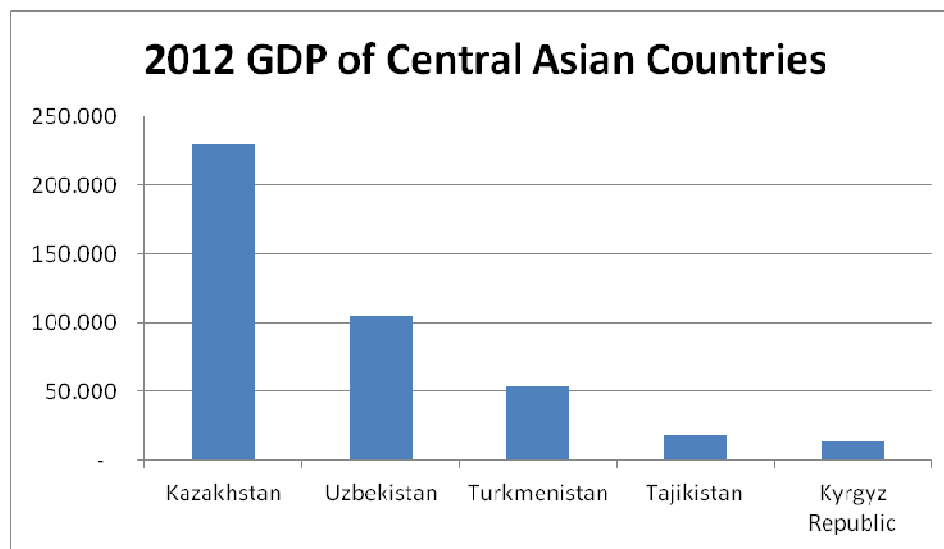
<sup>195</sup> Matt Rosenberg, "China Population: The population growth of the World's Largest Country", (<http://geography.about.com/od/populationgeography/a/chinapopulation.htm>), date of access: 21.11.2012.

<sup>196</sup> World Trade Organization- International Trade and Market Access Data, ([http://www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/statis\\_e/statis\\_bis\\_e.htm?solution=WTO&path=/Dashboards/MAPS&file=Map.wcdf&bookmarkState={%22impl%22:%22client%22,%22params%22:{%22langParam%22:%22en%22}}}](http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/statis_bis_e.htm?solution=WTO&path=/Dashboards/MAPS&file=Map.wcdf&bookmarkState={%22impl%22:%22client%22,%22params%22:{%22langParam%22:%22en%22}})), date of access: 01.04.2014.

<sup>197</sup> World Trade Organization- World Trade Development Statistics, ([http://www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/statis\\_e/its2011\\_e/its11\\_world\\_trade\\_dev\\_e.pdf](http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/its2011_e/its11_world_trade_dev_e.pdf)), date of access: 28.11.2012.

investments all around the world. However Kyrgyzstan is a newly established country that began its economic development as the independent country not so long ago. In the early 1990's after the collapse of the Soviet Union industry lost its meaning in Kyrgyzstan when most of the factories and industrial production sites closed. Agricultural sector became the salvation for thousands of people who lost their jobs. Even for today agricultural sector is the leading sector in Kyrgyzstan, nearly %55 of population are involved in this field. Also the massive emigration of Russian population in the first years of independence of the country led to the loss of experts in the most field of the economy. Nowadays the most developed sector is the textile industry.<sup>198</sup> So the economy of Kyrgyzstan is in its early stage of development. But troubled political situation in Kyrgyzstan, particularly “Tulip Revolution” in 2005, the unrests in April 2010 in Bishkek and in June in Osh just destabilized the economy of the country.

**Table 7:** 2012 GDP (current \$US) of Central Asian countries <sup>199</sup>



<sup>198</sup> “О Кыргызстане (About Kyrgyzstan)”, *Companion*, (<http://www.kompanion.asia/index.php?lang=ru&Itemid=363>), date of access: 01.04.2014.

<sup>199</sup> Gross Domestic Product, 2012, PPP (at purchasing power parity) based, *The World Bank Data*, (<http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/GDP-PPP-based-table>), date of access: 01.04.2014.

To better understand the place of the Kyrgyzstan economy let us look to the above table where economy of Kyrgyzstan is compared with other Central Asian countries economies. Among the countries that also began their independent life a little bit more than 20 years ago, the economy of Kyrgyzstan is weak even among them. According to the 2012 Kyrgyzstan had the lowest GDP of \$ 13, 231 million US dollar among the other Central Asian countries and Kazakhstan had the highest GDP of \$ 229,568 US dollar. So if the economy of Kyrgyzstan is weak among Central Asian countries than we can understand the place of Kyrgyz economy in the world. Shortly we can say that small economy of Kyrgyzstan that is struggling to develop is facing the huge rapidly rising economy of China.

We can clearly see the huge difference between the economies of China and Kyrgyzstan in comparison of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) amount of both countries for the last years in the below table.

**Table 8:** The GDP of China and Kyrgyzstan for 2012 and 2013<sup>200</sup>

<b>Year</b>	<b>GDP of China (trillion US dollars)</b>	<b>GDP of Kyrgyzstan (billion US dollars)</b>
<b>2012</b>	\$8.227	\$6.475
<b>2013</b>	\$ 9.31	\$ 6.96

As we can see the economies of China and Kyrgyzstan are so different that there cannot be made healthy comparison; the GDP of Kyrgyzstan for 2013 was \$ 6.96 billion dollars whereas China's GDP for the same year was \$ 9.31 trillion dollars. There is a huge gap between the economic situations of the two countries. However economic rise can be viewed in the cases of both countries, the GDP amounts of the countries for 2013 is higher than in the previous 2012.

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<sup>200</sup> "GDP per capita for China and Kyrgyzstan", The World Bank Data, (<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>), date of access: 06.04.2013.

According to the below table we can see world's 10 largest economies in 2010 and the expectations from International Monetary Fund (IMF) for 2020 and 2030.

**Table 9:** World's 10 Largest Economies by decade<sup>201</sup>

World's 10 Largest Economies By Decade						
Rank	2010		2020		2030	
	Country	GDP US\$ tn	Country	GDP US\$ tn	Country	GDP US\$ tn
1	U.S.	14.6	China	24.6	China	73.5
2	China	5.9	U.S.	23.3	U.S.	38.2
3	Japan	5.6	India	9.6	India	30.3
4	Germany	3.3	Japan	6.0	Brazil	12.2
5	France	2.6	Brazil	5.1	Indonesia	9.3
6	U.K.	2.3	Germany	5.0	Japan	8.4
7	Italy	2.0	France	3.9	Germany	8.2
8	Brazil	2.0	Russia	3.5	Mexico	6.6
9	Canada	1.6	U.K.	3.4	France	6.4
10	Russia	1.5	Indonesia	3.2	U.K.	5.6

Sources: IMF, Standard Chartered

As we can see in 2010 the USA had the largest economy in the world, China had a second largest economy. However according to the expectation of IMF China will overtake the USA and will preserve its primacy until 2030, moreover by 2030 the GDP of China will be nearly twelve (!) times more than in 2010.

Nowadays China became the “production country” where companies all around the world open their production factories, the main reason for that is the cheap labor force, good conditions for the investments and the government policies to improve the economy of the country where export is rising from year to year.<sup>202</sup> Also economic stability and prosperity allows China to make valuable investments all around the world, which means the power and influence of China is rising.

Moreover China according to the latest estimates developing and strengthening its military power and the leading countries of the world accept that China is becoming

<sup>201</sup> “China and India to Dominate the Next 20 Years”, Investment News and Commentary from Emerging Markets in Asia - China, India and ASEAN, 16<sup>th</sup> November 2010, (<http://www.2point6billion.com/news/2010/11/16/china-and-india-to-dominate-the-next-20-years-7993.html>), date of access: 08.03.2013.

<sup>202</sup> Rosita Dellios, “China: The 21st Century Superpower?”, *Lecture, Casa Asia, Barcelona*, 13 September 2005, p.2.

powerful and poses threat to their supremacy. So from the point of view of Kyrgyzstan it is better to establish friendly economic relations with China that is also useful for the developing economy of Kyrgyzstan. As China is the economically powerful neighbor that can be valuable investment and cooperation partner in economic sector of Kyrgyzstan.

### **3.2. TRADE RELATIONS AND KYRGYZSTAN AS A TRANSIT COUNTRY**

But in 1991 newly established independent states went for establishing economic relations with China to build up their own economy that from that moment they could control themselves. In that means Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan played big role as one of the first countries to open their borders and to establish economic relations with China. So after establishing diplomatic relations with Kyrgyzstan in 1992 by recognizing its independence China went to the next most important step as establishing economic relations. China as a country that has lots of economic ties and trade cooperation with other countries around the world did not need very much economic ties with Central Asia, but this was the secure way to begin cooperation with these new established countries as Kyrgyzstan. China was seeing Kyrgyzstan and entire Central Asia not only as an economic partner, but also as a transit area that could help China to establish trade relations also with Iran, Afghanistan, India and Pakistan. The opening of trade roads in Central Asia means that the historical Silk Road route will be reestablished.<sup>203</sup> Because the borders of Central Asia during the Soviet Union period was one of the secure ones, but also these borders never opened to China especially for the trade purposes.

Let us look back to the time when economic relations with Central Asia and China were established. Mainly the period of establishing economic relations we can divide in three main phases.<sup>204</sup> The first phase which captures the 1992-1996 period is the first step for cooperation when the post Dostyk-Alatau was opened in Kazakhstan. The next step was establishing economic ties with Kyrgyzstan, because this region was the shortest way to

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<sup>203</sup> Sebastien Peyrouse, "Economic Aspects of Chinese-Central Asia Rapprochement", Sweden: The Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, 2007, p. 8.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., p.11.

transport goods to other states such as Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Russia.

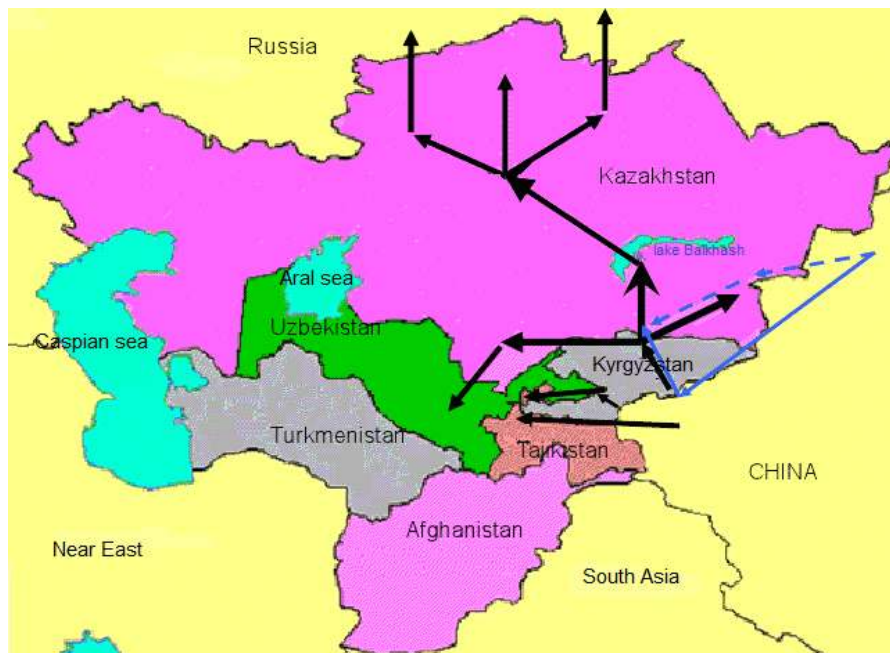
In economic relations between China and Kyrgyzstan the great role played the membership of Kyrgyzstan to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 20<sup>th</sup> December of 1998. Kyrgyzstan was the first country from CIS to become a member of the WTO. Kyrgyzstan even became the member of the WTO long before China, because China became member only on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2001.<sup>205</sup> The membership to the WTO gives the country many opportunities, as well as commitments and rules. Also it is much easier for member country to work with the other country that is member to the WTO. In this case both of the countries have a lot of opportunities, low subsidiaries, easy agreements, customs duties and tariff obligations etc. During the transition period, as a way to develop its economy Kyrgyzstan preferred to open its economy and integrate to the world as soon as possible. This way seemed as an important way to be recognized on the international arena and to establish new relations as the independent state in capitalist world.

When the neighbor China became the member of the WTO Kyrgyzstan-China trade relations developed quickly and they achieved very high trade flow that resulted in one billion dollars flow per year.<sup>206</sup> Because of the WTO membership Chinese goods could easily reach the customs without any obstacles; Chinese goods were transported to Kyrgyzstan then to other countries without any problem. So Kyrgyzstan could get profit as an importer and transporter of the goods and China could establish quick flow of its goods to Central Asia. This economic cooperation also strengthened diplomatic relations between two countries. Moreover, the membership of Kyrgyzstan to the WTO facilitated for China to achieve its aim to become influential country in Central Asia as the economic integration is one of the tools to achieve power in this region.

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<sup>205</sup> Ramesh Adhikari and Yongzheng Yang, "What Will WTO Membership Mean for China and Its Trading Partners?", "Finance & Development" a quarterly magazine of the IMF, September 2002, Volume 39, Number 3, p.2

<sup>206</sup> Sebastien Peyrouse, "Economic Aspects of Chinese-Central Asia Rapprochement", 2007, p. 14.

**Table 10:** Trade channel from China through Kyrgyzstan to the entire Central Asia<sup>207</sup>

As we can see in the map in Table 10 there are the main ways of trade flow from China to Central Asia. The main ways of entrance from China to Kyrgyzstan are the route that connects Kashgar with the northern part of Kyrgyzstan via Naryn, the another way links China through Sary Tash with the south of the Kyrgyzstan, then to the Fergana Valley and Uzbekistan. The third entrance passes through the Gorno-Badakhshan region to central areas of Tajikistan and beyond.<sup>208</sup>

Kyrgyzstan and China from time to time have Trade Economic Forums where they discuss future economic cooperation of the countries. The most discussed issue of the last years is the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railroad project. China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railroad project construction will ease the transportation issue in the whole Central Asia, as well as this railroad can become the main trade road between China and Kyrgyzstan. On the other hand this project will bring a lot of benefits to China. The

<sup>207</sup> World Bank report “Markets and trade integration in the countries of Central Asian Economic Cooperation (CAEC)”, 13 May 2009, p. 22.

<sup>208</sup> Sadykzhan Ibraimov, “China-Central Asia Trade Relations: Economic and Social Patterns”, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Volume 7, No. 1 (2009) p.49.



railroad will link Europe to Central Asia and then to China, which means Chinese goods can be directly delivered to Europe- European window will open for Chinese trade. There is no doubt that this railroad project will help for the economic development of Kyrgyzstan because all merchandisers from Kyrgyzstan and China will easily transport the goods and transportation fees will decrease which will affect the prices that will be not so high. At the same time this railroad will ease Chinese exportation. Moreover, the railroads in Kyrgyzstan are poorly developed since the Soviet Union. There is no link with railroad between South and North parts of Kyrgyzstan. The construction of this railroad will help to develop the transportation in the country and will link South and North parts of Kyrgyzstan. As we know most of the commodities are transported mostly by railroad, by the ships or by the highway transport, in Kyrgyzstan more than %90 of the goods are transported only by the highway transports, so for the development of the trade inside the country and with the other countries Kyrgyzstan has to develop its railroads and this China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan project is the best solution for that. Also Kyrgyzstan will be linked to Uzbekistan which will help for the friendly development of relations between Kyrgyz and Uzbek nations and will lower the tense after June 2010 events according to the president of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambaev.<sup>209</sup> By this China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan project Kyrgyzstan will become the real transportation country and will have approximately \$261 million US dollars benefit from this project every year which is valuable source for budget of the country. This project became more political issue than economical. The roots of this projects goes to the time of the first president Askar Akaev, then this issue continued during the presidency of Kurmanbek Bakiev and now it is in the agenda of current government of Almazbek Atambaev. When this project was presented to the government every time the price of the project became higher and higher. Lastly this project counted for \$2 billion US dollars.<sup>210</sup> This amount is very high for Kyrgyzstan, so the only hope is the financing of China. Recently the government of Kyrgyzstan proposed some ways of purchasing this project by giving the mineral resources to China, but this idea was

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<sup>209</sup> G. Smith, "China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway Project brings political risks", *Central Asia Caucasus Institute*, (<http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5731>), 03.07.2012, date of Access: 09.01.2012.

<sup>210</sup> Myles G. Smith, "China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway project brings political risks", *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Analyst*, 03.07.2012, date of access: 16.01.2013.

rejected.<sup>211</sup> Also Chinese themselves asked for several gold mines instead, this idea also was renounced by the government and population. Therefore there is still unresolved problem with this project- which is the problem of financing such project.

Analytic of «IHS Global Insight» Lilit Gevorgyan saying that Chinese projects generally come with the Chinese workers which means most of the project works will be occupied by Chinese themselves, so there will be no work places for Kyrgyz workers. There are concerns inside Kyrgyzstan about the project. Some experts and politicians strongly oppose the construction of this project. For example expert on infrastructure projects Kubat Rahimov doubting that this railroad will bring such profits as \$200 million dollars every year. Also he says that Kyrgyzstan shouldn't pay for that project, because this railroad firstly the aim of China and Uzbekistan and these two countries should pay Kyrgyzstan for using its territory for that project.<sup>212</sup> Moreover, former presidential candidate Tursunbai Bakir Ulu says that this China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan project is only the attempt of China to expand and raise its influence in Central Asia, also this railroad will be the main way of removal natural resources of the country to China and abroad. He also gave the example of the famous words of Mao Zedong: "Wherever stepped Chinese soldier is a Chinese land", so if Kyrgyz government will give permission to China for building this railroad through the territory of Kyrgyzstan than according to Tursunbai Bakir Ulu it will just bring chaos to the country.<sup>213</sup> Maybe in some aspects he is right, we shouldn't forget the factor of China itself as a huge country on international arena that has strong speedily developing economy, that it is one of the five nuclear-weapon states and has the ambitions to be dominant power in Central Asia and on its way to become the superpower in the world. The neighborhood with such country needs caution in the relation with it. And

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<sup>211</sup> Tolkun Namatbaeva, "Свет и тени проекта строительства железной дороги «Китай-Кыргызстан-Узбекистан (Lights and shadows of the railway project "China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan), *«Washington Times»*, 2 April 2012, Translation of InoZpress , (<http://profi.gateway.kg/transport/180-washingtontimes.html>), date of access: 16.04.2013.

<sup>212</sup> Anna Timofeenko, "Железная дорога Китай - Кыргызстан - Узбекистан: вопросы без ответов (Railroad China - Kyrgyzstan - Uzbekistan: Questions Without Answers)", *daily newspaper of Kyrgyzstan "Vecherniy Bishkek"*, 04.02.2013, date of access: 16.04.2013.

<sup>213</sup> Tolkun Namatbaeva, "Свет и тени проекта строительства железной дороги «Китай-Кыргызстан-Узбекистан (Lights and shadows of the railway project "China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan), 2 April 2012.

Kyrgyzstan has to carefully calculate all pros and cons for the country's future before accepting such large scale projects. From the other hand we live in the era of globalization which means close interaction of all countries with each other is inevitable. And for economic development every country is cooperating with the others, even the most influential and the strongest ones like the USA, Japan or Germany. So for the developing country as Kyrgyzstan it will be very beneficial to take help of China that can afford to make big investments in that kind of projects. Kyrgyzstan should smartly use the benefits of being neighbor to China.

According to the latest news of cooperation between China and Kyrgyzstan on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2012 Premier Wen Jiabao of the State Council of China visited Kyrgyzstan and met with the president Atambaev. During that meeting sides agreed to develop feasibility study for the project China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan and in 2013 there were organized meeting where they have discussed ways of financing this project. As we can see the vital railway project soon will be embodied to the reality. Moreover this meeting was essential for the economic relations between two countries. Because there were signed four memorandums regarding the development of economic and investment activities, the agreement on economic and technological cooperation of the two countries, a memorandum on cooperation in the field of geology and mineral resources, the agreement for the easy credit for the repairment of Osh-Batken-Isfana and Bishkek-Balykchy roads.<sup>214</sup>

China's main aim is maximally ease transportation issue between China and Central Asia. So the other important project is the road projects in Central Asia that will link with China. This road projects have aim to ease the shipping issue which is the core issue of trade relations. For example recently China gave 60 million Yuan of unreturned credit to Kyrgyzstan for the construction of China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan highway.<sup>215</sup> Also there is Osh-Irkeshtam and Bishkek- Torugart roads are constructing and after

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<sup>214</sup> Eleonora Beyshenbek kyzy, "Кыргызстан и Китай укрепляют сотрудничество (Kyrgyzstan and China are strengthening cooperation)", *Gezitter.org.*, ([http://www.gezitter.org/economics/16487\\_kyrgyzstan\\_i\\_kitay\\_ukreplyayut\\_sotrudnichestvo/](http://www.gezitter.org/economics/16487_kyrgyzstan_i_kitay_ukreplyayut_sotrudnichestvo/)), 5th of December 2012, date of Access: 21.01.2013.

<sup>215</sup> Aynur Nogaeva, "Orta Asya'da ABD, Rusya ve Çin Stratejik Denge Arayışları (The USA, Russia and China Quest for Strategic Stability in Central Asia)", USAK, Ames Printing House: Ankara, June 2011, p. 125.

completing these projects it will be easier to travel to China, on the bus it will take only 5-6 hours from Kyrgyzstan to reach the China. So it is expected that in near future all the obstacles for these projects will be solved and the projects will be finally constructed.

During the transition period from planned economy to the market economy Kyrgyzstan had to adjust several radical economic reforms to save the stability of the country's economy. But this transition period had its effect on socio-economic situation.<sup>216</sup> Inflation, closing of factories, privatization process resulted in unemployment and decrease in the average wage; people left unemployed, so most of them tried themselves in small-scale trade, so called shuttle trade to make ends meet. So the small scale trading on local bazaars became the main income of most of the population of Kyrgyzstan in that time.

The small scale trade on bazaars was realized by importing goods from China and re-exporting them to the other neighboring countries or simply re-selling them to the local population through Dordoi bazaar, which is a large wholesale and retail market in Bishkek- the capital of Kyrgyzstan. It is one of Asia's greatest public market places. Dordoi Bazaar is not just a major shopping and employment center for the Bishkek metropolitan area and entire Chui River Valley region, but also one of the main enrepicts through which consumer goods from China arrive to shops and markets in Kazakhstan, Russia, and Uzbekistan.<sup>217</sup> As we can see the economic cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and China became quite beneficial to both sides with the opening of Dordoi bazaar that became the main market of Chinese goods in Kyrgyzstan. Due to the low taxes and the location of Kyrgyzstan Dordoi bazaar turned to the main market not only for Kyrgyz people but also for the neighboring countries. There are not only traders from Kyrgyzstan, but as well as from China, Turkey, Syria, India, Russia and Kazakhstan. Dordoi bazaar became the popular place for trade flow nearly for all

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<sup>216</sup> Ayim Baktybekova, “Основные направления социально-экономического развития Кыргызстана в современных условиях (The main directions of social and economic development of Kyrgyzstan in the present conditions)”, 1999, p. 34.

<sup>217</sup> “Все о рынке Дордой (Everything about Dordoi bazaar)”, *official web-site of Dordoi bazaar*, (<http://dordoi-bazar.ru/dordoj/>), date of access: 06.04.2014.

Central Asia.<sup>218</sup> Buses that are traveling to Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan established bus station in Dordoi bazaar which make easier for the merchandisers to travel to Kyrgyzstan and especially to transport goods from Kyrgyzstan to their own countries. It worth to mark that in Dordoi bazaar 75% of goods and in Kara-Suu bazaar, which is the largest bazaar in the South part of Kyrgyzstan, 85% of goods are from China.<sup>219</sup> Kara-Suu bazaar locates near the Uzbekistan border and also attracts merchandisers all over the Central Asia, especially from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. These are the largest bazaars in the country where the monthly turnover in 2012 market at about \$331 million dollars, at Kara-Suu bazaar the monthly turnover is \$90 million dollars.<sup>220</sup> We can say that these bazaars are the main motor of the economy of Kyrgyzstan. Therefore China became the second trade partner of Kyrgyzstan among the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries and Kyrgyzstan became the third partner of China in its foreign trade in 2012.

After establishing of diplomatic relations the economic relations also were settled down between Kyrgyzstan and China and in 1992 the volume of bilateral trade flow was \$35 million 490 thousand dollars.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Sadykzhan Ibrahimov, "China-Central Asia Trade Relations: Economic and Social Patterns", Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Volume 7, No. 1 (2009) p.49.

<sup>219</sup> Chris Rickleton, "Kyrgyzstan: China's Economic Influence", EurasiaNet's Weekly Digest: Economy, 28 April 2011, (<http://www.eurasianet.org/node/63383>), date of access: 18.12.2012.

<sup>220</sup> Iren Saakyan, "Chelnoki, chelnoki za tri moray hodoki (Shattles shattles traveling over the three seas)", newspaper "Vecherniy Bishkek (Evening Bishkek), 17 December 2012, (<http://members.vb.kg/2012/12/17/panorama/1.html>), date of access: 26.12.2012.

<sup>221</sup> G. Raballand, A. Andrésy. "Why should trade between Central Asia and China continue to expand?," *Asia-Europe Journal*, Volume 5, Number 2, 2012, p. 235-252.

**Table 11:** The volume of bilateral trade flow between Kyrgyzstan and China<sup>222</sup>

<b>Year</b>	<b>Amount of trade flow</b>
2004	600 million dollars
2005	900 million dollars
2006	2 billion 200 million dollars
2007	3 billion 770 million dollars
2008	9 billion 330 million dollars

As we can see in Table 11 during the period between 2004 -2008 the trade flow amount was growing from year to year nearly in geometric way. Economic cooperation with Kyrgyzstan as well as with the entire Central Asia was very beneficial for China because trade flow rose very much; if we will analyze this trade flow increase by dividing them in stages then in 2004 and 2006 the increase was about 150 percent, with trade reaching a value of more than ten billion dollars.

Also China reached agreements in Central Asia in key sectors such as hydrocarbon and infrastructure. The important change happened in third stage, if before trade relations were limited only with Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, after that Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan opened their borders for China's economic influence.<sup>223</sup>

Kyrgyzstan is not only a transit country for Chinese goods aimed to Central Asia, but has a potential to become a transit country for Central Asian countries on the way to China. Particularly in 2014 was decided to build forth gas line D for transition of Turkmenistan's gas to China through the territories of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. This gas line will be constructed by the companies Turkmengaz and China

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<sup>222</sup> "Kyrgyzko-Kitayskoe ekonomicheskoe sotrudnichestvo (Kyrgyz-Chinese economic cooperation)", from the web-site of Kyrgyzstan Embassy in China, (<http://web87381.vhost056.cn/ru/content.asp?cid=279&id=175>), date of access: 17.12.2012.

<sup>223</sup> Sebastien Peyrouse, "Economic Aspects of Chinese-Central Asia Rapprochement", 2007, p. 13-14.

National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC).<sup>224</sup> So the territory of Kyrgyzstan will be used as for the transportation of the gas to China that is very important for Chinese industry and this will add extra bounds to the economic relation of China and Kyrgyzstan.

### 3.3. INVESTMENTS

Investment and financial assistance flow from China to Kyrgyzstan is the important factor in Kyrgyzstan-China economic relations. It is worth to mark that there are a lot of investment and financial assistance flow from China to Kyrgyzstan.

According to the Ministry of Economic Development of Kyrgyzstan in 2000-2001 \$1.82 million US dollars of technical assistance was given to Kyrgyzstan, and \$7.248 million US dollars was given in 2002-2004. Moreover in 2007 China gave the financial support to Kyrgyzstan as \$7.4 million US dollars for holding the SCO summit.<sup>225</sup> The first investments began in 1990 and according to the notes of the department that register investment companies in Kyrgyzstan there are 110 Chinese companies that are making investments in different sectors of Kyrgyzstan. The main Kyrgyzstan-China trade turnover articles are agricultural products and textile.<sup>226</sup>

If in the beginning of the 1990s the investments were to the roads that were the main ways of trade flow. Now cooperation and investment projects also cover healthcare, construction, energy, new technology, communication services, contracting works, development and mining, seed production, agricultural product processing, metallurgy, building materials, light industry, transportation, construction, tourism and other sectors of the economy.<sup>227</sup> For example the first investment in private sector of Kyrgyzstan was

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<sup>224</sup> Viktoria Panfilova, “Пекин взял Центральную Азию в газовое кольцо (Beijing took Central Asia in gas ring)”, *Независимая (Independent)*, 14.03.2014, ([http://www.ng.ru/cis/2014-03-14/1\\_asia.html](http://www.ng.ru/cis/2014-03-14/1_asia.html)), date of access: 05.05.2014.

<sup>225</sup> Nargis Kassenova, “China as an Emerging Donor in Tajikistan and in Kyrgyzstan”, *Russia/NIS Center*, January 2009, p.18.

<sup>226</sup> Daniyar Karimov, “Japarov: China –main trade partner of Kyrgyzstan”, *24.kg news agency*, November 2009, (<http://info.24.kg/business/2009/11/16/9643.html>), date of access: 20.05.2012.

<sup>227</sup> Bedelov Azilhan, “Сравнительный анализ прямых инвестиций Китая в Центральную Азию (Comparative analysis of direct investment in China to Central Asia)”, VII International Conference “Youth Science Forum: Social and Economic Science”, 2012, (<http://www.nauchforum.ru/ru/node/2076>), date of access: 07.04.2014.

the financial loan for \$7.4 million dollars that was given to Kyrgyzstan for the construction of paper factory in Tokmok town. Unfortunately the factory bankrupted because of the mistakes in financial operations. But in the end of 2012 Chinese company bought that old paper factory and 20 hectares of land around it. This company is going to construct oil refinery factory there and will invest at least \$70 million US dollars to construct factory that will produce 500 thousand tons of fuel annually. And the most importantly 300 people will be employed in that factory and \$600 000 US dollars will go to the budget from taxes.<sup>228</sup> Chinese investors invest in each project at least one million U.S. dollars. In recent years is growing the number of Chinese investment companies in Kyrgyzstan. Shared amount of Chinese investment has exceeded \$1 billion U.S. dollars; the effect of investment is also increased.

China also interested in Kyrgyzstan's gold mines. Kyrgyzstan has the rich mines of gold and every year produces 24 tons of gold, it is %1 from the gold produced all over the world. According to the amount of produced gold all over the world Kyrgyzstan ranks 18<sup>th</sup> and among the CIS countries ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> after Russia and Uzbekistan. According to the gold reserves in the world Kyrgyzstan ranks 13<sup>th</sup>.<sup>229</sup> For this time Canadian company Centerra Gold through its subsidiary company Kumtor Gold Company operating the gold mine in Issik-Kul region. This operation of that gold mine lasts for more than 15 years. So China also wants to invest in such gold mine and has the long lasting profit. Recently in 2011 China put its first steps in gold mine in Kyrgyzstan. Chinese company Zijin Mining, which is one of the China's leading investors in gold and copper. This company purchased the mine that is in Talas province in Taldy-Bulak region of Kyrgyzstan from Altynken Limited liability Company in 2011 for \$660 million US

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<sup>228</sup> Analytic resource for the politicians, "Кыргызстан: Китайцы строят в Токмаке два нефтеперерабатывающих завода (Kyrgyzstan: The Chinese are building in Tokmok two refineries)", ([http://www.vesti.kg/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&id=16557&Itemid=118](http://www.vesti.kg/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=16557&Itemid=118)), 4th of January 2012, date of access: 08.01.2013.

<sup>229</sup> Darya Sitenkova, "Объемы производимого в Кыргызстане золота позволяют открыть в стране биржу драгметаллов (Volumes of produced gold in Kyrgyzstan allows to open a stock exchange of precious metals in the country), Rus.kg, 26.10.2012, (<http://rus.kg/news/economy/7731-obemy-proizvodimogo-v-kyrgyzstane-zolota-pozvolayut-otkryt-v-strane-birzhu-dragmetallov-ekspert.html>), date of access: 06.05.2014



dollars.<sup>230</sup> The other Chinese company that is also operating gold mine in Kyrgyzstan is Chinese Full Gold Mine Company that opened for operating Ishtamberdy mine in Jalalabad province in south part of Kyrgyzstan in summer of 2011. It was expected that this mine will produce 300 thousand tons of ore yearly.<sup>231</sup> As we can see China is also active in the mine sector of Kyrgyzstan, because the economy of Kyrgyzstan mostly depends on the production of gold in the country. Kyrgyzstan is interested to developing relation in investment sector with China because Kyrgyzstan doesn't have the capacity to operate the mines that it has alone for the current time.

The government of Kyrgyzstan calls China the main donor of Kyrgyzstan and actively supports Chinese investments. Because since independence of Kyrgyzstan China has been actively investing in its economy billions of dollars. The government of Kyrgyzstan needs the investments of China, especially investments in building electric lines in South part of Kyrgyzstan, for the construction of the road Osh-Naryn-Torugart. Moreover, in 2012 the agreement for selling electricity to Xingjian Uighur region was made.<sup>232</sup> After the events in June 2010 when the most of the houses there were destroyed China also greatly helped and constructed most of the houses.<sup>233</sup>

The cooperation with China in investment sector is very profitable for Kyrgyzstan. China also getting a lot of profits from economic cooperation with Kyrgyzstan; China gets a lot of raw materials from mines, has its own interests in constructing roads which are actually the trade roads between two countries. In short, investment sector is beneficial for both sides that help to develop bilateral relations, but there are side effects

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<sup>230</sup> Marc Howe, "Horse killing triggers violence at Chinese mine in Kyrgyzstan", source for global mining news [www.mining.com](http://www.mining.com), 26 October 2012, date of access: 07.01.2013.

<sup>231</sup> China Mining Association, "Chinese miner launches gold plant in Kyrgyzstan", [www.chinamining.org](http://www.chinamining.org), 9 September 2011, date of access: 07.01.2013.

<sup>232</sup> Eleonora Beyshenbek kyzy, "Кыргызстан и Китай укрепляют сотрудничество (Kyrgyzstan and China are strengthening cooperation)", *Gezitter.org*, ([http://www.gezitter.org/economics/16487\\_kyrgyzstan\\_i\\_kitay\\_ukreplyayut\\_sotrudnichestvo/](http://www.gezitter.org/economics/16487_kyrgyzstan_i_kitay_ukreplyayut_sotrudnichestvo/)), 5th of December 2012, date of Access: 21.01.2013.

<sup>233</sup> Madina Sheralieva, "Жанторо Сатыбалдиев заверил правительство КНР в защите китайских инвестиций в Кыргызстане (Jantoro Satybaldiev assured the PRC government in the protection of Chinese investment in Kyrgyzstan)", <http://www.knews.kg>, 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2012, date of access: 07.01.2013.

as migration flow from China to Kyrgyzstan, disagreements between local people and Chinese workers and etc. and this issue will be discussed in the following part.

Kyrgyzstan is a small country that has weak economy that must be improved and strengthened. Corruption and political instability contribute to unfavorable investment conditions. In the way of developing economy of the country foreign investors have the great influence; they put big amounts of financing in different projects that bring them a lot of profit as well as the profit to that country, also those investment projects create new work places for the local people. So it would be better for the economy of Kyrgyzstan to take measures to prevent corruption, because the reduction of corruption will reduce the risk of investments which will reduce the risks for the investors and Kyrgyzstan will become preferable country for investments. For the current moment there are very few investment countries in Kyrgyzstan, especially from the West, because western countries cannot enter Kyrgyzstan for the investments because of the corruption level, even if they want despite of the corruption the legislation in their own country prevent it. However countries as China, Russia, Turkey do not have such limitation, therefore investors from these countries mostly come to Kyrgyzstan for investments. But still even for these countries the procedures of making investments is very hard and take very long time because of the corruption and mostly money from the investments does not go to the budget, but to the private pockets of local officials. So because of the corruption Kyrgyzstan missing a lot and the current government should put as one of the important aims the reduction of corruption if they want Kyrgyzstan to develop.

#### **3.4. MIGRATION FLOW FROM CHINA TO KYRGYZSTAN**

Investments of China open the way for migration, because together with Chinese investment companies Chinese workers come as well. Chinese people are hardworking and able to suit in different living conditions. They are the real competitors for local workers. So there is the danger that Chinese workers will take most of the jobs in already poor employment condition of Kyrgyzstan. This is the real concern for the government of Kyrgyzstan. Also most of Kyrgyz workers moving abroad to Russia or

in other countries for better jobs and higher salaries than in Kyrgyzstan, that creates more preferable conditions for Chinese migrants. Experts even say that in the future Chinese people will become the dominant minority in Kyrgyzstan, and maybe they will have the opportunity to affect the government decisions.<sup>234</sup>

Trade relations between Kyrgyzstan and China the scope of which is rising day by day become the reason of migration flow from China. As I mentioned above most of the products in Kyrgyzstan main markets as Dordoï and Kara-Suu are from China. This trade cooperation brings a lot of profit to the budget of the Kyrgyzstan. So there is no wonder that 34% of foreign trade of Kyrgyzstan is with China. Since the independence of the Kyrgyzstan which accounts for more than 20 years both of the countries understand that economic cooperation is profitable for both sides; China can sell its produced goods in Kyrgyzstan, Kyrgyzstan can re-export the Chinese goods to the whole Central Asia and abroad. Therefore both countries talking about economic relations, trying to strengthen it, solving the obstacles and problems related to that. For example in Urumqi, where nearly all merchandisers from Central Asia travel for having good, there are direct flights to all Central Asian capitals; Bishkek, Astana, Dushanbe, Tashkent.<sup>235</sup> Also Kyrgyzstan established visa-consulate for the Chinese businessman that are going to visit Kyrgyzstan which also simplify the visa procedures, otherwise they had to fly at first to Beijing which would be long visa procedure.<sup>236</sup>

The economic cooperation and trade flow that is developing very quickly have their side effect as migration flow from China. Again the issue of employment rises where mostly Chinese workers are hired. In order to ensure jobs for locals the government of Kyrgyzstan gives quotas to foreign citizen for legal work in Kyrgyzstan. 75% of this total quota is already occupied by the citizens of China. Minister of Labor and Employment Almazbek Abytov says that the total quantity of Chinese workers that are getting permission to work in Kyrgyzstan rising from year to year. Moreover, according

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<sup>234</sup> Nargis Kassenova, "China as an Emerging Donor in Tajikistan and in Kyrgyzstan", Russia/NIS Center, January 2009, p.18.

<sup>235</sup> Sebastien Peyrouse, "Economic Aspects of Chinese-Central Asia Rapprochement", The Central Asia-Caucasus Institute: Sweden, 2007, p.19.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*, p.20.

to independent expert Nurlan Orozbaev unfortunately there are also a lot of Chinese migrants who do not have legal registration. Which means control of the migrants in Kyrgyzstan is far from perfect.<sup>237</sup> Because of this lack of control the real quantity of Chinese migrants in the country is unknown. According to the latest estimates the growing population of China is accounted for 1 359 633 805 people.<sup>238</sup> The demographic control rule that was put in 1979 as one child per family does not much help, illegally born children cannot get birth certificate and other social cares and services, so they are mostly illegally emigrating to the neighbor countries as Kyrgyzstan.<sup>239</sup> But on the other side political commentator Sanjar Tajimatov says that Kyrgyzstan does not have the reason to concern about the Chinese expansion. Mostly Chinese migrants go to Russia and Kazakhstan.<sup>240</sup> Nevertheless for a country with a population slightly over 5 million still the Chinese migration is the point of concern.

To understand a potential threat from Chinese migration the situation in other surrounding countries has to be evaluated. For example in South-East neighborhood of China the migration of Chinese raised to the great numbers. In Singapore Chinese migrants is more than the local people and form %76 of the population of 3 million with the total size of 2 million, in Malaysia Chinese migrants also has a huge number of 34 % in 18 million total population.<sup>241</sup> This list can be continued and nearly in every country of South East Asia we can see Chinese minority.<sup>242</sup> Most of those countries putting the issue of Chinese rising power, its sheer size as a primary threat perception in geopolitical consideration of the country. Because if we look back to the history we can

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<sup>237</sup> Kubanychbek Joldoshev, “Кыргызстан - Китай: иммиграция под контролем?.. (Kyrgyzstan - China: immigration under control? ..), *Informational Radio Azattyk*, 15.09.2011, ([http://rus.azattyk.org/content/kyrgyzstan\\_china\\_trade\\_migration/24329141.html](http://rus.azattyk.org/content/kyrgyzstan_china_trade_migration/24329141.html)), date of access:22.04.2013.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Steven W. Mosher, ““Illegal” Babies Abducted by Chinese Population Control Officials”, Population Research Institute, 2011 (v13), (<http://www.pop.org/content/illegal-babies-abducted-chinese-population-control-officials>), date of access: 07.04.2014.

<sup>240</sup> China Population Clock for 22.04.2013, (<http://countrymeters.info/en/China/>), date of access: 22.04.2013.

<sup>241</sup> Countries and Their Cultures, “Chinese in Southeast Asia”, (<http://www.everyculture.com/East-Southeast-Asia/Chinese-in-Southeast-Asia-Orientation.html>), date of access: 04.04.2013.

<sup>242</sup> Zhuang Guotu, Wang Wangbo, “Migration and Trade: The Role of Overseas Chinese in Economic Relations between China and Southeast Asia”, *International Journal of China Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 2010, p. 174.

see that China during the Cultural Revolution of 1960s strengthened its position in South-East Asia by providing material and moral support to communist insurgency movements, which was most profitable for China. This movement aimed violent overthrow of national governments. Even the leadership of that movement was dominated by ethnic Chinese. As we can see Chinese ethnic minority directly involved in the government issues and even got material support directly from China.<sup>243</sup>

We know that Kyrgyzstan had two main “revolutions” in recent 10 years. China did not engage and interrupted in those issues. There is possibility that if in the future the flow of Chinese migration will rise in Kyrgyzstan then there will be problem of influence of Chinese migrants in government issues as in the example of the South-East Asia. Central Asia is the neighborhood of China from another side; the other side is South-East Asia. The only reason of absence of Chinese migrants in Central Asia was the “iron curtain” of the Soviet Union that restricted any migration in and out. So now when that “iron curtain” disappeared the migration flow will rise from year to year. Since in the quite populous South-East Asian countries there is a perception of threat from Chinese migration, then it is understandable that in Kyrgyzstan where the population is only 5 million some politicians are concerned with this issue.<sup>244</sup>

On the other hand it was Chinese migrants who firstly established trade relation between Kyrgyzstan and China. In the beginning of 1990s Chinese migrants came to Kyrgyzstan to engage in commercial activity. They sold clothes and other everyday consumer goods with the mark “Made in China”. On the road to the Chinese border Torugart the first stores with Chinese goods such as Artush and Kashgar opened in Naryn region of Kyrgyzstan.<sup>245</sup> Later the trade in the bigger scope began to be achieved and first Kyrgyz-Chinese joint ventures established. For example in August 2000 the

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<sup>243</sup> Ian James Storey, “Living with the Colossus: How Southeast Asian Countries Cope with China”, *Parameters*, Winter 1999-2000, pp. 111-25, (<http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/PARAMETERS/Articles/99winter/storey.htm>), date of access: 04.04.2013.

<sup>244</sup> Bakyt Asanov, “В Кыргызстане растет число мигрантов из Китая (A growing number of migrants from China in Kyrgyzstan), Radio Azattyk, 11.11.2013, ([http://rus.azattyk.org/content/kyrgyzstan\\_china\\_migrants/25164009.html](http://rus.azattyk.org/content/kyrgyzstan_china_migrants/25164009.html)), date of access: 07.04.2014.

<sup>245</sup> Amantur Zhaparov, “The Issue of Chinese Migrants in Kyrgyzstan”, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Volume 7, No. 1 (2008), pp. 81-82.

joint Kyrgyz-Chinese enterprise Aloom started to the production of domestic matches. The stock company Salkyn, the former Belovodsk brewery that a Chinese businessman transformed into a modern production facility is another example of a joint partnership between Kyrgyz and Chinese. These joint ventures based on intergovernmental agreements. But most of them could not stay long against the corruption of local government.<sup>246</sup>

The migration flow from China that is rising from year to year can become serious issue of concern of near future in Kyrgyzstan, especially with the small population of this country. So it will be better to take measures regarding control of migration flow from China from these days. Otherwise the large Chinese minority in the country can become another tool of manipulation of China.

### **3.5. KYRGYZSTAN BETWEEN RUSSIA AND CHINA**

During several centuries up till now Russia and China are the great powers in Central Asian region. We can simply remember the end of 1800s when China and the Russian Empire divided territories between them. The lands of Kyrgyz people left under the rule of the Russian Empire and the following more than hundred years Kyrgyz people remained under the rule of Russia. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Central Asian countries got their independence and officially became independent. For China this was a chance to earn its place in this region and become a dominant power. So the competition between Russia and China as an influential power in this region has very ancient roots. As expert note "...the Central Asia is the area of special interest in the foreign policies of both countries"<sup>247</sup>. In new circumstances both China and Russia are trying to actively cooperate with Central Asian countries.

Despite of the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia still has strong influence in this region and the former Soviet republics such as Kyrgyzstan have strong relations with

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<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> Dr. Vladimir Paramonov, Dr. Aleksey Stokov, "Economic Involvement of Russia and China in Central Asia", Conflict Studies Research Centre, *Central Asian Series* 07/12 (E), May 2007, p. 1.

Russia. China is actively trying to take part in the political, economic issues of the region. The establishment of the SCO together with Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan was mainly the step of China to gain official presence in that region. But the competition between Russia and China is continuing even within the SCO.

Strengthening of economic ties between Central Asian countries and China contributes to overall Chinese influence in Central Asia.<sup>248</sup> For Russia it is hard to compete with Chinese cheap goods.<sup>249</sup> Under the conditions of free competition Russia does not have enough financial resources to be dominant and competitive in the region.<sup>250</sup> Because of this Russia pursues a policy of regional integration with Central Asian countries. After 1991 the trade flow between Russia and Central Asia decreased ten times, whereas the trade flow between China and Central Asian countries steadily rose from year to year in geometrical proportion.<sup>251</sup> Let us examine the below table where we can see the foreign trade amounts of Russia and China with each of the Central Asian countries for 2011.

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<sup>248</sup> International Crisis Group, "Asia Report №244", 27 February 2013, p.5.

<sup>249</sup> Dr. V. Paramonov, 2007, p. 9.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> Dr. V. Paramonov, 2007, p. 2.

**Table 12:** Foreign Trade of Central Asian Countries with Russia and China for 2011  
(\$ million)<sup>252</sup>

Countries	Foreign Trade with China		Foreign Trade with Russia	
	Export	Import	Export	Import
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	15330	9568	6859	12906
<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	98	4879	293	1160
<b>Tajikistan</b>	72	1997	90	720
<b>Turkmenistan</b>	4693	785	143	1160
<b>Uzbekistan</b>	807	1359	1860	2107
<b>Region total</b>	21000	18588	9245	18053

As we can see China's foreign trade with Central Asian countries in total much higher than Russia's foreign trade. Kyrgyzstan has high trade amount with both Russia and China. In case with China the main reason for that is the membership of Kyrgyzstan to the WTO, as with Russia the most of important exports to Kyrgyzstan as fuel products, arms and weapon etc. are still carried by Russia. China continuing its economic investments, market flows to Kyrgyzstan and to other Central Asian countries. The membership of Kyrgyzstan to the WTO greatly facilitates the transportation of the goods to the whole Central Asia and Russia. China wants to have productive economic relations with other Central Asian countries, so China vigorously supporting the applications of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan to join to the WTO. This attempt of China also shows that China is highly interested to cooperate with Central Asia, especially in economic means.

As was mentioned above, being weaker economic power in comparison to China, Russia pursues the policy of regional economic integration with Central Asian

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<sup>252</sup> Yelena Kuzmina, "Russia and China in Central Asian Economies: Can They Ever Cooperate?", e RAS Institute of Economics, (n.d.). ([http://www.eastviewpress.com/Files/FEA\\_FROM%20THE%20CURRENT%20ISSUE\\_No.%204\\_2013.pdf](http://www.eastviewpress.com/Files/FEA_FROM%20THE%20CURRENT%20ISSUE_No.%204_2013.pdf)), date of access: 06.05.2014.



countries. Because of this initiative expectations of China to establish close economic relations with the whole Central Asia were not met. Kazakhstan preferred to sign the Customs Union agreement with Russia and Belarus in July 2010. This event completely changed the trade flow in Central Asia. The import cost was raised for 10% in Kazakhstan and a lot of other rules put on the custom.<sup>253</sup> Moreover, Russian aim is to unite post-Soviet area within the scope of Eurasian Economic Union. Integration within the Customs Union raised a lot of discussions and accusation from the international world, that Russia is establishing “new Soviet Union”, that it was contrary to the WTO rules.<sup>254</sup> Especially China and Kyrgyzstan were affected from this Customs Union. If before goods from China firstly imported to Kyrgyzstan and then distributed to other Central Asian countries through Kazakhstan, but after the establishment of this union it was very expensive to deliver goods through Kyrgyzstan to Kazakhstan and then to other countries.<sup>255</sup> Because the custom tariffs raised and there were no any benefit for merchandisers from Kyrgyzstan to re-export the goods. So the trade flow from China decreased very much, because goods from China are exported only to Kyrgyzstan, which is much lesser than if it would be exported for re-exporting. Kyrgyzstan had a lot of benefits from this trade flow; a lot of people were making money by merchandising.

On the other hand Kyrgyzstan began to develop its own production of goods now. Especially Kyrgyzstan is expanding its textiles. The reason is that it is much cheaper and beneficial to export its own goods rather than re-exporting the Chinese goods, because the taxes on the custom for the goods that are produced in Kyrgyzstan are lesser than to the goods that are exported from China. So after the opening of

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<sup>253</sup> Prajakti Kalra, Svetoslav Varadzhakov, “The Customs Union between Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus: First Steps Toward the Revival of the Silk Road”, *G-Global-communication platform*, ([www.group-global.org/en/storage.../34859](http://www.group-global.org/en/storage.../34859)) 2011, p.1-3, access date: 18.12.2012

<sup>254</sup> Francisco G. Carneiro, “What Promises Does the Eurasian Customs Union Hold for the Future?”, The World Bank, *Economic Premise*, February 2013, №108, (<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTPREMNET/Resources/EP108.pdf>), date of access: 08.04.2014

<sup>255</sup> Aleksandr Libman, “Евразийский таможенный союз и его влияние на Центральную Азию (Eurasian Customs Union and its impact on Central Asia)”, Analytical Forum of Central Asia, № 4, February 2013, p.4 ([http://0354523.netsolhost.com/images/Policy\\_Forum\\_4-printed\\_version\\_RUS.pdf](http://0354523.netsolhost.com/images/Policy_Forum_4-printed_version_RUS.pdf)), date of access: 08.04.2014

the Customs Union the new stage of economic relations between China and Kyrgyzstan began.

There are strong discussions in the government about the accession of Kyrgyzstan to the Customs Union. As a country that is located in Central Asia for Kyrgyzstan in many aspects it is beneficial to be a member of the Customs Union, this membership can improve the economic situation of the country, the easier and beneficial economic relations with member countries can be achieved. Because Kyrgyzstan has close economic and political relations with Kazakhstan and Russia and the new limitations of trade in the custom, different high fees of this union affect the economy of Kyrgyzstan very much. According to the report of Public Supervisory Council under the Ministry of Economic Regulation of the Kyrgyz Republic cancel of formalities, duties and customs controls at the internal borders of the Customs Union will create favorable conditions for the wholesale markets of the country. Very important for the Kyrgyz economy will be the removal of all restrictions on the export within the Customs Union, country can import without any restrictions and limitations strategically important goods such as oil, timber, metal etc. Significant advantage for manufacturers will be the removal of internal posts of sanitary, veterinary controls, which are the stumbling point for today in transporting goods as meat and milk products to neighboring Kazakhstan. But most of all the migration policy will be positively affected from the accession of Kyrgyzstan to the Customs Union. More than 800 000 guest-workers from Kyrgyzstan are working in Russia and Kazakhstan. Kyrgyzstan's participation in the Customs Union and in the Common Economic Space provides a free immigration policy without quota restrictions and allows migrant workers to enjoy all the social rights together with the citizens of the host countries, and it will significantly improve the conditions of their temporary residence.<sup>256</sup>

The disadvantages from the accession of Kyrgyzstan to the Customs Union will be increasing the average rate of customs duties from %5.1 to %10.6. Thus, the custom

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<sup>256</sup> “Общественный наблюдательный совет при Министерстве экономического регулирования КР обозначил плюсы и минусы вхождения Кыргызстана в Таможенный союз (The Public Supervisory Council under the Ministry of Economic Regulation outlined the pros and cons for Kyrgyzstan from entering the Customs Union), Kabar, 04.08.2013, (<http://kabar.kg/economics/full/5090>), date of access: 06.05.2014.

duties will be raised almost 2 times from the current customs tariffs. Also there will be further reduction in revenues to the budget from the activities of wholesale markets "Dordoi" and "Kara-Suu" for the 2009 amounted to 427.5 million soms. But in 2010 due to the reduction of trade and border closures taxes received in the amount of 351.3 million soms. And the amount of revenues from those wholesale markets is reducing since then from year to year. Reduction of re-export that began since the establishment of the Customs Union will be further reduced with the membership of Kyrgyzstan to the Customs Union.<sup>257</sup> The economic relations with China will be limited if Kyrgyzstan will draw limitations by joining to the Customs Union. However the ambassador of China in Kyrgyzstan Mr. Wan Keywen said that China and Kyrgyzstan will save their economic relations after Kyrgyzstan will access to the Customs Union. The main reason is that both Kyrgyzstan and China are the members of the WTO, which is very important according to Mr. Wan Keywen. But he also noted that China has its own rules and after accession to the Customs Union they will discuss the future condition of their market economy relations. According to him the recent decrease in trade flow between two countries is because of the financial crisis. The Customs Union also affected the decrease in trade flow but not so much. Also he marked that the trade flow between Kyrgyzstan and China despite everything is about 10 billion dollars every year.<sup>258</sup>

Normally it is impossible for Russia to compete with Chinese ability to produce goods of all qualities at cheap price. So the establishment of the Customs Union will protect Russian market from such kind of efficient producers as well as will ensure easy access of Russian goods to the markets of member countries. As we know after Central Asian countries got their independence China became dominant power in trade and in economic issues especially in Kyrgyzstan and partly in Tajikistan, however China has active facilities to widen its economic influence to Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Economic influence of Russia became limited and could not compete with

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> “Кыргызстан и Китай смогут сохранить торгово-экономические отношения после вступления в Таможенный Союз (Kyrgyzstan and China will save their trade-economic relations after accession to the Custom Union)”, News journal “*Trend*”, 10.11. 2011. (<http://www.trend.az/capital/business/1955334.html>), date of access: 24.12.2012.

those of China. So the establishment of the Customs Union provides for Russia an opportunity to better compete with a powerhouse of the world economy. Thus, despite the fact that the dominant powers of this region Russia and China are cooperating within the framework of the SCO, they still try to balance each other and do not let each other become stronger.

After the establishment of the Customs Union Kyrgyzstan was affected a lot, because Kyrgyzstan is a border country to Kazakhstan and used Kazakhstan markets and through Kazakhstan delivered goods from China to Russia and other markets. Under these circumstances the government of Kyrgyzstan is actively supporting membership to the Customs Union. According to the President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambaev the membership in the Customs Union will be very profitable for Kyrgyzstan.<sup>259</sup> Atambaev also pointed out that Kyrgyzstan will not withdraw from the WTO for the membership to the Customs Union, because two biggest bazaars of the country as Dordoi and Kara-Su from which the country has a lot of income exist due to the membership to the WTO, because in the framework of the WTO limitless goods can be exported from China to Kyrgyzstan.<sup>260</sup> As we can see Kyrgyzstan now put in difficult dilemma choosing between partnership with China or Russia. And this dilemma not only with economic issue but as a whole it is political issue as becoming an ally with one of them. As we can see government of Kyrgyzstan is trying to save friendly cooperation with both of the countries. The most diplomatically right step is trying to be neutral for Kyrgyzstan.

Kyrgyzstan is trying to manage friendly and close relations with both Russia and China. However with Russia Kyrgyzstan mostly has cooperation in security sphere, the bright example is the membership of Kyrgyzstan to CSTO and the presence of Russian Air Base in Kant nearby the capital Bishkek. China is mostly the economic partner of Kyrgyzstan. Therefore, one does not interfere with the other and Kyrgyzstan continuing

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<sup>259</sup> Leonid Gusev, "Отношение Киргизии и Таджикистана к Таможенному союзу России, Белоруссии и Казахстана (Relation of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan)", Open Research and Discussion Journal "New Eastern Outlook", 10.06.2012, <http://www.ru.journal-neo.com/node/117313>, date of access: 02.04.2013.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

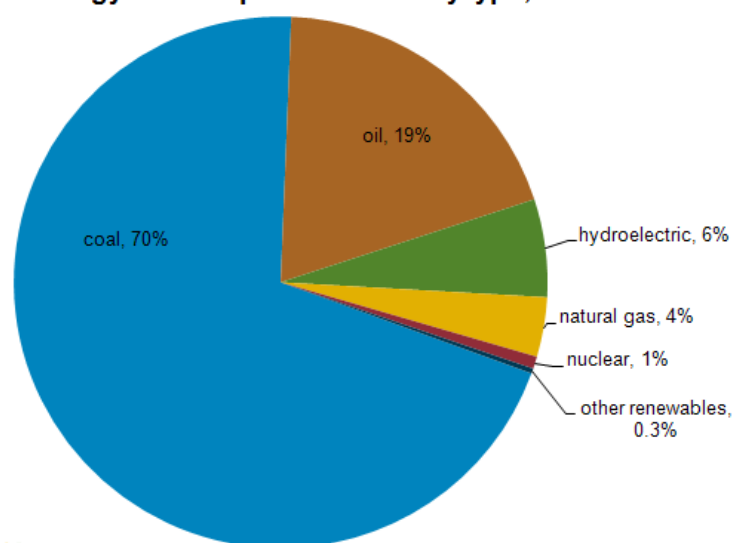
peaceful relations with both of the countries as the one of the important issues in its foreign policy.

### 3.6. THE ROLE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The other main interest of China in Kyrgyzstan is the mineral resources of Kyrgyzstan which is very efficient for the speedily developing industrial sector of China.<sup>261</sup> As China is a huge country that has the biggest population in the world, also industry is rapidly rising and demands for energy resources as electricity, gas, coal, oil etc. is speedily rising. China cannot meet all its energy demands itself and has to import energy resources all over the world. The factor of industry growth of China and that production capacity is rising from year to year affect energy consumption a lot. According to International Energy Agency (IEA) China is the largest global energy consumer.<sup>262</sup>

**Table 13:** Total energy consumption in China<sup>263</sup>

**Total energy consumption in China by type, 2009**



 Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *International Statistics*

<sup>261</sup> Sun Zhuangzhi, "The relationship between China and Central Asia", "Eager Eyes Fixed on Eurasia: Russia and Its Neighbors in Crisis" edited by Iwashita Akihiro, Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, 2007, p. 45.

<sup>262</sup> "Energy consumption of China", U.S. Energy Information Administration (Independent Statistics and Analysis), 04.09.2012, (<http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=CH>), date of access: 17.04.2013.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

Generally 70% of energy consumption of China is supplied by coal that greatly raises energy emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere. An oil supply is 19% of total energy consumption, hydroelectric sources 6%, natural gas 4%, nuclear power 1%, whereas other renewable energy sources are only 0.3%. China is planning to reduce its energy emissions by reducing use of fuel-fossil energy sources and increase using of non-fossil fuel energy resources.<sup>264</sup> In the above chart we can see the total energy consumption of China, in which hydroelectric energy consumption is 6% and if China is planning to reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, then the use of hydroelectricity will possibly rise. In the top priorities of China is to diversifying energy suppliers at the global level, which means having the energy from different countries and not to be dependent on only several countries.<sup>265</sup> So from these days Kyrgyzstan can become the energy and water supply partner of China, which will be added to diplomatic, economic and security cooperation between two countries.

For this moment Kyrgyzstan is exporting mercury to China which is produced by Khaidarkan factory. China also interested in silver mines deposits in Zhetimskoe which is situated in Naryn region. Moreover China is interested in the extraction of tin, molybdenum, gold, tungsten that are found in Enylchek and Sarydzhaz rivers in Eastern Tyan-Shan.<sup>266</sup> As I mentioned above, Chinese companies are also quite active in gold sector in Kyrgyzstan. Particularly Chinese company Zijin Mining purchased the mine that is in Talas province in Taldy-Bulak region of Kyrgyzstan from Alтынken Limited liability Company in 2011 and since then operating this mine. Chinese Full Gold Mine Company is operating Ishtamberdy mine in Jalalabad province in south part of Kyrgyzstan since summer of 2011.<sup>267</sup> So there is no obstacle to implement Chinese

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<sup>264</sup> U.S. Energy Information Administration (Independent Statistics and Analysis), “Energy consumption of China”, 04.09.2012, <http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=CH>, date of access: 17.04.2013

<sup>265</sup> Zhou Peng, “China’s Energy Import Dependency: Status and Strategies” presentation, College of Economics and Management & Research Center for Soft Energy Science, Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, China, p. 21

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, p.33

<sup>267</sup> China Mining Association, “Chinese miner launches gold plant in Kyrgyzstan”, 9 September 2011.

investments in other sectors as mineral resources and this only a matter of time when Chinese companies will operate nearly in all sectors in Kyrgyzstan.

In the world where clean water reserves are reducing very fast countries that have stocks of water resource such as Kyrgyzstan, consider water resources as a valuable asset.<sup>268</sup> It is expected that in 5-10 years the water scarcity will raise in China. On the contrary Kyrgyzstan has the great potential of water, thanks to the great amount of glaciers on the mountains of Kyrgyzstan, rivers and lakes that are situated in this country. Also water resources can be used for production of energy by building of hydroelectric stations. Nowadays according to the official discourse Kyrgyzstan consider itself as a country that shares its water resources with the whole Central Asia. So China is also planning to use the water and energy resources of Kyrgyzstan that will help China to reduce its future water and energy scarcity. China already has begun to implement its programs of investment in these sectors. For example the construction of hydropower stations in Krypsay, Tashkumyr, Toktogul regions are discussed because these regions have the great water potential that can be used for construction of hydropower stations.<sup>269</sup>

The possible role of Kyrgyzstan as an exporter of hydroelectricity to China is being discussed since the beginning of the 2000s. The fact that Kyrgyzstan is neighbor country makes transportation cost lower and the total cost for the electricity will be much more lower that makes hydroelectricity of Kyrgyzstan more desirable for China. In 2004 during the visit of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao to Kyrgyzstan the 5 year plan of cooperation was discussed according to which Beijing will buy 20 million kW hours of electricity every year. In 2004 China was importing from Kyrgyzstan 1 million kW hours of electricity yearly.<sup>270</sup> This imported electricity was mostly for Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Since then nearly in 10 years the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous

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<sup>268</sup> Valentini K.L., Orolbaev E.E., Abylgazieva A.K., “Water problems of Central Asia”, Bishkek: International Strategic Research Institute Under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2004, p.5-6.

<sup>269</sup> Sadykzhan Ibraimov, “China-Central Asia Trade Relations: Economic and Social Patterns”, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Volume 7, No. 1 (2009) p.51.

<sup>270</sup> News of CentrAsia, “Экспорт кыргызской электроэнергии в КНР вырастет в ...20 раз! (Kyrgyz electricity exports to China will grow ... 20 times!)”, 13.10.2004, (<http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?st=1097644140>), date of access: 20.04.2013.

Region developed its industry and economy and the demand for the electricity has been risen.

The infrastructure for exporting energy and even for the supply of electricity inside the Kyrgyzstan is not well developed; most of it left from the time of the Soviet Union and needs maintenance and new investments for the efficient use of electricity. This issue of reconstruction of electric energy infrastructure also was discussed during the visit of Wen Jiabao in 2004, because this reconstruction will rise the import capacity of electric facilities.<sup>271</sup> Since 2004 export of the electricity stopped due to the weak infrastructure and the shortage of the electricity inside Kyrgyzstan for its own population. Kyrgyzstan and China cooperated to improve infrastructure to export electricity to China. As a result of this cooperation the power line “Datka Kemin” and transformer station “Datka-Yug” are under construction by the support of Chinese companies.<sup>272</sup> Moreover, Kyrgyzstan is planning to resume the export of electricity to China and also to Kazakhstan and Pakistan after the commissioning of Kambar-Ata hydro-electro station (HES) 1.<sup>273</sup>

This issue of water and energy supply of China from Kyrgyzstan brings to the agenda the crucial issue of water problem in Central Asia. Kyrgyzstan is upstream country that controls water flow along Syr Darya and Toktogul reservoir along it. As a net importer of energy resources Kyrgyzstan started to produce more electricity on Toktogul reservoir. This new situation diminished water amount for the downstream countries. Raised tension around the water quotas used by every country brought Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to settle new agreement regarding water use in 1998.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>272</sup> “Отношения Кыргызстана и Китая строятся на основе взаимного доверия (Kyrgyzstan and China relations are based on mutual trust)”, interview of Wan Keiwen to informational and analytical magazine “Delovoi Sobesednik” (Business Interlocator), December 2012, <http://kg.china-embassy.org/rus/xw/t1002027.htm>, date of access: 20.04.2013.

<sup>273</sup> “Кыргызстан будет экспортировать электричество в Китай, Казахстан и Пакистан (Kyrgyzstan will export electricity to China, Kazakhstan and Pakistan)”, [novosti.kg](http://novosti.kg/2014/01/ky-rgy-zstan-budet-e-ksportirovat-e-lektrichestvo-v-kitaj-kazahstan-i-pakistan/), January 27, 2014, (date of access: 08.04.2014).

<sup>274</sup> International Crisis Group Asia Report № 34 “Central Asia: Water and Conflict”, 30 May 2002, Osh/Brussels, p. 12.



According to downstream countries Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan water must be free. However, Kyrgyzstan insists that it has a right to sell water and for this purpose use the forth principle of “Final Declaration of the International Conference on Water Resources and Environment” that was organized in Dublin, according to which “...water has economic value and must be recognized as an economic good”.<sup>275</sup> Finally in 1998 Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan made an agreement that Kazakhstan will provide coal, Uzbekistan will provide gas for power stations in Osh and Bishkek.<sup>276</sup> After several tensions between countries because of that Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan were not able to fulfill the agreement signed in 1998 regarding the provision of coal and gas, Kyrgyzstan finally decided to take different measures for that energy problem. In other words government in 2001 of Kyrgyzstan passed the law on interstate use of Water Objects, Water Resources and Water Management Installations and declared that water has its own economic value and is owned by the state.<sup>277</sup> This law means that neighboring countries have to pay for water they use that comes from Kyrgyzstan, the same as Kyrgyzstan is paying for their natural resource coal, gas etc. Downstream countries Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan opposed the law and refused to pay saying that Kyrgyzstan wants to have benefit by selling the water.<sup>278</sup> Seeing the reaction of neighbors Kyrgyzstan offered to pay at least for the water that comes from reservoirs of Kyrgyzstan, in other words share the maintenance cost of the reservoir. Kazakhstan responded positively saying that they are paying for service- for the Kyrgyz water engineering system. Government of Kazakhstan make an agreement on 7<sup>th</sup> March of 2002 with Kyrgyzstan on interstate water facilities on Chui and Talas rivers and accepted to pay US \$100 000 annually. However Uzbekistan didn't accept this offer of maintenance cost either. Later in the end of March 2002 Uzbekistan accepted to cover part of the cost of maintenance of Toktogul reservoir for the guarantee of receiving

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<sup>275</sup> Ibid., p.12.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid., p.13.

<sup>277</sup> Rashid Duseмбаев, “Водные вопросы (Water issues)”, *ЭКСПЕРТ Казахстан (Expert Kazakhstan)*, May 10, 2004, (<http://expertonline.kz/a9962/>), date of access: 08.04.2014.

<sup>278</sup> Valentini., Orolbaev, Abylgazieva, “Water problems of Central Asia”, 2004, p.76.

water for irrigation.<sup>279</sup> Still covering only the maintenance cost of the reservoir doesn't solve the energy scarcity problem of Kyrgyzstan and there is no extra economic benefit from such agreements with neighbors.

Kyrgyzstan searched for new ways to cover its energy needs and have profit to the budget of the country. The solution is the construction of Kambarata I and II hydropower complexes which will locate above the Toktogul reservoir. This hydropower complex will provide twice as much power annually than Toktogul reservoir, which will make it possible to export electric energy to China. Estimated cost of the complex is US \$1 billion.<sup>280</sup> Kyrgyzstan cannot cover such a big cost, especially when according to the latest estimates this hydropower complexes Verkhnenarin cascade HEP (Hydro-Electric Power) and Kambarata HEP1 will cost US \$3 billion. Kyrgyzstan attracted investors for these projects and recently Russia agreed to become an investor by fully financing these projects, as a result dividends will be divided 50/50.

Finally despite of the opposition of downstream countries in 12<sup>th</sup> June 2013 in Kyrgyzstan began the construction of Verkhnenarin cascade HEP together with the government of Russia.<sup>281</sup> After construction of this hydropower complexes Kyrgyzstan will have an opportunity not only use the produced energy for domestic needs, but also to sell electric energy to neighboring countries as China for market price. Actually there is enough water in Central Asia for every country, it is just need good management system. Central Asian countries can make an agreement regarding water allocation between the countries and maintenance of reservoirs that will suit to every of them. And there will be no conflict; water source countries Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan will have money for maintenance of reservoirs so enough water will be sent for irrigation of downstream countries. If the water problem will be solved Kyrgyzstan could produce enough electricity for the use of the country and at the same time the excess of the

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<sup>279</sup> ICG, Asia Report № 34, "Central Asia: Water and Conflict", 2002, p.16.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid, p.18.

<sup>281</sup> Elvira Temir, "Сегодня стартует реализация проекта Верхне-Нарынского каскада ГЭС (Today starts the realization of the project Upper-Naryn cascade)", Daily newspaper of Kyrgyzstan "Vecherniy Bishkek", 12.06.2013, <http://www.vb.kg/231733>, date of access: 12.06.2013.

produced energy Kyrgyzstan can sell to neighboring countries as China that will be good income for the budget of the country.

### **3.5. THE SCO'S ECONOMIC DIMENSION**

The membership to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) of Kyrgyzstan and China also helped to development of economic relations between two countries.

Even if the SCO was established for security needs it developed and became effective nearly in every issue of international cooperation between Central Asian states, China and Russia. Moreover the sphere of activities of the SCO is continuously expanding and the most important ones are combating the threat of terrorism and the development of economic cooperation.<sup>282</sup>

Since the establishment of the SCO the member states achieved several important agreements and memorandums in the framework of economic cooperation. The first Memorandum on the Basic Objectives and Orientation of Regional Economic Cooperation and the Launching of a Process of Trade and Investment Facilitation was signed in 2001 on the first meeting regarding economic issues in Almaty, Kazakhstan. In 2002 mechanisms for trade and economic were settled.<sup>283</sup> But Director of the Center for East Asian and the SCO Studies at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations Alexander Lukin argues that this agreements left only on paper and there is no any important projects that was realized in the framework of the SCO.<sup>284</sup> He also notes that some projects that are seemed to be implemented are multilateral projects of particular states, and they refer to the SCO only because they are member states. On the contrary Chinese author Sun Zhuangzhi in his article “The relationship between China and Central Asia” conversely saying that economic projects within the SCO

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<sup>282</sup> Chjao Huashen, 2005, p. 13.

<sup>283</sup> Sun Zhuangzhi, “The relationship between China and Central Asia”, chapter from the book “Eager Eyes Fixed on Eurasia: Russia and Its Neighbors in Crisis” edited by Iwashita Akihiro, Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, 2007, p.59.

<sup>284</sup> Alexander Lukin, “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: What Next?”, *Russia in Global Affairs* Vol. 5, No.3, July-September 2007.

successfully implementing by the members.<sup>285</sup> Especially as he marks "...member states are working on the 127 joint projects covering the areas of trade, investment, custom, finance..." etc. Also according to him some \$2 billion dollar worth of agreements were signed that cover the projects of highway between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, two high-voltage electricity lines in Tajikistan, a cement plant in Kyrgyzstan, and a hydropower station in Kazakhstan. It seems that it is two different angles of view of China and Russia on the same events; they just interpret events in their own interest. Actually all those joint projects are realizing on the bilateral basis of member countries to the SCO. Especially it is noted that investment projects are realized on the bilateral basis of the member countries. In other words, organization is helping to improve cooperation in investment sector between member countries.<sup>286</sup> This does not mean that the economic activities within the SCO is not developing at all, on the contrary measures to develop cooperation in economic field is reflected in the Action Plan for the implementation of the multilateral trade and economic cooperation within the SCO which was approved on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2008 by the Council of Heads of Government of the SCO Member States. This document includes 85 projects and activities that also cover projects in trade, investment, finance and taxes.<sup>287</sup>

In fact economic issue in the framework of the SCO is the point where Russian and Chinese interests start to have divergences. Since the establishment of the organization for Russia it is just the organization for balancing its security issues in the region. Economic dimension was not planned by Russia. Russia is concerned with China's rising economic influence in Central Asia, its developing trade relations with Central Asian countries and penetration to the market of Central Asia with the help of the SCO. The reason why the big and important projects that are planned in the frameworks of the SCO are not implementing it is the unwillingness of Russia to take part in them. Because China is using the SCO to uphold its economic interests in the region which on

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<sup>285</sup> Sun Zhuangzhi, 2007, p.59.

<sup>286</sup> "ШОС: перспективы экономического развития (SCO: Prospects for Economic Development)", Information Agency "Жахон (Jahon), (n.d.), (<http://www.uzbekistan.pl/documents/ru/worddocs/shos11.doc>), date of access: 09.04.2014.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

its turn serves for the gaining more influence in Central Asia for China, therefore China actively supporting economic projects in this field with the member countries. According to the latest statement of Chinese government they are willing to allocate about \$ 10 billion to stimulate the economic development of the SCO which was announced on June 7, 2012 by the President Hu Jintao at the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Council of Heads of the SCO Member States.<sup>288</sup>

For the speedily developing economy of China actually the success in economic sphere in Central Asian countries is only important as the step to integrate to this region and become more influential by depending Central Asian states to its investments and other economic assistance for political influence that will just strengthen with every other Chinese investment in Central Asian countries. Thus, according to the offensive neorealist theory China in its attempt to gain more power than its rivals as Russia and the USA is using every opportunity to become influential in this region and economic activity is one of the clues for China that has successfully developing and rising economy in the world. We can say that investments of China to Central Asia, and those within the SCO too are the implementation of soft power of China which it can use when it needs for its own economic, political or security interests.

However economic facilities within the SCO are developing one sided; China is organizing, upholding and financing them in Central Asian countries such as Kyrgyzstan, Russia is trying to be far from those economic issues because it is not in their interest. Moreover China vigorously wants to implement free flow of goods, services and capital by the 2020 between the members of the SCO, but this idea is not certainly shared by Russia and other the SCO members. As I mentioned before on the contrary Russia together with Belarus and Kazakhstan established the Customs Union. Kyrgyzstan has plans to join this Customs Union very soon. Particularly in the end of May, 2013 the Presidents of member countries to Custom Union and President of Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine gathered for summit in Astana where member countries

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<sup>288</sup> “Китай прокредитует экономические проекты ШОС (China will finance the economic projects of SCO)”, *Fergana. News*, 08.06.2012, (<http://www.fergananews.com/news.php?id=18842>), date of access: 09.04.2014.

expressed willingness for membership of Kyrgyzstan to the Customs Union. They have signed memorandum on deepening cooperation between the Eurasian Economic Commission and the Kyrgyz Republic.<sup>289</sup> So for this moment the working team was created for agreement of technical points of entry of Kyrgyzstan to the Customs Union. Approximately in 2015 Kyrgyzstan is planning to enter to the Customs Union.<sup>290</sup> In other words Russia is creating together with Central Asian countries as Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan the other new economic union where China will not take part. We can say it is the attempt of Russia to gain more influence in the region through the establishment of economic union without the presence of China in its attempt to gain more power according to the offensive neorealism.

With the accession to this union the economy of Kyrgyzstan will become more isolated from the influence of China, as we know Kyrgyzstan for the past 20 years became the huge bazaar for selling, reselling and transporting of Chinese goods. But according to the First Deputy Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic Joomart Otorbaev the accession to the Customs Union is the economic step, not political, therefore relations with other economic partners of Kyrgyzstan as China wouldn't be damaged. With the accession to Custom Union the economy of Kyrgyzstan will get such benefits as the lower prices for fuel products that are mostly imported from Russia, also the working conditions of the guest workers in Russia would become better and in total the economy of Kyrgyzstan will develop very well.<sup>291</sup> From the other side there is possibility that after accession of Kyrgyzstan to Custom Union this time Kyrgyzstan will be under influence of Russia, then time will show what will be the condition of Kyrgyzstan inside the Customs Union.

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<sup>289</sup> Егор Колуванов, "Саммит в Астане: Украина стала ближе к России и Казахстану (Summit in Astana: Ukraine became closer to Russia and Kazakhstan)", News of NTV, 29.05.2013, <http://www.ntv.ru/novosti/609869/>, date of access: 09.12.2013.

<sup>290</sup> "Джоомарт Оторбаев: «Россия — наш друг, системный и фундаментальный партнёр» (Djoomart Otorbaev: Russia is our friend, systematic and fundamental partner", Interview of First Deputy Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic to the newspaper «Дело №...», 11 March, 2014, (<http://www.gov.kg/?p=32516>), date of access: 17.03.2014.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

Kyrgyzstan strongly needs support and cooperation of China as one of the leading power on international arena. China needs Kyrgyzstan as an economic partner to realize its aim to become influential power for its rush for more power in Central Asia, because Central Asia still is in the high interest of China as the strategic region. As we have seen the aim of China to become influential in this region by using economic tool was implemented successfully. In other words China could kill two hares with one shoot; became influential through its economic activities and politically powerful country through the SCO that has great influence in Central Asia. As for Kyrgyzstan, country found good economic partner for cooperation and raising its own economy, begin to realize its natural resources by selling them to China. On the other side we don't know what is really on mind of China and in what will result its generous investments to Kyrgyzstan. There is possibility that Kyrgyzstan becoming more and more dependent to economic influence of China and China can use this dependence for its interests. Particularly China can make pressure on Kyrgyzstan to realize its interests there that will be not very beneficial for Kyrgyzstan itself. Therefore it would be better for the government of Kyrgyzstan to take measures regarding strong economic presence of China in the country and its impacts in the long run. Time will show in what will be formed the economic relation of "big giant" with small country, especially in the light of future accession of Kyrgyzstan to the Customs Union with Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus.

## CONCLUSION

This thesis analyzed the relations between China and Kyrgyzstan from the economic and security aspects. Also their relations was discussed in the context of competition of three great powers that are existing in Central Asia as Russia, the USA and China itself and how their active rivalry affected the relations of China and Kyrgyzstan.

As a result we could see that active competition of three great powers Russia, China and the USA are the bright example of offensive neorealism theory where three powers are competing for more power and actively involved in different economic and security issues in the region to rise their influences. Kyrgyzstan in this rivalry of great powers plays the role of small state in this theory and acting toward balancing and bandwagoning in its relations with them. Thus, Russia as historical dominant power in this region for more than a century at first as the Russian Empire, then as the Soviet Union sees Central Asia as the region of its strategic interests and direct influence. Therefore, active presence of Russia in the region, particularly in social, economic, security and cultural life of Kyrgyzstan after short time as 23 years of independence of Kyrgyzstan is natural. However, Kyrgyzstan does not want too much domination of Russia in the country, therefore trying to balance the strong influence of Russia by establishing relations with other two powers as the USA and China. The USA from its side began involvement in Central Asia since this region became independent from the Soviet power. However active involvement of the USA to this region was observed since 2001 after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and when the USA began the military actions on terrorism in Afghanistan against the terrorist organizations. The location of Afghanistan nearby Central Asia determined the next step of the USA as the settlement of military troops in Central Asian countries to held its military actions not so far from Afghanistan and to deploy its military troops there. Particularly Kyrgyzstan gave permission to settle US military troops on its territory. The presence of the USA in the country has its side effects as the USA could control the situation in Central Asia and moreover intervene to the internal issues of Kyrgyzstan for its own interests as the change of the existing pro-Russian government of Kyrgyzstan by supporting change of government during “Tulip Revolution” through the activities of its NGO’s, that completely changed the political life and stability in Kyrgyzstan. We can say that since



the deployment of the US troops in Kyrgyzstan, in the heart of Central Asia, the USA has become an active political player, along with the regional powers as Russia and China and moreover became the strategic partner of Kyrgyzstan that allowed balancing the influence of Russia and China to the country.

China is the regional power that has direct border to Kyrgyzstan. Since the independence of Kyrgyzstan China established diplomatic relations that then rose to active economic and security relations. However, in the diplomatic relations with China Kyrgyzstan mostly has to bandwagon - accept the wishes of powerful neighbor. We could see bandwagoning of Kyrgyzstan with China in border issue that was raised by China in the beginning of the 1990s. According to China those claimed lands were annexed from China as a result of "unequal treaties" by the Russian Empire in the end of the XVIII century. For the purpose of claiming border issue by the initiative of China was established the Shanghai Five community by the participation as the claiming side China on one side and Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan on the other side. As result of cooperation in this community Kyrgyzstan finally had to accept that old claims of China as the other parties of that community that were also involved to this border issue and give its lands in Uzongu-Kuush region. Kyrgyzstan has to accept the will of powerful neighbor in the first decade of its independence in order to continue its friendly relations with the powerful neighbor. In other words Kyrgyzstan had to bandwagon as the small state in neorealist theory in its relations with great power.

The SCO became the important organization with the membership of two regional powers and Central Asian countries in security issues of the region. More importantly this organization became the tool of influences of two powers China and Russia, moreover brought to the agenda another bandwagoning situation of Kyrgyzstan, this time with two regional powers. As the establishment of this organization and active involvement of the USA to Central Asia came to one time to 2001, China and Russia later used this organization to pressure on the Central Asian states to withdraw the US troops from their lands which was announced on 2005 Astana summit of the SCO. This requirement was also regarding Kyrgyzstan that still has US troops as the transit center on its territory. So after that pressure from China and Russia Kyrgyz government announced the decision that US troops has to withdraw from the lands of Kyrgyzstan in

summer 2014. So by the complete withdrawal of the US troops from Central Asia the balance of power will change in the favor of Russia and China. However, security situation in Afghanistan remains grim and there is still a possibility that instability in Afghanistan will influence Central Asian countries. So China and Russia should maintain the security issue by themselves as they are insisting on the withdrawal of the US troops that were providing security since 2001.

The other important bandwagoning situation between China and Kyrgyzstan occurred as Chinese government calls them regarding the “Uighur separatists” in XUAR in the West of China. China in the framework of security activities of the SCO added to the declaration of the organization such terms as “terrorism”, “extremism” and “separatism” which mostly described the Uyghur activities for their rights in XUAR. Thus, China guaranteed that member countries to the SCO will not tolerate the activities of Uighur in XUAR and as well as the minorities of Uighurs in their countries. In other words Kyrgyzstan as the other small states Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan had to accept this wish of China, again bandwagon in this issue to continue its close relations with China.

We have observed the stages of development of economic relations between Kyrgyzstan and China. For the huge developing and rapidly rising economy of China economic relations with Central Asian countries and the income that is China having from this region is not so important from the financial point of view. Economic relations that China initiated from the first years of independence of Kyrgyzstan served for China as the step to become influential country there. Moreover economic relations successfully developed as China is the neighboring country to Kyrgyzstan, therefore could flow its produced goods to this region through the territory of Kyrgyzstan to other Central Asian countries, also huge investments and financial aid also became the bridge for the close, friendly relations with these countries. However, “isolation” of huge markets of Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus by the establishment of the Customs Union in 2010 affected the economic flow from China and generally the economic situation in Central Asia. Moreover Kyrgyzstan is preparing to become the member of the Customs Union in near future. The accession of Kyrgyzstan to the Customs Union that will put limitations to the flow of Chinese goods certainly will change the economic relations

between them. However, Chinese government officially expresses its positive view of the accession of Kyrgyzstan to that union saying that even though the economic cooperation and close relations will continue between their countries.

Let us discuss the thesis question why Kyrgyzstan established close neighboring relations and actively cooperating in security and economic issues with China. First of all Kyrgyzstan chose multi-vector foreign policy from the first years of independence which implies the establishment of close relations with several countries on international arena, in this case Kyrgyzstan is establishing close relations with three great powers Russia, China and the USA and trying to balance their powers in the country. In other words Kyrgyzstan as a small state is trying to balance the influences of great powers and as we have seen sometimes also has to bandwagon especially in the relations with China. So the main reason of establishment of close relations with China was the attempt of Kyrgyzstan to balance the influence of other two powers Russia and the USA. Three powers are continuing their active competition in Central Asia for more power and their rivalry just strengthened in the last years as China and Russia are cooperating within the SCO to exclude the presence of the USA in the region. At the same time competition between China and Russia also gaining strength and Russia established the Customs Union with Kazakhstan, which is the most economically developed country in Central Asia that weakened the economic presence of China in Central Asia. With the accession of Kyrgyzstan to the Customs Union there is a possibility that China cannot fully use its economic strength as the tool for more influence in this region. However, close relations and cooperation of China with Kyrgyzstan will continue on the bilateral basis and in the SCO as Kyrgyzstan accepts the accession to the Custom Union as the completely economic measure and that it should not affect the political sphere of relations with China. However, the economic trade flow and cooperation with China will decrease with the accession of Kyrgyzstan to the Customs Union and time will show how this will affect their relations in the future. For this moment Russia successfully integrated in security and economic means in Central Asia by establishing CSTO and the Customs Union with Central Asian countries without the presence of China. Especially the Customs Union is closing the disadvantageous position of Russia's economic power in comparison to China in its relations with Central Asian countries. And it seems that great efforts of China and

Russia for the exclusion of the USA from Central Asia gained success. After withdraw of the US troops from the territory of Kyrgyzstan and from Afghanistan the influence of the USA to Central Asia will diminish. But still we do not know if the USA will withdraw its troops from Central Asia or there will rise different circumstances for its further presence there.

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