



International Boundary Study

No. 26 (*Revised*) – September 15, 1983

Afghanistan – U.S.S.R. Boundary

(Country Codes: AF-UR)

**The Geographer
Office of the Geographer
Bureau of Intelligence and Research**

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY STUDY

No. 26 - Revised: September 15, 1983¹

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¹ Office of The Geographer, "Afghanistan - U.S.S.R. Boundary," *International Boundary Study*, No. 26, December 30, 1963.

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AFGHANISTAN - U.S.S.R. BOUNDARY

I. BOUNDARY BRIEF

The Afghan - Soviet boundary is 2,140 kilometers long. In the west the boundary crosses a hilly region for about 702 kilometers between the Iranian border and the Amu Darya (Oxus River). It then follows the thalweg (main channel) of the Amu Darya and two of its headstreams, the Pyandzh (Ab-E-Panj)* and the Pamir, for 1,220 kilometers upstream to Lake Sari-Qul (Victoria). The easternmost 218 kilometers in the Wakhan Corridor follow mountain crests in the Pamirs.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Geographical

The border area between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan may be divided into two parts: the hilly area to the west with elevations of 600 - 900 meters, and the Hindu Kush and Pamir systems to the east with most elevations exceeding 3,000 meters. From the eastern highlands, mountain systems extend westerly north and south of the border area in the Hindu Kush and associated ranges of Afghanistan and in the Gisserskiy Khrebet (mountain range) of the U.S.S.R. Northwest of the border area the land drops to near sea level in the desert of Kara Kum.

The drainage is largely dominated by the Amu Darya, whose principal source is Lake Sari-Qul located in the easternmost part of the Afghan - Soviet boundary. The outlet to the lake, the Pamir River, is joined 120 kilometers downstream by the Wakhan River, which drains the eastern end of the Wakhan Corridor (the Afghan "panhandle" stretching east to the Chinese border). Below this junction the Panj River flows through the mountains for nearly 650 kilometers; below the Soviet town of Bagarak it leaves the mountains and for another 240 kilometers flows through a dissected plateau area to a junction with the Vakhsh River, which comes from the north. Thirty kilometers above this junction, at the Soviet railhead of Pyandzh, is the head of navigation for the Amu Darya system.

Downstream from the junction with the Vakhsh, the river assumes the name of Amu Darya and meanders across a broad flood plain, marking the international boundary for 300 kilometers before it turns north across Soviet territory to empty finally into the Aral Sea. Below Bagarak the river is broad and meandering with many islands. The left (Afghan) bank is low and subject to flooding; the right (Soviet) bank is firmer and is the site of most of the river towns. In the westernmost part of the border area are two rivers flowing north from the Hindu Kush system: the Morghab, with its tributary the Kushka River,

* The transliteration and orthography of place names along this frontier vary widely. See part VIII for a gazetteer of common place names. Diacritical marks are not used in this study. For information on Afghan place name usage, refer to: U.S. Board on Geographic Names, Afghanistan: Official Standard Names Gazetteer (1971).

loses itself in the Kara Kum sands; the Harirud (Tedzhen) drains the Herat Valley before turning north along the Iranian border to the Kara Kum.

Precipitation in the border area generally is less than 10 inches per year except in the Hindu Kush and Gisserskiy Mountains, where it averages 10 - 20 inches. Temperatures in the western hills tend toward extremes, spread from 35° F. in January to more than 85° F. in July. In the highlands, temperatures decrease with altitude. Vegetation is largely grass, low bushes, or desert scrub; grazing and irrigated agriculture are the principal economic activities in the vicinity of the Afghanistan - U.S.S.R. boundary.

Along the boundary, the major ethnic groups are the Uzbeks, Tadzhiks, and Turkmen, each of which has a republic in the Soviet Union. About 1.4 million Uzbeks live on the Afghan side of the boundary, mostly in the central section. Tadzhiks are found in the eastern border area, beginning near the Afghan town of Qonduz, while Turkmen inhabit the western area.

The international boundary passes through thinly populated regions. On the Soviet side the principal city is Termez (pop. 35,000), smaller towns include Kushka, Bagarak, and Khorog. Dushanbe (formerly Stalinabad), capital of the Tadzhik S.S.R., is 160 kilometers north of the Amu Darya. Afghanistan has only villages along the boundary. Thirty to 50 kilometers south, at the foot of the mountains, are such towns as Meymanah (55,000), Mazar-e-Sharif (97,000), Qonduz (80,000), and Khanabad (30,000). Farther east, Feyzabad (65,000) is a focus of routes to the eastern panhandle.

A Soviet railroad parallels the Amu Darya upstream to Termez, where a line loops north to Dushanbe and then back to the river at Nizhniy Pyandzh. Soviet roads follow the boundary except in the eastern Wakhan sector, and even here a Soviet highway crosses the Pamirs about 85 kilometers north of the boundary. The Soviet roads and railways in the border area are connected with the major trans-Caspian network via the Amu Darya Valley. The Afghans have few roads in the boundary sector. In the Wakhan Corridor, travel is along trails and tracks; movement by wheeled vehicles is virtually impossible.

Of the three fixed span bridges connecting the U.S.S.R. and Afghanistan, two are over the Amu Darya and one over the Kushka. A bridge over the Amu Darya which connects Termez in the U.S.S.R. with Afghanistan was completed in 1982. The bridge over the Kushka, built in 1960, accommodates a single broad-gauge railroad track. It connects with the Afghan town of Towraghondi about 5 kilometers south of the border on the Afghan highway leading to Herat.

B. Historical

The history of the delimitation of the Afghan - Soviet boundary reflects the 19th century Anglo - Russian struggle for hegemony in south central Asia. The British were anxious to maintain a unified buffer area to the northwest of India which could serve as a check on both Russian and Persian expansion. The Russians, moving southward in the mid-19th

century, eventually conquered the Khanates of Khiva and Bokhara, bringing Russia's borders to the area of the upper Amu Darya.

In 1873, Great Britain and Russia signed an agreement wherein they stipulated that: (1) the eastern Badakhshan area as well as the Wakhan Corridor to Lake Sari-Qul were Afghan territory; (2) the Amu Darya was the northern Afghan boundary as far west as Khwaja Salar; and (3) the boundary from the Amu Darya to the Persian border on the Harirud was to be delimited by a joint Russian - British commission. Not until 1885, however, was any move made toward delimitation of a boundary west of the Amu Darya.

Although the Afghans put forth historical claims to the Pandjeh Oasis on the Morghab River, the Russians in spring 1885 sent military forces to the area and occupied it. In September of that year, a Russo - British Protocol was signed in London defining the boundary west of the Amu Darya. During the next three years, a binational commission demarcated this sector of the boundary, erecting 79 boundary posts. Because the village of Khwaja Salar no longer existed, a dispute arose over where the boundary should leave the Amu Darya. Eventually the Russians agreed on the town of Kham Ab as the boundary point in exchange for some territorial concessions in the Kushka salient.

A British - Afghan Agreement of 1893 stated that the Afghans would abandon territory they had occupied some years earlier north of the Amu Darya and called for a delimitation of the Afghan - Russian boundary east of Lake Sari-Qul. This delimitation was agreed upon in an Exchange of Notes between Great Britain and Russia in March 1895. The subsequent demarcation by a mixed commission resulted in the erection of 12 boundary pillars between Lake Victoria and the Chinese border.

The first direct Afghanistan - U.S.S.R. agreement on their common boundary was concluded in 1921. At that time, the Soviets agreed, in Article 9, "to hand over to Afghanistan the frontier districts which belonged to the latter in the last century, observing the principles of justice and self-determination of the population inhabiting the same." The areas referred to were in the Morghab River area, particularly the Pandjeh Oasis and the Kushka River. No move was made, however, to implement this provision.

Twenty-five years later, a protocol to the 1946 Frontier Agreement between Afghanistan and the U.S.S.R. declared Article 9 expired and thus invalid. The 1946 Agreement called for the boundary to follow the thalwegs of the Amu Darya and the Pyandzh to the head of navigation and, above that point, the median line of the rivers. The division of the islands in the Amu Darya and the Pyandzh were to be determined by a mixed commission. The Soviet - Afghan Border Commission in 1947 - 48 reportedly allocated some 1,192 islands in the Amu Darya and Pyandzh Rivers. Afghanistan received certain water rights on the Kushka River, while the U.S.S.R. obtained the right to construct a dam on that portion of the Morghab River which marks the international boundary.

Also in 1947 - 48, according to the 1958 Afghanistan - U.S.S.R. treaty "Concerning the Regime of the Soviet - Afghan State Frontier," the boundary from Zulfikar (the Afghanistan -

Iran - U.S.S.R. tripoint) to Kham Ab was redemarcated and the sector extending from Kham Ab to Lake Sari-Qul was demarcated.

III. BOUNDARY ANALYSIS

In the west the Afghanistan - U.S.S.R. boundary leaves the border with Iran in the thalweg of the Harirud and proceeds in a generally easterly direction for 90 kilometers across a hilly area, 600 - 900 meters in elevation. Connecting points have been established, for the most part, on high points of land. Near Kushka, a Soviet town noted for its pistachio orchards and the terminus of a railroad from the oasis of Mary (Merv), the boundary turns south in a 15 kilometer salient to the village of Chehel Dokhtaran. From here it trends northeast and east 150 kilometers to the Morghab River, whose thalweg it follows for 35 kilometers before turning east again for 370 kilometers across the uplands to Kham Ab on the Amu Darya. From the Harirud to the Amu Darya, the boundary has no important towns close to it, other than the railhead of Kushka, nor is it paralleled for any distance by highways or railroads.

At Kham Ab the boundary turns to follow the thalweg of the Amu Darya for 300 kilometers upstream to the confluence with the Vakhsh. The river is followed on its right bank by a Soviet railroad as far as Termez, and its entire length by a Soviet highway. Near Kelif and Termez, Afghan roads reach the river; ferries connect the two countries. The greatest population and economic activity along the entire boundary exist in the central sector from Kelif to Pyandzh. Such southward-flowing Soviet rivers as the Surkhandar'ya, the Kafirnigan, and the Vakhsh have been harnessed both for power and for irrigation. Towns line the river, particularly on its right bank. At its junction with the Vakhsh, the Pyandzh River forms the international boundary. It meanders across a broad flood plain for 240 kilometers to the Soviet town of Bagarak (37° 38' N, 69° 52' E), where the mountains begin.

The internal political divisions in the border area form a complicated pattern, particularly on the Soviet side. The Turkmen S.S.R. adjoins the boundary in the west from Iran to a point on the Amu Darya, 80 kilometers above Kham Ab. The following 130 kilometers are occupied by the Uzbek S.S.R.; beyond this point is the Tadzhik S.S.R. On the Iranian side nine provinces adjoin the boundary. The profusion of political subdivisions illustrates the complex ethnic nature of the area.

Above Bagarak the boundary follows the Pyandzh in a great horseshoe-shaped curve through the mountains for 840 kilometers. A Soviet road follows the river for most of this length, and a number of Soviet towns line the river. The Afghanistan side is sparsely settled. The Pyandzh ends near the Afghan village of Gaz Khun; the boundary then follows the Pamir River for 115 kilometers to Lake Sari-Qul.

IV. THE WAKHAN CORRIDOR

The Wakhan Corridor is generally thought of as extending from the Afghan village of Eshkashem at its lower or western end to the Vakhjir Pass at the Chinese border on the east. For location, altitude and conditions of various Wakhan passes, see the table on pages 19 - 20. At the eastern end, the border is divided by a westward salient of Chinese territory—one segment continuing to the northeast and the other to the southeast. Consequently, Afghan territory actually extends east of Vakhjir Pass on the north and on the south. From Eshkashem to the easternmost point of Afghanistan the distance is approximately 350 kilometers, whereas to the Vakhjir Pass it is only 300 kilometers. The corridor is widest (65 kilometers) in the middle, where it includes the Nicholas Range; it is narrowest along its western third, where the width is 13 - 25 kilometers except for a breadth of 30 kilometers at the headwaters of the north-flowing Ishtaragh River. At the western entrance, the corridor is 18 kilometers wide.

The countryside is extremely rugged. The mountains are young. They have not been rounded off by erosion; little silt and rock material have been deposited in the valleys. Only the largest valleys have floodplains of even moderate proportions; the rest are V-shaped and occupied by fast streams or rushing torrents. In past millennia, however, glaciation of the "mountain" type was extensive—probably not covering all the landmass but certainly filling and scouring the valleys and making many of their lower walls nearly vertical. As the rivers of ice diminished and were replaced by rivers of water, the larger valleys were partly filled with silt, rock rubble, and glacial boulders. They now approximate plains in appearance because their streams do not have volume enough to scour deep channels.

Such a flat valley floor with a wandering stream usually has a partial cover of grass and glacial boulders. It may contain a chain of shallow lakes in peaty soil and may be miles wide and dozens of miles long. This physical feature is called a "pamir." The term "Pamirs," used in the plural and usually capitalized, refers in general to the high mountain area of central Asia, covering parts of China, the U.S.S.R., and Afghanistan.

The Vakhjir Pass in the southeast prong of the corridor provides access between Vakhn Pamir on the west and Taghdumbash Pamir which extends east and north into China. The flat floors of both pamirs end some 16 kilometers from the pass, and the intervening 35-kilometer stretch through the pass is rough. The northeast prong of the corridor is occupied by the Little Pamir, 2 - 7 kilometers wide, which extends first northeastward and then north in the valley of the Aq Su River (Oksu) as far as Ak-Tash in the U.S.S.R., and southwestward to Baza'i Gonbad in Afghanistan. Within the pamir, Chaqmaqin Lake and the string of small shallow lakes northeast of it constitute an indefinite drainage divide between the Aq Su River, flowing northeastward, and the Little Pamir River, which flows southwestward through the southwestern end of the Little Pamir. Most of the water is believed to flow down the Aq Su.

East of Lyangar, a town at the junction of the Pamir and Ab-E-Vakhan Rivers, the corridor consists of only the drainage basins mentioned above and, except for the Aq Su valley, is bounded by high ridges. This area is nearly "the Roof of the World." Peaks and passes are 5,000 - 6,500 meters above sea level. The Ab-E-Vakhan begins as melt water from

permanent glaciers, and bare rock or shale is exposed on hillsides which are barren of any significant vegetation. Even the moist pamirs have no trees, but their bunch grass is valuable as forage for pack animals. All travel is through the lowlands. In some places excess water is a problem, as in the lower 16 kilometers of the Vakhjan Pamir between Vakhjan village and Baza'i Gonbad.

In the southeast prong of the corridor, about halfway between Vakhjan Pass and Baza'i Gonbad, it apparently is possible to turn south up watercourses and cross the border at Delhi Sang Pass. Much of the trail is over permanent snowfields. From here southeastward, the steep and slippery descent into Hunza continues through Kalam Darchi to Misgar. The principal route from the corridor to Hunza, however, is more roundabout—eastward through the Vakhjan Pass to the head of the Taghdumbash Pamir, then southward through the Kilik Pass or the Mintaka Pass to Kalam Darchi. Some 16 kilometers east of Lyangar, a side trail swings off to the south and connects with a network of trails leading to Hunza and to Gilgit in Pakistan-controlled territory. On the eastern route, west of Delhi Sang Pass, is the Irshad Uwin Pass, which in reality is two passes less than a mile apart that provide alternate trails for 6 or 8 kilometers. Farther west and nearer Lyangar are the Khora Bort and Garzan Passes. They are open for a few weeks in spring and autumn.

Trails also lead northward out of the northeast prong of the corridor, cross the drainage divide via such high passes as the Andaman Davan and Jaman Shur, and lead down into the Great Pamir east of Lake Sari-Qul. Some 32 kilometers northeast of Baza'i Gonbad, the Andaman Stream enters from the northwest into the confused drainage pattern of the water divide (the Aq Su headwaters). Apparently, it is possible to proceed up the Andaman Stream and its western tributary, skirting Salisbury peak along its eastern and northern slopes, and then cross the border into the U.S.S.R. at Andeymin Davan (32° 24' N, 74° 14' E). A small lake at the crest has outlets to both north and south. From here northward and eastward, the route follows Andeymin Stream (Andeymin Su) and the Istryk River, eventually reaching the north-flowing Aq Su at Tokhtamysh 40 kilometers north of Kyzylrabort. Some 12 kilometers east of the confluence of the Andeymin and Aq Su Rivers and 45 kilometers east of Baza'i Gonbad, a short steep trail swings northward to Jauan Shur (Urta-bel) Pass and then down to the Istryk River route.

West of the latitude of Lyangar, the southern boundary of the corridor continues to follow high ridge lines, as it does to the east, but the northern boundary follows watercourses. East of Lyangar the corridor attains its greatest width and includes the Seh Taleh range, an almost unexplored mountain mass with an east-northeast, west-southwest ridge. The ridge is highest near the eastern end and slopes down gradually to the west. About 5 kilometers east of this unnamed high point is Varam Pass (37° 14' N, 73° 49' E), through which a trail can be followed from Lyangar to Lake Sari-Qul on the U.S.S.R. border.

Although some travelers have gone through the Great Pamir both east and west of Lake Sari-Qul probably without encountering difficult terrain, most travelers in the corridor have been en route between Afghanistan and China or India and therefore have used the Vakhjan Pamir. On this tortuous Ab-E-Vakhjan River route the nearly barren valley walls rise

steeply to the north and south, permitting very little floodplain development. East of Sarhadd the route leaves the river to climb the Dehliz Pass; halfway between Sarhadd and Lyangar it not only leaves the river but has been built onto—not into—the hillside with brush and stones.

Baroghil Pass is the lowest crossing point in the mountain chain that defines the south rim of the corridor. The pass crosses the Ab-E-Vakhan about a mile east of its confluence with the north-flowing Warsing River; it then cuts southwest to, and follows up, the Warsing River valley. As an alternate route the Ab-E-Vakhan can be crossed west of the confluence, and the broad, marshy lower Warsing valley can be followed for 5 kilometers before the gentle rise begins. The crest of the mountains lies about 20 kilometers from Sarhadd and consists of a nearly level expanse of grass and loose stone some 500 meters wide. Through Baroghil Pass sheep once moved southwestward to be bartered at Chitral for sugar, tea, and cloth.

For travelers from Sarhadd bound due south of Darkot and Yasin, another alternate route branches southeastward off the Baroghil route about halfway up to the ridge and tops the ridge at Darwazo Pass, some 7 kilometers east of the Baroghil. Between Sarhadd and Qal'Eh-Ye Panjeh, three other passes are also used—the Kankhun, Ochhili, and Shahgologh—all of which lead to Chitral. The Shahgologh is easier to traverse than the Anoshah Pass to the west or the Ochhili to the east.

The lower corridor, from Qal'Eh-Ye Panjeh to Eshkashem, differs markedly from the rough, cut-up countryside to the east. There is still a mountain wall to the north and one to the south; but the drop between the two villages, which are some 100 kilometers apart, is less than 200 meters. The flat floodplain, ranging from a few meters to 2 kilometers in width, makes traveling easy. Yet, in this part of the corridor, where mountains rise 3,000 - 5,000 meters above the trail, travelers get the impression of being "in a box." Russian Ishkashim is just across the Panj River from Afghan Eshkashem; the Russian road on the north side performs follows the river, as does the Afghan trail. In this sector the southern wall can be crossed in three places: the Anoshah Pass, south of Powkowsy; the Kotgaz, south of Shkhawr; and the Qazi-Deh, south of Ishtragh. West of the corridor mouth, six other passes can be approached from Zibak.

Little information is available on the terrain in the big bend of the Panj River north of the Eshkashem - Taloqan road. Certainly it is wild and rugged, much of it 3,000 - 5,000 meters above sea level. Most of the slopes are too steep and the precipitation too scanty to permit more than occasional scrubby tree growth. The usual vertical zonation of vegetation is observable: trees at the lowest and wettest elevations, thick grass on the pamirs and sparse grass on the moister slopes, scattered alpine-type vegetation on the slopes above them, and a nearly barren zone just below the snow line. Probably this area has even less non-local travel than the corridor.

All travel north of Feyzabad is by foot or horse. The central mountain mass makes it easier to follow the encircling Panj, difficult though it is, than to cross the mountains. As far

downstream as its junction with the Kyzyl-Su, the Panj continues to flow through steep-walled valleys that have almost no floodplains. In some places, the valleys are chasm-like for several miles; the trail can follow the riverbed only at lowest water if at all.

In the mountains of the high, rugged east region, the drainage pattern is a network of perennial streams and small torrents. The fact that there are pamirs in the corridor and apparently none in the big bend area indicates that the corridor has a certain amount of standing surface water whereas the big bend has almost none. Particularly in summer, when melt water is released, the pamirs are wet and in some places swampy. Chakmaqin Kol is merely a deeper and possibly marshy section within the Aq Su-Little Pamir River drainage divide. Lake Sari-Qul is 20 kilometers long and 2 - 5 kilometers wide; it has no flowing surface outlet; but water probably seeps westward. North of Eshkashem is glacier-fed Shiveh Lake. It drains into the Panj to the east. The lake is frozen nearly three-fourths of the year.

Throughout the Wakhan Corridor, spring and early summer are the seasons of greatest water flow, and late summer and winter the time of low water. Travel is seriously hampered during May - July. Probably the ideal time for travel is September, a month of relatively low water before the snow and cold weather set in.

V. TREATIES AND RELATED MATERIAL

Three treaties in the late 19th century delimited the Afghan - Russian boundary. The first, in 1873, established the central portion, along the Oxus and east to Lake Sari-Qul. A second, in 1885, provided for the western sector, from the Oxus to the Iranian tripoint. A third, in 1895, delimited the boundary east of Lake Sari-Qul to the Chinese tripoint.

In the 20th century, three treaties (1946, 1958, 1981) delimited or redelimited the boundary between Afghanistan and the U.S.S.R.

A. Agreement Between Great Britain and Russia, January 31, 1873

The 1873 Agreement established that Badakhshan and Wakhan from Lake Sari-Qul west along the Amu Darya to its junction with the Kokcha River belong to Afghanistan. The Amu Darya remains the northern boundary as far as the ferry at Khwaja Salar. The boundary from this point to the Iranian border is to be delimited.

B. Delimitation Protocol Between Great Britain and Russia, Signed at London, September 10, 1885

This protocol provided for the delimitation of the boundary from the Oxus to the Harirud and was followed by 19 additional protocols (1885 - 88) on delimitation details.

C. Agreement Between Great Britain and Afghanistan, Signed at Kabul, November

12, 1893

The 1893 Agreement reconfirmed the 1873 Agreement and called upon Afghanistan to evacuate territory it had occupied in 1884 north of the Amu Darya. A letter from the British Government, dated November 11, 1893, called for delimitation of the boundary east of Lake Sari-Qul.

D. Exchange of Notes Between Great Britain and Russia, March 11, 1895

These notes established British and Russian spheres of influence east of Lake Sari-Qul by delimiting the northern boundary of the Wakhan Corridor, east of the lake. This boundary was subsequently demarcated by a mixed commission.

E. Treaty of Friendship Between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, Signed at Moscow, February 28, 1921

Article 9 of this agreement obligated the Soviet Union to hand over to Afghanistan the frontier districts which belonged to the Afghans in the 19th century. It states:

"In order to accomplish the promise given by the R.S.F.S. Government of Russia through its President, Mr. Lenin, to the Minister of His Majesty's Government of Afghanistan, which promise being to the effect that the Government of Russia agrees to return to Afghanistan all the lands situated in the frontier zone, and which had belonged to Afghanistan in the past century, it is hereby agreed that a separate agreement will be signed by the plenipotentiaries of the High Contracting Parties on the basis of the plebiscite of the nationals living in those lands."

F. Exchange of Notes Regarding the Settlement of Frontier Disputes, Signed at Kabul, September 13, 1932

This agreement provided for the appointment of frontier commissioners to be responsible for the settlement of disputes along the length of the Afghanistan - U.S.S.R. boundary.

G. Frontier Agreement Between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, Signed at Moscow, June 13, 1946

Article 1 provided that the international boundary shall follow the main channel of the Amu Darya (Oxus) and the Pyandzh to the head of navigation. Above this point, the median line, with the allocation of the islands in the rivers, was entrusted to a mixed commission. A protocol to the agreement held that Article 9 of the 1921 Treaty had expired.

H. Treaty Concerning the Regime of the Soviet - Afghan State Frontier, Signed at Moscow, January 18, 1958

This treaty notes that in accordance with the Frontier Agreement of June 13, 1946, demarcation and redemarcation documents (both dated September 29, 1948) were prepared. However, it was noted that "From Lake Zor-Kul to the junction of the frontiers of the U.S.S.R., Afghanistan and the Chinese People's Republic the frontier shall be determined in accordance with the Demarcation Protocols of 1895." In accordance with Protocol No. 2 of the treaty, the residence of frontier commissions was agreed upon."

I. Soviet - Afghan Treaty on Border Demarcation, Signed at Kabul, June 16, 1981 (Radio Moscow, June 16, 1981)

Radio Moscow announced that the border running "from the western shore of Lake Zorkul to Pik Povala Sheveykovskogo" had been demarcated. It added: "The Treaty sets the legal seal on the existing guarded boundary and reaffirms its inviolability."

VI. SUMMARY

The Afghanistan - U.S.S.R. boundary has been demarcated along its entire length and there should be no major disputes concerning its position.

VII. EASTERN WAKHAN BOUNDARY COORDINATES

The Wakhan Corridor river boundary from Eshkashem to Lake Sari-Qul (Victoria) results from Anglo - Russian diplomatic agreements of 1869 - 73.

From Lake Sari-Qul to the Afghanistan - China - U.S.S.R. tripoint, the 218 kilometers of boundary, which follows the watershed of the Vakhanskiy Khrebet Range, was delimited by the Anglo - Russian Boundary Commission of 1895. The Commission demarcated the boundary at 12 points. The location of the boundary pillars, as noted by the Russian surveyor Zaliessky, was calculated east of the Russian observatory located at Pulkowa (30° 19' 38.55" east of the Royal Greenwich Observatory). The location was recalculated during the Indo - Russian triangulation of 1912 - 13 and corrected by the India Office of the Trigonometrical Survey in 1921. Geographic values for the 12 pillars noted on the Wakhan Corridor map are taken from the World Geodetic System (WGS-72) employed by the United States Defense Mapping Agency.

- (1) Pamir Boundary Commission 1895
- (2) Indian 1916 Datum
- (3) WGS 1972 Datum
- (4) Pulkovo 1942 Datum

<u>Station</u>		<u>Latitude (N)</u>	<u>Longitude (E)</u>	<u>Height (Ft)</u>
Pillar 1	(1)	37° 26'32.2"	73° 49'00.6"	13,398
Victoria Lake	(2)	27.5"	46'30.3"	13,574
(4,137.4m)				
(Sari-Qul)	(3)	24.1"	27.8"	
	(4)	23.8"	30.3"	
Pillar 2	(1)	37°24'51"	73° 43'44"	
	(2)	46.3"	46'13.7"	
	(3)	43.0"	11.2"	
	(4)	42.7"	13.7"	
Peake La Concorde	(1)	37° 20'35"	73° 49'14"	17,753
	(2)	30.3"	46'43.7"	17,929 (5,464.8m)
	(3)	27.0"	41.2"	
	(4)	26.7"	43.7"	
Pillar 3	(1)	37° 22'36"	74° 32'32"	14,150
(Benderski)	(2)	31.3"	13'32.7"	15,126 (4,610.4m)
	(3)	28.0"	29.9"	
	(4)	27.7"	32.4"	
Pillar 4	(1)	37° 24'08"	74° 32'32"	14,150
(Urtabel)	(2)	03.3"	30'01.7"	14,326 (4,366.6m)
	(3)	00.0"	29'58.7"	
	(4)	23'59.7"	30'01.2"	
Pillar 5	(1)	37° 23'58"	74° 33'05"	
	(2)	53.3"	30'34.7"	
	(3)	50.0"	31.7"	
	(4)	49.7"	34.2"	
Ganjabi	(1)	37° 24'33"	74° 33'56"	
	(2)	28.3"	31'25.7"	
	(3)	25.0"	22.7"	
	(4)	24.7"	25.2"	
Pillar 6	(1)	37° 23'45.5"	74° 35'30"	
	(2)	40.8"	32'59.7"	
	(3)	37.5"	56.7"	
	(4)	37.2"	59.2"	
Pillar 7	(1)	37° 22'26"	74° 36'06"	
	(2)	21.3"	33'35.7"	
	(3)	18.0"	32.6"	
	(4)	17.7"	35.1"	

Pillar 8	(1)	37° 24'43"	74° 44'06"	12,700
	(2)	38.3"	41'35.7"	12,876 (3,924.6m)
	(3)	34.9"	32.6"	
	(4)	34.6"	35.0"	
Pillar 9	(1)	37° 23'14"	74° 44'53"	
	(2)	09.3"	42'22.7"	
	(3)	06.0"	19.5"	
	(4)	05.7"	21.9"	
Pillar 10	(1)	37° 21'53"	74° 48'45"	
	(2)	48.3"	46'14.7"	
	(3)	45.0"	11.5"	
	(4)	44.7"	13.9"	
Pillar 11	(1)	37° 21'25"	74° 50'22"	
	(2)	20.3"	47'51.7"	
	(3)	17.0"	48.5"	
	(4)	16.7"	50.9"	
Pillar 12	(1)	37° 21'20"	74° 50'40"	
	(2)	15.3"	48'09.7"	
	(3)	12.0"	06.5"	
	(4)	11.7"	08.9"	

Longitude Corrections

-02'27" Madras Observatory
- 03.3" Adjustment to Indian 1916 Datum
-02'30.3" Total

Latitude Corrections

-04.7" Adjustment to Indian 1916 Datum

Elevation Corrections

176 feet to agree with the Indian adjustment

n.b. Elevations are unlikely to differ from spirit levelling by more than 17 feet (5.2 meters)

GAZETTEER

The following place names appear in Afghanistan - U.S.S.R. boundary agreements documented in the United Nations Treaty Series. Owing to variations in orthography, accepted U.S. Government usage is taken from Afghanistan (Af.), and the Soviet Union (SU).

ORTHOGRAPHY

<u>United Nations Treaty Series</u>	<u>U.S. Board on Geographic Names</u>	<u>Other Variants</u>
Aiwaj	Ayvadh (SU), 36°59'N., 68°02'E.	Ayvaj, Aiwanj
Amu-Darya	Amudar'ya (SU), Amu Darya (Af.), stream, 43°40'N., 59°01'E.	Oxus River, Jaihun, Jihun, Darya-i-Amu, Amu Dar'ya
Andkhui	Andkhvoy (Af.), 36°56'N., 65°08'E.	Andkhui, Andkhoy, Andkhoi, Ankhoi
Aral-Pagambar (I.)	Zapovednik Aral-Paygambar (SU), nature preserve, 37°19'N., 67°08'E. Ostrov Aral (SU), island, 37°17'N., 37°17'N., 67°08'E.	
Harirud (R.)	Tedzhen (SU), Harirud (Ir.), (Af.), stream, 37°24'N., 60°38'E.	Tejend, Tejend River, Heri Rud, Arius, Hari
Hazrat-i-Imam Sahib	Emam Saheb (Af.), 37°11'N., 68°55'E.	Khwaja Imam Saiyid, Hazrat, Khwaja Iman Saiyid, Imam Saheb
Ishkashim	Eshkashem (Af.), 36°42'N., 71°34'E.	Ishkashim, Post, Iskasem, Eskasem
Kalai-Khumb	Kalai-Khumb (SU), 38°28'N., 70°46'E.	Kala-i-Khumb, Qala-i-Khum
Kala-i-Kuf	Qal'eh-ye Kuf (Af.), 38°02'N., 70°29'E.	Qala-i-Kot, Qala-i-Kof, Kala Kuf, Qal'a-i-Kuf
Kala-i-Wamar	Rushan (SU), 37°57'N., 71°33'E.	Kalai-Vamar, Kala-i-Warma
Kerki	Kerki (SU), 37°50'N., 65°12'E.	Qarki
Khamiab	Kham Ab (Af.), 37°32'N.,	Kham-i-Ab, Khamab,

	65°42'E.	Khamiab, Kham Ab
Khorog	Khorog (SU), 37°30'N., 71°36'E.	
Kirovabad	Pyandzh (SU), 37°14'N., 69°06'E.	Saray-Kamar, Kirovabad, Baumanabad, Sarai, Saray Komar, Kirowabad
Kokrash Kol(Mt.)**	Pik Povalo-Shveykovskogo, peak, 37°16'N., 74°53'E.	Peak Povalo Shveikovski, Peak Kokrash Kol
Kushka (R.)	Kushka (SU), Darya-ye Koshk (Af.), stream, 36°03'N., 62°47'E.	Kushk Rud, Darya-i-Kusk, Rud-e Koshk
Murgab (Town)	Murgab (SU), 38°10'N., 73°59'E.	Margab, Murghab, Post Pamirsky, Pamir Post, Pamirskiy Post
Murgab (R.)	Murgab (SU), Darya-ye Morghab (Af.), stream, 38°18'N., 61°12'E.	Morghab River, Murghab Rud, Darya-i-Murghab
Pyandzh (R.)	Pyandzh (SU), Darya-ye Panj (Af.), stream, 37°06'N., 68°20'E.	Pyanduzh River, Ab-i-Panja, Darya-i-Panj
Shuroabad	Shuroabad (SU), 37°51'N., 70°03'E.	Shurabad
Siahgird	Siah Gerd (Af.), 36°55'N., 67°05'E.	Siahgird, Syahgerd, Seiahgird, Siadgird
Takhta-Bazar	Takhta-Bazar (SU), 35°57'N., 62°50'E.	
Termez	Termez (SU), 37°14'N., 67°16'E.	Termiz
Turgundi	Towraghondi (Af.), 35°14'N., 62°16'E.	
Urta-Tagai (I.)	Jazireh-ye Owrtta Tughay (Af.), island 37°30'N., 69°30'E.	Urta Tagai, Urta Toghai, Darqad, Jazira-i-Ortatughay, Ostrov, Urta-Tagai
Vakhan (R.)	Ab-E Vakhan (Af.), stream 37°00'N., 72°40'E.	Vakhan-dar'ya, Vakhan-Dar'ya, Oxus,

* Pik Povalo-Shveykovskogo is the only form currently approved by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names for the international tripoint of the U.S.S.R., China, and Afghanistan. The Chinese and Afghan names for this feature, if they exist, have not been verified.

		Abi Wakhan, Oksus Wakhan, Wakhan, Darya, Abi-i-Wakhan
Zor-Kul (L.)	Ozero Zorkul'(SU), Sari-Qul(Af.), lake, 37°25'N., 73°42'E.	Viktoriya, Kol-i-Zorkol, Lake Victoria, Victoria L., Sar-i-Kul, Sar-i-Kol Sor-Kul, Saraikul Lake, Ozero Zor-Kul
Zulfikar	Dahaneh-ye-zu ol Fagar (Af.), 35° 35'N., 61° 17'E.	

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WAKHAN PASSES

Name	Alternate Name	Approx. Location	Altitude (meters)	Conditions
Vakhjir Dawan	Wakhjir Dawan	37°05'N 74°29'E	5,000	Open to men on foot and animals, usually during June - September. Trail is fairly rough on both sides of the pass.
Mintaka Dawan	Mingteke Daban	37°01'N 74°50'E	4,690	Open to men on foot except during or just after a major snowstorm, or when snow is melting. Pass is on an old main trade route between China and the Hunza Valley, still referred to as the "silk route."
Kilik Dawan		37°04'N 74°31'E	4,755	Deep in snow until late June. Animals must be taken over the pass before sunrise, before the snow begins to melt. Ascent to the pass is easier than that to Mintaka (above) but is longer and subject to closure.
Irshad Uwin Kik-i-uwin Kirghiz-i-uwin	Ersad Uwin	36°54'N 74°08'E 36°03'N 74°08'E	4,877 4,890	There are two passes located here, about 1 kilometer apart. The higher pass opens first, because it has less accumulation of drifted snow. On Wakhan side, the path crosses a glacier difficult for loaded animals; therefore, the lower pass is preferable when open. Kirghiz pass is snowy until July, when most of the snow begins to melt; it can be crossed from then until October.
Khora Burt	Khora Bort	36°50'N 73°55'E	4,570	Closed in winter by snow and open for only a few weeks inspring and fall. Has the least amount of snow in September.
Garzan	Qalandar Uwin	36°53'N 73°52'E	5,250	Alternate to Khora Burt but is steeper and more difficult; seldom used.
Darwazo An	Shawitakh	36°53'N 73°26'E	4,150	Pass is easier than Baroghil and seldom closed. Used by traders moving between Wakhan and Yasin and is good for loaded animals. There is an easy route on the Wakhan side that leads to Sarhadd border post.
Baroghil		36°53'N 73°21'E	3,800	Often closed for short periods in March and April when snow is soft. Route through Chitral to the pass is the easiest and best in all seasons for loaded animals. There is another unnamed pass, located at 36°54'N 73°25'E, that is easier than Baroghil and is usually open.
Kankhun An		36° 53'N 73° 05'E	4,940	Open to men on foot June through September and to animals during July and August. Travel is dependent on the amount of crevassing of the glacier.
Ochhili Dolich		36°51'N 72°51'E	5,288	Open to men on foot. Southside has steep shale and snow slope; north side is very steep, leading down to a flat glacier. Pass is very long and covered by deeply crevassed glacier.
Shahgologh	Phur Nisini	36°50'N 72°43'E	5,240	South side is fit for men on foot; path is across the center of a glacier. On the Wakhan side there is an ice precipice and a flat glacier below it.
Anoshah	Kach	36°49'N 72°32'E	5,360	Path on the south side is almost vertical and over a badly crevassed glacier.
Kotgaz An	Sar Ishteragh Gotgaz	36°35'N 72°02'E	5,600	Open in the summer but has glaciers on both approaches to the pass. Seldom used.
Sad Istragh		36°28'N 71°40'E	5,180	Open to men on foot June to September and to lightly loaded animals during August. Path on the south side is steep and over a glacier and shale outcrop. Surface of the glacier is hard and safe in midsummer during morning hours; surface softens in midday. Descent into Wakhan is easier and path crosses a snowfield and then a glacier but is practicable for loaded animals mid-July to mid-October. Below the glacier the path is easy and leads to the hamlet of Qazi Deh(Kazi Deh).
Khatinza		36°23'N 71° 5'E	4,877	Open all year to men on foot but never open to animals.
Nuqsan		36° 22'N 71° 34'E	4,755	Open to men on foot from approximately mid-May to mid-October and for animals during August - September.
Agram An		36° 15'N 71° 25'E	5,060	Snow encountered at 4,300 meters in August. Path very steep and over avalanche debris and shale. Easier and shorter pass than Dorah (see below), but subject to a very cold wind.
Mach An		36°17'N 71°25'E	5,180	Open to men on foot from June to October. Pass has a steep slope

			of loose sand and stones; impracticable for animals.
Uni An	36°09'N 71°17'E	4,785	Open mid-July to October and only for men on foot. Used as an alternate to Dorah. Used also by smugglers who must use a difficult route over glaciers on the Afghan side to avoid the main trail.
Dorah An	36°07'N 71°14'E	4,511	Open to men on foot May through November and to animals June through October. Free from snow in summer but subject to bad storms in June. Pass is on the main trade route between northern Afghanistan and the Indian subcontinent.

Unclassified

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