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**THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND  
THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION :  
EXPECTATIONS AND CAPABILITIES**

Master's Thesis

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I declare I have written the master's thesis independently.

All works and major viewpoints of the other authors, data from other sources of literature and elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

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## **ABSTRACT**

After experiencing some different foreign policy orientations, the Russian Federation has found its new foreign policy orientation in the Eurasianism. As a part of its Eurasianist Foreign Policy, the Russian Federation had involved in some bilateral agreements, and those bilateral agreements had been followed with the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001.

Today, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization works as a model of regionalism. The main interest area of the organization is Central Asia. Since the region is in Russia's interest area, the country aims to use the organization for realization of its own regional interests.

The aim of this work is to interpret the expectations of the Russian Federation from the organization, under the light of country's foreign policy perspectives. Here, Constructivist theory of the international relations will be used to be able to understand the main factors which paved the pathways of the Russia's Foreign Policy toward the Eurasianist foreign policy. The interpretations about Russia's expectations are followed by the capabilities of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization regarding the expectations of Russia. Lastly, the work will try to find proper answers for the question of what the organization could give to the country. Here, the other regional organizations which can be seen as restrictive elements for the works of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization will be mentioned as well, to be able to have better results in terms of the capabilities of the organization.

Keywords: Russia, Russia's Foreign Policy, Constructivism, Eurasianism, The Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

## INTRODUCTION

After the dissolution of The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1991, the Russian Federation had been established as the main inheritor of the failed union. Following its establishment, the new country had needed to integrate herself to the new world order. With that aim, the country had gone through some foreign policy experiences and Eurasianism has been accepted as the most proper foreign policy orientation for the country. As a part of its Eurasianist policy the country had entered into some bilateral and multilateral agreements with the countries of the region. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is one of those important agreements. Today, the organization is seen as a remarkable regional organization in international relations. And the Russian Federation aims to use that organization as a tool to be able to achieve its foreign policy interests.

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the Russian Federation's expectations from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the capabilities of the organization in return. This will be achieved by answering the following research questions, " How does Constructivist Theory explain Russia's existence in the organization? What are the expectations of Russia from the organization? What are the capabilities of the organization? What could/can the organization give to Russia?"

For a better understanding, the paper starts with a brief explanation of the Russia's Foreign Policy and its formation. In this spot, three main paths of the Russia's Foreign Policy will be examined which are the Atlanticism, Near Abroad Policy and the Eurasianism. It will be figured out that, the Eurasianist foreign policy of the Russia's Foreign Policy is still in the process, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is in the agenda as one of the main instruments of this Eurasianist Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation.

The paper will continue by examining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Here, firstly, the establishment reasons of the organization will be mentioned in details. Moreover, the structure of the organization and its enlargement will be interpreted for the creation of a better perception related to presence of the organization. At the end of these examinations regarding the

Russia's Foreign Policy and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a proper tie will be tried to be found between those two, with the help of the Constructivist theory. Therefore, a brief explanation about the Constructivist Theory of the International Relations will be given as well.

In the following, the work will focus on understanding the expectations of the Russian Federation from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Here, the expectations of the Russian Federation from the organization will be tried to be interpreted in three parts. The first part will focus on the expectations regarding to establish a power in the region in which Russia would be in an advantageous position. The second part will be about the expectations of the Russian Federation in terms of establishing a balance of power in the region. And the last part will mention the economic expectations of the Russian Federation from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

After interpreting the expectations of the Russian Federation, the work will continue by focusing on the capabilities of the organization regarding the expectations of the country. Here, firstly, in terms of security expectations of the country, military exercises will be given as the capability of the organization. Secondly, the political capabilities of the organization will be mentioned as an answer to the expected balance of the power in the region. And lastly, economic capabilities of the organization will be examined.

In the last part of the work, proper answers will be tried to be given to the question of what the organization could give to the Russian Federation. This examination will be done by giving some other organizations which Russia is involved in, as restrictive elements for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. These organizations are the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Eurasian Economic Community. At the end of this part, it will be pointed out that, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization could have answered the expectations of the Russian Federation if all the concentration of the country would have been given just to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, rather than dividing the attention among the other similar organizations.

# 1. EVOLUTION OF RUSSIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

After the dissolution of the USSR, Russia appeared in the world politics as a lonely country and this lonely country was under the pressure of being an old superpower which was practicing its diminished status in the world politics. The position of the country in the world politics had changed deeply and dramatically with the all world politics. Russia was trying to deal with its own economic and political problems which had occurred as results of the changing world position. In that changing world position, while Russia was holding a diminished status, The USA was enjoying the privileges of being the one and only superpower in the world. Under such circumstances, Russia was seeking to find solutions for its economical and modernization problems and meanwhile was trying to revise and define its own national status and interests.(Danks 2009, 345)

Before the dissolution, back in USSR times, Russia was a challenging superpower which has the privileges of having nuclear power and conventional forces. And now, the country had to accept the reality of being defeated against the liberalism and in addition, the country had to deal with occurring budget constraints which were caused from being the successor of a dissolved union.

During the Yeltsin period, who was the first president of the newly established state, Russia was struggling with some problems at home which were mostly about the decision making process. Therefore, in those days, the country mostly was concentrated on its own politics and also busy with some reforms which were waiting to be done. On the other hand, this uncertainty at home was also affecting the foreign policy and foreign policy making process as well. Now, with its changed system and position in the international relations, the country had to build a new foreign policy concept.

With the aim of having a new foreign policy concept, the agents had started to work for creating a new agenda. And till the presidency of Putin who has come to the mission in 1999 with a clear agenda, the country had gone through three different foreign policy concepts. Respectively, those concepts are Atlanticism, Near Abroad policy and Eurasianism.



As it is mentioned, after Yeltsin, Putin have come to the presidency with an agenda which aimed to solve country's all problems (Biography ... 2015). But for the management of that, the presidency had supposed to have a supremacy especially in the decision making process. New president had mentioned that Russia had to reach back again the superpower status. After all, Putin pursued a strong and decisive policy against the Western countries and mentioned the importance of the implementation of national interests, especially in the international summits. Therefore, it is possible to say that under the strong presidency of Putin, Russia wanted to rebuild its importance and power in the global politics and aimed to act in accordance with its own national will and interests, not as a junior partner of the West (Danks 2009, 346).

To understand better the pavement which have shaped today's policy, we should better look through the evolution of the Russia's Foreign Policy which had started with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and continued till the Putin's strong presidency.

## **1.1 Russia's Foreign Policy based on Atlanticism**

As it is mentioned already, during the first years of the Russian Federation, the foreign policy was based on Western principles. This period of foreign policy is called as West-First or Atlanticist in Russia's Foreign Policy. The idea which was on the bottom of that approach was about the Russia's needed transformation. According to the Westernists, Russia needed to behave in accordance with the Western policies to be able to transform itself both economically and politically (Mankoff 2011, 75 ). The reason which is on the behind of that decision was that, during the first years of its existence, Russia was dealing with some problems economically and politically. And, in such condition, economically Russia needed to follow IMF to be able to organize its own economy in a well-working order. On the other hand, the country was carrying the heavy status of being defeated by the West and its ideas, just after the Cold War. Therefore, it was also politically important to integrate Russia to the West by following the ideas and norms of the Western society.

According to the Westernists, the acceptance of Western policies would have helped Russia to adapt Western democracy and human rights to the country and to catch the Western market. For the implementation of Westernist economic views, Russia had to accept a reformist process in its economics which has been called as 'shock therapy' (Reddaway, Glinski 2001, 233 ). Shock therapy process was offered by the president Yeltsin, in 1992, for the quick transformation of Russian economics from a planned economy to a liberalised economy. It was expected that with the help of those reforms which had been done under the name of shock therapy, Russia might have eliminated all economic problems which were caused by the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and therefore the country would have been ready to play economically in the same stage with the Western countries.

However, in contrast to the desired prospects of the shock therapy, the reality did not bring such a quick and positive transformation for the country. With the acceptance of shock therapy, foreign trade had been liberalized, but the majority of the population and the market itself was not ready for that privatization and price liberalisation. This caused a hyperinflation in the country (Ibid.). Industrial and agricultural production had declined and instead of local products, the markets started to be full with imported goods. Since the local production had declined, the rise on the unemployment level had increased automatically. All those factors together had caused a poverty in the country. Therefore, with the effect of all aforementioned negative factors, the Yeltsin Administration had needed to abandon the shock therapy in 1993 - 1994. But, even though the shock therapy had been abandoned quickly, the population in the country which had suffered a lot because of the reforms that had come with the shock therapy, the opposition to the Westernist foreign policy had increased in the country. Besides those economic problems which had created an opposition against the West, there were also some other questions which were causing doubts regarding the sincerity of Western views toward Russia.

As a part of its Westernist policy, starting from 1991, Russia had needed to support the USA and also the NATO which has been an organization acting under the American dominance. However, after a while, especially with the effects of NATO's enlargement, Russia started to realize the importance of self - defence and security in the politics (Caşın 2006, 454 ). The frustration in the relations with Western countries can be seen as the reason of that realization in Russia. The truth was that, despite the effort of the Russian Federation, The West was still quite

sceptical about Russia, and therefore still membership for NATO had not been offered to Russia. This was another element which had led Russia to revise its Westernist Foreign Policy.

In addition to those foreign policy issues, meanwhile the country also had to deal with some internal issues. The main issue related to the internal problems was about the constitution of the country. The existing constitution had been accepted during the old, Soviet period, and mainly this constitution was giving a lot of privileges and power to the Supreme Soviet to maintain the unity in the country (The Constitutional Process ... 2015). According to that constitution, Supreme Soviet had the right to lead the foreign policy and to appoint the ministers of foreign policy. Therefore, this constitution was restraining the power of the president. One of the first works which had to be done at home was to change that constitution with a better one which would give some action rights to the president.

After all, in December 1993, the current constitution had been accepted in Russia (The Constitution of Russia ... 2015). This new constitution was taking back the power from the Supreme Soviet, and was giving that power to the President. Because of the achievement of Russian national interests, it was important to base both foreign and domestic policy making to the presidential authority. On the other hand, according to that new constitution, there were two important players in the politics which were the Foreign Ministry and the Security Council (Informal Powers and ... 2015). Basically, the Security Council was similar to the UN National Security Council, and it was the main rival of the Foreign Ministry (Danks 2009, 347). There was a kind of competition between those two. According to the Foreign Minister, there was a West-First approach in the foreign policy (Danks 2002, 243 ). But contrary to the Foreign Ministry, the main center of the Russia's foreign policy should have been the Russia's status as a great power. With that explanation Security Council had decreased the importance of the West in the Russian foreign politics (Danks 2009, 347).

With the effects of all those factors, the revision in the foreign policy had come to agenda in 1993, and a new policy period had been opened in the Russia's Foreign Policy in 1994 (Medvedev 1999, 44 ). Still ongoing Western sceptism toward Russia had led the foreign policy decision making bodies to realize the importance of having good relations with the Near Abroad countries. It was hoped that, this important change in the foreign policy would have helped Russia to revive its statehood in the so-called Fatherland, like it is mentioned in the new

constitution (The Constitution of Russian ... 2015). And then, consequently , Russia started to increase its presence in the so called Near Abroad area. This period is called as Russia - First foreign policy period.

## **1.2. Russia's Foreign Policy based on Near Abroad**

In 1993, a new Foreign Policy Concept had been published in Russia. In that document, Russia's interests had been revised and according to that revision, CIS area accepted as the area of vital interests for Russia.(Jackson 2003, 65)

From that time on, Near Abroad policy had been in the center of the Russia's Foreign Policy. Actually, even before 1993, Near Abroad had been mentioned in some documents in the country. One of those documents which name is ' Strategy for Russia' had been published by the Institute's Foreign and Defence Policy Council in 1992. In that paper, it was mentioned that Russia needs to adapt a foreign policy which would take the stability of its neighbours to its main focus.(Lloyd 1998, 358) Similar to that one, there were a lot of papers and all were arguing the elimination of Westernist foreign policy and instead of it, the acceptance of a new policy which would have based on Near Abroad.

The Near Abroad policy of Russia has covered the 14 successors of the USSR. When we look geographically, it is possible to divide the Near Abroad in four different regions which are mainly Caucasus, Central Asia, Eastern Europe and Baltic regions. Caucasus covers Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia. Central Asia covers Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. Eastern Europe consists of Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. And lastly Baltic region includes Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Relations with the Near Abroad operate over the Commonwealth of Independent States. The Commonwealth of Independent States founded by Russia, Ukraine and Belarus in December 1991. The main point and aim of that agreement was to build good relations between the countries. Those relations would have based on mutual recognition, and the recognition of each other's sovereignty which would have followed by mutual cooperation. In the establishment

process of the CIS, it was also important to show that the CIS would not have been the center of a possible new Russian Empire. Therefore, it was decided that, the headquarter of the CIS would be in the capital of Belarus, Minsk.(Danks 2009, 356)

Following the establishment, except three Baltic states, and Georgia, all the other countries of the former Soviet Union had signed the agreement on Establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States. Georgia had joined in 1993 (Ibid.). However, following the disagreements with Russia, the country withdrew from the CIS in 2009. In addition to Georgia, the position of Ukraine within the organization was also problematic. Although Ukraine was one of the founding members, the country have never signed the Charter of the organization which came to the agenda in January 1993 (Robinson 1999, 23). Now, the country is just a participating state in the CIS. Furthermore, also Turkmenistan has just associate state status in the organization.

As it is mentioned already, even though Russia had tried to focus on its relations with the West during the first years of newly established Russian Federation, the CIS countries have also kept their importance for the Russian foreign policies. During that period, several mutual agreements had been signed between the sides based on the mutual recognition. However, on the other hand, these countries had approached to the Russian Federation with hesitation.

This hesitant position of the CIS countries led Russia to think about its CIS area oriented Near Abroad policy once more. And, starting from that time, Russia's Foreign Policy had gone through another revision and with that revision, in addition to CIS countries, Middle East and China also accepted as the main interest areas in the newly declared Russia's Foreign Policy. The idea of Eurasianists had been effective for the acceptance of that new foreign policy.(Silvius 2014, 55) And as a result of that effect, from that time on, Eurasianism started to be welcomed explicitly in the Russia's Foreign Policy, and mainly that period continued till 1999.

### **1.3. Russia's Foreign Policy Based on Eurasianism**

From the Russia's point of view, Eurasianists claim that in its politics, Russia needs to look both Europe and Asia, like it does geographically. The reason behind those claims of Eurasianists is mostly about the continuing contradictions between West and Russia. Eurasianists assume that the country's relations with West is not really a matter, Russia just needs to pursue its powerful Russian state culture. According to Aleksander Dugin, so - called father of the Eurasianism, in its state culture, Russia is in a deep contradiction with the West which is called as 'irreconcilable contradiction', and under such kind of circumstance, it does not really matter how much Russia tries to change its structure politically and ideologically in accordance with the Western ideas, in any way Western aggression toward Russia will never end (Dugin 2001, 8). From the Eurasianists point of view, NATO and its continuing expansion is an example of Western aggression toward Russia. Under the light of those ideas, Eurasianists strongly argue that, Russia should better stay away from the effects of Western politics and as an alternative to West, should create better relations with the countries which are located in its Near Abroad and Asia.

With the acceptance of the Eurasianist policy, Russia had concentrated on achieving some success in its foreign policy. For that aim, the country had tried to enter into some bilateral and multilateral agreements especially with the countries of Near Abroad and additionally China. The main concern of those agreements was mostly the security issue. Actually besides those bilateral agreements which had been done with Russia, in that period, the old-Soviet countries whom are currently CIS countries ,were also having some talks with the NATO under the name of Partnership for Peace. Those talks had been started in 1994. And at the end of this year, including The Russian Federation, ten CIS countries had become a part on that partnership. Those countries were Armenia,Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Moldova, Russia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan (Signatures of Partnership ... 2012). This example shows the increasing importance of the security issue for Russia and for the country's foreign policy.

Following, the Partnership for Peace agreements with NATO, together with Russia, some other CIS countries which had been a part in that partnership have come together with China in Shanghai, in 1996. The main aim of that gathering was to talk about the main security issues in

the region.(Sutter 2012, 126) At the end of the meeting, the countries had agreed upon building a mutual military confidence in the region and they also decided to secure the borders by decreasing the military forces nearby. From now on, the group which includes Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan started to be known as ‘Shanghai Five’ in the international relations (Ambrosio 2008, 1325).

Later, on 23 April 1997, in Moscow, Russia and China had signed a joint declaration related to pursue multipolar world order in international relations. The document had been signed by the Russian President Boris Yeltsin and the President of the People’s Republic of China, Jiang Zemin and forwarded to the UN Security Council by the Ambassadors Sergey Lavrov and Wang Xuexian. In that joint declaration which had been named as ‘ Russian-Chinese Joint Declaration on a Multipolar World and the Establishment of a New International Order ’, it was stressed that, the cold war is over and so, the intention for a bipolar world order in the international structure which was coming with the Cold War had started to change with a new world order which would have based on multipolarity. The parties had emphasized that, as an actor of that multipolar international system, United Nations should work for the strengthening peace and stability all over the world.(General Assembly ... 1997)

This joint declaration which had been signed by China and Russia in 1997 might be accepted as a positive turning point in terms of the relations between the countries. The declaration which was caused by the USA domination especially in the Central Asia, also had two other dimensions from the common point of view of China and Russia. In the global dimension, as it is mentioned already, the aim was to stop superiority of the USA and to create a new world order. On the other hand, in the regional dimension, the declaration was giving a hint related to establishment of a possible strategic partnership between Russia and China which would end up with the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

In 1999, a new presidential election had been held in Russia, and Vladimir Putin have become the new president. The main promise of the new president to the Russian public was to take Russia back to a prestigious position in the international relations (Biography ... 2015). Therefore, the new president started to work for the achievement of a new foreign policy as quickly as he could. And, as a result, a new foreign policy concept had been accepted in Russia, in 2000. According to that new foreign policy concept, while continue the good relations with

Central Asian countries and China, Russia would try to achieve active relations also with Europe and the USA (Danks 2009, 353 ). On the other hand, it is important to note that, the new president was a strong supporter of the Eurasianist policy of the Russian Federation (Pryce 2013, 31). Therefore, during his presidency, the Eurasianist foreign policy have continued in the country, and the president had aimed to strenghten his country's relations especially with the neighbours in Central Asia and China. The document, ' The Main Directions of the Development of Russia's Relations with the CIS Member States' which had been approved by the president Putin in January 2000 might be an example for the continuance of the aimed good relations between Russia and the CIS countries (Waller 2005, 257 ). There is also another important document which had been signed by Russia and China, in July 2001. This document is a 20-year friendship agreement between the parties, and the presence of such kind of an agreement is a good sign which shows the importance of good Russia - China relations in the long term.(Wilson 2004, 35)

All those indicators have been presented to be able to point out how Russia's foreign policy evolved since the beginning of its history as the Russian Federation and at the end how Russia have come to the position where the relations with Central Asia and China have been really important. This brief summary is important especially to be able to analyse the background of the relations between Russia and the members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Now, we can continue to look through the details of the relations between the parties and with the help of the aforementioned indicators, we can try to analyse from the constructivist point of view what Russia wants to get from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and if the organization could answer the demands of the Russian Federation, or not.



## **2. THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION**

### **2.1. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is an intergovernmental international organization which had been founded on 15 June 2001 (Brief introduction ... 2015). The founding agreement of the organization had been signed in Shanghai by six member states. Those founding states are the Russian Federation , the People's Republic of China , the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Tajikistan. The official languages of the organization are Russian and Chinese.

The member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization covers an area of around 30 million 189 thousand square kilometers and this equals to the three fifths of the Eurasian continent. Also, only with its all member states, the population of the organization is 1.5 billion people (Ibid.). But if the population of the observer countries is added to the calculation as well, this makes up almost 3.2 billion people.<sup>1</sup> In addition to those facts, we should mention also the natural gas reserves and oil reserves, to be able to figure out the importance of the organization which is taking that importance from the region it represents. When the observer countries also included, it seems that, the organization has 17.5 percent of the world's proven oil resources and also and 47-50 percent of the natural gas reserves (Ibid.).

As we can understand from those facts, that region which hosts the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is quite strategic because of economic and demographical features. Economic importance of the region is caused by the rich sources of the region and the demographical importance is caused by the remarkable population of the region. These two factors increase the

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<sup>1</sup> Calculation had been done by using the data of the year 2014 which has been taken from the World Factbook of CIA, available in <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2119rank.html>

importance of the region in international relations and the region has been in the middle of attention. Therefore, there is always a need to build stability in the region. But in contrast to that need for the stability, the region has been always in the middle of some problems which are arising mostly from security issues. These problems increased especially with the dissolution of the USSR, in 1991 and in correlation with that dissolution, with the establishment of newly independent states in the region.

Historically, there were always problems even between Soviet Union and China which were caused by their shared border (Bailes, Dunay, 2007, 4). But these problems became more problematic with the independence of the Central Asian countries after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Starting with the agreement on the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States in 1991, the newly established countries had agreed upon some agreements between each other, to ease those problems (Commonwealth of ... 2015). But for a better and more effective action in terms of the peace and stability in the external borders of the aforementioned countries, it was needed to include also China which has a very long border in the region. Therefore some steps had been taken by China, Russia and the Republic of Kazakhstan and some bilateral agreements had been signed between those countries (Douhan 2013, 5).

Following those bilateral agreements, when the countries of the region had realized that the stability which the region is missing, only could have come with the establishment of a permanent peace and good-neighbourly relations, they decided to take a step by starting some mutual talks in Shanghai, in 1996, to find some solutions for the threats which were the reason of ongoing instability. And later on, this first step brought the countries to the establishment of the organization against the so - called three evils which are the products of non - state threats (Bailes, Dunay 2007, 2). These threats are terrorism, separatism and extremism.

As mentioned, the first steps related to the foundation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization had been taken in the meeting which had been held in Shanghai, on 26 April 1996. In that meeting, the heads of the states which includes the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China came together in Shanghai to build trust in the border regions. At the end of that meeting, the heads of the states agreed to sign the Shanghai Agreement on Confidence Building in the

Military Field in the Border Area. And the next year, in 1997, this agreement had been followed by the Agreement on Mutual Reduction of Military Forces in the Border Areas which had been signed in Moscow.(History of the SCO, 2015)

The agreements which had been signed in 1996 and 1997 were based on the necessity of the secured borders and trustworthy neighbour relations. That's why during these two meetings, the main topic was the security and sustainable stability in the region, and for the implementation of these wills, it was a need to take some decisions about military restraints. But after those first attempts, during the next years, the meetings had turned into something annual and the actors of those meetings which now called as 'Shanghai Five' had started to meet every year to talk about some extended agendas. In addition to the military restraints and disarmament for the border security, now mutually beneficial cooperation in any area had started to be talked in the meetings.

Till the meeting which had been held in June 2001, 'Shanghai Five' countries continued to organize their annual meetings regularly. And in June 2001, the countries had planned to meet again in their annual meeting. This meeting would be the fifth anniversary of establishment of the Shanghai Five mechanism. The meeting had been held in Shanghai again. The heads of all member states had been ready in that meeting. And in addition to the five countries, the president of Uzbekistan had been invited there as well. The reason of inviting Uzbekistan was related to the country's battle against Islamic militants (Plater-Zyberk, Monaghan 2014, 5). Uzbekistan had started that battle, because the Islamic militants had been increasing serious threat, especially in that region. Having the common enemy with the Uzbekistan took the attention of the countries of the Shanghai Five, and therefore after the admission of the Uzbekistan as an observer state in 2000, the country had been invited to the annual meeting which had been held in 2001, in Shanghai, for the fulfillment of accession process (Akbarzadeh 2005, 49-50).

After the joint declaration which had been signed to fulfill the admission process of Uzbekistan, another important declaration had been signed by all countries of the Shanghai Five mechanism and now additionally Uzbekistan. This was the document which setting up the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a new institution.(Bailes, Dunay 2007, 4) The name of that document was "Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization". This document is accepted as the official founding document of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization which is based on the prototype of the Shanghai Five Mechanism

(Brief Introduction ... 2015). According to that declaration, the organization had some clear and strategic objectives. These objectives are “strengthening mutual trust and good-neighbourly relations among the member states; encouraging effective cooperation among the member states in politics, trade and economy, science and technology, culture as well as education, energy, transportation, tourism, environmental protection and other fields; making joint efforts to maintain and ensure peace, security and stability in the region; and establishing a democratic, fair and rational, new international political and economic order” (Ibid.).

As it is already pointed in the founding document of the organization, the main interest and priority of the organization would have been fight against the so called three-evils, terrorism, extremism and separatism. This is an evidence which shows the importance of the security and stability in the region. Another evidence can be seen also under the reason of the invitation of Uzbekistan to the meeting which held in Shanghai in 2001. As it is already mentioned, the reason for that invitation was the acceptance of the terrorism and separatism as common enemies by the parties of Shanghai Five and Uzbekistan. And lastly, one another example which shows the importance of the regional security is the document which had been signed in 2001, just after the joint declaration which is accepted as the founding document of the organization. This document is ‘The Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism’ (The Shanghai Convention ... 2015). All these points emphasizes the mentioned importance of the regional security and stability and also indicates explicitly the main priorities and the activity areas of the organization.

## **2.2 Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization**

With the aim of implementation and the sustainability of all those aforementioned objectives, the SCO has started to work and has built a well - working structure. Within that structure, the organization comprises The Heads of State Council, The Heads of Government Council, The Council of National Coordinators, and two permanent bodies which are The Secretariat and the Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure. Beside those, the organization also has

some mechanisms of meetings in the level of heads of ministers or departments, such as meetings in the level of Foreign Ministers, Ministers of Defence, Supreme Courts and Courts of Arbitration and several similar ones.(Brief introduction ... 2015)

The roles and the works of all these bodies which are included in the framework of the SCO, has been explained in the Charter of the organization. The Charter which is accepted as the main document of the organization had been approved and signed by all member states during the meeting which had been held in June 2002.(Charter ... 2015) In that document, all the principles, main goals and tasks, areas of cooperation and the main bodies had been introduced in details.

According to the Charter of the SCO, The Council of Heads of State is the supreme decision making body of the organization (Ibid.). The Council has the right to make important decisions and to take important steps. Within that concept, the Council also has the right to define its relations with international organizations as well as other states, and if it is necessary it needs to do some internal arrangements. The heads of the two important permanent bodies, which are The Secretariat and The Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure are also appointed by the Council of the Heads of State for three years terms. And lastly, at the end of every meeting, this body makes some informative instructions in terms of the decisions which have been done during the meeting. For the implementation of all those works, the Council holds its meetings once in a year. The meetings generally are held one by one in every member state of the organization. And here, the significative point is the Russian alphabetic order of the names of the member states.(Ibid.) In every meeting, the head of the state which the meeting is held needs to be presented as the chairman of the meeting.

The other existing bodies and their structures are also defined in the Charter of the organization. One of those other bodies is the Council of Head of Government. Within that structure, the Prime Ministers of every member states come together for the meeting which is hold once in a year. The meeting takes place in a venue which is determined by prior agreements which have ben signed among the prime ministers.(Ibid.) The main work of that body is to overview the economic situation of the organization and to approve a budget which will be valid till the next year. And as it is mentioned already, some other bodies also exist to talk about specific topics and to make decision in terms of those areas. Those are the meetings of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, as well as other ministeries such as education, transportation,

healthcare, defence and also meetings for the national coordinators which are responsible from the coordination of interactions within the framework of the organization.

In terms of bodies under the framework of the SCO, it might be much more important to pay attention for the two permanent bodies of the organization. These bodies are The Secretariat and the Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure. According to the Charter of the organization, The Secretariat might be accepted as the administrative body of the organization (Charter ... 2015). The main tasks of the Secretariat had been defined in the Charter as overseeing the fulfillment of the decisions which have been done by the organization and providing necessary support either technical or organizational, for implementation of the activities which have been carrying out by the organization.

The Secretariat also prepares drafts for the meeting sessions of the SCO institutions. These drafts are generally proposed by the member states. The Secretariat may take actions for the necessary dialogues and collaboration with the other international organizations and partners, if the consent of the National Coordinators exists. Beside those, The Secretariat is also responsible for preparing economic proposals for the budget of the organization. The meeting places and dates of the SCO institutions are also proposed by the Secretariat, and after the end of session periods, the Secretariat prepares catalogues and some other materials to inform the public about the updates which have been done during the meetings.(SCO Secretariat ... 2015)

The Secretariat is located in Beijing. Under the Secretariat, there are 30 permanent staff . According to the data of 2004, this year, The Secretariat held a budget which was \$2.6 million.(Bailes, Dunay 2007, 5) The Secretariat is headed by a Secretary General. And The Secretary General is appointed by the Council of Heads of State for a three years term. Currently, since the appointment which had been done on 01 January 2013, Dmitry F. Mezentsev who is from Russia, maintains the work as the Secretary General, and he is supposed to finish his term on 31 December 2015 (SCO Secretariat ... 2015).

According to the Charter of the SCO which had been signed in 2001, another permanent body of the SCO which is really important to analyse is the Executive Committee of the Regional-Counter Terrorism. Even though, the Executive Committee of the Regional-Counter Terrorism had been officially established with the signing of the Charter of the organization, the main document which had been signaling the establishment of such kind of an unit was the

document of the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism (The Executive Committee ... 2015).

The main tasks of the RTCS are to work efficiently against the three evils which are terrorism, extremism and separatism. To be able to efficient enough in its tasks and duties, the RTCS gathers some informations and datas based on those informations. Under the light of those datas, the unit creates its counterterrorism plans and schedules. And in its continuance, when it is necessary, the unit organizes some conferences and workshops to share knowledge and to warn society against those threats. For the implementation of those tasks in a bigger frame, in its fight against those three evils, the RTCS has aimed to work collaborately with the other international organizations which accepts those three as the common enemies. Therefore, the RTCS might enter into some bilateral or multilateral agreements with the other states and the organizations to be successful in its fight against terrorism, extremism and separatism.(Ibid.)

The Executive Committee of the Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure might be seen as the center for information exchange among the security services of the member states (Bailes, Dunay 2007, 5). This definition is a good example which explains the multicultural structure of the RTCS. Within this unit, there are 30 staff and seven of them are from China , another seven from Russia, six from Kazakhstan, five from Uzbekistan, three from Kyrgyzstan and two from Tajikistan (Bailes, Dunay 2007, 5-6). Another interesting point related to the Executive Committee of the Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure is about its budget. According to the data which had been taken from the 2004, in that year, the budget of the RTCS was \$3.1 million (Wacker, 2004). When we remember the aforementioned data which indicated the budget of the Secretariat, we will be able to realize that, the budget which had been saved for the RTCS was more than even from the budget which had been keeping for the Secretariat. When we look through all those details, we can witness the importance of the unit and its critical position within the organization.

Currently , Zhang Xinfen is in the position of the Director of the Executive Committee of the Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure since he has been appointed by the Council of Heads of States on 1 January 2013, and he will turn over this position to the new director on 31 December 2015.(Management, 2015)

Besides all those units which had been created to ease and order the works of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, there are also some non-governmental agencies within the structure of the organization. Those agencies are established with the decisions which had been taken by the Council of Heads of SCO member states.(Douhan 2013, 10) The main aims which are lying under the creation of those non-governmental agencies are to provide cooperation in terms of education and economy. Namely, those non-governmental agencies are Business Council, Interbank Consortium and Forum for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The Business Council of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which has a Secretariat in Moscow, has been created in the Shanghai summit which had been held in 2006. The main aim of the establishment of the Business Council is to create a mechanism which would help and foster the achievements of the business relations in the region. For the achievement, the Business Council holds annual sessions since its establishment. In every session, the business environments of the member states come together and they have discussions about possible cooperation in any field, such as technology, trade, education, investment and energy. Those discussions might be interpreted as an advisory mechanism. For better results, the Business Council might need to work together with the different ministries of the member states, and when it is necessary the Council might come up with some recommendations and proposals for the works of ministries.(The Business Council ... 2015)

Since its establishment, the Business Council has held some important discussions. One of those is about the creation of an education institution. This is the desire for a possible SCO University. The other important discussion is about the creation of an Energy Club within the organization, and the reason behind that discussion might be seen related to the position of one of the powerful SCO member states, Russia, in the energy market. It is expected that, the Business Council will continue its discussions and works for the achievements of those prevailing plans, and some other plans might also come to the agenda of the Business Council, in the near future.(Ibid.)

Another non-governmental agency of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is the Interbank Consortium. The Interbank Consortium has been created with the decision of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO. The creation has been completed with the signing of the agreement on Interbank Cooperation(Consortium) under the framework of the SCO.(The



Interbank Consortium ... 2015) The main aim of the creation of such kind of cooperation area is to consist a mechanism which would be efficient for the SCO projects in terms of funding and banking.

According to the decisions which had been taken in the creation process, the Interbank Consortium would have a council which would comprise one representative from each member states and this council would meet at least once in a year. Hence, the members of the Interbank Consortium has been approved as the State Development Bank of China, the Bank for Development and Foreign Economic Affairs of Russia, the Development Bank of Kazakhstan, the National Bank of Tajikistan and lastly the National Bank for Foreign Economic Activity of Uzbekistan.(Ibid.)

As it is mentioned already, the main priority of the consortium is the maintaining of the SCO projects by providing necessary economic help. For the achievement of that, these economic help might be either in terms of funding or economic consulting. In terms of advising, the Interbank Consortium has the right to organize trainings, seminars and conferences. Therefore, the consortium needs to be in interaction with the other economic institutions.(Ibid.)

Currently, the heading position of the Council of Interbank Consortium is held by the president of the Governing Board of the Development Bank of Kazakhstan, M. Sagindykov.(Ibid.)

Finally, the last non-governmental agency of the SCO is the SCO Forum. The SCO Forum has been established in 2006 by the Council of Heads of State of SCO. The main tasks of the forum is to create a platform for the public consultation and provide expertising. With those aims, the forum is responsible from organizing conferences, seminars, and round table discussions.(Shanghai Cooperation Organization Forum, 2015)

One research institution from each other has been included to the forum. Those research institutions are chosen by the member states. The Center for East Asian Studies and SCO at the Moscow State Institute for International Relations with the collaboration of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Russia, China Institute of International Studies, The International Institute for Modern Politics from Kazakhstan, The Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of Uzbekistan, The Center for Strategic Studies under the observation of the President of Tajikistan

and The Center for Strategic Studies under the President of Tajikistan are the institutions which are participating to the forum meetings.(Shanghai Cooperation Organization Forum, 2015)

The forum holds annual meetings regularly. Beside the research institutions which have to attend the all forums, some diplomatic representatives, partner organizations of the SCO, expert groups from observer states might be invited to the meetings. The venue of the meeting is determined by the Russian alphabetic order of the names of the member states. The forum chairman is the director of the national research institution in which the meeting takes place.

### **2.3 Enlargement of the organization**

With that different and open to collaborate structure, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization caught the attention of many countries which are located especially in the region where the SCO has born. As a result of that interest, a possible enlargement process came to the agenda of the organization. But, it is decided that, it might be better to give just observer status to the countries whom are interested to be a part of the organization, instead of giving the full membership. This decision had been held in the annual summit which has been realized in Tashkent in June 2004. Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Li Hui put that decision into words and he said the organization has decided not to accept new members for a few years, until some good and serious studies will be done by the current member states (SCO not ready ... 2004).

Despite the decision of keeping the organization with its current six members, during the summit which had been held in 2004 in Tashkent, it was accepted that the organization might give observer status to some interested parts. This decision brought the member countries to sign the document which named as The Regulations on Observer Status at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.(The Regulations ... 2015) And actually this regulatory document is signed in an accordance with the Article 14 of the SCO Charter which says that the organization might build dialogue with other states or international organizations in terms of cooperation and may grant the interested state or organization with the observer status or dialogue partner (Charter ... 2015).

According to that regulation, the organization might have decision about granting an observer status to an interested country or an international organization. For gaining the observer status, the interested part should forward a letter which imply the desire for being an observer state within the organization. This letter should be forwarded to the Secretary General of the organization and it must be signed by the head of interested part. After having the letter, The Secretary General notifies the Council of Heads of State and the decision is adopted by the council. To be able to granted with the observer status, the interested part should agree with the principles, priorities and main tasks of the organization and should accept the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all the member states. And after being granted with the observer status, the country or the organization hold some rights to be able to join to the open meetings of the organization and to participate to the discussions of the organization, except having the right to vote.(The Regulations ... 2015)

## **2.4. Observer States**

Within the structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Mongolia has been the first country who has gained the observer status (Aris 2011, 164). Actually, at the very beginning of its establishment, Mongolia did not want to involve in the group. The thought was that, it would have been irrelevant to join that organization in which the main task is to fight against the so-called three evils, since those threats do not exist in the country (Jargalsaikhan 2012, 1-2). However, later on especially because of the economic interests, the country started to change its view about the organization.

In 2014, while Mongolia was enjoying its presence in the organization as an observer state, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi had mentioned that, it might be the time to start considering to upgrade Mongolia's position within the organization from an observer status to a full-membership (Kucera, 2014). However, Mongolia has not seen so much interested to that idea. According to Mendee Jargalsaikhan who is a Mongolian analyst, Mongolia sees the organization still as an 'authoritarian club', and the country believes that to be a part of the

organization with full membership might diminish the country's fully independent position and also might damage the country's relations with European organizations (Jargalsaikhan 2012, 3). Therefore, Mongolia still prefers to keep its relations with the organization in the current level.

After Mongolia, in 2005, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization had granted three other countries with the observer state status. Those countries are India, Iran and Pakistan. There are some different reasons for all those three countries, to be an observer state in the organization. In case of Iran, there are both political and economic reasons behind the rapprochement with the organization. Politically, the reasons are connected to country's national interests. These national interests are based on being an effective power in the region. But, there is an obstacle which is making the achievement of that desire harder for Iran, and this is the existence of the USA in the region. From Iranian point of view, the USA was trying to gain some effectiveness in an area which is located far away from its mainland. After the establishment of the SCO, Iran perceived the organization as an organization which might balance that existence of the USA. Therefore, Iran has received the idea of being an observer state in the organization as an advantage (Aris 2011, 159). In addition to that political reason, there were also economical reasons which were taking Iran to the decision of building close relation with the organization. Those economical reasons were related to expectations of the country in terms of contributing to SCO's economic cooperation, especially in energy field (Aris 2011, 158). Also, the trade opportunities with the member states of the SCO were attracting the country.

In the case of India, holding an observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization would benefit the country in terms of economy and security, because the country sees the organization, mostly as a platform for having dialogue to discuss the economy issues and the security issues in the region (Roy 2014, 62). Especially in terms of economy, being a part in the organization had seen as an advantage for the country, since the country would be like a bridge between Central Asia and South-east Asia. Beside its economical advantage, being involved in the SCO would be also beneficial for the country's security. India has been in a critical location, because of its closeness to the two threatful countries of the Central Asia, which are Afghanistan and Pakistan, and both countries have struggles with the so-called three evils, terrorism, extremism and separatism. By being a platform to discuss possible solutions for the counterterrorism and the security problems, the SCO have been perceived as a diplomatic

opportunity against the terrorism, from the Indian point of view (Roy 2014, 62). Therefore, for India, the SCO has seen as an organization in which being involved is necessary, especially for country's security.

On the other hand, India's presence in the organization might be advantageous also for two powerful countries of the SCO, which are Russia and China. In that sense, it is possible to say that, China would be profited with India's existence mostly economically, rather than politically. However, for Russia, India was much more critical, especially for the implementation of Russian aims in the region. India was holding close relations with the US, because of the fears which might be caused by failed position of Pakistan and Afghanistan. For India, the US existence in Afghanistan was vital, because if US had not been in Afghanistan, there would have been high possibility for a bigger destruction in Afghanistan which would be caused by terrorism, and after Afghanistan, this destruction would have been effective also in Pakistan (Ibid.). To prevent such kind of disaster, India wanted to enter into better relations with the USA. But, since any increase of the US involvement in the region, would have been a disadvantage for Russia's interest, Russia wanted to play the Shanghai Cooperation Organization card to convince India to build close relations with the organization, instead of the USA. And as a result of Russia's initiative, India accepted to be included in the SCO (Trenin 2011, 252).

The other two observer states of the organization are Afghanistan and Pakistan which have quite similar backgrounds and expectations from the organization. It is possible to say that, for these two countries, the relations with the SCO is much more based on the border management and regional security issues. The observer status had been granted firstly to Pakistan in 2005, and then in 2012 to Afghanistan. Here, it must be pointed out that, the idea of being an observer state in the organization had been offered to Pakistan in 2005 which was the year when the USA had been called to create a timeline for the withdrawal of its military bases in Central Asia (Scheineson, 2009). This detail shows us that, the presence of those countries in the organization directly has been linked to the priority of the organization which is setting a mechanism for counterterrorism and creating a stable area.

As it is mentioned above, in 2005, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization had offered the US led military armies which were based in the Central Asia to create a timeline to leave the region, since the military action of the armies had been mostly completed (Gill 2007, 150). On

the other hand, during the summit which had been held in 2005, the organization had decided to include Pakistan with the observer state status. This coincide in the timing might be interpreted in accordance with the aimed position of the organization in the region. By offering to US led armies to set a timeline to withdraw the troops, the organization had showed that, it would like to be the main actor within that region. Since the Russian Federation is one of the member states of the organization, it can be said that, this decision of the organization is definitely in accordance with the interests of Russia's Foreign Policy regarding the limitation of the US existence in the region.

Under the light of those explanations related to the presence of the observer states in the organization, we can see that, the organization has preferred to grant that status to some important and critical countries of the region. Even though their desire of being an observer in the organization differs from each other, mainly there are two common points which attracts those countries to pursue close relations with the organization. One of those common points is the desire for opening up a trade zone across the Central Asia especially in terms of Asian energy deliveries (Bailes, Dunay 2007, 18). And the other one is to secure the region by presenting a stable border management and maintaining the security interests of the countries against counter terrorism.

When we connect those interests of the observer states, with the interests of the organization, we can witness the intersection of interests. Even though, the main argument of the organization is to present an united action against the three serious threats of the region, which are terrorism, separatism and extremism, on the background, the founding states also aimed to create a compatible trade zone which would help the countries to increase their economical profits. The existence of the Business Council and the Interbank Consortium and common currency arguments can be seen as the examples of economic interests within the organization.

As one of the biggest founding members of the organization, Russia has always wanted to gain some profits from the organization. Therefore, even the enlargement process of the organization has been important topic for the country. It is possible to see this importance of the enlargement in organization's relations especially with Iran and India. For Russia, having Iran within the union would have been advantegous especially to balance the US involvement in the region. And in the case of India, the situation was similar but much more critical, because of

close relations of the country with the US. As we can see from the details mentioned hereinabove, Russia has played the Shanghai Cooperation Organization card to attract those countries. This was important, especially to be able to free the region from the existence of any US-led Western army. The reason behind that is the contradiction between the US presence in the region and the Russia's Foreign Policy which is based on Eurasianism.

In the upcoming parts, the importance of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization for the implementation of the Eurasianist Russia's Foreign Policy will be examined, and an interpretation will be tried to be done related to the question if the Shanghai Cooperation Organization would answer the expectations of the Russia's Foreign Policy or not. But, before continue with that analyse, to be able to understand the real logic, it would be better to refer the Russian perspective on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization with the help of the Constructivist theory.

### **3. RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION FROM THE CONSTRUCTIVIST POINT OF VIEW**

Constructivism has been introduced to the international relations by Nicholas Onuf, in 1989, and from that time on, the theory has been accepted as one of the leading theories in the International Relations.

This chapter will be devoted explaining the existence of the Russian Federation within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Since the Constructivist theory of the International Relations has been accepted as a theory which explains the Russian Foreign Policy fairly, this theory will be used to be able to express the Russian Perspective on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Now, to be able to understand the Russian perspective on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the work will continue by introducing the Constructivist theory of the International Relations. This introduction of the theory will be followed by trying to explain the Russia's existence within the organization from the Constructivist point of view.

#### **3.1. Constructivist Theory in International Relations**

The Constructivist theory has come to the agenda of the International Relations with the end of the Cold War. During that time, two leading theories of the International Relations, neo-realism and neo-liberalism, could not explain the end of the Cold War with their existing arguments, and this had been the main pavement for the acceptance of the Constructivism as a new theory of the International Relations (Reus-Smit 2005, 195-196). Therefore, at the beginning, the Constructivism has gained its importance because of the lack of explanation regarding the end of the Cold War.



According to the Alexander Wendt who is one of the foremost scholars of the Constructivism, Neo-Realism and Neo-Liberalism could hardly explain the collapse of the Soviet Union which was one of the main parties of the Cold War and so the end of Cold War, because these two theories were using just individualistic and materialistic explanations for the current issues and actually the current issues were needed to be explained by idealistic and holistic view to the international relations(Wendt 1999, 4). This need for idealistic and holistic view to the international relations caused the emergence of the constructivism as a new theory in the IR.

By mentioning the idealistic views, Constructivism does not mention the ideas which are located inside the black holes of our heads. Instead, with that term, the theory mentions the ideas which are totally social. In addition to idealism, the theory also mentions to the holistic view. This holistic view defends the idea that, the social world should be interpreted with its all existing properties. So, even the actors are determinative for the structure of the international relations.

With that accepted importance of idealistic and holistics views in international relations, Constructivists has started to argue that, shared ideas, beliefs and values have a powerful influence on social and political actions. These normative and ideational structures are quite important, because they are accepted as important determinants to form the social identities of political actors. By that definition, Constructivism institutionalized and internationalized the norms which constrain the acts of the actors of international relations and influence their ideas.(Barnett 2008, 162).

Constructivists claim that identities shape the interests and then turn those interests to the actions. So, from the Constructivist point of view, it is possible to say that, ideas define the international structure and this defined international structure forms interests, rules and main identities of the foreign policies of the sovereign states. Then states and other actors of the international politics reproduce and transform that international structure.(Ibid.)

As it is mentioned already, Constructivism is based on the idea that states are socially constructed. With that interpretation, constructivism emphasizes that, nothing is given out there. Instead of being given, the actors, their interests and identities are produced by the cultural environment (Barnett 2008, 163). And rather than international system, national developments and politics have become significant to determine identities of the actors (Wendt 1999, 246). That

is why Constructivists assert that, with the help of their thoughts and actions, people can make important changes either in their own national system or in the international system.

In addition to mentioned importance of the ideas, identities and norms within the Constructivist theory, it is also necessary to pay attention to the position of the knowledge. According to the theory, knowledge is a historically produced element of the Constructivism. It is significant for individuals, because individuals construct their world with the help of the knowledge and in addition to that, with the help of those gained knowledges, individuals creates the reality. So, Constructivism accepts also the reality as socially constructed. By saying the reality is socially constructed, Constructivists create a new viewpoint toward the things which we used to see in the politics and the theory says that, those things were not granted to the humanity. Instead, those things have been constructed with the effect of existing ideas and institutions. With this discourse, one of the significant difference of the theory from Rationalism occurs. For example, for Rationalism anarchy is a condition which exists in the international relations naturally. Constructivism does not agree with that discourse of the Rationalism. Instead, constructivism argues that 'anarchy is what states of it' (Wendt 1992, 395). In other words, anarchy is socially constructed with the effects of norms, ideas and strategic cultures of states. Here, again it is possible to see the importance of the existing ideas, and this importance leads us to realize the effect of calculations of the political leaders and actors. Therefore, constructivism assumes that, the history of the international relations might have been different if the discourses of the actors were different.

Another point which has to be mentioned about Constructivist theory is that, according to the theory, culture does not shape only identities and interests of actors, it also shapes the strategies of the actors. The actors need to use those strategies to be able to reach their interests. So, like the rational choice and game theory, Constructivism also has speeches about the game. The theory claims that, norms which are the main determinants of the international relations, also form some important characteristics of the games of the international relations. Those norms become very influential for the actors, especially in order to determine the strategies, which would be used .

According to the Constructivists, sometimes even the great powers may feel a need to change or to review their policies. The reason behind that attempt to change the policy is about

the legitimacy. To be able to have supportive partners for an action, the countries need to have legitimacy which is recognized by the others. This legitimacy would help the country to take the desired action easily. With the help of that gained legitimacy, the country would be able to pursue its politics without having a manner such as being a law-breaking government (Barnett 2008, 165). That's why from the Constructivist point of view, having legitimacy for the planned actions is really important in the international relations.

On the other hand, here, it might be important to call Rationalism as a debater againsts the Constructivist theory. The main differences between these two theories had been evolved within the concepts such as anarchy, power and cooperation. As it is mentioned already, Constructivism defines anarchy differently than Rationalism. In Rationalism, anarchy is accepted as a concept that exists naturally. However, according to Constructivism, anarchy is socially constructed by the norms, ideas and strategic cultures of states. Another concept which is described differently by the theories is power. Rational theories define power as the ability of one state to force another state to do something (Ibid.). Here, material things are determinative, such as military forces. On the other hand, Constructivism goes beyond materialism and adds some ideational feature to the power, and argues that material things can obtain meaning only with the effect of shared knowledge about each other's intention (Baylis 2008, 234). Therefore, power might depend on shared knowledge and understanding.

Last concept which will be mentioned as a difference between the theories is cooperation. Rationalist theories such as neo-liberalism and neo-realism have different perspectives regarding the cooperation. Therefore, within Rationalism there is not any common definition of cooperation. According to Neo-Realists, cooperation between states is only possible if the other side is a friendly state. Neo-Liberals agree that, if there is not any common point and mutual interest between states, it might be really hard to achieve cooperation. However, even though it is hard, Neo-Liberals emphasize that cooperation between different states is possible, and for the achievement of any desired cooperation, institutions work as mediators. On the other hand, many Constructivists argue that changes in ideas let a shared knowledge between the countries, and this shared knowledge may develop policies and processes which will take countries to cooperation (Baylis 2008, 235). Therefore Constructivist believe that if there is a possibility to change

policies and to have cooperation, the necessary actions should be taken to bring international security.

Those aforementioned points are some main and important informations about the Constructivist theory which has been evolved as a challenging theory for its adversaries, with the end of the Cold War. Now, with the help of those informations regarding to the theory, the work will continue by trying to explain the Russian existence in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization from the Constructivist point of view in the international relations.

### **3.2. Russia's Existence in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization from the Constructivist point of view**

Constructivism assumes that identity is not something has been granted. It is a dependent variable which is effected by historical, political and cultural background (Varol 2013, 27 ). And this identity construction process does not only include the construction of the identity of a state, it also includes the construction of a national identity and the construction of the political identity. Therefore, to be able to interpret correctly, it is important to look through the Russia's indigenous history and the system which has been effected, for the identity building process ( Tsygankov 2013, 14). And between the all theories of International Relations, the theory of Constructivism is the only one which is focusing of the importance of those.

Throughout the history, Russia always has been an impressive country. Firstly, the country was formed as a small kniaz, and then it transformed into one of the biggest empire of the world. These glorious periods of the Russian history had created a national pride in the society. And even after the Cold War and the break-up of the Soviet Union, this national pride of the society has been an effective characteristic of the Russian society.

As it is mentioned already, according to the Constructivists, ideas and norms are not given in the nature. The countries build their own ideas and own identities with the effect of their histories. And in accordance with what Constructivists say, with the effect of its glorious state transformation, Russia's ideology has been based on the idea that, the country has a distinctive

civilization. This distinctiveness caused by its strong national identity and state identity. And later on, this logic of the country has been a determinative point in its whole international relations.

During the evolution process of the Tsarist Russia and even after, the society of the country always had been an obedience society under a powerful leader. This leader always had been on top and he had an infinite power. Even though, the political position and the political figures had changed several times, this infinite power of the leader have never changed (Onay 2008, 9). And those infinite power figures and their ideas had been significant for the foreign policy directions. Regarding that, in the Russia's Foreign Policy, we can see how political actors have been effective in the country's international relations. First of all, we can see that, at the very beginning of the history of Russian Federation, there were two powerful figures in the political elite. These people were Yeltsin and Kozyrev, and both are quite affected from the Western politics. Therefore, they aimed to catch the level of the Western countries by pursuing Westernist foreign policy. However, Western countries were still doubtful toward to the Russian Federation. As it is mentioned in the first chapter, Aleksandr Dugin explains that as a deep contradiction with the West which is called as 'irreconcilable contradiction', and because of that contradiction, it does not really matter how much Russia tries to change its structure politically and ideologically in accordance with the Western ideas, in any way Western aggression toward Russia will never end (Dugin 2001, 8). Constructivism explains this as the incompatibility between civilizations.

As a result of that Western skepticism, Russia needed to change its Westernist political direction with other different views. The take over process in the political elites also has been effective in that change of the political direction. Putin has come to the Russian politics with a policy which was much more Eurasianist, rather than Westernist and with his strong leadership, he succeeded to replace the Westernist Foreign Policy of the country with Eurasianist Foreign Policy. Especially in his third term, this Eurasianism has been even more visible and this term has started to be called as 'triumph of Eurasianism'(Pryce 2013, 25-43).

On the other hand, Russia has always been perceived as a non-democratic state in its relations with the Western countries. Therefore, Western countries always have tended to be doubtful about pursuing some close and strong relations with the Russian Federation. Because of that perception in the Western world toward herself, even though Russia wanted to build some

better relations with the Western world from time to time, this could not have been possible, and that bad perception toward herself led Russia to look for alternatives and as a result of that attitude, the country decided to build stronger relations with the countries of Eurasia. The countries of that region had practiced the similar democratical paths with herself. And it was hoped that, this would be a constructive point for the establishment and the continuance of the relations, since the country would not need to legitimize itself, like it is supposed to do in its relations with the Western countries.

All these self-confidence, pride and great power mentality which evolved with the Russia's existence and arose during the Soviet Union period consolidated the country's alleged distinctiveness. Thus, a new foreign policy concept which is against the Western domination has occurred and this foreign policy concept led the country enter into some collaborations with the Eurasian countries who look like sharing the similar ideas and norms with herself. And as the highest point of that collaboration between Eurasianist countries and the Russian Federation, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has been established with the Russian and Chinese initiative.

Here, shared ideas, shared security perceptions and common values had been main determinants which brought Russia and China together for the initiation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. First of all, both countries were aware of importance of the regional strategy in the Central Asia, and they were looking forward to have a powerful position in Central Asia's politics. From Russian point of view, the U.S. existence in the region might have been an obstacle for the implementation of Russia's interests in the region. And, from Chinese perspective, U.S. existence in the region might have been a barrier in front of China's rise in the region as a great power (Gleason, Jiadong 2008, 146). This perception toward the U.S. existence in the region has been one of the points which brought China and Russia together.

Another point which brought Russia and China together is shared security perceptions and expectations of the countries. Since the dissolution of the USSR, some border problems occurred in the region. Those problems caused instability, and emergence of terrorism. For Russia, the stability was needed in the region to be able to implement the country's regional interests. Therefore, the country was looking for some cooperations within the region. Those cooperations should have worked to stop terrorist, separatist and extremist threats. On the other hand, from the Chinese perspective, the spread of radical Islamism in Xinjiang province was a crucial security

threat for the country (Cross, Bolt 2008, 4). The objective of those separatists was the creation of an Islamic republic in the region. Regarding that, from the Chinese point of view, the Central Asian countries were really critical, because according to official Chinese sources, these separatists had been trained in Afghanistan (Gleason, Jiadong 2008, 147). China aimed to prevent receipt of those kind of supports by the separatists. In addition, some Uighurs were refusing to Central Asia countries to run away from the province, and China was chasing those refugees to subject them in the country. Those challenges created a need for China in terms of ending these problems. Obviously, this need could have been realized with a possible cooperation which would include all Central Asian countries. As a result, these shared security perceptions had been an important motivation for Russia and China to take the initiative for the creation of a cooperation in the region.

In addition to those shared ideas and shared security perceptions between two countries, both Russia and China are important in the international relations, because of their distinctive territorial size, military power and economic abilities. Moreover, both countries have their own seats in the UN Security Council as the permanent members.(Aris 2011, 1) On the other hand, these two countries are distinct from their Western partners in the UN Security Council by their centralised political systems and their perspectives on international issues (Aris 2011, 1). Both countries were avoiding to support the U.S. policies, under the framework of the UN Security Council with the fear of possible counter-position of those policies to their own regional and global interest (Cross, Bolt 2008, 4) Those shared positions in world politics were crossing the roads of Russia and China. As a result of these distinctiveness, Russia and China came together under the Shanghai Cooperation Organization where they could have shared their security perceptions as non- Western powers (Aris 2011, 1).

Although some scholars claim that Russia's existence in the SCO is much more like being a 'junior partner' for China, from the Russian perspective, at least China recognizes the Russian Federation as a partner with whom the country shares the similar objectives in terms of sovereignty and regional security (Ziegler 2012, 400-417).

## **4. RUSSIA'S EXPECTATIONS FROM THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization which has been defined as 'a new model of successful international cooperation' by Russia, has been an important organization for the Russia's Foreign Policy just after its establishment.(Troitskiy 2007, 32) From the Russia's point of view there are some basic features that make the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as an unique one in the history of the country. First of all, all those countries which are the member states of the organization has come together with the aim of creating some common policies for the regional security and socio-economic cooperation. Second feature is that, the organization has evolved as the first multilateral organization which includes cooperation between China and Russia in the Central Asia (Sutter 2008, 273). And the other feature is the recognition of the country within the organization as a powerful state.

Under the effect of all these features, Russia has started to build up some expectations from the organization. Those expectations have been mainly set on the base of building and pursuing the security in the region, establishing a political balance, and fostering the economy.

### **4.1. Building Security in the Region**

Building and pursuing security in the region has been one of the expectations of the Russian Federation from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, because of the ongoing security issues. These security issues cover extremism, separatism and terrorism in the region.

Especially since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, terrorist and separatist activities in the region have been seen more often in the region. Regarding those activities, Afghanistan has been a critical country in which the countries of the region should have better pay more attention,



because those terrorist activities in the region have evolved with the Afghan conflict. The case in the Afghanistan started after the Soviet invasion of the country in 1979. This invasion had aimed to support the puppet regime of the Soviet communism in the country. Therefore, Soviet army started to move on into the country. To resist against the marching Soviet army, an armed Afghan group which known as 'mujahedin' had been gathered in Afghanistan. This group also had been backed by the official Afghan security forces.(Bowman, Dale 2009, 6) And moreover, during the Soviet invasion in the country, secretly the USA also had started to support mujahid groups in the Afghanistan against the Soviet army (Bowman, Dale 2009, 6-7).

After ten years of invasion, in 1989, the Soviet forces withdrew from Afghanistan. But the movement of the Afghan mujahedins have continued increasingly in the country. And in 1992, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the puppet regime of the Soviet communism which was lacked from the Soviet support, had been fallen over by the mujahedin group.(Bowman, Dale 2009, 6) Afterwards, in 1994, Taliban which is an Islamic fundamentalist political movement has started to gain control over the country, by taking the advantage of political instability in the country. Under the Taliban, Afghanistan continued to be armed and it also supported the evaluation of the Al-Qaeda as a terrorist organization.(Bowman, Dale 2009, 7)

This extreme movement which occurred in Afghanistan has started to spread anxiety in Central Asian countries, because of the possible spillover of the instability. This anxiety which was caused by the question of possible expansion of Taliban forces arose between the Central Asian countries, since those countries have shared border with Afghanistan and also ethnic affinity.(Kassenova 2014, 3) And of course the same anxiety has effected the Russian Federation since the region is in the interest area of the country. Thus, the Russian Federation started to focus on achieving security and stability in the region, because of the key role of the security issues of its Central Asian border (Danilovich 2013, 19).

For the achievement of this aim, a collaborative step which would be taken by all Central Asian countries had seem necessary. Therefore, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization which has been established by the initiative of Russia and China, has gained importance as an intergovernmental organization which gathers the countries of the Central Asia together. As it is mentioned already, beside China and Russia, three Central Asian countries had been in the first meeting of the intended organization. Those countries are Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and

Tajikistan. From the Russia's point of view, those countries were having a geographically important position for the Central Asian security. Turkmenistan and Tajikistan have a border with the heart of the terrorist activities, Afghanistan. While the Afghanistan border of the Turkmenistan is 804 km long, the Afghanistan border of the Tajikistan is even more and it is 1357 km long (The World Factbook ... Afghanistan, 2015). And both have a strong ethnic affinity with the country. On the other hand, even though the other Central Asian country of the organization, Kazakhstan, does not share a border with Afghanistan, it shares the border with Turkmenistan which might be effected by the terrorism in Afghanistan, because of the spillover effect (The World Factbook ... Kazakhstan, 2015). And since all those countries create a buffer zone between Russia and Afghanistan, all three of them are important for Russia, in terms of security.

When we think about the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, we will remember its structure which serves as a forum against terrorism, stability and extremism. To be able to create some valid and long-lasting solutions for those threats, it was important to include these three Central Asian countries into the organization. As a result of the inclusion of those countries, the organization has been an important anti-terrorist platform. And the Russian Federation started to use that anti-terrorist feature of the organization as a security tool, especially to secure its own interests from the security threats and started to expect finding solution against those threats. Moreover, the inclusion of Afghanistan and Pakistan had been crucial steps to control the threat. Because, Afghanistan was the core of the terrorism, and Pakistan was the country which the terrorists have been fleeing in. Therefore, those two countries have been granted with the observer status, and with that, it is aimed to stop spreading of the terrorist, extremist and separatist seeds, in the region. All those acts regarding the enlargement of the organization which had been done by the organization to be able to build the security in the region, has been also important considerably in the Russia's Foreign Policy, since the region is included in the interest area of the country's foreign policy. Under the light of those informations, it is possible to say that, building security and stability in the region was one of the main expectations of the Russian Federation from the organization. And therefore in international relations, the country has aimed to use that security card of the organization in accordance with her security expectations.

## **4.2. Establishing a Power in the Region**

As it is mentioned already in the previous chapter, as Dugin said, there is a deep contradiction between West and the Russia Federation, and even though Russia would try really hard, the Western actors and organizations would never accept Russia as a Western country (Dugin 2001, 8). The reason behind that is the construction of Russia as the other, by the Western world. With the effect of that constructivist view, by approaching to the East and by involving in the initiative of establishing the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Russia has aimed to show Western countries and organizations that, there is another alternative to have better relations with, instead of Western actors. This alternative has seen as an independent Eurasian integration. (Troitskiy 2007, 33) The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was serving in accordance with that aimed independent integration model, and it was totally in a coherent with the Russia's Foreign Policy. Therefore, the organization has been accepted as an important policy tool by the Russian Federation and the country has specified some political expectations from the organization. To limit the involvement of the USA and the US-led Western organizations in the region can be seen as one of those political expectations of the Russian Federation.

From the Russia's point of view, it has always been quite important to have a political balance in the region which is in the interest area of the country. Thus, since the acceptance of the Eurasia oriented foreign policy, it has been a need to build and pursue a balance of power in the region. According to Russia, two Western organizations, EU and the NATO and the USA along with the the NATO, are the international actors which are supposed to deal with the Western issues. In that sense, the Central Asia is not a place for these two and the USA to try to be involve in the regional balance of power. With the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Russian Federation has aimed to stop these two Western organizations and the USA in their actions in the Central Asia. It is aimed to show especially to these two organizations that, Russia would consolidate its position in the Central Asia via the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and would not leave any space to those for the implementation of any possible US led partnerships with the Central Asian countries (Ibid.).

After the attacks of the September 11, 2001 which are accepted as the biggest attacks of the Al-Qaeda, the US announced its War on Terror policy against the Al-Qaeda and in addition

to that, Taliban which was the biggest supporter of the terrorist group had been called to act immediately against the terror of the Al-Qaeda. (Transcript of ... 2001) But after the refusal of the Taliban regarding to stop supporting Al-Qaeda, US-led military operations had been launched on October 7, 2001, in Afghanistan (Bowman, Dale 2009, 7). In this War on Terror, like most of the countries, the USA had been supported by the Russian Federation and the Central Asian countries (NATO Fact Sheet, 2004).

As a result of that Central Asian support, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan entered into some bilateral agreements with the US. According to those agreements, the US could have used air bases in those countries to deploy US-led forces and in return the US would have started to assist those countries in terms of their technical and economical needs (Moroney 2003, 171). In continuance, according to US military, 800 US troops deployed in Uzbekistan and 1,200 US-led troops had been deployed in Kyrgyzstan (China, Russia-led alliance, 2005). Following this deployment of the US-led forces, in 2002, Uzbekistan and the US had met again and this time a Strategic Partnership agreement had been signed by the US Secretary of State and Uzbekistan Foreign Minister, in 2002 (Declaration ... The Republic of Uzbekistan, 2009). According to that agreement, The US-led forces could have stayed in Uzbekistan until the completion of the mission of those forces, and in return some remarkable assistances had been done to Uzbekistan by the USA (U.S. Government Assistance, 2003). On the other other, this partnership between those two countries caught the attention of the Russian Federation, since Uzbekistan is located in her interest area.

Regarding the deployment of the US-led forces in the Central Asia, the authorization had been approved also by Putin in late 2001, as a support for the US war on terror (Ferguson 2001, 52). However, as a result of coloured revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine, the relations which had been healed a little bit just after the 9/11 attacks had been worsened again between the USA and Russia, and the Russia started to view the US existence in the Central Asia with suspicion (Scheineson, 2009). Russia supposed that the coloured revolutions in those countries had been supported by the USA, to change the pro-Russian governments. And as a result of that fracture in the relations, in 2004, the Russian Federation had started to mention the prolonged existence of the US-led armies in the Central Asia (Mankoff 2011, 129). In addition to those speeches of the Russia, in 2005, also the Uzbek government had asked the US-led forces to leave the country

(Mankoff 2011, 129). The official reason behind that call of the Uzbek government have been declared as the Andijon massacre, and the increased US pressure over the Uzbek government (Cheng 2011, 645). However, the aforementioned speeches which had been done by the Russian Federation, regarding to the existence of the US-led army forces in the region might have effected Uzbekistan to take that decision. At the end, this decision of the Uzbek government had been supported by the Russian Federation. Meanwhile, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization had made a statement which emphasized that regarding the completion of necessary progress which had been done in Afghanistan, the coalition members should have decided a possible deadline for the withdrawal of the forces from the Central Asia (China, Russia-led alliance, 2005). It was expected that, with the withdrawal of the Western powers from the Central Asia and especially from Afghanistan, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization might have started to be a more effective and probably leading organization, regarding the Central Asian security issues (Aris 2009, 468). Following that statement, a Protocol on Establishment of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group had been signed by the SCO member states and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (Protocol ... 2015). This manipulation which had been done by the Russian Federation over the Uzbek policy has been an important step regarding the US existence in the region. Hereby, the Russian Federation had used the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to fulfil its expectations regarding the limitations of the US existence in the region. This shows the usage of the organization as a political tool by the Russian Federation.

Besides Russia's expectations to balance Western actors in the region, there is also one more expectation of Russia from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization which might be important to mention about. This is about Russia's expectation in terms of controlling the activities of China in the Central Asia, with the help of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (Chotaev 2006, 145). Even though the relations between Russia and China had come to the rapprochement with the establishment of the organization, especially for the implementation of Russia's economical aims, it was still important to be able to control China. The reason behind that aim is to limit and control China is about the preceding existence of China within the structure of the organization.

Although, the organization had been established with the initiative of both Russia and China, according to some scholars, most of the times, Russia has seen just as a co-initiator while

China leads to the organization (Troitskiy 2007, 31). After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia which is the inheritor of the dissolved union had seen as a diminished power, especially among the Western scholars. On the other hand, China has been accepted as an expanding power (Titoff, 2015). That's why Russia has seen as a co-initiator under the Chinese leadership. On the other hand, even though Russia was uneasy with such definition which had been done for herself, since the Western organizations does not see herself as a Western country, cooperating with China would be the best foreign policy orientation. Therefore, the Russian Federation has accepted to be defined as a co-initiator of China within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Moreover, there were some points which have led the Russian Federation to be doubtful about China. Increasing economic and military power of the country had caused those doubts. In terms of that increasing military power, there were some datas which have shown that China's growing military existence depends on copying the Russian weaponry (Shambaugh 1999, 13). This reality has seen as strategic and economic challenge by some Russian leaders (Ibid.). Regarding those challenges, Russia has aimed to know the possible future steps of the country beforehand. Therefore, it would be better to have close relations with China under the relevant units of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Under the light of those interpretations, it is possible to say that, the Russian Federation has had some political expectations from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as an effective Eurasian integration model, and regarding the fulfillment of those expectations the Russian Federation has aimed to use the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Mostly these are about the desired power in the region, in accordance with the Russia's Foreign Policy. Lessening the involvement of the US and the other Western actors, into the politics was one of those expectations. And in addition to that, the country also expected to control the acts of its partner, China with the help of the organization. And lastly, by creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the country has expected to show Western organizations that there is another organization as an alternative for the country to be involved in, and this organization is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

### 4.3. Economic Expectations

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has had a dynamic economic agenda. As one of the main members of the organization, Russia has also some economic expectations from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and those expectations are related with the desire of energy and trade partnerships within the region.

Besides existing economic expectations of Russia from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, China has become the most enthusiastic one in terms of pushing the economic dimension of the organization. Therefore, first economic steps in the SCO framework had been done by China. For instance, China had become the first country who mentioned the idea of setting up a free trade zone within the structure of the SCO. The first talks regarding the creation of a free trade zone had been done in the SCO meeting of the trade ministers, in 2002 (Troitskiy 2007, 42). In its continuance, the same proposal had been repeated by the Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, in the meeting of 2003 (China Proposes ... 2003). It was said that, if the organization could reach the establishment of a free trade area, with the region's total population of 1.5 billion people, this free trade area of the organization could be the largest free trade area in the world (Ibid). Thus, for the implementation of that idea, a work programme has been adopted to build by 2020 with the participation of all member states (Bailes, Dunay 2007, 26).

Obviously such a free trade area would be more beneficial for the world's most-crowded country, China. According to the latest data of the World Bank, with it 1.3 billion population, China is the second largest economy, and also an increasing player in the global economy (China Overview, 2015). On the other hand, it was for sure that, the creation of a free trade zone within the SCO structure might be beneficial also for the Russian Federation, in terms of increasing the trade in any goods and services between the member states. Therefore, even though they were less eager than China about the creation of a free trade zone, because of the fear that an increase in economic effect of China within the organization, might cause an increase in the political interference of the country, the Russian Federation had decided to support the creation of a possible free trade zone under the SCO framework. The one and only reason behind that support was the expectation of using the SCO as a vehicle for the country's economic position within the Central Asia (Troitskiy 2007, 42).

On the other hand, in terms of intensifying the energy cooperation within the structure of the SCO, Russia seems much more eager than its partners. The reason is that, Russia's economy mostly depends on energy exports (Russia Overview, 2013). And from the Russian point of view, since the SCO consists of major energy exporters of the region which are Russia, Kazakhstan and Iran, and also big energy consumers which are China and India, the organization could be an efficient platform to hold some energy talks (Haas 2007, 23). Therefore, during the 2006 Summit which had been held in Shanghai in June, the president of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin proposed the idea of establishing a Energy Club within the structure of the SCO (Matveeva, Giustozzi 2008, 5). After that first proposal, in 2006 September, at a meeting of Heads of Government Council in Dushanbe, the Energy Club which aims to have common energy policy had been discussed in details with the possibility of the creation of special working groups in fuel and energy (Haas 2007, 26). Following those progresses, during the 2007 Summit in Bishkek, the member states had agreed upon the creation of an unified energy market (Matveeva, Giustozzi, 2008, 5). And the draft of the charter document which is Regulations of the Energy Club of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization had been approved and signed by the members in a meeting of the SCO Forum (Shavialiova 2013, 62).

Finally, as a result of the initiative of the Russian Federation, on July 3, 2007, the Energy Club had been established officially, in Moscow (Haas 2010, 70). According to the regulations of the Energy Club, it was accepted that, the club would unite the energy producers, consumers and transit countries to be able to perform the coordination in energy strategies for the implementation of the energy security. In Bishkek Summit, it was also mentioned by the Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergey Lavrov that, in addition to the member states, observer states also had been included to the regulations of the Energy Club.(Haas 2007, 26-27)

On the other hand, during the same period, there was another project which had been offered by Kazakhstan. This project was the Asian Energy Strategy. These two projects had been perceived as competitive ones with each other, and some discussions had come to the agenda of the SCO. While the Energy Club was planning the creation of a platform in which the energy related issues would be discussed, the Asian Energy Strategy was aiming to formulate an energy strategy for the region (Roy 2014, 52). And, this discussion was affecting the realization process of the project. Meanwhile, some criticism to the Energy Club had started to be done especially by



Chinese experts (Shavialiova 2013, 62). In their critiques, Chinese experts emphasized that, the discussions about the Energy Club had been held in the non-governmental bodies of the SCO, therefore it might not have been a binding decision (Ibid.). These dissolved questions had blocked the implementation of the Energy Club which is the main economy expectation of Russia from the organization.

To sum up, even though the offer which had been done by China based on the creation of a free trade zone had been welcomed by the Russian Federation, the main economic expectation of Russia from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization had been the creation of an Energy Club within the structure of the organization which includes the important energy producers and consumers. However, it is still not certain whether the club has been working officially or as a result of the questions which had been asked by the Chinese experts, it just stands as a signed document of the SCO Forum.(Ibid.)

## **5. THE CAPABILITIES OF THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION**

As it is mentioned already, the expectations of the Russian Federation are based on the security, politics and economy. In the upcoming part, the capabilities of the organization regarding those expectations of the country will be examined.

### **5.1. Military Exercises**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization had been set on the base of two militarily important documents which had been signed by the Shanghai Five countries in 1996 and 1997. Respectively, these documents are The Agreement on Strengthening Mutual Military Confidence in the Border Regions and the Agreement on the Mutual Reduction of Military Strength in Border Regions 1997 (Wilson 2004, 111). These two documents had been the main documents which prepared the pavement for the establishment of the organization. As we can see from these two, the first agreements of the organization had aimed to build confidence within the region. However, later on, the implementation of some military terms within the structure of the organization has gained importance to be able to secure the region from threats.

Like the other founding states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Russia has appreciated the role of the organization, especially in terms of securing the status-quo during any conflict which occur in the region (Troitskiy 2007, 36). Therefore, the country expected that the organization might have been influential in terms of facing some military issues. Some steps which had been taken by the organization for the implementation of security against those threats, had created more expectation in the Russian Federation in terms of realization of her interests.

Just after the Declaration on the Establishment of The Shanghai Cooperation Organization on June 15, 2001, the same day, the first step had been taken by the members regarding the military position of the organization. This was the acceptance of the Shanghai Convention on

Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism (The Shanghai Convention ... 2015). The reason behind that was the awareness of terrorism, separatism and extremism as threats to the regional security along with the international security and peace (Ibid.). In Article 10 of the aforementioned convention, it was mentioned that to be able to perform a joint act against those threats, it was necessary to create a Regional Counter-Terrorist Structure whose mission would be just fight against those threats (Shanghai Convention ... 2001). The same article emphasized that to conclude the creation of that structure a new document would be signed by the parties. And after one year, in 2002, agreement on the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure had been signed between the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (Agreements and Concepts ... 2015). Following that, the Executive Committee of the Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure became a permanent body of the organization with its headquarter in Tashkent (The Executive Committee ... 2015). With the establishment of that permanent body, in accordance with its missions, military exercises of the organization had increased on the base of several bilateral and multilateral agreements which had been signed by the member states, and the topic of those agreements was not only just the counter-terrorism, but also the security issues (Haas 2008, 18).

As a result of one of those bilateral agreements, an anti-terrorist exercise had been held by China and Kazakhstan, in October 2002. This military exercise had become the first military exercise which had been performed within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.(Haas 2007, 16) But, officially the first anti-terrorist military exercise of the organization held in August 2013 with the sponsorship of the organization. This exercise had been done to stop Uighur separatists of the Chinese Xinjiang province (Ibid.).

After those, the first Peace Mission Exercise of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization had been performed, in 2005. This Peace Mission exercise was the first joint exercise of Chinese and Russian armed forces for forty years.(Ibid.) The aim of that exercise was the strengthening of cooperative acts against the terrorist, separatist and extremist movements. Here, there is an important detail which might be beneficial to recall. This first Peace Mission exercise of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization coincided with the 2005 Astana Summit of the organization in which a call had been done for the US-led powers to withdraw their armed forces from the Central Asian countries, which had been deployed to stop terrorism in Afghanistan (Qihua, 2005). Therefore, the Peace Mission 2005 which had been performed in August 2005, just after

the July 2005 Astana Summit, had been perceived as a show of the SCO's military power to prove its qualifications in terms of security building (Haas 2007, 20). As a result of this military show of the organization, some questions had started to be asked by the Western countries whether the SCO could be seen as the 'NATO of the East' or not (Haas 2008, 17).

Even if, officially this military exercises might not have meant to show of against any Western organization, from the Russian point of view, it might be interpreted as a power exhibition which reveals that, the country is a part of such kind of powerful organization which can be seen as alternative to Western organizations.

On the other hand, in 2007, the military exercises of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization had been upgraded and as a result, those military exercises started to be more important for the Russian Federation, as well as the other member states of the organization. This turning point for the military exercises was the 2007 Bishkek summit of Shanghai Cooperation Organization. During the 2007 Bishkek Summit, for the first time, political summit had been unified with military exercise of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (Haas 2008, 18). Just after the Bishkek Summit, the heads of the SCO went to Russia to attend and watch the last day of the military exercises (Aris 2011, 118). Till 2014, Peace Mission 2007 had been perceived as the biggest joint military exercise of the organization. As a result of those, Bishkek Summit had been accepted as an important summit which showed the unification of the political and military activities of the organization.

The next Peace Mission of the SCO had been held in September 2010, in Kazakhstan. Like the previous ones, this exercise was also an anti-terrorist exercise of the SCO. In 2012, another Peace Mission had been held under the framework of the SCO and this time the exercises took place in Tajikistan (Rozaev 2013, 42). This exercises of the SCO had consolidated the statements regarding the increased importance of the military position of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The last military exercise of the SCO had been organized lately, in 2014. Peace Mission 2014, which was called as the biggest joint military exercise of the SCO in its history had coincided with an important period for one of the organization's leader member states, Russia (Kucera, 2014). The same year, under the effect of the Ukrainian crisis which was caused by the political ambitions of Russia, the European countries and the US has started practicing some

economic and political sanctions against the Russian Federation. Therefore, besides this successful military exercise of the organization, 2014 had been important for Russian Federation because of her tensed relations with the Western world. In the face of these tensed relations with the West, the country had aimed to use its existence in the SCO as a political tool and tried to secure herself under the roof of the organization.

After the successful completion of this Peace Mission 2014, some questions regarding the time of that military exercise had been asked by the Western media, whether the SCO had performed that Peace Mission in 2014 with a special purpose against the Western world or not. However, an article which had been published by the Chinese commentators emphasized that the dates of the SCO's military exercises had been fixed already before the emergence of tensions between the Russian Federation and the Western world (Junshe, 2014). Thus, with the help of this detail, it is possible to say that the timing was just a coincidence. But, anyway, these relaxing statements which had been done regarding the timing of the SCO military exercise, could not stop the political scientists to define the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as 'a new alternative to the West', as a result of the Russia's new perception for the SCO as a supplementary against the sanctions of the Western world toward herself (New Alternative ... 2014).

As a result of those aforementioned details, we can see that, the military exercises of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization have been very significant for the implementations of the political expectations of the Russian Federation. The main aim of those exercises has been defined as providing security against the external threats. From the Russian point of view, the realization of that aim had been welcomed with the expectation regarding the limitation of the Western and US-led organizations in the region. However, in terms of military exercise, the organization is still not capable of competing with other organizations such as NATO or the CSTO, which is another Central Asian military organization (Haas 2008, 30). The reason behind that might be related with the core definition of the organization. It had been mentioned several times that, even though the organization has been practicing military exercise for the security aims, the SCO would not turn into a military-political bloc (Roazanov 2013, 40). This means since the organization has been created as an economic-political organization from the very beginning, this feature will be kept as the main principle. On the other hand, even if using the organization

as a collective security platform is still aimed especially by the Russian Federation, instead of competing with them, the organization might need to enter into partnerships with similar organizational samples, to be able to gain a successful military prospect (Cooley, 2009).

## **5.2. Political Capabilities**

All military exercises of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, especially the Peace Missions have been efficient for the organization's some political expectations against the Western organizations. As it is noted already, since the very beginning of its establishment, the SCO has aimed to be the main regional organization in the Central Asia. For the implementation of this aim, controlling and limiting the intervention of the US-led forces and any organizations in the region was essential. The aforementioned details regarding to the military exercise of the SCO have shown us that, especially the Peace Missions of the organization had been done in accordance with that aim. At the end of all the Peace Missions, the message had been delivered to the Western world which was emphasizing that, the organization has ability to fight against the terrorism, separatism and extremism and it has a collaboration to secure the region against those threats. That is why, after any Peace Mission which had been performed by the SCO, the Western world had asked the question whether the SCO could be 'a new alternative for the West' or not.

Beside the military exercises which had been done for show of and had delivered some political messages to the Western world, the SCO also had involved in some direct political acts to demonstrate its superiority as a regional organization. Some important declarations which had been done by the SCO member states can be seen as samples of those political acts.

One of those is the joint declaration which had been signed in the 2006 Summit of the organization. In this document, the member states of the SCO declared that, the world has been going through some changes. And as a result of those changes, a new international order would be established under the superiority of the UN norms and laws. Moreover, within that newly constructed international order, in Central Asia, the SCO would try to pursue its existence for the implementation of mutual understanding and mutual respect with its 'Shanghai Spirit' and it

would work as the main actor to secure the stability of Central Asia.(Declaration on the Fifth Anniversary ... 2015)

These objectives of the SCO 2006 Summit had been repeated in the 2012 Summit of the organization with the declaration of the Heads of State of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on Building a Region of Lasting Peace and Common Prosperity. In that document, the member states agreed upon the importance of the maintenance of regional cooperation and collaboration under the 'Shanghai Spirit' and they emphasized the crucial position of the SCO as an important player and a model of regional cooperation (Declaration on ... Common Prosperity, 2015).

Under the light of those details, it is possible to say that, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization which is an organization aims to work as the main regional organization of the Central Asia, had tried to achieve its aim by using the diplomacy as a political tool. This political capability of the organization have been interpreted as a success especially through its structure which is in coherent with the UN norms and laws.(Yakovenko, 2014) Among the member states, to be presented within such kind of an organization which implements some political acts and works in harmony with the UN laws had been perceived as a privilege. This perception has been welcomed more in the Russian Federation, since the country mostly feels excluded by the Western world.

### **5.3. Economic Capabilities**

The economic agenda of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was under the responsibility of the prime ministers of the SCO member states (Haas 2007, 29). Therefore, topics related to economy had been always left to the discussions of the prime ministers of the SCO member states (Bailes, Dunay 2007, 25). The reason behind that was the lackness from an unique economic institutionalization within the organization. On the other hand, in reality, promoting the economic cooperation in the Central Asia was one of the main priorities of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. For the implementation of that aim, there was a need for the

economic institutionalization and the steps for that had started to be taken in 2005 (Bailes, Dunay 2007, 25).

As aforementioned, specifically, from the Russian point of view, economic expectations from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization were based on the establishment of the free trade zone which was offered by China and the creation of the Energy Club. However, for the realization of those expectations, it was important to have some institutionalized economic agenda within the SCO. In that sense, the organization had been successful to provide desired economic institutionalization.

First institutionalization in the economic field had been the establishment of the SCO Inter-Bank Consortium (SCO IBC). On October 26, 2005, this unit was established by the Council of Heads of Government.(What ... Business Council?, 2015)

The main aim of the Consortium would be providing funds and sponsorships for the investment projects of the SCO. The SCO IBC meets at least once in a year by the consent of all parties to discuss a specific topic in terms of cooperation. Within the structure of the SCO IBC, the main cooperation areas include providing funds for the approved projects which are based on infrastructure, industry, export and import. In addition to those, the SCO IBC aims also to stimulate trade and cooperation among all member states and observer states (Ibid.). For instance, just after its creation, during 2006 summit, the SCO IBC had agreed to provide funds and credits to the SCO investment projects worth around \$742 million (The Interbank Consortium ... 2015).

The economic institutionalization had continued with the creation of the SCO Business Council on June 14, 2006 (What ... Business Council?, 2015). The aims of the SCO Business Council had been determined as facilitating development of economic cooperation among the SCO member and observer states, promoting direct relations and dialogue between them, providing their involvement in business cooperation in trade, investment, agriculture, transport, telecommunication and other spheres, preparing plans and programmes of cooperation between business and financial communities.(History, 2015)

In addition, on June 10, 2007, during the meeting of the SCO Business Council, members held discussions regarding the possible cooperation of the council with the Inter-Bank Consortium. Following that discussion in the same year, on August 16, the chairman of Business Council and the chairman of the SCO IBC had signed the long term cooperation between the two



non-governmental agencies of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.(History, 2015) Thus, two important non-governmental agencies of the organization which work for the development of the economic agenda of the SCO has started to work collaboratively for better economic achievements.

As it is mentioned already, Russian Federation had brought the idea of creation of a possible Energy Club to the agenda of the SCO, in 2006 (Roy 2014, 52). Regarding that offer, some formal and informal discussions had been held within the structure of the SCO. The formal discussion had been done during the meetings of the ministers who are responsible for foreign economic and trade relations (Shavialiova 2013, 51). And the informal discussions had been held through main non-governmental agencies, the SCO Business Council and the SCO Forum (Ibid.). However, the desired Energy Club still could not have been realized properly within the SCO structure because of the increased Chinese opposition which was standing in front of the realization of the project.

On the other hand, even though one of the main wishes of the Russian Federation from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which is the creation of the Energy Club, still could not have been realized, in any case, from the Russian point of view, increasing the economic dimension of the SCO has always been welcomed with the expected economic growth of the country within the Central Asia (Muzalevsky 2009, 41). This would ease the achievement of the economic expectations of the Russian Federation from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

## **6. RESTRICTIVE ORGANIZATIONS**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is not the one and only regional organization which the Russian Federation has been involved in. The Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Eurasian Economic Community are the other organizations. In some points, the tasks and the structures of these two organizations intersects with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. And this intersections limit the abilities which could have been performed by the organization. This situation creates a dilemma for the Russian Federation. For the implementation of its foreign policy expectations via the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Russian Federation needs to make a decision in terms of defining the position of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Under the light of this information, this part will try to examine these similar organizations as restrictive elements standing in front of the capabilities which the organization could have performed in military and economical terms.

### **6.1. Military Terms and the Collective Security Treaty Organization**

As it is mentioned already, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has been established with the aim of dealing with any attempt against the regional security. To be able to achieve this aim, the organization should be given more military rights and exercise. As we can see from the aforementioned expectations of the Russian Federation from the organization, this priority of the organization is also in an accordance with the Russia's Foreign Policy orientations. However, there is also another organization in the region which deals with the security and military issues, and in those terms, the organization overlaps with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. This organization is the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

The CSTO had been evaluated from the Collective Security Treaty which had been signed in 1992 by the countries of the former Soviet Union, except Georgia and three Baltic states (Best, Christiansen 2008, 443).

On October 7, 2002, this treaty turned into the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the document came into the force on September 18, 2003. The organization comprises Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Belarus, Armenia and Russia. The main aims of the organization had been determined as coordination and deepening of military-political cooperation, formation of multilateral structures and mechanism of cooperation to provide national security of member states on collective basis, to provide help, including military one to the member state which became a victim of aggression.(Basic Facts, 2015)

As we can see from the official priorities of the CSTO, in terms of enhancing the regional security, the organization is quite similar with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. But, militarily, the CSTO still seems as the main institution which Russia relies on, in terms of defence cooperation with the Central Asian countries (Bailes et al 2007, 178). In fact, the CSTO had aimed to establish cooperation and relation with other international organizations which are acting in the field of security, and the SCO is accepted as one of those organization (Basic Facts, 2015). And for the achievement of those close relations between the organizations, Russia played a role as an initiator. On the other hand, Russia's existence in both of these organizations had caught the attention of the member states of the SCO, and they started to ask a question which is questioning the existence of the Russian Federation in these two similar organizations which have even the similar agenda and aims. From the Russian Perspective, the answer is quite obvious, because the Russia would have much more benefit by involving in those two organizations, rather than being involved just in one (Forest 2009, 85). Therefore, for the realization of the country's expectations, it was necessary to bring those two together.

For the achievement of desired close relations and links between the CSTO and the SCO, several steps had been taken by the organizations. Firstly, in 2003, with Russia's intention, the Secretary General of the CSTO met with the Secretary General of the SCO in China to discuss any possible cooperation between the organizations, especially in terms of fight against terrorism (Troitskiy 2007, 34). And later on, in 2004, this time in terms of military exercise, two organizations came together during the Rubezh-2004 military exercise of the CSTO, and some observers from the SCO had joined that exercise (Ibid.). However, even though there had been some attempts for the deepening of the relations between these two, the desired cooperation could not have been achieved, because of the opposition of the Uzbekistan and China. The Uzbek

opposition for a possible cooperation between these two organizations was caused by reluctance for a partnership with the CSTO (Haas 2008, 21). In addition, the existence of Kazakhstan in these two organizations was not perceived as a good sign by the Uzbek government, because of the ongoing race between the countries. Uzbekistan thought it might be perceived as a Kazakh hegemony over the country (Ibid.). Therefore, the country did not support the close relations of the SCO with the CSTO. On the other hand, China was reluctant about a possible close relation between the organizations. From the Chinese point of view, the CSTO is a political-military organization, while the SCO is a political-economical organization (Haas 2008, 22). China had supported the idea that, the SCO should better stay as a political-economical organization. Therefore, like Uzbekistan, China as well, did not support the idea of possible close relations between the CSTO and the SCO.

In spite of the reluctance of Uzbekistan and China, especially from the Russian perspective, it was still aimed to gather these two organizations for creation of a beneficial cooperation. And, as a result, in July 2007, regarding to the case of Afghanistan, the CSTO had been called by the SCO, for a possible joint action with the consent of China (Ibid.). This call had been welcomed especially by the Russian Federation with the hope that, the intervention of the US-led NATO into cases of region might have been stopped with that joint action. Regarding that joint action, a memorandum of understanding had been signed by the parts on October 5, 2007 (Haas 2008, 23). According to that memorandum, even though there will not be any change in the practice, the organizations will be in interaction in terms of regional and international security (Chronicle ... 2015).

According to the 2008 publishment of Marcel de Haas who is Professor of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, the CSTO is simply a military organization, and by entering into more dialogue with the SCO, the organization might help to the SCO to increase its military position in its agenda. For being a well-working security organization, the SCO's intensive dialogue with the CSTO might be essential and beneficial. Therefore, the professor mentioned that, in the future, more cooperation between the CSTO and the SCO might be developed. (Haas 2008, 24)

However, even though the close relations started between the organizations by 2007, according to the International Crise Group report which named as China's Central Asian

Problem, nowadays mistrust for the Russian Federation has started to increase among all the members of the SCO (China's Central Asia ... 2013). The member states of the SCO have thought that Russian Federation supports the competing organization which is the CSTO, rather than the SCO (Kucera, 2013). Therefore, the SCO partners of the Russian Federation expect country to concentrate just one of those similar organizations, instead of two. Moreover, a perception regarding the attempts of the Russian Federation which aims to achieve cooperation and partnership between the two organizations had been occurred among the SCO countries. This perception was that, by taking the organizations into a close relation, the Russian Federation may try to bring the SCO in a similar position with the CSTO which is known as a Russian-led organization (Ibid.).

These perceptions towards herself and increasing mistrust among the member states of the SCO had created a dilemma for the Russian Federation. This dilemma of the Russian Federation, was about determining the position of the SCO, and where to put the organization. As it is mentioned already, Russia's expectations from the organization were based on the security, politics and economy. On the other side, it was obvious that the organization, either could increase its military position or stay in its current agenda which is based on security and economy for the achievements of all those expectations. But, related with the China's definition which emphasizes the position of the SCO as a political-economical organization, it can be said that the organization would keep its position just as a political-economical organization (Haas 2008, 22). Non-existence of any official document among the SCO documents, regarding any defence cooperation or any idea of common military unit can be seen as a proof for that structure of the organization (Troitskiy 2007, 37). Thus, for better achievements, Russia may need to sacrifice one of her expectations.

## **6.2. Economical Terms and the EurAsEc**

Similarly, there was another organization which restricts Russia in its actions with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in terms of economy. This organization is The Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEc). The organization had been established on the base of the

Customs Union Agreement which was signed on March 29, 1996 by Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan with the aim of creation of a single economic area (Souza, 2011).

The Eurasian Economic Community is an international organization aims to provide and support multilateral economic cooperations among its member states. The founding agreement of the organization, The Treaty on the Establishment of the Eurasian Economic Community, signed in the capital of Kazakhstan, Astana, on October 10, 2000. This treaty signed by the heads of the member states. The member states of the organization are The Republic of Belarus, The Kyrgyz Republic, The Republic of Kazakhstan, The Republic of Tajikistan and The Russian Federation. And in addition to those states, in 2006, The Republic of Uzbekistan had joined to the organization. In addition to those member countries, The Republic of Moldova and The Republic of Ukraine held the position as observer states within the organization since 2002. And The Republic of Armenia has the same observer status since 2003.(About EurAsEc, 2015)

The EurAsEc aims to create common external customs borders, provide common external economic policies with common tariffs and prices (EurAsEc, 2015). Moreover during the meeting which was held on August, 2006, the member states had agreed upon the decision on establishment of a customs union within the structure of the organization (About EurAsEc, 2015). It was decided that, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia would start enjoying in that customs union in 2006 and later on whenever the other member states would be ready, they would also join to the customs union (Ibid.). Thus, the organization was serving an economic integration option for the countries of the region.

With that aim, the EurAsEc was acting as a competitor for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, especially regarding the China's desire to take the organization as a leading position among the other economic organizations of the world politics. Similar to that desire of China, the economical part of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is accepted as essential also from the Russian perspective. On the other hand, the Russian Federation already holds the founding member status in both organizations. Moreover, Russia had seem like supporting the EurAsEc, rather than the SCO (Troitskiy 2007, 35). Thus, this competing position of the EurAsEc and Russia's position within that organization has caused the appearance of an increasing mistrust toward the Russian Federation, in China. And this situation, again, drives the

Russian Federation in a dilemma regarding the economic expectations of the country from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

As a result of the interpretations which had been done regarding to the Russia's expectations from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, it is possible to say that, rather than involving in a few different organizations which have the similar priorities, if Russia could just concentrate on its founding membership under the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, it might have been much more high possibility to achieve its all expectations. But now, with its ongoing position in the Collective Security Treaty Organization and The Eurasian Economic Community, the Russian Federation creates a bad perception toward herself among the other member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and especially, its co-partner the People's Republic of China. This perception includes mistrust from the Chinese perspective and feeling of insecurity from the perspective of Central Asia states. Therefore, since the Russian Federation spends quite a lot efforts via those two organizations by using its hegemony over the Central Asian countries as a tool, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is staying far from any possible improvement in its structure and its aim of being the main regional organization in the Central Asia (Matveeva, Giustozzi 2008, 7). Herewith, this blockage in front of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization effects negatively also the achievements of the expectations of the Russian Federation, under the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

## CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the Russia's Foreign Policy has shown us that, after practising some different approaches in its foreign policy, the country has decided that, the most proper foreign policy orientation for herself might be the Eurasianist Foreign Policy. According to Eurasianist Foreign Policy, the main interest area of the country has been accepted as the Central Asia and China. The Eurasianism brought some bilateral and multilateral agreements to the agenda of the country. Those agreements signed with the countries of the region. From the Russian point of view, those agreements were targeting implementation of the foreign policy expectations. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization have been examined as one of the important samples of those agreements for the Russian Federation.

The theoretical reason behind the Russian involvement in the structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has explained with the help of the Constructivist Theory of the International Relations. It has seen that, some contradictions between the Western world and the Russian Federation led the country to look for other orientations in which the country would not have needed to legitimize herself. Since China shares similar values, close relations had been established with the country. Moreover, it has seen that, the idea of being a great power effected the country for taking some steps regarding the creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, together with China as the co-partner.

Following the creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Russian Federation had started to set some expectations from the organization. Mainly those expectations were about security, economy and politics. As it is mentioned in the work, related with the security, the country expected the organization to solve the ongoing instability in the region and to bring the peace to the region. The main reason about that security expectations is the need for stability in the region for the achievement of the main foreign policy interests of the country. The Afghanistan case has been mentioned as the major threat against that aimed security, since the country is the core area of the terrorism, separatism and extremism. Moreover, those threats were



spreading the fear to the neighbours because of the spillover effect, and it was also effecting the Russian Federation. Therefore, it was important to gather the countries of the region together to discuss and find some long lasting solutions against those security threats. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has acted in a coherency with those expectations, by creating a platform and gathering most of the countries of the region under its roof. For the achievement of better solutions, the organization has granted some critical countries with the observer status. It has seen even Afghanistan and Pakistan have been granted with that status. Moreover, the anti-terrorist military exercises and the Peace Missions of the organization have been examined regarding the security expectations from the organization. The creation of the Regional Counter-Terrorist Structure has defined as an achievement of the organization for security aims. On the other hand, in the work, it has seen that, the main military organization of the region is still accepted as the Collective Security Treaty Organization. The reason behind that has seen in the core definition of the organization. In that sense, it has been argued that, even though the organization practices some military exercises for the achievement of better security solutions, in its core, the organization is an economic-politic bloc and especially the SCO partners of the Russian Federation aim to pursue that pure feature of the organization. That is why the organization can be seen as limited in its military practices, in terms of answering the security expectation of the country.

Besides security expectations, the Russian Federation had some political expectations from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Those political expectations had been set on the base of achieving a balance of power in the region, and in that sense the country has imagined herself in the leader position in that political balance of the region. To be able to achieve this expectation, it was necessary to limit the involvements of the USA and the Western organizations to the politics of the region. In the work, it has argued that, this expectation has tried to be achieved by intensifying the stance of the organization. This has been done by signing some important political acts and joint declarations under the structure of the SCO. It has seen that, those documents have mentioned to the changing position of the world politics and the importance of being involved in those world politics under the light of UN norms and laws. The SCO has achieved to involve in the new agenda of the world as a regional organization which performs in accordance with the UN norms. Therefore, it has seen that, the political position of

the organization has been appreciated by the Russian Federation along with the all member states of the organization.

The last mentioned expectation of the Russian Federation from the organization was about the economy. Here, the main economic expectations of the country has been defined as boosting the trade and the creation of the Energy Club. The idea of boosting the trade in the SCO area has been offered by China and supported by Russia. However, in the analysis, it has seen that, the organization could not achieve the establishment of a free trade zone within its structure. The competing organization, Eurasian Economic Community and its works have been defined as the main obstacles for that aim. Moreover, it has seen that, the aimed creation of the Energy Club could not achieved properly as well. Even though there are some constructive documents regarding the establishment of that club, the idea is still standing just as a desire of the Russian Federation, without any realization.

At the end of those analysis regarding the expectations of the Russian Federation and the capabilities of the organization, it is possible to say that, especially in political terms, the country enjoyed the position of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the world politics. However, in the last part of the work, it has argued that, the Russian Federation's existence in the other organizations which are similar to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, had restricted the abilities of the organization especially in terms of economy and security. Here, it has tried to be mentioned that, if the country had paid all her attention just to the SCO, instead of dividing this attention between the similar organizations, the SCO might have been much more successful also in terms of economy and the security.

To conclude, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is established with its main aim as the fight against terrorism, separatism and extremism. However, one of the main members of the organization has charged different expectations to the organization. Even though, the organization could not achieve all those expectations, from the Russian point of view, generally, the country has appreciated to be involved in the organization which perceived as an alternative to the Western organizations. And within that structure of the organization, the Russian Federation had aimed to consolidate its position in the politics of the region by using her position as the founding member of the organization.

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