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US Foreign Policy towards Russia during Trump and Biden Tenures: A Comparative Study

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Declaration

I, Mohamed Aimen Bouzeghrane, declare that this research does not incorporate, without acknowledgement, any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university ; and that to the best of my knowledge it does not contain any materials previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to:

The memory of my father, Bouzeghrane Taher, may ALLAH have mercy on his pure soul and grant him paradise.

My mother, Kadi Azza, my north star that guides me whenever I'm lost.

My sisters Aicha, Naima, and Roumana.

My cousin, Mouloud Bouzeghrane.

The memory of my teacher, Rabehi Salima, may ALLAH have mercy on her pure soul and grant her paradise.

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Abstract

This research deals with the foreign policy of the United States towards the Russian Federation, during the tenure of two US Presidents Donald J Trump and Joseph R Biden. The study is conducted through the lenses of comparative analysis of the two Presidents' policies, as well as, the Russian interests and counter policies to the US at the time of each administration. The study is based on two assumptions whether the US-Russia relations are based on cooperation they will work together to keep peace and make the world safe for democracy and economic prosperity, and if the US-Russia relations are based on competition they will fight each other for global influence and economic superiority. This research seeks to investigate the areas of confrontation and cooperation between the US and Russia during the tenure of both Trump and Biden. The two Presidents draw from different theoretical backgrounds. Trump and his populist ideals attempted to move away from the usual US elites dealings with Moscow, as he attempted to desecuritize the US and Russian relations. His attempt was rendered futile by the US congress, who soon grew wary of the new president elect potential policy with Russia. However, Biden's liberal internationalism obliged him to work both with and against Russia. In this sense, Biden worked with Russia when needed to preserve the collective security of the liberal democratic world, and he worked against Putin to urge him to restore peace that the Liberal democracies have worked to build since the Second World War. As a consequence, the US and Russian relations during both administrations seemed to have had both cooperative and confrontationist nature.

Keywords: Populism, Liberal Internationalism, Sanctions, Cyber Security, Ukraine

Résumé

Ce travail de recherche traite la politique étrangère des Etats-Unis avec la fédération de Russie, entre deux périodes des deux présidents américains : Donald J Trump et Joseph R Biden. Cette étude sera menée à travers les deux loupes de la comparaison analytique des politiques de deux présidents, aussi les contre-politiques de la Russie. Cette élaboration présente les deux hypothèses suivantes : Si la relation entre les Etats-Unis et la Russie est construite sur la collaboration, alors, ils travailleront ensemble pour la préservation de la paix et de mettre le monde en sécurité démocratique et l'épanouissement économique. Si les relations entre les Etats-Unis et la Russie sont basée sur la concurrence, ils se battront pour une influence mondiale et une supériorité économique. Cette recherche vise à étudier les domaines de confrontation et de coopération entre les États-Unis et la Russie pendant les mandats de Trump et de Biden. Les deux présidents ont des règles philosophiques spéciales, Trump à cause de son populisme, il vaudrait s'opposer au courant traditionnel américain élitiste dans ses relations avec la Russie, alors qu'il a essayé d'établir ses rapports moins sécurisés que d'habitude. Ces essais sont échoués bien que le Congrès américain a été au courant des tentatives du président élu et il les a empêchées. Par contre, l'internationale libérale de Biden lui forçait à travailler avec et contre la Russie. Biden a bossé avec la Russie afin de protéger la sécurité collective des états libéraux et démocratiques, mais il a également tenté d'être contre la Russie dans le but de forcer Poutine à récupérer la paix qui est construite par les états libéraux et démocratiques dès la deuxième guerre mondiale. En conséquence; les relations entre les États-Unis et la Russie au cours de l'administration de Trump et Biden était dominée à la fois par la coopération et la confrontation entre les deux états.

mots clés : populisme, internationalisme libéral, les sanctions, la cyber-sécurité, Ukraine.

List of Abbreviations

ATACMS: Army Tactical Missile System

CAATSA: Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency

CISA: Cyber Security and Infrastructure Agency

COP26: Conference of the Parties 26

EU: European Union

FSB: Federal Security Service

GMA : Great Magnitsky Act

GRU: Central Intelligence Office

ICBM: Intercontinental Ballistic Missile

IRBM: Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile

INF: Intermediate-Nuclear Forces

ISS: International Space Station

ISIS: the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

NASA: National Aeronautics and Space Administration

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NDAA: National Defense Authorization Act

NS1: Nord Stream 1

NS2: Nord Stream 2

SDF: Syria Democratic Forces

SLBM: Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile

START: Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty

USA: United States of America

USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

YPD: Democratic Union Party

YPJ: Women's Defense Unit

Glossary

Checks and Balances: A principle to the US government that works upon the founding fathers' vision of decentralizing political power. This principle works with the three branches of government executive, legislative, and judiciary. The three branches check one another, so that no branch can abuse political power.

Euromaidan: A civil unrest that began on November 21st, 2013 in Ukraine, after the then Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich refused to sign into law an agreement between Ukraine and the European Union.

K-12 Schools: A term that expresses the years of public education supported by the government in the US and Canada. In this system education is afforded by the government in primary and secondary schools, until high school.

Lithography: It is a printing process that uses ink, grease, and water. In a lithographic process, ink is applied to a non image blank surface either directly on a paper, or through press tools to create an image.

Monroe Doctrine: In his annual statement in front of the congress, President James Monroe declared that the old world should not intervene or involve themselves in the new world. This created an approach in foreign policy that was based on "continentalism", this approach meant that the Eastern sphere should not intervene in the Western sphere, at that time the Americas, as it is considered American sphere of influence.

Mutual Assured Destruction: A foreign policy principle that originated in the Cold War era. It holds that a nuclear attack initiated by any one of the nuclear states on other nuclear state would be met with a nuclear counter attack. The results of this nuclear assault will be the mutual destruction of both states.

New Deal: A economic relief program enacted by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt between 1933 to 1939. It brought about reforms in various economic and social sectors of the US.

Rosocosmos: A state corporation of the Russian federation, that was created in August 2015. It aimed at overseeing the aeronautic programs of Russia, and cooperating with international partners of the International Space Station.

Sanctions: An order by a government that limits the amount of economic exchange and contact with another country, in order to oblige it to obey the international law.

Stux-Net Virus: It is a malware virus that was developed in 2006 by the US to attack Iran's nuclear program facilities. In 2010, a code error in the virus made it spread around the world; with the US admitting to creating it in 2012.

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General Introduction

The foreign policies of American Presidents play a crucial role in shaping international relations and addressing global challenges. The US foreign affairs towards Russia have always been an interesting point of discussion. Indeed, both nations relationship helped and has helped in shaping the world we live in today. This research is undertaken to examine and compare the approaches of two prominent American presidents Donald Trump and Joe Biden in dealing with Russia. By analyzing their policies, one can gain insights into their strategies, priorities and diplomatic engagements. Finally, this research discloses the potential areas of cooperation and conflict between the two nations during the tenure of two American Presidents.

The main motivator for countries conducting foreign affair policies is survival, and the United States` foreign policy uses two instruments to maintain its power and sovereignty on the global scene. The first is economic interests, the more wealth secured means a more prosperous economy. And the second is national security, it entails the need of protecting the wealth and prosperity, thus both tools are actually interrelated in US foreign policy, and are basic elements for the US foreign policy. When testifying in congress in 1972, the undersecretary of state U. Alexis Johnson predicted that the economic considerations would dominate US foreign affairs, as did the security consideration dominated before (Pastor 4).

It seems that the History of the Russo-American relations dates back to the thirteen colonies war of independence. At the beginning, the Russian stance of the war was that of aiding King George III of England to fight against the Americans, a promise made by Catherine II of Russia; while at the same time the Russians would get effective assistance from the British in their fight against the Turks (Straus 4). Such a bad start to their relation did not hurdle their future engagement with each other after the independence, for it was the

same Russian monarchy that helped in keeping the English's involvement in the American civil war limited to only political discourse, as stated by the journalist Henry Clews in an article concerning this point (10). Although, they had a rough start in their relations, the US and the Russian Empire seemed to have worked together later on.

Anderson Coleman in his thesis "*Bridging the Gap: Analyzing the History of U.S.-Russian Relations throughout History and the Actions That Would Improve Them*"(12) contends that during the era of the Russian Empire, the US and Russia had peaceful relationship, however, such a relationship did not last, as after the 1917 Bolshevik revolution their relationship started to change. Initially, the working class of Russia rose against the tyranny of the ruling class, this resulted in a long bloody civil war in Russia. The civil war ended with Nicholas II, the last Tzar of Russia, abdicating his throne. Vladimir Lenin would later establish a full communist government to lead the country. Such a coup d'état was not welcomed by the US president Woodrow Wilson, as he refused to recognize the Soviet Union as legitimate state, and so diplomatic relations between the US and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) would be halted until 1933. Nevertheless, the situation would later change, as both countries were obliged to work together during Joseph Stalin's rule to fight Nazi Germany (13-14)

This alliance ended with the defeat of Nazism in Germany, and later evolved into a rivalry that dominated the second half of the 20th century. The United States started to be aware of the spread of communism in Eastern Europe and other places in the world, and the Soviet Union's wariness of US potential attack on its soil resulted in the cold war. The fear of "Mutually assured Destruction" grew day by day during that period. Both the US and Russia raced one another for superiority in areas like armament, space, and ideological dominance; such race resulted in various face offs between the US and USSR like the Cuban missile crisis of 1961. This period saw its end with the downfall of the USSR, the Ronald Reagan

administration had worked against the USSR by the end of the Cold War by providing aid to anti communist groups, like the Taliban in Afghanistan. Reagan also attempted at getting closer with Soviet leaders, Gorbachev seemed keen on Reagan's attempts of desecurtization resulting in various agreements between the two powers like the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) of 1987. The slow but sure downfall of the USSR came true with the fall of the Berlin wall in 1991 marking the end of the Cold War (14-16).

The post cold war period and the rise of Boris Yeltsin as President of the Russian Federation was not as peaceful, although the US with both Clinton and Bush wanted to integrate Russia to the Liberal Internationalist world order. It partially worked as Russia had made various treaties concerning trade and arms control agreement with the US. The relationship between the two superpowers would quickly sour, and the reasons are Yeltsin's authoritarian policy that painted a bad image of Russia with democratic America, as well as, the Clinton administration's ambitions to expand the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) borders eastward. When NATO advanced its borders, Russia reluctantly agreed.

The Bush administration hence wanted to patch the relationship with the new Russian President Vladimir Putin, as the period of 2001-2003 saw a positive rise of diplomatic relations between the two. Mainly, Putin's support of the law, and his war on terror appealed to the US. However, the Iraq invasion of 2003, and the Bush administration deployment of several ballistic missiles that were against treaties of arms control with Russia made their relations sour again. In the next few years the US would take various unilateralist decisions like the invasion of Lybia which made Putin reconsider the Russian-American relations. Subsequently, Putin viewed it best for Russia to restore its national identity and began restoring its power worldwide, thereby the annexation of Crimea seems to be a good example (17-19)

Various studies were conducted on both Trump and Biden's foreign policies towards Russia, yet it was done separately, few academic works have compared both. Joseph Nye in his book *"Do Morals Matter"* (12) contends that there are two faces of a moral foreign policy according to the western tradition. The first is the realist one which takes its intellectual roots from Hobbes, Thucydides, and Machiaveli. Foreign policy for this camp is amoral. The other face is that of the Liberals which traces its roots to Immanuel Kant, who argued that there are basic values that are shared by the cast population. For this view Trump represents the former camp, while Biden represents the latter. Thoresten Wojczweski in his articles *"Trump, Populism, and American Foreign Policy"* (9) claims that The election of Trump as a president of the US has been a fascinating event of the rising populists, who pit "the people" against "the elite". Trump's speeches pleased the people during the election period of 2016, the Trumpian narrative promised to overcome an existential crisis that the US is facing, and that only he can overcome by restoring American interests over the interests of foreign countries

Furthermore, Jonny Hall in his book *"In Search of Enemies: Trump's Foreign Policy"* argues that populism can be found on three basis, the first is to put a moral goal for the people at the center, and secondly arguing that there is a group of elite working against that moral goal. Lastly, the stage is now ready for populists to call for a state of crisis to win over the support of the populace. In addition, Trump's moral goal that he set is "America First Ideal". As stated by Ronald Powaski in his book *"Ideals, interests, and US foreign policy from George HW Bush to Donald Trump"*, during his early months at the White House, he implemented that principle to the core, as during his speech at the NATO headquarters in Brussels in the 24th of may 2017, he criticized the European leaders for not meeting the commitments towards the alliance.

In the same light Hilde Eliassen Restad in his article “*What makes America great? Donald Trump, national identity, and US foreign policy*” (7) states that the trump doctrine is driven by ethnic nationalistic ideals, this was apparent when he claimed that the first Black president of the US is not a native. This was followed by a series of what most considered racist and hate speech towards Mexicans and Muslims.

In their article “*The Biden Doctrine and the Baltic States from Rhetoric to Action*” Sandis Šrāders and George Spencer Terry (8) argue that the Biden tenure witnessed a rising Russian aggression with Putin seizing more control, and china’s growing economy. The Biden narrative during the 2020 election period had criticized the Trump tenure, as he promised that the US would build back its relationship with its allies. All in all, Lev Sokolshchik in “*Year One of the Biden Administration*” claims that the united States and Russia each country envision its own mission on the international scene, for the US is to protect democracy and liberal values, whereas for Russia it is to protect its political and cultural diversity and its growing influence in other areas in the world.

This research is going to focus on shedding the light on the shift that happened in US foreign policy after trump. This kind of academic endeavor will help enhance the basis for a better understanding of the events occurring in our world today, especially the conflict in Ukraine. It will also pave the way for further studies to be conducted in order to fill the gap in knowledge of our comprehension of the US foreign Policy for the last 8 years.

The study adopts a comparative analytic viewpoint, as it will allow for a better understanding of both administrations’ good comings and shortcomings, similarities and differences, and it will help develop a solid ground for answering the major question of the research.

This research seeks to investigate the foreign policy of the U.S. towards Russia during the tenure of two American Presidents Donald Trump and Joe Biden. The premise of such a decision is to limit the period and topic to better study and comprehend the intricate factors that influenced the events described.

It raises the following hypothesis:

- If the U.S.-Russia relations are based on cooperation they will work together to keep the peace and make the world safe for democracy and economic prosperity.
- If the U.S.-Russia relations are based on competition they will fight each other for global influence and economic superiority

In order to answer these Hypothesis the following major questions have been raised:

- What are the potential areas of conflict and cooperation between the two superpowers?

This major question is subdivided into the following subsidiary questions:

- What are the differences between their policies ?
- What are the similarities of their policies?
- What is the philosophical background of their foreign policies ?
- What are the Russian interests at the time of each administration ?
- What are the Russian responses to the US foreign policy at the time of each administration ?

This research includes an abstract, general introduction, three chapters, and a general conclusion. The abstract gives a brief overview of the research. The general introduction contains the hypothesis and the questions raised by the research. The first chapter deals with the US and Russia relations under Trump, and his attempt at descurization. The second chapter deals with the Relationship of the US and Russia under Biden, and the return of

liberal Internationalism at the forefront of American foreign policy. The third chapter deals with the Russian response to their policies, which will lead to determining the areas of conflict and cooperation between the US and Russia. Finally the general conclusions will give a summary, and present the findings of the research.

Chapter One

US-Russia Relations Under Trump's Administration

Introduction

The foreign policy of the United States is characterized by continuity and change, as continuity represents a general goal that US presidents strives to achieve, however, change means that each president has a different vision and an approach to achieve that goal. Indeed, this was evident with the economic sanctions of 2014 that Obama reaffirmed shortly before Trump's inauguration in 2017. The reaffirmations of these sanctions were a response to the Russian alleged interference in the US 2016 elections, and a concerned measure against Trump's statements about him lifting these sanctions, and recognizing Crimea as part of Russia. In terms of Trump's foreign policy with Russia, there seems to be some discrepancy between his statements that he has a more friendly relationship with the Kremlin and his actual foreign policy initiatives. It is possible that Trump is inconsistently soft and harsh when it comes to his policy with Moscow. This chapter explores the theories that guide President Trump's foreign policy, their characteristics, and his foreign policies towards Russia. It will also shed light on the motivation and the source of pressure behind Trump's actions in order to comprehend this disparity with Russia.

1.1 Brief Biography of Trump's Political Career

Donald Trump was born on June 14th, 1946, in New York. He was the fourth of five children for Fred Trump, a real estate developer, and Mary Anne Macleod Trump, a Scottish immigrant. In 1971, he would eventually take over his family's business and expand it, as he took interest in resorts, casinos, hotels, and golf fields. In the 1980's, he branded his name to include food, cologne, clothes, and furniture. Trump had switched over his political affiliations over time during the past thirty years. In 1987, he was a republican, then an

independent in 1989. In the year 2000, he ran for presidency for the first time, only to become a democrat in the next year. In 2009, he became republican again, yet he became independent in 2011 to get a chance at the presidential run of 2012. The latter is the year where he became a republican, a political position he had not changed since. During the 2016 primary elections, Trump won over other Republicans nominees. He would later win over the former secretary of state Hilary Clinton in the general elections, becoming the 45th president of the United States of America (“Donald Trump-impeachment, presidency & Education”).

1.2 Populism

Mudde and Kaltwasser (2) and Muller (7) argue that populism is not a fixed term to define, as it is a politically contested subject. This notion according to Muller (15) “Populism, I suggest, is a particular moralistic imagination of politics, a way of perceiving the political world that sets a morally pure and fully unified—but, I shall argue, ultimately fictional—people against elites who are deemed corrupt or in some other way morally inferior.” In the same light, Mudde and Kaltwasser (5) define populism as an amateur political action of gaining support of the media and people, by going against the political norms. It seems that populist leaders picture themselves as the ones who stand with the people against the corrupt elites, so populism suggests two concepts, the people against the elites. Populist leaders rise to political power usually revolves around these two notions. Usually, a populist leader would suggest that a corrupt elite minority, which may vary from political personals, media, and economic entities, have undermined the interest of the people in favor of their own interests. Populists capitalize on such sentiment to gain the support of the public to achieve political power, and to have better domestic support for their foreign policy conduct.

Furthermore, Mudde and Kaltwasser (9) suggest three core concepts of this subject the people, the elites, and the general will. Firstly, the concept of the people is combined of

three notions, people as sovereign, common people, and people as a nation. The first represents the idea of democracy referring especially to the French and American revolutions in the 18th century, for the populists the political power is driven from the will of the people. If their will is not respected, revolts will occur. Common people concept refers to the people who are excluded because of their socioeconomic and socio-cultural status by the elites, the ruling corrupted minority, usually exclude the people who are inferior in wealth or their culture is that of a minority. The populist leader promise to make these kinds of people who were excluded by the elites included, if he or she achieves political power. The people as a nation refers to national boundaries that all people born within may be included, the populist leader is only concerned with the people living inside the national borders of his or her country.

The second concept presented is the elites (11). Power is the main factor of determining whether someone is an elitist or not. Anyone holding power positions in politics, economy, and media is positioned with the elites, however, when a populist leader assumes power position he or she partially redefine the elite notion to be some figures working in the background against the will of the people. The last core concept is that of general will. It is derived from the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, he differentiated between the general will (*volonté générale*) and the will of all (*volonté de tous*). The former reflects that people can come together at the same time to share the same interests through elections for example. However, the latter represents different interests of the people at different times, which are not unanimously represented. Hence, populists argue that the general will of the people is constantly ignored by the elites. In other words populists view elites' governments as aristocratic representatives of themselves which treats people as passive entities (14-15).

In April, 14th 2016, Trump published an article in "*Wall street Journal*" entitled "*let Me Ask America a Question*" where he summoned a populist tendency. He states:

I, for one, am not interested in defending a system that for decades has served the interest of political parties at the expense of the people. Members of the club—the consultants, the pollsters, the politicians, the pundits and the special interests—grow rich and powerful while the American people grow poorer and more isolated.

It seems that President Trump is an example of a populist leader based on his aforementioned claim and the populist definition. He has claimed that the elites of different backgrounds political, media, and businessmen, had been constantly violating the interest of the American public. They had positioned their interests and the interests of foreign countries first, over the interests of the US citizens.

Clarke and Ricketts (22) claim that when Trump first articulated his “America First” slogan during his 2016 campaign, it placed him against not only neo conservatives, but also against the broader supporters of the post cold war consensus. During his first speech to explain his administration’s foreign policy, Trump stated “We will no longer surrender this country, or its people” (qtd. In Clarke and Ricketts 22). He therefore made it clear that he would be departing from the foreign policy of the previous administrations, who he considers to be elitists political institutions that worked for their own interests only.

To put it briefly, populism is a political philosophy that examines how the people are in a constant fight against the corrupt elites. Trump views that the elites had undermined the interests of the public and the US because they placed their interests and interests of other foreign countries over that of the US citizens. Therefore, Trump is a quintessential example of a populist leader; his populism draws inspiration from the views of previous US President Andrew Jackson.

1.2.1 Jacksonianism

It is argued by many that the first populist in the United States is the 7th president Andrew Jackson. He prioritized the protection of the will of the American people. He was against a strong centralized government, as he believed that it will undermine the very basis that the founding fathers had laid for the United States. Watson (218) explains that Populism in the United States dates back to President Andrew Jackson. He built his reputation on glorifying the will of the people against who he described corrupted elites. In his farewell address he says “Never for a moment believe that the great body of the citizens of any State or States can deliberately intend to do wrong” (qtd. In “American Presidency Project”). Thus, affirming that power belongs to the people, and that kind of power should not be undermined by any entity.

For Biegon (12) Jacksonianism is one of the four schools of thought in American foreign policy, alongside Jeffersonianism, Wilsonianism, and Hamiltonianism. In this sense Mead (qtd. In Biegon 12) argue that the main aim for the leaders in the Jacksonian context is not economic as for Hamiltonians, nor preaching moral values through administration, as sought by Wilsonians, or liberty for Jeffersonians. However, Jacksonians believe that the government should do everything to promote the well being of the “folk community.”

An important differentiating factor of Jacksonianism foreign policy from that of Woodrow Wilson’s on, is that of to protect members of the “folk community”. The latter is the most important concept for Jacksonians, and it should not be undermined by any form of government. The folk community represents the people and their interests, the government should always prioritize their interests over the interests of other minorities, states, and government in itself.

Furthermore, Clarke and Ricketts (19) argue that Andrew Jackson's tradition foregrounds five implications of foreign policy. The first concerns military interventions, the main reason for Jacksonian intervention in wars has to do with the protection of the "folk community." A great example can be found in the Second World War. Jacksonians lined their opinions with president Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR), as soon as, the attack on Pearl Harbor occurred, as that attack was directed at American soldiers or members of the folk community. Consequently, this presents the second implication. It is to be seen righteous when it comes to conflicts.

The third concern is the protection of national honor, this entails that leaders of the US has to avoid incidents that may embarrass the US on a global scene. This concern seems to have found an example through President Kennedy's attempt to avoid an incident similar to Pearl Harbor with the Cuban missile crisis. The fourth implication has to do with a complete victory in wars with the unconditional surrender of the enemy, the nuclear bombing of both Hiroshima and Nagasaki seems to be a good example, the bombing rendered Japan utterly defeated and had to accept the US terms unconditionally.

The final concept has to do with the minimalist foreign policy of the Jacksonians, this entails that presidents of the US should seek confrontation only with States that impose danger on the "folk community" like the USSR during the cold War, or Germany during the Second World War, however, confrontation should be avoided with States that do not impose a threat on the "folk community." As an example they opposed Clinton's interference in Haiti, Cuba, and Somalia, as these states did not pose any real threat to the traditional border or security of the folk community of the United States (21).

1.2.2 Trump and Jackson

According to Fair (26) Trump took Brian Kilmeade of Fox News on a tour of the White House, as they entered the Oval Office, Kilmeade noticed a portrait of president Andrew Jackson. When he asked Trump about the reasoning of decorating the office with such a portrait, Trump responded by saying:

Well they say his whole campaign and his whole thing was most like mine. That was interesting, that was 1828. They used to go back to Ronald Reagan, now they go back to Andrew Jackson, but that's the great Andrew Jackson. Who actually was a great general and a great president but, a controversial president. (qtd. In Fair 26).

It seems that the 45th president of the US sees some kind of similarity between him and the 7th. Fair (26) argues that every president is capable of decorating the Oval Office to his own taste, so the presence of a portrait of Andrew Jackson seems to not be a coincidence. This quote by Trump explains how he sees that the main point of similarity between him and Jackson is that of populism. Trump represented the will of the people against Hilary Clinton who represented the coastal beltway elites. Same as Jackson did against John Quincy Adams, so for Trump the 2016 election was a much more a replay of its 1828 counterpart, people versus the elites (27). Another similarity between the two is that they used media to their advantage. Jackson used lithography in his campaign, as many lithographs of Jackson in the battle of New Orleans were distributed among citizens. Similarly, Trump utilized Twitter to directly address the American people.

Both Trump and Jackson were “counter-punchers”, although, Jackson counter punched during his duels, while Trump counter punched political criticism by his adversaries. Indeed, during his duel against Charles Dickinson, Jackson opened his chest to him and allowed him to take the first shot, which hit Jackson in his chest. He would later level himself

up and shoot Dickinson dead. Although, Trump had not participated in any duels, he won over other seventeen republican candidates. In each republican debate, Trump made sure to retaliate after every insult of the other republicans, “Lying Ted” and “Low Energy Jeb” are among the counter punches Trump used against Jeb Bush and Ted Cruz as an example (Wead qtd. In Fair 27).

Lastly, the final similarity between the two is their dislike towards misrepresentation of their character in the News. Jackson had showed his anger over incorrect information about him, he even tasked his followers to start the Jackson Newspaper, in order to help fix those misrepresentations. While Kilmeade was with Howard Kittel president of the Hermitage, Jackson’s house and museum, in one of the rooms of Jackson there were news papers scattered on a table with Jackson’s own hand writing. In each paper, Jackson seems to label some articles as incorrect. In the same light, Trump often called out the media to be fake either through press conferences when the question is not to his liking, or through twitter posts (Fair 28). For example, in a twitter post addressing the alleged Russian bounties on US troops in Afghanistan Trump says “Intel just reported to me that they did not find this info credible, and therefore did not report it to me or @VP. Possibly another fabricated Russia Hoax, maybe by the Fake News @nytimesbooks, wanting to make republicans look bad”. It seems that President Jackson and Trump share some characteristic like their populist ideals, their use of available means to create direct contact with the people, their “counter-punching” habits, and their direct stance against the news.

1.2.3. Characteristics of Trump’s Populism

According to Fukuyama (12) there is no clear definition of what populism is, however, he believes that there are three main characteristics of a populist leader. Firstly, the government adapts policies that are popular in the short term, but not in the long run. The second characteristic has to do with the word “people”. Populist leaders do not include the

whole population as a base for their authority. The third characteristic is that a populist leader would denounce existing institutions, like political parties, and develop a direct relationship with the people. Furthermore, Fukuyama (12) argues that Trump fits all three aforementioned characteristics, withdrawing from the Trans Pacific Trade partnership (TPP), not rejecting the support of white nationalists, his problematic relationship with African Americans, Muslims, Hispanics, and his charismatic acts during his speeches in rallies. As well as, his use of twitter to directly address and build a connection with the citizens, all seems to indicate that Trump is a populist figure.

1.2.4. Trump Populist Foreign Affairs and Congressional Checks on Trump

Trump worked on gaining domestic support from the public to conduct his foreign policy. He knew that normalizing relations with Russia would be a hard pill to swallow for the American public, so he presented the difficulties caused by the elites in the United States, and presented the idea that the US is marching towards its doom. By creating such insecurities, Trump had created a fertile soil for his attempt to be friendly with Russia. Mead (qtd. in Lacatus 39) argues that gaining the support of the public on foreign affairs policies has long been a great challenge for US presidents. Consequently, Trump continually presented himself as a better replacement for his contemporaries, also the use of strong language to criticize his adversaries was a trademark of Trump. The foreign policy of Trump was aimed at three main areas, renegotiating trade agreements with partners, strengthening US military position in the world, and stopping illegal immigration (39). These can be explained through the light of Trump's Jacksonian protection of the "folk community" ideal.

Moreover, Wojczewski (14) argues that the rise of Trump to the White House was because he seized the fears and anxieties caused by dislocations. The first dislocation is caused by globalization, and the rise of non liberal capitalism through China. Also, The United States had experienced various economic shortcomings between 2007 and 2009. With

the rise of China that challenged US economic hegemony of the world, and the validity of the capitalist democratic model of social order of the US. The third dislocation has to do with the white Christian nationalists, especially after Barack Obama's rise to presidency. This symbolized the decline of the status of white America. All of these dislocations have created a status of insecurity in the minds of US citizens, Trump in his campaign seized the idea that the US is marching towards its doom, with promise to "Make America Great Again." "The Trumpian discourse appealed to voters through a fantasy narrative that promised to overcome this deplorable situation...." (Wojczewsk 16). Hence, Trump had prepared a fertile soil for his foreign policy, as he wanted to gain the support of the public for his attempt at desecuritizing relations with Moscow.

Trump drawing from his populist background attempted at opposing American elites who had a hostile approach to relations with Russia. Such ambition raised concerns over the future of US-Russia relations. Böller and Herr (3) state that the congress can actually limit a President's foreign policy, as it can use various avenues to counter the foreign policies of the President. Since Trump announced he is running for presidency, he sent various hints that he is going to desecuritize the US-Russia relations, as he announced he would lift the 2014 sanctions on Russia and recognize Crimea as part of it (7). Also, Trump stressed the importance of normalizing relationship with Moscow and reducing emergency measures, as he said in an interview with CBN that getting along with Russia would not be a bad thing (qtd. in Böller and Herr 8).

In addition, concerns by congress members of the threat of desecuritization by Trump took action. Several members initiated bills that would limit Trump's foreign policy conduct, as in January the 10th, 2017, John McCain, Lindsey Graham, as well as, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ben Cardin and Bob Menendez announced Counteracting Russian Hostilities Act of 2017 in an effort to bolster the sanctions imposed on Russia in response to

its 2016 elections cyber attacks (9). Other measures to limit Trump's efforts to desecuritize the relations with Russia came in February 8th, with the introduction of the 'Russia Sanctions Review Act of 2017'. These measures came to enable the congress to veto presidential attempts at waving, suspending, and limiting the applications of such sanctions on Russia (10).

In summary, Trump's pledge to normalize relations with Moscow represents a populist effort to distance himself from American elites. He was, nonetheless, restrained by the legislative branch and coerced into signing laws that would securitize U.S. relations with Russia.

1.3 Unilateralism

Trump had shown a unilateralist sentiment. This can be traced to his populist Jacksonian background. He developed a distrust of his allies, as he saw that they only cared about their own interests at the expense of the interests of American citizens. Sands and Robinson (89) argue that there is no consensus over the definition of unilateralism, however, they define a unilateral state as the one that does not engage in collective agreement on major issues, as it considers its own interests before the interests of other states. In brief, a state is considered unilateral when it is seen acting selfishly when it comes to foreign affairs. The American led invasion of Iraq in 2003 appears to be an example of such unilateral decisions. Although, it was opposed by American allies like France and Germany, the US carried out its invasion. The unilateral sentiment that dominated at the time of President George Bush could be traced to the fall of the Soviet Union and the unipolarity of the world order at the time. In addition, the Trump tenure was characterized by a unilateralist approach to foreign affairs, this is due to Trump's Jacksonian sentiment and the care for only the "folk community." Lacatus (39-40) argues that president Trump had a skeptic point of view toward multilateral

organizations like the United Nations (UN), NATO, and the European Union (EU). In doing so, Trump believes that his predecessors had prioritized the interests of foreign countries, over the domestic interests of the United States and its people. Trump's skepticism of multilateral organizations seems to be evident when according to Larres (7) had described the British withdrawal of the European Union as "fantastic", also he did not shy away from showing support to French presidential candidate Marine Le Pen. The latter, did not hide her intentions of withdrawing from the EU, once she becomes president. Briefly, Trump's distrust of US traditional allies and international institutions, only helped in getting the United States closer to Russia. Trumps' unilateralist attitude stems from his populist sentiment, as the latter views that the elites had exploited the vast resources of the people in favor of doing the bidding of other foreign nations.

1.4 Background on US-Russian context before Trump

Leading up to Trump's inauguration in 2017, US and Russian relations had been deteriorating since 2014. A domino effect that started with Russian support of separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk regions in Ukraine; leading to its annexation of Crimea on March 18th, 2014. Finally, with the Russian alleged interference in the US 2016 elections.

1.4.1 US 2014 Sanctions on Russia

Blanc and Weiss (8) claim that the US 2014 sanctions on Russia came to deter the Kremlin from further aggression on Ukraine, as well as, to support the diplomatic discourse to reach a peaceful agreement between the two nations. It is a first time that an economy like that of Russia would be the target of such systematic sanctions. Archick et al (1) suggests other reasons for these sanction mainly Human rights abuse, the use of chemical weapons, Russia's trade with North Korea, and Russian support of Syrian and Venezuelan governments.

Archick et al (1) continues, stating that the following is a list of the measures the executive branch employed in response to Russian aggression in Ukraine:

- Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-208, Title IV; 22 U.S.C. 5811 note).
- Support for the Sovereignty, Integrity, Democracy, and Economic Stability of Ukraine Act of 2014, as amended (SSIDES; P.L. 113-95; 22 U.S.C. 8901 et seq.).
- Ukraine Freedom Support Act of 2014, as amended (UFSA; P.L. 113-272; 22 U.S.C. 8921 et seq.).
- Countering Russian Influence in Europe and Eurasia Act of 2017, as amended (CRIIEEA; P.L. 115-44, Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act [CAATSA], Title II; 22 U.S.C. 9501 et seq.).

Finally, the determination of the effects that these sanctions had on Russian behavior is a grey area. Indeed, militarily Russia has not withdrawn its forces from annexed Crimea, and its support for the separatist forces has been in all time high. Its intervention has reached the waters of Eastern Ukraine. For example in November 2018, Russian border guards had prevented three Ukrainian vessels from using the waterway that connects the Black Sea to the Sea of Azov. Concerning other diplomatic endeavors of Russia such as its trade with North Korea, it appears to be difficult to say that the sanction may have an effect in this case, because other factors may alter the Russian mindset (Archick, et al 2-3).

1.4.2 Russian Interference in US 2016 Election

According to McFaul et al (3) the Russian president Vladimir Putin had to endure years of western criticism about Russia's autocratic system of government, especially from the then secretary of state Hillary Clinton. In 2016, he got the chance to undermine the legitimacy of US elections, with the rise of Trump as the unexpected wild card in the electoral

race. Furthermore, Putin did not only have a preferred candidate, but worked to make sure that the elections result were to his liking. In May 2017, the department of justice appointed Robert Mueller to oversee a thorough investigation over these allegations. After two years of long investigations, Mueller concluded a long report of 448 pages, in which he made one clear statement “Russia attempted to interfere with our election.”

Mueller (qtd. in McFaul et al 5) explains how the Russians attempted at interfering with the election through two ways. The first is through a “Russian entity” carrying out a social media campaign that favored Donald J. Trump. The second is through Russian intelligence conducting cyber intrusion aimed at volunteers and employees working for Hillary Clinton. McFaul et al (5) suggests that Russia gathered Human Intelligence and signals intelligence. To do so the Kremlin used its ambassador in the US to reach out for prominent advisors in Trump’s team like Michael Flynn, Jeff Sessions, and Jared Kushner. That was the ethical way that the Kremlin used to gather intelligence, however, the unethical way was through stealing it. The officers of the Russian intelligence hacked into the computers of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and the Democratic National Committee. They sent spear-phishing emails to Clinton’s employees, and they were successful in stealing hundreds of emails from John Podesta, Clinton’s campaign chairman.

To say that the Russian intervention was the major factor in deciding the result of the 2016 election would be far from the truth. It is important to note that other factors had influence on the election. “The state of the economy together with terrorism were some of the top issues that affected the decision of voters in 2016” (Tahir 99). Trump was able to seize the opportunity of the US economic distress, as he lured voters with his ideologies of free trade and that he would break the stagnation of the economy caused by immigration (101). McFaul et al (15) claim that it is impossible to decide whether or not the Russian intervention was the

main reason Trump winning the elections, however, one should not deny the evidences that the Kremlin had a role to play with Trump becoming the 45th President.

1.5 Trump Administration Policy Actions towards Russia

Fifty-two (52) policy initiatives pertaining to Russia were taken by the Trump administration from 2017 to 2019. The range of these measures included indictments, military defense assistance to Ukraine, and economic sanctions on Russian nationals and goods (Polyakova and Letsas). With Russia, Trump acted both leniently and harshly. He is quoted as remarking that “just about everyone agrees getting along with Russia is a good thing except very stupid people” (qtd.in Hankewitz). Nevertheless, he did mention a further time in a 2023 interview with NBC News that “Look I’ve had a very good relationship with him [Putin], and yet nobody was tougher on Russia than me” (“Trump reacts to Putin’s praise” 00:01:19 - 00:01:24).

1.5.1 Harsh Approach

The Trump administration had a harsh approach to its relations with Russia. This was evident through sanctions, withdrawing from the INF treaty, supporting Ukraine, opposing Nord Stream 2 (NS2), and indictments and expulsions of Russian personals. Trump was pressured by the congress to take some of the policies in this approach like sanctions and indictments, through the congress checks on Trump. However, other policies like withdrawing from the INF treaty and opposing Nord Stream 2 were drawn from his populist sentiment of protecting the “folk community” principle.

1.5.1.1 Sanctions

According to Ziegler (506) the United States had used economic sanctions as a tool in foreign policy, as it was less costly than military interventions, as well as, its impact on diplomacy. When Donald Trump assumed his position in the White House in 2017, he faced

an outrageous pressure from the congress, members of the Democratic Party, and members of the Republican Party. The main reason is Trump's friendly comments about Putin during his 2016 campaign. Ziegler (514) states "Trump had often praised Putin and suggested that his administration would improve relations with Russia." Trump also suggested that he would uplift the 2014 sanction made by President Barack Obama. However, congress members were determined to keep the sanctions on Moscow.

Shortly after Trump became president he was pressured to sign The Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act of 2017 (CAATSA). The congress' outrage with the Russian interference in the 2016 election made CAATSA come into fruition. What is interesting is that this bill pitted both the legislative branch against the executive branch, as Trump had his concerns about this bill. He says in a speech after signing the bill on August 2nd, 2017, "I built a truly great company worth many billions of dollars. That is a big part of the reason I was elected. As President, I can make far better deals with foreign countries than Congress" ("Statement by President Donald J. Trump on Signing the "Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act"). The bill imposed various sanctions on Russian economy, government, intelligent sectors, and energy. Trump expressed in two separate signature statements that the legislative branch has undermined the powers of the executive branch, and hurt the American economy and the economy of its European allies (qtd. In Ziegler 515).

Trump's Administration would follow up with other sanctions after CAATSA. President Trump implemented the Great Magnitsky Act (GMA) by signing Executive Order 13818 "Blocking the Property of Persons Involved in Serious Human Rights Abuse or Corruption," in order to impose sanctions on 52 entities from Russia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Polyakova and Letsas list the following additional sanctions:

- January 26th, 2018, sanctions of additional entities that had ties with the conflict in Ukraine and occupation of Crimea, properties of 21 individuals and 9 entities would be blocked in the United States (“Treasury Sanctions Additional Individuals and Entities in Connection with the Conflict in Ukraine and Russia’s Occupation of Crimea”).
- August 8th, 2018, sanction in response to Russian aggression on Salisbury, American companies won’t be able to get a license to export any item concerned with national security (Harris).
- August 21st, 2018, sanctions concerning on two Russians, one Russian company, and one Slovakian company, for helping another Russian company avoid US sanction with concerns to malign Russian cyber attacks (“U.S. imposes fresh sanctions for Russian cyber-related activity”).
- September 12th, 2018, Trump issued an executive order to affirm sanctions on any nation that attempts at interfering in US elections, sanction include freezing US assets in that nation (Polyakova and Letsas).
- September 20th, 2018, sanction to include 33 Russian individuals for their meddling in US elections; as well as, supporting war in Syria and Ukraine, and a Chinese individual who bought jet fighter and missiles from Russia (Polyakova and Letsas).
- December 19th, 2018, sanctions on 19 Russian individuals, who had a hand in undermining US election in 2016 (Polyakova and Letsas).
- March 11th, 2019, sanctions on Russian bank owned jointly by Russia and Venezuela, the bank worked to work a way in which Venezuela would overcome US sanctions (“Treasury Sanctions Russia-Based Bank Attempting to Circumvent U.S. Sanctions on Venezuela”).

- March 15th, 2019, sanctions in response to Russian aggression in Kerch Strait, it involved 9 Russian individuals, and 8 Russian entities (“Treasury Sanctions Russia over Continued Aggression in Ukraine”).
- April 24th, 2019, sanctions in response to Russia granting citizenship to civilians of Russian controlled Eastern Ukraine (Polyakova and Letsas).
- May 16th, 2019, sanction in response to Russian abuse of human rights (Polyakova and Letsas).
- August 2nd, 2019, further sanctions in response to Russian assassination of former Russian spy in Salisbury; it restricted exportation of chemical and technological goods to Russia (Polyakova and Letsas).
- September 26th, 2019, sanctions of a scheme of evading sanctions concerning the shipment of jet fuel to Russia in Syria (“Treasury Targets Sanctions Evasion Scheme Facilitating Jet Fuel Shipments to Russian Military Forces in Syria”).
- September 30th, 2019, sanctions as response to 2018 mid-term election interference, Yevgeniy Prigozhin among other seven individual and four entities were sanctioned (Polyakova and Letsas).
- December 5th, 2019, sanctions against “Evil Corp” Russian cyber-criminal organization accused for stealing 100 million dollars (Polyakova and Letsas).

Begeijk (62) claim that president Trump had imposed more sanctions on Russia than any other US president before him. In his research he observed three major points. The first is that between the period of 1950 to 2019 the US was the one state with major uses of sanctions with 35%. Secondly, he detected a raise in US to EU sanctions, and finally he noticed a difference between the sanctions imposed by Obama and Trump. The Trump administration did not favor trade sanctions, in contrast with arms sanctions. This could be because of Trump’s background as a businessman.

1.5.1.2 Withdrawing from Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty

The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) is the most successful arms control document from the era of the cold war. According to Kühn and Péczeli (66) the treaty was such an important event, as it lifted the nuclear danger on Western Europe. In 1987, The US and Soviet Union agreed on destroying their ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5500 kilometers. “The United States and the Soviet Union destroyed a total of 2692 short-, medium-, and intermediate-range missiles by the treaty's implementation deadline of June 1st, 1991” (“The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty at a Glance”). By this decree, both parties are not to produce or test any of these missile types. However, the first allegation of Russian violation of the treaty came in 2014, as the US accused Russia of testing cruise missiles in the range that the treaty prohibits. Although, the first detection goes back to 2008, the reason why the United States waited such a long time to accuse Russia can mainly amount to wanting to build a strong argument before accusing the Kremlin directly (75).

He (3-7) suggests three levels that caused Trump's administration from withdrawing decision making level, state level, and international level. At the decision making level, Trump made it clear in various occasions that he would “de-Obamaize” US politics. Trump quickly withdrew from TPP and Paris agreement. In a rally during the midterm elections, Trump announced his will to withdraw from the treaty; this was a tactic to gain voters' favor of republican majority congress.

The second level is the state level. With momentum gained by Trump's populist upsurge, the Republican Party took slogans like “America First” into action. In opposition to the Democratic Party which seeks peace through mutual agreement with both states, The Republican Party seeks peace through strength. The congress republican majority measured

American capabilities of deploying maneuvers, and found that the US is superior. Thus, a direct engagement would render the US victorious against Russia.

Lastly, the US makes two claims at the international level. Firstly, the new world is changing with the rise of new super powers like China. Although, it has not reached US level yet, but it challenged its leadership in economy. In addition, the rise of other nuclear third party countries, like North Korea have rendered the INF treaty stagnant, as it rendered both the US and Russia shackled by it. And by both retreating from it; may open the door for other treaties that may include third party countries.

To sum up, He (7) states “the Trump administration has changed its predecessor's vision of building a "nuclear-free world" and attached great importance to the role of nuclear in revitalizing military forces.” The Trump administration took notice of the technological advances concerning nuclear weapons, thus they concluded that the United States must be at the top of that field. In other words Trump believed in “peace through strength”.

1.5.1.3 Opposing Nord Stream 2

The Nord Stream Pipelines are gas transportation pipes that exports Russian gas from Western Russia to Germany then to the rest of Europe under the Baltic Sea. Nord Stream 1 (NS1) was in operation since 2011 with fifty five billion cubic meters in transportation capacity. The success of NS1 tempted the Russians to build another two pipelines crossing the same route and with the same capacity of NS1, so in 2018 works on Nord Stream 2 (NS2) started between Russia and Germany (Russell 3). Trump has seen this as a betrayal by Germany, since it is importing gas from the US nemesis that the US is protecting Germany and Western Europe from. At a NATO summit Trump described Germany’s actions by saying “how can we be together, when a country is getting its energy from the person you want protection against, or from the group you want protection from” (qtd. In “Trump says

Germany is controlled by Russia” 00:02:26 – 00:02:35). The Trump administration’s opposition of the construction of NS 2 is for the fact that the pipeline do not cross Ukraine, and that entails that the latter will not get any financial repayment, thus making the latter more vulnerable to the continued Russian separatist aggression. The second reason is that NS2 would further secure European dependence on Russian energy. Hence, the EU would be rendered vulnerable to doing Russia’s bidding (“Fact Sheet on U.S. Opposition to Nord Stream 2”). For this the Trump administration seems to be both against Russia and Germany for continuing the NS2 project, as well as, imposing sanctions to deter the completion of the project. Before NS2 project was about to finish, Trump issued in December 2019, Protecting Europe’s Energy Security Act. The latter forced all ships companies involved in laying the NS2 pipelines to withdraw from the project. As an example “Allseas” the Swiss-Dutch company’s ending ties with the project brought it to a stop (Russell 5-6).

1.5.1.4 Support for Ukraine

Alongside imposing sanctions in relations to the conflict in Ukraine, the Trump administration had supported the Ukrainian government through providing aid packages and facilitating arms sales. Gould and Altman claim that the Trump administration announced its willingness to facilitate more lethal weapons arms sales to Ukraine in their fight against the Russian backed separatists. In 2017, Trump showed his willingness to provide the Ukrainian government with Javelin anti-tank rockets. The congress later approved of such lethal arms sale worth 47 million dollars, the package included two hundred and ten missiles and thirty seven launchers. In addition, in July 20th, 2018 the US pentagon had announced an aid package of two hundred million dollars for Ukraine. The aid package aimed at providing equipment, training, anti-mortar, anti-artillery, night vision, and medical equipment for the Ukrainian troops facing the Russian backed separatists in Eastern Ukraine. The Trump administration ruled that Ukraine had met the qualifications of a state that is to be given aid

packages by the US, hence it allowed the Pentagon to release the aid package for Ukraine (Browne).

Furthermore, the Kerch strait has long been an important location for Russia, as it linked between its mainland and the annexed Crimea. The importance of this strait seems to appear through the newly twelve miles bridge Russia has constructed in that location. The very most incident that showed its importance is that of what happened in November 25th, 2018. Russian naval forces intercepted three Ukrainian ships wounding 3 Ukrainians in the process, also Russian helicopters and jet fighters blocked the strait to the Sea of Azov (Roth). Consequently, in response to this aggression the Trump administration in December 21st, 2018, announced that the US will provide Ukraine with additional ten million dollars, in order to increase Ukrainian naval capabilities. Also, it called for Lithuania and the United Kingdom to further assist Ukraine with security measures, the US also called Russia to return the captured ships along with their respective crew members. Also, to respect Ukrainian sovereignty, and its internationally recognized borders (“Press Release: Increasing U.S. Security Assistance to Ukraine’s Navy”).

Later, in July 25th, 2019, an infamous call between President Trump and the new President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky was leaked to the public. In the call, Zelensky asked for the US to speed up the sale of more Javelin anti tank missiles to Ukraine, as he says “We are ready to continue to cooperate for the next steps specifically we are almost. ready to buy more Javelins from the United States for defense purposes.” Trump responded by making his desire known, that in order for him to facilitate the sale, the Ukrainian President had to investigate the vice president Joe Biden and his son Hunter. Trump responded by saying “I would like you to do us a favor though because our country has been through a lot and Ukraine knows a lot about it. I would like you to find out what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine, they say CrowdStrike” (qtd. In “Read Trump’s phone conversation

with Volodymyr Zelensky”). The phone call had created a great commotion in the United States, with Nancy Pelosi declaring that the Congress’ House is going to launch an impeachment inquiry into President Trump’s call with Zelensky (Becket et al). Initially, according to US officials the call did neither speed nor slow down that arms sale to Ukraine, later Javelins worth thirty nine million dollars were delivered to Ukraine. The sale included one hundred missiles and additional two other missiles launchers (Browne).

1.5.1.5 Indictments and Expulsions

Starting with Indictments, in March 17th 2017, the Trump administration indicted two Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) officers and another Russian individual. The defendants were Dmitry Aleksandrovich Dokuchaev (FSB officer), Igor Anatolyevich Sushchin (FSB officer), and Alexsey Alexseyevich Belan. The reason being their attacks on Yahoo database in 2014; they paid hackers and were able to steal 500 million Yahoo accounts information. “Today we continue to pierce the veil of anonymity surrounding cyber crimes,” said Director Comey. “We are shrinking the world to ensure that cyber criminals think twice before targeting U.S. persons and interests” (qtd. in “U.S. Charges Russian FSB Officers and Their Criminal Conspirators for Hacking Yahoo and Millions of Email Accounts”). Later, in February 16th 2018, the Trump administration indicted 3 Russian entities and 13 Russian individuals for interference in the 2016 election; they paid American citizens to promote political rallies, and to support the then candidate for presidency Trump (“U.S. Charges Russian GRU Officers with International Hacking and Related Influence and Disinformation Operations”). Other indictments include:

- July 13th, 2018, indictments in response to 12 Russian intelligence officers involvement in the hacking of the Democratic National Party office “The 29-page indictment is the most detailed accusation by the American government to date of the Russian government’s interference in the 2016 election” (Mazzetti and Benner).

- October 4th, 2018, including 7 officers of the Russian Military Intelligence (GRU) with their involvement in the hacking of Olympic anti-doping organizations investigating Russian involvement with Chemical weapons (“U.S. Charges Russian GRU Officers with International Hacking and Related Influence and Disinformation Operations”).
- October 19th, 2018, indictment of a Russian woman who interfered in the 2018 mid-term elections (Polyakova and Letsas).

Furthermore, the Trump administration has issued two Expulsion issues in 2018. The first in the 25th of March came when the US accused 12 Russian diplomats of acting outside their capacity of residence. US ambassador to the United Nations (UN) Nikki Haley said that this decision comes under the 1947 agreement that formed that international institution. Haley said ““Here in New York, Russia uses the United Nations as a safe haven for dangerous activities within our own borders” (qtd. In Nichols). The second expulsion came in the 26th of March when the Trump administration joined with the United Kingdom campaign of expelling Russian spies and diplomats. Another 48 Russian diplomats were evicted from the US in retaliation to the assassination of ex-Russian spy in Britain (Rucker et al).

1.5.2 Soft Approach

Even before trump announced his bid for US presidency, he always showed a friendly and soft part to Russia. His statement about lifting the 2014 sanctions on Russia seems to be an example of his soft part towards Moscow. Such a soft approach could be explained by his populist background, as Trump wanted to move away from the traditional way that the American elites deal with Russia.

1.5.2.1 Trump’s Syrian War on Terror and Withdrawal from Syria

Initially, throughout the Trump tenure the aim of the US in Syria started to shift to eliminating the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (Ford 9). Although, the Russian stance

since entering the conflict has always been to defeat ISIS, while implicitly to help Bashar Al Assad. That stance has been fully shifted to fight the terrorist group, after the Russian forces captured Okeirbat. The latter has affirmed the standing of the Syrian government, and that left only ISIS as a target for the Russians in Syria (Walker). Hence, making ISIS a common target for both US and Russian forces during the Trump tenure, as of May 27th, 2017, US forces in Syria had conducted a total of 24 assaults on ISIS targets. Later in the same year, on October 20th US Syrian proxies the “Syria Democratic Forces” (SDF), Was able to Liberate Raqqa of ISIS control (Marshall). Assad the Russian proxy had also shifted his target towards ISIS, and even making gains against the terror state, as his forces broke a three years siege of a zone in Deir Al Zour (Sly).

However, in October 13th, 2019, Mark T. Esper secretary of defense declared that the US troops in Syria are to withdraw. Around one thousand American soldiers are to be moved from the northeastern part of Syria to Iraq (Barnes and Schmitt). According to De Luce et al this decision by the Trump administration would be considered as a betrayal by their Arab and Kurdish proxies who had been fighting the Bashar regime for at least seven years at that point in time. Although, the Russian and Iranian forces had stabilized the position of the Bashar regime, the US forces had always created an obstacle for them, by not allowing them to take full control of the region. Yet, such a sudden decision by Trump would solidify the position of Russia and Iran in the Middle East.

1.5.2.2 Denuclearizing North Korea

Kim (58) states that North Korea has kept taunting the US by testing nuclear weapons, since president Trump was first inaugurated. From January 2017, to September of the same year, North Korea had launched two Hwasong-14 international ballistic missiles (ICBMS) capable of reaching the US soil. Also, North Korea tested two intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBM) in July and August of 2017. As a consequence, the Trump

administration adopted a new approach to its foreign policy with North Korea, the former called for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. In the same light, Russia shares the same position of the US, concerning the Trump new foreign policy approach to North Korea. According to Mankoff and Barrnikova (48), Russia refused officially that North Korea be granted the status of a nuclear state. The reasons behind Russian opposition are various, but mainly Russia still considers North Korea a member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Because Pyongyang had not withdrew for the treaty using the right process. Another reason for the Russian opposition is its strong belief that only countries that manufactured and detonated nuclear weapons before January 1st, 1967, are the ones that qualify as nuclear states.

1.5.2.3 Trump Withdrawing Troops from Germany

In June 2020, Trump announced that he is withdrawing one third (12500) of US troops from Germany. Trump said “Germany is delinquent, they have been delinquent for years, and they owe NATO billions of dollars and they have to pay it, so we have been protecting Germany and they are delinquent, that doesn’t make sense” (“Donald Trump to Cut Half of US Troops over Germany’s Nato Spending” 00:00:00 – 00:00:10). Trump’s reasoning behind this action seems on the surface as a retaliation of German monetary contribution in NATO, but others say that it is a retaliation against Merkel who refused the return of Putin to the G7, as well as, Germany’s heavy reliance on Russian gas. Retired US Navy Adm. Jim Stravidis, the former top military commander in Europe and NATO, said in a tweet that “abruptly pulling 12,500 troops out of Germany (to put half of them in countries who spend LESS on defense) doesn’t make sense financially, hurts NATO solidarity overall, and is a gift to [Russian President Vladimir] Putin” (qtd.In Gaouette and Browne). Trump’s reasoning of pulling one third of US troops from Germany was that the latter was paying lesser than any other member of NATO, however, this decision by Trump will further harm the trust that grew between the US and its longtime allies, which will

work in the favor of the Russian president. According to Giles, Russia recognizes that the best strategy to defeat an enemy is to make him go home without the battle even starting, and if that process occurs directly through the enemy's commander in chief, that would be double the prize. This withdrawal could had been interpreted by the Russians as a weakness by NATO to deter Russia's geopolitical ambitions in pre-Soviet territories in Eastern Europe, and it might had gave Russia an opportunity to exert its influence in territories that were part of the USSR.

1.5.2.4 Space Exploration

Despite the tensions being in an all time high during the Trump tenure because of sanctions and the Russian interference in the 2016 elections, the US and Russia seem to continue working together concerning outer space exploration. It seems that a good example of that cooperation during Trump would be the latter initiated call on April 10th, 2020, with Putin where the two had a conversation about outer space and cooperation in that area ("Putin, Trump discuss space cooperation, says Kremlin"). Moreover, According to Warner on September 27th, 2017, at the 68th International Astronautical Congress in Australia, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) had agreed on cooperating with Roscosmos to help build more human presence in the solar system. Especially, establishing a base on the moon surface, which may open the door for long waited expedition to planet Mars. Although, the US is planning to cut its funding to the International Space Station (ISS) by 2025, the relationship between NASA and Roscosmos will continue concerning the establishment of the lunar base (Illis). Furthermore, Astronauts from both States had been transported to the ISS on board of the Russian Soyuz spacecraft, as on October 11th, 2018, Roscosmos astronaut Alexey Ovchini and NASA's Nick Hague had been transported on board of the Russian Soyuz MS-10 to the ISS. However, the two astronauts abandoned the space craft on its second stage of the trip. The space craft had a malfunction that forced its

crew to evacuate immediately (“Soyuz Crew in Lucky Escape after Mid-Air Rocket Failure”). That incident did not hinder the relationship between NASA and Roscosmos, as on December 3rd, 2018, NASA’s Anne McClain along with Canada’s David Saint-Jacques and Roscosmos’ Oleg Kononenko departed to the ISS on board of the Russian Soyuz M-11 (Reevell).

1.6. Analysis of Trump’s Policies

Trump’s foreign policy with Russia is a grey area, as Trump seems sometimes like he is firm and follows traditional American presidents when it comes to dealing with Russia, but sometimes seems like Putin is the Achilles’ heel for Trump. In 2013, in a Twitter post Trump says “Do you think Putin will be going to The Miss Universe Pageant in November in Moscow – if so, will he become my new best friend?”

Before Trump’s inauguration he made comments that he would try his best to have a friendly relationship with Russia, as he said in October the 9th, 2016, “I don’t know Putin. I think it would be great if we got along with Russia because we could fight ISIS together, as an example. But I don’t know Putin” (“The Second Presidential Debate” 00:46:18 – 00:46:25). Such comments raised so many concerns about what would happen if Trump was to become a president of the United States. Indeed, in his attempt to break away from the tradition of past presidents, he tried to have a softer approach with Russia. This could be traced to his populist background; seeing that the American elites distrust Russia, he went to the opposite side, and attempted to have friendlier policies with Moscow.

However, after his inauguration Trump was faced with high pressure, especially from Congress. The 2016 election was the major card that the Congress used on Trump to pressure him to impose sanctions and much harsher policies towards Russia. Trump in order to get himself out of the suspicion zone of being an accomplice with Russian interference in the elections, his hand was forced to take on policies that would undermine his attempt to

have a healthier relationship with Russia. Trump's past friendly comments on the Russian president did not help him either.

Yet, although his hand was forced, he maintained his aim to have much more flexible policies with Moscow. So during his presidency we find that kind of incoherence in his foreign policies. His policies varied sometimes he is harsh on Russia through sanctions, expulsions, and indictments, and in other times we find that he is soft on Russia. He often defends Russia and the Russian president

In brief, Trump aimed at having a good relationship with Russia, however, he was not able to completely achieve that, because of suspicions about his involvement in the Russian interference in 2016 elections, as he was pressured by the congress to take more firm policies with Moscow.

Conclusion

The US-Russia Relations under Trump were much more shaped by events that happened before he was in the White House. The 2014 sanctions which Trump promised to lift and the 2016 Russian interference in the elections had made it hard for Trump to have his way with Russia, as congress pressured Trump directly after his inauguration to securitize his policies with Moscow. Yet, Trump was able to have some kind of soft approach with Moscow, which made foreign policies with Russia during the Trump era inconsistent between harsh and soft. The harsh approach of Trump towards Russia culminated in the form of sanctions, opposing Nord Stream 2, supporting Ukraine, and indictments and expulsions of Russian individuals and entities. The soft approach of Trump had been visible through his war on terror in Syria, denuclearizing North Korea, space explorations agreements, and withdrawing US troops from Germany. Such inconsistency would continue during the tenure of the 46th president Joe Biden, however, under the umbrella of liberal internationalism

Chapter Two

US-Russia Relations Under Biden's Administration

Introduction

The Trump tenure had raised so many concerns over the position of the United States in the world scene. Especially, the mistrust that Trump had put on the United States' longtime allies, and his attempt at desecurtizing relations with Russia was a first of a kind in American history. It was a period of a unilateralist and populist sentiment that dominated throughout the Trump tenure. Indeed, the then candidate for presidency Joe Biden, had promised to restore what made the US great once more, drawing from the very values of the US. Freedom, Liberty, and facing global challenges like the pioneers once did in the front. Consequently, many scholars predicted that the period of the then president elect Joe Biden will mark a clear shift from that of his predecessor. The return of Liberal Internationalism, multilateralism, US as the leader in facing international challenges amongst its allies, and strict and consistently firm approach to Russia would be the hall mark of President Biden's tenure. Yet, it seems that the latter of the Biden promises could not be achieved during his tenure, as the inconsistency that dominated during Trump seemed continue during Biden's administration.

2.1 Brief Biography of Biden's Political Career

Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. was born on November 20th, 1942, in Scranton, Pennsylvania. He was the first born for Catherine Eugenia Fennegan Biden and Joseph Robinette Biden Sr. In 1968, Biden graduated from Syracuse University Law School, he would eventually work for a corporate law firm to defend big companies. However, he would change the sector of his defense to be public, where his most clients were African Americans. Biden's political life started on 1970, when he won the New Castle County Council (Levingston). At twenty nine, Biden became the youngest senate member to ever serve, and

he served as a chairman or a ranking member in the senate judiciary committee for 16 years, where he would propose the Violence Against Women Act. Then he would serve for 12 years as a chairman or a ranking member in the senate foreign policy committee. He had a significant senatorial career lasting over 36 years. After Barack Obama became a president in 2009, Biden worked as his vice president. He helped Obama in various legislations, including the Recovery Act and Affordable Care Act. On April 25th, 2019, Biden declared that he is running for presidency making 3 pillars the foundation of his campaign; the battle for the soul of our country, rebuilding the middle class, and a call for unity. He would later win over Trump in the 2020 US election, becoming the 46th president of the United States (“Joe Biden THE PRESIDENT From Scranton to Wilmington to the White House — with thousands of train rides in between”).

2.2 Liberal Internationalism

Biden’s foreign policy advocates the protections of “collective security”, spread of democracy, and US engagement in multilateral institutions. It seems that Biden draws his foreign policy from liberal internationalism. The latter is a theory in International Relations studies that suggests the application of liberal values in an international setting, protection of peace through multilateral agreements and bodies, as well as, protecting and spreading democracy. To have a better understanding of this theory one has to understand Liberalism as a theory in a domestic setting, then the rise of liberal Internationalism with the early democratic revolutions, and then the American variants of this theory.

2.2.1 Liberalism

As a starting point, according to Mises (9) for a better understanding of Liberalism, one has to look beyond the historical barriers and the modern political parties that identify as Liberal. Because Liberalism has never been able to fully implement its platform throughout

history. As well as, this theory has no fixed definition, if we trace it back to its founders. Like sociology, economy, and philosophy; it is in a constant development. Furthermore, The Liberal policy is founded upon eight pillars, they are property, freedom. Peace, equality, the inequality of the distribution of wealth, state and government, democracy, and tolerance.

First of these is property, and it has to do with the notion of capitalism and the private ownership of the means of production, it is contended that all the other demands of Liberalism stems from this first notion (17). The private ownership means that no private sector of the economy should be nationalized, and that the citizens are free to own private property that varies from everyday life things like a house, cars, and anything that can be owned. As well as, the right to own means of productions like farms, bakeries, or mobile factories. The notion of freedom is deeply ingrained in the term liberal, as it is for the 18th and 19th Centuries liberals that people owe the demolition of involuntary servitude and slavery, as the liberals replaced slave labor by free labor (18-19). With the introduction of property, slavery and endangered servitude became meaningless, in the sense that capitalism had introduced the idea of luxury. People started to look for jobs voluntarily in privately owned means of production, in order to get wages and to reach that level of luxury that other people enjoy in capitalism.

In addition, liberals believe that peace is the father of all things, they argue that free labor brings positive gains. Free labor is most productive during peace times, however, war only obstructs such productivity, thus liberals oppose wars (20). Peace is very important for liberals, and it must be preserved no matter what. The importance of peace culminate in the fact that the working class is mass productive during that period of time, since it is a period where luxurious products can be produced, and the production is not obstructed by war. Thus, the production rises with it gains for the luxurious people owning the means of production.

Furthermore, the idea of equality was brought by the 18th century liberals who were very influenced by religion. They believed that God created all men equal, yet the inequalities between the poor and the rich are created by men themselves. The equality that the liberals call for thus is that before the law, it is of high importance that the law does not discriminate, and there are two reasons for that. The first has to do with the protection of the freedom of men, as only free men can receive wages, thus more productivity. The second reason is to preserve social peace. All members of society must have the same rights and duties in order to preserve the peace in a society (20-21). To be equal before the law is very important, it does not matter if one is rich or poor, all must be treated equally in the court of law. If the latter discriminates, then there is no difference between free labor and slave labor for that matter.

The inequality of the distribution of income has long been criticized by other political theories mainly communism. However, what the communists do not realize is that this model creates the concept of luxury. The latter help motivate the working class to reach that status of luxury, thus to promote more productivity (23). The capitalist liberal model tempt people with luxurious products, homes, or anything that can be rendered private. People are motivated by such products, but can't own them with no money or income. Hence, they voluntarily choose to work in different sectors to earn money and to achieve that kind of luxury. Hence, such inequality provides a motivation for more productivity by the working class.

In addition, Liberals believe that any state or government should not interfere in the economic sector. This means that the government should not nationalize the private sectors of the economy, as by doing so it opposes the private ownership of production (27). If the government opposes the capitalist liberal model of private ownership, the market competition that capitalism creates may be rendered null. Hence, negative effects such as rising prices and low quality products may arise. Carrying on, Democracy is a government which adheres to the vast majority of the governed. In this kind of government no civil war is needed to put a

government that reflects the will of the people, the process is done through peaceful elections which makes the change of government non-violent (28). Democracy is important for liberals, since it ensures peace in society, and it produces a government that represents the majority will of the citizens.

The last concept is that of tolerance. Liberals has long won the ideological war against the church which regarded anything that did not adhere to the religious rules as heretics, and to be burn on the stake as a punishment. In this sense the church was intolerant; consequently, Liberalism to preserve the peace in society must promote tolerance, but at the same time it must be intolerant to any form of any kind of intolerance. In this sense, liberals must promote tolerance towards every religion, in doing so they will promote peace in society (35). To be tolerant to every kind of belief in society, but at the same time to show intolerance towards any kind of belief that seeks to illuminate the other beliefs preserves peace, hence liberals are both tolerant and intolerant.

In brief, Biden is by far a liberal, as we see him defending liberalism by saying that Putin wants the make himself and other people believe that the concept of liberalism is useless. Biden believes that Putin fears the true power of liberalism, as no military force can go up against its power that transcends borders, languages, and persons (Biden 76).

2.2.2The Rise of Liberalism in an International Setting

Ikenberry (66) contends that Liberal Internationalism dates back to the 19th century, its intellectual roots date back to 18th century democratic revolutions, and its political roots traces back to the emergence of nationalism in the mid 19th century in Europe. In this sense both internationalism and nationalism are considered to be two faces of the same coin; both hold the people as a focus of their definition. Nationalism holds that people should be divided into ethnic, cultural, and geographic groups. However, Internationalism claims that such

differences should be eliminated, in order to create a better cooperation internationally. It is important to notice that internationalism has come in different variants, mainly imperial internationalism and Westphalian internationalism. The former is seen as the various ways in which empires create international institutions, projects, and rules to protect their Imperial interests. Westphalian Internationalism is seen when sovereign states cooperate through a recognized agreement about norms and institutions that helps preserve the sovereignty of these states. We can see the latter's definition is very close to what liberal Internationalism is today (68).

Liberal Internationalism saw the light with the rise and success of the Western liberal democracy. The Liberals at the time aimed at creating legal, economic, and social relations with other States of the liberal world. Liberal Internationalist had two different views on such a framework, as some viewed it to be a mere regulatory framework that would help transaction between the Liberal World. Others viewed it as a framework that would create a new world order. For such an order to be successful Liberals realized that peace must prevail between States of the liberal democratic world. They had different approaches to achieve that. Some Liberals attempted at promoting peace internationally through promoting international adjustments in trade, law, and institutions. Other Liberals made it evident that peace must be promoted through changes within societies domestically (69).

At the time that Liberalism first expanded to the foreign policy domain three core characteristics appeared. According to Smith et al (56-57) the first is the Liberal peace zone, the latter entails that Liberal states do not wage wars among each other, as they work to establish a permanent peace among them. It seems that this concept find an example in the state of European countries at the time like England and France. They were in constant fighting since the feudal time until the 18th century. It is at that time when Liberals started taking control over those countries and realized the futility of fighting among them. The

second characteristic is that of imprudent aggressiveness. Although, Liberal states do not wage wars against each other, they have shown a mistrust towards non-Liberal authoritarian States. In that case it is hard to avoid war and conflict with them. Both Liberal Britain and France had waged economical costly colonial wars, and the US did the same when it came to its Westward expansion and the native Americans. Also the war of the US and Mexico appears to be another example of such imprudence by early Liberal Internationalists (59). The third and final characteristic of early Liberal Internationalism is that of compliance and isolationism. This represents the inability of Liberal states to support one another during crisis, like what happened to the US late engagement in World War I (64).

To sum up, Liberalism had started expanding to the realm of international relations, with the first emergence of Liberal democratic format of government. Early on it had three core legacies, peace among liberal states, aggressive imprudence, and compliance and isolationism. These three would carry on existing in the future formats of Liberal Internationalism that were introduced by the United States

2.2.3 Liberal Internationalism in an American Setting

The United States had introduced two frameworks of liberal internationalism, the first was introduced by President Woodrow Wilson, and the second was introduced by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The former provided the main principles of Liberal Internationalism like, democracy, peace, collective security, and freedom of the international trade. While the latter made sure such a version of American Liberal Internationalism sees the light.

2.2.3.1 Wilsonianism

Smith (30) contends that a deeper comprehension of this American kind of Liberal Internationalism will require a return to Woodrow Wilson's presidency. Indeed, many other

individuals may lay their claim as to be the first to push for such an agenda in high office like Nelson Mandela, Kim Dae Jung, Pope John II, and Oscar Arias. All these individuals were for the most part following a liberal internationalist frame work presented to them by the 27th President of the United States. Therefore, the term Wilsonianism can be used to refer to Liberal Internationalism, as his policies that pushed for the creation of the framework of the latter.

In January the 8th, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson issued his 14 points as a proposal to end World War I, among these points:

- Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.
- Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.
- The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.
- A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.
- A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial

integrity to great and small states alike (Wilson qtd. In “Avalon Project President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points”)

Smith (37) argues that four main elements of Wilsonianism can be subtracted from Wilson's fourteen points. The first is economic openness, and it stands for economic integration and interdependency. Wilson had encouraged on the demolition of economic barricades, as well as, his call for imperial powers at that time to liberate their colonies can be seen as an attempt by Wilson to break those barricades. These are all attempts by him to open markets worldwide, so that everyone can practice free trade. The main reason of such claim by Wilson is the transformation that the US had witnessed during the late 19th century; rendering it a powerful economy. Hence, the US became a productive state with no markets opened for her, it seems that this is the reason why Wilson wanted an international free economy. The second element of this concept is that of multilateralism. As suggested by the last of his points, Wilson wanted to create an international institution called the “League of Nations”, that multilateral organization would serve as a “collective security” measurement for all democratic nations. In addition, America has to assume its role as the leader of these Liberal democratic nations. America has all the qualities to lead this new multilateral organization to serve the multilateral interests of the Liberal states (39). These multilateral organizations would serve as a safe shuttle for “collective security”, and it will work at integrating other non liberal states, in order to spread the democratic liberal model to them. The last element is the promotion of democracy; it is the most important element in Wilson's agenda, as it holds that democratic nations live in peace and harmony. Wilson stated:

It is character and good principle, after all, which are to save us, if we are to escape disaster.... It is for this that we love democracy: for the emphasis it puts on character; for its tendency to exalt the purposes of the average man to some high level of endeavor; for its just principle of common assent in matters to which we are

all concerned; for its ideals of duty and its sense of brotherhood. Its forms and institutions are meant to be subservient to these things. (Wilson qtd. In Smith)

For Wilson democracy is the foundation of his framework; it is the idea that liberal democracies do not wage wars against one another. Liberal democracies work in harmony under multilateral institution and open-free market; therefore, democracy must be promoted everywhere to establish peace.

According to Ikenberry (73) Wilson's agenda was to create a new world order in which States would adhere to a concept of a "collective security", The latter would make sure that peace is preserved through a multilateral institution in which states will engage in. The United States being the land of democracy would assume its role to lead this new order. Consequently, a contradiction appeared with Wilson's agenda. It is the idea that collective security could only work with liberal democratic states; this means that non democratic, non liberal, and authoritarian States would not fit in such peace. Thus, to face such a challenge Wilson welcomed States from different regimes to join the League of Nations, he believed that non liberal States would soon be fascinated by Liberal democracy and the frame work that it brought, and will soon after make transition to a liberal democratic regime (74).

Briefly, Wilson's vision of International Liberalism could be traced in his fourteen points. Important to his agenda is collective security, promotion of democracy, free trade and sea navigation, and multilateral institutions led by the United States. It is important to note that, although, Wilson had pitched the idea of the League of Nations, the United States would not join due to the isolationist tendency that dominated at the beginning of 20th century. It is until after the Second World War that the US joined the United Nations.

2.2.3.2 Rooseveltian Approach

According to Ikenberry (141) the period that followed President Wilson had witnessed a great upheaval, and a decline in the implementation of the Wilsonian Agenda. A period of doubts and stagnation in Western democracy, as reasons vary between the US failure to join the League of Nations, dissatisfaction of some States from the Versailles agreement, the raise of nationalist movements in non western countries, and the quick growth of non liberal and fascist States. This was the setting that thwarted the implementation of Wilson's new Liberal order. In 1920, most countries in Europe had democratic regimes. However by 1930, most had fascist and authoritarian regimes. Such retreat by Liberal democracy had given a chance for the National Socialist Party and Hitler to take control over Germany for example (146-147)

Consequently, such a retreat of Liberal Democracy in Europe had forced Liberal intellectuals to rethink ways in which they could revive their world order. At the time the democratic modern state and their institutions were seen as being weak because they failed to face the economic crisis, mainly the great depression, and the chaos that layed outside their borders (164). However, the relationship between the state and its citizens grew in a liberal democratic state more than in a fascist one, this has to do with ability of the liberal democratic states to create a state of welfare, as well as, the protection of the rights and duties of its citizens. It is of no surprise then that the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt had focused more on fixing social and economic hardships. Roosevelt's "New Deal" had committed the government to find solutions for the socio economic problems of that time (165).

Furthermore, Deudney and Ikenberry (3) argue that Roosevelt's approach demands an understanding of the modern world. It sees it as a complex interdependency caused by industrial revolutions and technological advancements. Because of that Liberal Internationalism's goal in this interdependence industrial changing world is to preserve

Liberal values. In concern of Liberal Internationalism in itself, the Rooseveltian approach make it clear that in such global interdependency, concepts like peace, security, prosperity, capitalism, health, and environment should be preserved and worked upon (4). Additionally, Rooseveltians hold that such industrial and technological revolutions have altered the nature of war and peace; an example would be the introduction of nuclear weapons, so Rooseveltians hold that war or anything that may cause conflict should be avoided. To do so the US had introduced various multilateral institutions like the United Nations and arms control associations. Also, Roosevelt had shown a huge interest in how these industrial and economic growths affects the environment. The latter had the US establish institutions to face such challenges to the environment (5).

Finally, Deudney and Ikenbbery (7) argue that Biden's 2020 campaign came with an agenda similar to that of FDR. The rise of non liberal capitalism, with China as a main focus, had made a threat to the unipolarity of the world order; which the United States had enjoyed since the collapse of the Soviet Union. China's well developed economy thus imposed a full on attack on the position of the United States, so contrary to Trump's distrust towards his allies, Biden would work on restoring that Trust. The White House states the following:

President Biden will take steps to restore America's standing in the world, strengthening the U.S. national security workforce, rebuilding democratic alliances across the globe, championing America's values and human rights, and equipping the American middle class to succeed in a global economy. ("The Biden-Harris Administration Immediate Priorities")

In accordance with Rooseveltian interest in interdependency and its effects on economy, it has been found that the Biden tenure was during Covid-19 pandemic, as well as, challenges about

climate change were at their peak. Just like Rooseveltians focused on domestic reforms to face international challenges during World War II by doubling production, the Biden administration had recognized the importance of domestic reforms in facing climate and pandemic challenges (8).

To sum up, FDR had recognized the importance of domestic reforms to face the interdependency of the world at the time. He recognized that concepts of peace, capitalism, and environment must be preserved. The Rooseveltian approach to liberal internationalism is mixture of Wilsonian concepts of peace, collective security, free economy, and multilateralism, as well as, Roosevelt's own concerns about environment, interdependency, and domestic reforms.

2.3 Multilateralism

Keohane (731) defines multilateralism as a group of states working in coordination through international organizations. This concept has been invoked by Wilson and FDR, as it is seen that it can serve as a shuttle for "collective security". Multilateral intergovernmental organization has peaked from 100 in 1949, to 200 in 1960, and reaching 600 in 1980. This raise of multilateral organizations is due to the successful application of Wilson and Roosevelt's Liberal Internationalism, and the raise of the interventionist sentiment after the Second World War in the US. Greve argues that after Biden was inaugurated his government worked extensively to lend a hand to European partners, strengthening relations with the world Trade Organizations, and recommitting to the Paris Trade agreement. Biden says in his address to the 78th sessions of the United Nations' general assembly "In my address to this body last year, I announced the United States would support expanding the Security Council, increasing the number of permanent and non-permanent members" ("Remarks by President Biden Before the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly | New York, NY").

This statement stands in a contrast with Biden's predecessor, as Biden worked to get The US back to its position in the World, and to restore the trust of US allies that was lost during Trump's tenure. The return of multilateralism after Trump can be due to two reasons. The first is the liberal Internationalist sentiment of Biden which depends on multilateral organization to preserve peace. The second reason seems to be the rise of China and Russia as a threat to the Liberal Internationalist order. This threat has not been strongly felt since the downfall of the USSR. Russia rising tensions with Ukraine, and China building a military Island and bases in South China Sea, made the US realize the importance of multilateralism in facing non liberal threats.

2.4 Characteristics of Biden's Liberal Internationalist Foreign Policy

The foreign policy agenda of President Biden has prioritized promotion and defense of democratic values, the return of US leadership on facing challenges, and engagement in multilateral institutions. Firstly, with the rise of China as a threat to the US on the economic scene, the US found itself in a challenge unlike any other. The Chinese economy has become a non liberal capitalist model; providing an alternative to the US liberal capitalist one. Biden says "Look, all we know, it's not easy. It's not — this has never been easy. Democracy is hard work. The work of democracy is never finished. It's never laid down and that's it, all you have to do. It must be protected constantly" ("Remarks by President Biden at the Summit for Democracy Virtual Plenary on Democracy Delivering on Global Challenges"). Wong argues that the defense on democracy at home and on a global level by President Biden can be explained by the constant rise of China on a global level, and the Russians war on Ukraine, as well as, the attacks made by Trump and his followers on democracy. Consequently, the return of US leadership in the international scene is a must. In a speech on February 4th, 2021, President Biden elaborated that he vows to restore the relationship of the US and its allies, and to be more involved with the world to face the

challenges of expanding Chinese influence and the Russian threat to US democracy (“Remarks by President Biden on America’s Place in the World”). Finally, these global challenges required Biden to return to certain multilateral organizations and agreements. Shortly, after becoming president Biden had reengaged in the Paris Agreement, which Trump had disengaged from. The agreement joined 196 entities who agreed to reduce their gas emissions, in order to face the declining state of earth’s climate (Cho).

2.5 Biden Policy Actions with Russia

The Biden administration policy actions towards Russia was also like the one of its predecessor, as it had marked an inconsistent policy towards Russia, sometimes the Biden policies seem firm, whereas other times his policies are soft. The policies of Biden towards Russia were marked by both a continuation and a departure from that of the Trump’s administration. Departure seems to culminate in matters concerning arms control and cyber security, while a continuation seems to be apparent through sanctions and support of Ukrainian government.

2.5.1 Harsh Approach

The Biden administration had a harsh approach towards Russia, drawing from his Liberal Internationalist sentiment. When Russia attempted at destabilizing the collective security of the Liberal world, Biden used retaliatory policies against the Kremlin mainly cyber security policies, sanctions, opposing Nord Stream 2 pipelines, and an extensive support of Ukraine.

2.5.1.1 Cybersecurity

Since the Russian meddling in the US 2016 and 2020 elections, cyber security was a focus of both presidents Trump and Biden. According to Shively (6), President Biden’s cyber security program differed from that of Trump, unlike him, Biden made it a national security

priority. Cyber security in the Trump tenure was characterized by a stagnation in appointing important cyber security positions, which in general had negative effect on the country's defense against cyber attacks (Kleine and Clarke 1).

Kleine and Clarke (2) claim that in his first year in office president Biden had taken major action to improve the US capability of deterring cyber attacks through executive orders, support of congress legislations, and promoting cyber security jobs. Firstly, concerning executive orders, on May 12th, 2021, Biden issued EO 14028 that improved the nation's cyber security. This executive order developed the amount of information about cyber attacks shared between the federal government and federal contractors, it developed the government foundation by normalizing the zero trust protocol, and it designed a transparent debriefing counsel for cyber attacks (2).

Furthermore, the Biden administration helped through legislation. On March 11th, 2021, Biden signed America Rescue bill into law, this bill appropriated 650 million dollars in fund for the Cyber Security and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) in order to apply new broad malice reduction agenda. This law also gave 200 million dollars for the Digital Service, and around 1 billion dollars for the General Services Administration's Technology Modernization service (2). In addition, on October the 8th, 2021, Biden signed the K-12 Cybersecurity act into law. This law appointed CISA to assess the K-12 schools' information base, and to create internet instructions to better the performance of these schools' officers with concerns to cyber security. Following that, on November 15th, 2021, Biden passed the Infrastructure Investment Act. This would appropriate 550 billion dollars in fund, as an investment in various US infrastructures. A sum of 1.49 billion dollars was appropriated towards cyber security, this will be invested in evaluating dangers over agencies concerning cyber threats, and training more people about cyber security. On December 21st, 2021, Biden passed the National Defense Reauthorization Act (NDAA) for fiscal year 2022, which accommodated

770 billion dollars to be spent on various country sectors. This NDAA had some polices concerning cyber security like expanding cyber security to the private sector, evaluating the US cyber safety standing, developing cyber skills of individuals, and improving the defense department capabilities towards cyber security (3).

Furthermore, the Biden administration helped improving the cyber safety of the US through reorganization and building a cyber security workforce. Firstly, the Biden administration worked to reorganize the White House staff and federal agencies. In the White House, Biden made sure to appoint staff skilled in cyber security like Chris Inglis and Anne Neuberger. They were appointed as National Cyber Director and Deputy National Adviser for Cyber and Emerging Technology respectively. Both individuals had past experience working for the NSA cyber security (4). Biden also worked on reorganizing federal agencies. The establishment of the Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy, announced by secretary of state Antony Blinken, is a sign that the US is prepared to deal with cyber dangers on a global scale because the new organization will work with US allies to better prevent such threats (5).

In the same light, Biden administration worked on bettering US cyber security through building an appropriate workforce. Firstly, through recruitment efforts supported by the Department of Homeland Security and its Cyber Security Talent Management System, which set a sixty days of speed recruitment process. By doing so, the department was able to fill crucial cyber security positions (6). Secondly, through budget increases, as Department of Homeland Security Fiscal Year budget of 2022 witnessed a raise of 3.2 million dollars setting it at 124 million dollars from last year. The department of Justice also announced that they will be raising the budgets for fiscal year 2022 of the two divisions responsible for defending against cyber attacks, as it set 17.9 million dollars for National Security and 5.9 million dollars for Criminal Divisions (7).

2.5.1.2 Sanctions

Same as his predecessor, Biden continued in imposing economic sanctions on Russia, even before the Start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. On April 15th, 2021, the intelligence committee's assessment of foreign threats to the US election in 2020 was completed. The committee determined that attempts had been made by foreign countries, particularly Russia, to sway public opinion and interfere in the 2020 elections. The US sanctioned 16 entities and 16 individuals who worked at sabotaging the elections at the command of the Russian government ("Treasury Escalates Sanctions against the Russian Government's Attempts to Influence U.S. Elections"). Additionally, on March 2, 2021, the U.S. extended on its chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act of 1991, Executive Order (EO) 13382, in response to the poisoning and imprisonment of opposition leader Alexei Navalny. And countering America Adversaries Through Sanctions Act against multiple Russian entities and individuals involved in the Russian chemical weapons agenda, as well as, regulating Section 126.1 of the International Traffic in Arms Regulations. The latter added Russia to the list of countries, that the US will not export defense products to ("Imposing Sanctions on Russia for the Poisoning and Imprisonment of Aleksey Navalny").

Moreover, shortly after President Putin announced Russia's special operation on Ukraine, President Biden on 24th of February, 2022, announced a list of sanctions on Russia. The list targeted 10 of the most important banks in Russia, through forbidding any US entities from making any sort of transactions with Russian individuals and elites, and other sectors of Russian economy like mining (Nakashima and Sonmez). In addition, the White House announced on the 28th of February, 2022, it will expand its sanctions on Russia. Thus, Americans were forbidden from making any form of transaction with the Central Bank of Russia, and claiming all the latter's assets in the United States. An officer of the Biden administration said "Our strategy to put it simply is to make sure that the Russian economy

goes backward. As long as President Putin decides to go forward with his invasion of Ukraine”(qtd. in Macias and Franck). Such a sanction was aimed to weaken the Russian economy, in order to make Russia back down from its operation in Ukraine. Indeed, on April the 8th, 2022, Biden signed two bills that would allow for further sanctions on Russia. The first bill abstain any act of normal trade for the US, Russia, and Belarus; by rising tariffs on Russian and Belarusian imports. While the second bill banned exportation of natural energy imports from these two countries (Carvajal).

Biden issued an EO on December 22, 2023, authorizing additional penalties on financial institutions who supplied armaments to Russian soldiers.(Haslett). This executive order came in a time where Russia is looking for to restock its arsenal with more weapons, banks in the United Arab Emirates, China, and Turkey were targeted as a consequence (“Biden Signs New US Sanctions Targeting Russia's Defense Industry”). The February 16th, 2024, death of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny in prison, soon Biden accused Putin of killing Navalny in prison by saying “Make no mistake, Putin is responsible for Navalny’s death” (qtd. in Roth). Consequently, with the anniversary of the second year of the ongoing war on Ukraine and the alleged assassination of Navalny in prison, on February the 23rd, 2024, Biden in a speech in the White House announced the he will impose another 500 sanctions on Russia. The sanctions will target individuals involved in the imprisonment of Navalny, and 100 entities that provided support for Russia during the war in Ukraine (“Statement from President Joe Biden Ahead of the Two-Year Anniversary of Russia’s Brutal Assault Against Ukraine”).

In brief, Biden used sanctions as a means of confronting Russian aggression on human rights, its war on Ukraine, and the risk of undermining its European allies. Same as the Trump tenure the sanctions policy continued being imposed during the Biden tenure. However, unlike Trump, Biden was not forced by the Congress to take such policy with Russia, he was

driven by his liberal internationalist sentiment of protecting the “collective security” of the liberal democratic world order. Hence, he had to impose such sanctions to protect democracy, human rights, and US allies.

2.5.1.3 Support for Ukraine

The Biden administration had concerns about the situation in Ukraine. When the Russian president translated his threats into action, the Biden administration was at the forefront of helping the Ukrainian government militarily, economically, and by providing humanitarian aid. The need of the US support was crucial for Ukraine, since it could not stand a chance against the Russian forces without it. For the US, its help for the Ukrainian government stems from its Liberal Internationalist sentiment; the US being the leader of the free democratic world had to protect the liberal democratic government in Ukraine.

2.5.1.3.1 Non-Military Support

The United States made sure to be at the front in providing financial and military equipment aid to the Ukrainian government and people. The US and Western allies were concerned over the massive hoarding of Russian soldiers on the Ukrainian border during January 2022. The Biden administration saw it suitable to approve of 200 million dollars aid package for Ukrainian government, it was the US stepping up to a potential war in the region, and in a way threatening Russia that doing so will have regrettable consequences (Ilyushina). On March 15th, 2023, President Biden signed a bill that would ensure the delivery of the sum of 13.6 billion dollars aid package. That package would be divided into military, humanitarian, and economic aid. Six and a half billion dollars of that package would go for military aid, in order to send more equipment for Ukrainian troops at the front. While 4 billion dollars would go to provide shelter, food, and health care for Ukrainians fleeing their homes. The economic aid will be supported by 1.8 billion dollars, and it will provide assistance for Ukraine and other countries facing economic and cyber attacks threats by Russia (Lobosco).

In addition, On November 22nd, 2022, The World Bank announced that Public Expenditures for Administrative Capacity Endurance in Ukraine (PEACE) Project, which the US used to forward a package of 4.5 billion dollars. This aid was aimed at helping the Ukrainian government withstand the wages of its employees, health service sector, and welfare policies (“World Bank Mobilizes Additional \$4.5 billion for Ongoing Assistance to Ukraine”).

2.5.1.3.2 Military Support

Additionally, the US had supported Ukraine through military aid. As of December 12th, 2023, the amount of money spent on Ukraine to help its military sector is 44 billion dollars in military aid alone. Since the war began Biden’s administration was careful when providing weapons to Ukraine, fearing that it would further escalate the situation with Russia. So it seems that at the beginning the US started providing small weapons like Javelin anti tank missiles. However, later the US started delivering more lethally advanced weapons like High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems and patriot antimissile batteries. In 2023, Biden’s administration delivered Army Tactical Missile Systems (ATACMS), as the final weapons aid of that year (Crowley et al). Furthermore, on March 12th, 2024, the Biden administration had asked the Department of Defense for a 300 million dollars aid. In order to address some of the shortcomings concerning Ukraine’s arsenal, The list included Stinger anti craft missiles, additional ammunition for high mobility artillery rockets, 155mm artillery rounds, including High Explosive and Dual Purpose Improved Cluster Munitions rounds, 105mm artillery rounds, AT-4 anti-armor systems, Additional rounds of small arms ammunition, demolitions munitions for obstacle clearing, and spare parts, maintenance, and other ancillary equipment (“Biden Administration Announces Urgent Security Assistance for Ukraine”).

2.5.1.4 Opposing Nord Stream 2

Same as Trump, Biden also opposed Nord Stream 2 construction, he says “If Russia invades — that means tanks or troops crossing the border of Ukraine — then there will be no

longer a Nord Stream 2, we will bring an end to it” (qtd. In Egan). This was translated later on 23rd of February, 2022, one day before the Russian invasion of Ukraine into a sanction. The NS2AG and CEO Mathias Warnig were sanctioned, and officers of NS2 faced Visa restrictions, and their properties in the US were blocked (“Sanctioning NS2AG, Matthias Warnig, and NS2AG’s Corporate Officers”). In September, 2022, East of Bornholm, Denmark, three of four pipelines were blown up underwater, Danish secret service had announced after their investigation that a court case cannot be held, as the saboteurs are still unknown (Gozzi). This led Putin to accuse the US secret service of blowing the pipeline, as he responded to Tucker Carlson in an interview with him. When Putin was asked who blew Nord Stream 2, he responded by saying “You for sure” to which Carlson replied “I was busy that day”, and Putin replied directly by saying “You personally might have an alibi, but the CIA has no such alibi” (Tucker 01:11:33 – 01:11:56). It seems that President Putin is convinced that the Biden administration had ordered the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to sabotage the NS2 pipeline. The United States had not hid its anger over Germany and the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. The US claims that this will make Germany and Europe more dependent on Russian energy.

2.5.2 Soft Approach

The US during Biden’s tenure worked on preserving the Liberal Internationalist peace. So Biden had to work with Russia in certain areas to preserve the “collective security”, even when tensions between the two States had reached an all time high. Consequently, Biden had a soft approach with Russia concerning his policy in arms control, climate change, and space exploration.

2.5.2.1 New START Treaty

According to Kimball, almost every president from John F Kennedy until Trump was able to reach an agreement with the Soviet Union or later Russia with concerns to nuclear

weapons. However, the Trump tenure had witnessed a break with such tradition, as he refused to renew negotiations with concerns to the INF treaty. However, the first foreign policy challenge of President Biden was the renewal of the last standing hallmark of US-Russian arms control agreements the New Start Treaty. Woolf (1) explains that the US and Russia had signed a new agreement with concerns to Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) on April 8th, 2010. This would be a renewal treaty, for the START treaty that expired on December 5th, 2009. In this Treaty Obama and Medvedev agreed to a total of three limitations. The first has to do with the number of delivery vehicles tasked with carrying nuclear weapons, it issued 800 as the limited number of Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) and Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) launchers. It also limited the number of deployed ICBMS, SLBMS, and heavy bombers to 700. The third and final limitation concerns warheads, as it made 1550 warheads as the limit for both countries. (2). After Biden became president he had a phone call with president Putin and both agreed on January 26th, 2021, to extend the treaty for five more years. In that call Putin insisted on improving US-Russian relations, and issues of election interference and the conflict in Ukraine were raised on part of President Biden (Hersezenhorn). Reasons for extending this treaty from Biden's administration vary. Firstly, not extending the treaty would mean a loss of a valuable source of information on Russian nuclear power, especially during a time of crisis and tension. Secondly, the return of US leadership in concerns of arms control, that it had lost during the Trump tenure. Finally, this treaty would open the door for more arms control agreements between the US and Russia, as well as, other countries that are growing to be third party nuclear States like Iran, North Korea, and China (“On the Extension of the New START Treaty with the Russian Federation”).

2.5.2.2 Facing Climate Change Challenges

According to Harvey at the White House climate summit Biden had expressed his will to cooperate with Russia, in order to discover new techniques to reduce the effects of climate change on our world. The Russian mindset towards climate change had changed, as denial of climate change is no longer the approach of the Kremlin. This seems to be apparent at the Conference of the Parties 26 (COP26) UN climate change summit at Glasgow. Although, Putin did not attend the summit himself, the Russian delegation of 312 individuals was large at number, as it exceeded even the delegation of the country hosting the event. The Russian delegation was composed of high ranking officers, ministers, and energy corporate representatives, which showed the interest of the Russian Federation in the area of climate change and global warming (Trenin). On July 15th, 2021, John Kerry, the US presidential envoy for climate, and Ruslan Edelgeriyev Russia's climate representative, issued a joint statement where they recognized the importance of cooperation between the two countries, and discussing important climate problems like "satellite monitoring of emissions and removals of greenhouse gases; forests and agriculture; climate and the Arctic, including black carbon; reducing emissions from non-CO2 gases" (U.S.-Russia Joint Statement Addressing the Climate Challenge). It seems that a further evidence is that after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Biden administration seemed to make the Russian government isolated globally, however, when it comes to the arctic the US seems keen on letting the door open for cooperation with Russia. The main reason for such approach is the fact that Russia has more information on climate change in that region, and the US is not willing to lose it (Widakuswara).

2.5.2.3 Space Exploration

On April 3rd, 2021, Russia and the US agreed on extending cooperation with concerns to space exploration until December 31st, 2030. This came as a surprise, as the relationship

between the two powers have been in all time low, with Biden labeling Putin as a “killer”, which the Kremlin has denied (“Russia backs extending space cooperation deal with U.S. to 2030: agencies”). Additionally, the outer space collaboration between the two states seems unaffected after the Russian invasion began. According to Gorman, NASA and Roscosmos had been conducting talks amid the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, and they both reached a crew exchange agreement. The latter would allow for crews from both countries to visit the space in US and Russian space rockets. Furthermore, on August 25th, 2023, the US and Russia reached another agreement which would allow for American astronauts to use Russian Soyuz to reach the ISS. Although, the US and Russia relationship have been in an all time low, their cooperation in space exploration have not been affected, especially when crews of both countries exchange flights to the ISS (“Russia, US agree additional US astronaut flight to International Space Station, Interfax reports”).

2.6 Analysis of Biden’s Policies toward Russia

The Biden tenure was both a continuation and a departure from that of Trump. Biden’s focus mainly drew from his Liberal Internationalist sentiment. In this sense, Biden attempted to secure peace through the multilateral institutions and agreements, arms control policy, improving US cyber security program, sanctions, and through supporting Ukraine during the war with Russia. In this Biden wanted to keep peace, because of the long Liberal Internationalist belief that authoritarian states would in time be overthrown by Liberal democratic regimes, and join the collective liberal internationalist body of states. Fukuyama (1) says “The triumph of the West, of the Western idea, is evident first of all in the total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism.” It is because liberal internationalists hold that the people living in authoritarian states are to be amazed by the everlasting peace that Liberal States enjoy amongst themselves, so in order to preserve peace

Biden had to work with and against Russia. Hence, we find that the inconsistency that dominated the policies of Trump continuing to exist during the tenure of Biden.

Another area of preserving peace was the use of NS2 pipeline as a means to deter Russia from initiating its full scale invasion in Ukraine. According to Temnycky there are three reasons why NS2 imposes a threat to the European Union. The first is that the pipeline goes through the Baltic Sea, meaning that Russia would gain more than it would lose if that pipe line would have gone through another country like Ukraine. Second reason leads to raising the naval presence of Russia in the region. The final reason would be that Russia would have the upper hand if relations with the European Union goes south, by having the leverage of turning the pipeline off. With tension rising at the borders of Russia and Ukraine, the pipe line was used by the US to threaten Russia of engaging in conflict in Ukraine.

Biden attempted at preserving democracy through improving the US cyber security. Biden says “Cybersecurity is essential to the basic functioning of our economy, the operation of our critical infrastructure, the strength of our democracy and democratic institutions, the privacy of our data and communications, and our national defense” (“One Year In: The President’s National Cybersecurity Strategy is Driving Change and Protecting the Nation”). The Russian intervention in the 2016 and 2020 elections created an outrage over the vulnerability of the US democracy itself. Unlike Trump who cyber security wasn’t a national priority for, Biden made it clear that this sector is an important national priority. It seems that the Biden administration has invested more money in cyber security, creating more jobs in the sector, issuing executive orders, and supporting legislative branch decisions concerning the improvement of the sector.

The 46th president marked a continuation in his sanctions and support for Ukraine policy with his predecessor against Russia. However, unlike Biden, Trump’s hand was forced

to impose such sanctions, Biden sees that sanctions are a tool used to preserve and restore peace. The sanctions were imposed even before the war on Ukraine had started, however, after the full scale invasion of Ukraine the sanctions were doubled as a means to restore peace, and to force the Russian economy to stagnate, forcing an immediate peace in the region. The Biden administration worked to support Ukraine during its war with Russia. Ukraine is a standing example of an authoritarian country, which is becoming a Liberal state. Such an example must be protected from any attempt of other non liberal states to return it to its former self. Biden says “The brave people of Ukraine fight on, unbowed in their determination to defend their freedom and future” (“Statement from President Joe Biden Ahead of the Two-Year Anniversary of Russia’s Brutal Assault Against Ukraine”). Biden sees Ukraine as a country that is fighting for the main principles of any other Liberal country, his government support of Ukraine military and non military can be explained in this light.

Global warming was an issue that was of utmost priority for the Biden administration, global warming and other climate change challenges imposed various risks on earth and humans. An example of how global warming could disturb peace is the effects of it, drought and other natural disasters could ignite wars between nations. Biden chose to cooperate with Russia in that field to better find solutions for the major issues of climate change. Unlike Trump, Biden attempted at preserving peace through arms control. The New START treaty is an evident break of the break that happened after Trump. The latter’s motto is “to lead through strength”, so we find him not negotiating or renewing arms control agreements like withdrawing from the INF treaty. However, Biden’s focus on this sector is of a grave importance, he says “The United States is going to continue to pursue good-faith efforts to reduce the threat of weapons of mass destruction and lead by example, no matter what else is happening in the world” (“Remarks by President Biden Before the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly | New York, NY”). For Biden the US must return to lead the scene

in arms control, as it is a tool that serves in preserving the Liberal Internationalists peace. The fact that an authoritarian state like Russia owns nuclear weapons is a major threat in itself, the US can go on a full scale war that would be destructive, on a scale that humanity have not witnessed before. Thus, the safest way to preserve peace is through arms control agreements. The continuation seems to appear with the continued space cooperation during Biden. NASA and Roscosmos carried on working together, despite the isolationist approach that the US showed towards Russia after its invasion of Ukraine.

Briefly, The Biden tenure marked both a continuation and a departure from that of Trump. In a sense Biden continued imposing sanctions and offering support to Ukraine; however, he differed from Trump in that such support was not being forced upon him by the congress, and his reengagement in arms control and cyber security.

Conclusion

To sum up, Joe Biden's foreign policy action is derived from a Liberal Internationalist stand point. In this view, peace is common amongst liberal states, and it must be preserved from any threat coming from non liberal states. Hence, we find Biden working with and against Russia, and that created the same inconsistency that prevailed during the Trump tenure. Same as Trump, the Biden administration had inconsistent policy towards Russia. The harsh policies during Biden culminated in improving cyber security, sanctions, support for Ukraine, and opposition of Nord Stream project. The soft approach of culminated in US reengagement in New START treaty, and working with Russia with concern to facing climate change challenges and exploring outer space. It appears that the Russian interest at the time of each president, as well as, its response to both administrations' policies were the same, and that would help distinguishing the grounds of cooperation and conflict between the two superpowers.

Chapter Three

US-Russia Cooperation and Conflict

Introduction

Both Trump and Biden administrations implemented policies that helped to reduce the long standing hostility that existed between the US and Russia, but they also took steps to cause the relationship between the two countries to worsen. This is due mainly to the issue of interests, as sometimes the interests of both Washington and Moscow align, however, other times their interests do not. Sometimes the Russian response to the policies of the US may help in escalating the situation, and may also hinder any attempt at finding a common ground for having a more good relationship between the two superpowers. The Trump and Biden administrations were both cooperative in some areas, and confrontationist in others with the Russian Federation. Mostly, areas of cooperation and confrontation are common between the two administrations with slight difference. Though, uncovering such areas will help to determine the extent to which both administrations were cooperative and confrontationist with Russia.

3.1 Russian Interests at the Time of Each President

The Russian interests play a major role in either paving the way for cooperation with the US, but other times it creates more grounds of conflict between the two superpowers. Putin's interests at the time of Trump and Biden are common between both US Presidents. He always sought to find ways in which he could ease the US sanctions on Russia and on his own allies. The issue of arms control is of a grave importance to his regime. Adding to that, the Syrian conflict and energy policies are at the front seats when it comes to his diplomacy with the US.

As for Trump, US sanctions have long been a thorn at the side of President Putin and Russia, aside from its economic hindrance, it proved to be an effective and an inexpensive tool that the US uses to punish other countries. Putin realizes the threat that such sanctions impose, and have constantly worked on making the Russian economy and the economies of his allies unsanctioned. According to Zeeshan, while heading to Helsinki for his first meeting with Trump, at the top of his lists of discussion is the issue of US sanctions on the Russian economy, and finding ways to ease such policy by the trump administration.

Same thing goes for President Biden, as Putin had never hid his desire of the Russian economy being unsanctioned. We find him even belittling such policy of the US labeling it risky and would undermine the US dollar, which according to him is the strongest weapon the US has. He says in an interview with Tucker Carlson on February 9th, 2024, when Carlson asked him how has sanctions changed the dollar's place in the world "You know, to use the dollar as a tool of foreign policy struggle is one of the biggest strategic mistakes made by the US political leadership. The dollar is the cornerstone of the United States' power." His main argument is that the US leadership has made its allies loose trust in the dollar, as many of its allies began to "downsize their dollar reserves" (Tucker 01:17:50 – 01:19:28). It seems that Putin realizes the effects of sanctions on the Russian economy, and he worked to both directly seek to make the Russian economy unsanctioned, as well as, the use of criticism of such a policy by both administrations.

In addition, Williams distinguishes between two main narratives about Russia when it comes to arms control, according to Williams there are two major narratives concerning Russia. The first is that the Russians no longer need arms control agreements, this seems to be the case through the Russian constant violations of the INF treaty. The latter led to the treaty to be terminated from both sides, which made people speculate on the future of arms control agreements, and whether the US and Russia have returned to arms race that dominated

through the Cold War era. Reasons may vary for Russian rejection of arms control, but mainly the rise of China, North Korea, and Iran as potential nuclear threat. As well as, Trump's belief of "leading through strength" made Putin want to dispose of old treaties to create new ones that include the aforementioned states, and having a better deal with the US. Hence, the termination of the INF treaty could be explained through this light.

However, a second narrative suggests that Russia is of need of arms control treaties, because it offers the Russians a kind of an up to date on American nuclear arsenal. Hence, we find Russia attempts to preserve such treaties from being terminated, the New START is an example of a last standing arms control deal that was renewed for 5 more years. Shortly before its termination date, Putin called Biden and both Presidents agreed on extending the deal. In arms control, Putin seems to have different interests concerning the two Presidents. For the Trump tenure the Russians had not accepted the Trump offer of destroying the missiles developed by the Kremlin that violated the treaty, which brought it to an end, this seems to fall in line with the first narrative of the Russian interest in arms control. However, for the Biden tenure, Putin was the one to initiate the call for the renewal of the New START treaty. This falls in line with the second narrative.

Furthermore, concerning the Syrian conflict, according to Ford (3) the roots of the conflict started when the mass majority of the Syrian people got influenced by the Arabic Spring that started in Tunisia, and later extending to Egypt. Similar to these movements, the Syrian one started peaceful with people protesting corruption, mistreatment of law enforcements, and the way the government handled the drought from 2006 to 2010. Soon by spring 2011, Syrian rebels took control over towns and living areas outside of large cities. Consequently, in order to take control over the situation, the Syrian government started deploying military forces, which resulted in a start of a civil war to achieve power. The warring dynamics of this conflict are the Syrian government backed by Russia and Iran,

which helped the former achieve various victories in the form of the surrender of many rebel groups in Western Syria(4). In Contrast, the US had supported rebels in Eastern Syria trying to overthrow the Assad regime and to fight terror groups, mainly the Democratic Union Party (YPD) and Women's Defense Unit (YPJ). The latter consisted of only Kurdish fighters, until the US merged Arab tribal soldiers to create the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) (9-10).

The reasons of Russian backing and involvement in this conflict vary, mainly Syria stood as the only Arab ally for Moscow after the fall of Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, while also sending a message towards Western countries to not support democratic movements against authoritarian regimes (6). The US stance towards Syria has changed from helping to create a transitional government, to fighting and eliminating ISIS by 2019. Although, Trump had withdrew most of US troops from Eastern Syria, some US forces are still in the region to defend its proxies there (9). The interest of Russia then at the tenures of both Trump and Biden is to solidify the Assad regime positions against US backed proxies, and to fight ISIS and exterminate any other terrorist organization and threat that may arise in that region.

Finally, Russia is interested in growing its dominance when it comes to energy exportation, especially exporting gas to Europe. Rossbach (52-53) argue that Russia is adopting a new strategy to its energy policy, as it wants to use the latter as a form of neo-imperialism. Russia endured years of NATO eastward expansion, so it uses energy to meddle in the American sphere of influence; that stands in clear contrast with the US "Monroe Doctrine". The Russian-European energy expansionist policy can be seen through this light, as Russia wants EU countries, mostly US allies to import more gas from the motherland. Consequently, more European importation of Russian energy means more European dependency on the Kremlin, and that gives political leverage for Moscow over Washington, thus challenging the US hegemony over its longtime allies.

Briefly, the interests of Russia are essential and must be taken into consideration when looking at the foreign policy of the US with Moscow. Such interest may align with Washingtons' own, thus it may create grounds for cooperation. However, the Russian interests sometimes stands in a clear contrast with that of the US, hence grounds of conflict are created. Initially, the Russian interests are common during both administrations, wanting to ease off sanctions, the Syrian conflict, and energy exportation. All are areas that the Russian government sought diplomatic engagement with the US. The only difference in these interests is that concerning arms control. For Trump, the Russians were not interested in renewing the INF treaty, however, the interest of Russia had shifted during the Biden tenure to renew the New START treaty.

3.2 Russia's Response to Both Administrations Policies

The Russian government has worked to respond within its power to the policies of both administrations. The responses of the Kremlin vary between the harsh and soft approaches of both Presidents. The Russian counter policies culminated in the form of actual executive orders from Putin himself, to mere diplomatic criticism of the harsh policies of both administrations. Reasons also vary, the sanctions imposed on Russia required laws that would allow for counter-sanctions to the US, however, other policies like support of Ukraine did not surpass the medium of diplomatic criticism, in order to not escalate the situation with the US to the level of global military confrontation between the two nuclear powers. Also, the soft policies of both administrations had been met with applaud by the Russian government and President.

3.2.1 Russian Response to the Harsh Policies

As starting point, concerning the sanctions imposed by both administrations on Moscow and its allies, the Kremlin had responded by both diplomatic rhetoric and imposing

counter sanctions on the US. Firstly, the diplomatic rhetoric includes undermining speeches by Russian spokespersons or officials on the US sanctions. According to Reevell, the Russian spokesman Dmitry Peskov had deemed the Trump sanctions made over the alleged Russian assassination of its former spy in the UK, to be unwarranted and uncalled for. He says “We consider the tying of new restrictions -- which as previously we consider illegal -- with the affair in Salisbury to be categorically unacceptable” (qtd. in Reevell).

In the same light, such diplomatic rhetoric continued during the Biden administration. On December 12th, 2023, Russia’s spokeswoman Maria Zakharova deflected the effects of the sanction war led by the Biden administration and its Western allies, Zakharova entailed that such sanction affected mainly the European Union only. She explained that the US treats the European countries in a puppet like manner, by restricting them to the American technological market only (“Russian MFA Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova” 00:00:00 – 00:00:35). It seems that the Russian government is trying to undermine the US sanctions labeling to be either unnecessary or a tool that will only harm the US long time allies.

Secondly, another manner of Russian response to US sanctions culminated in the form of counter-sanctions. It is the long standing form of the diplomacy of any sovereign state to treat other states the way they treat you. In this sense, according to Teslova on June 4th, 2018, Putin signed a bill into the Russian Federation law, which would allow him and his governing body to impose sanctions on the US and its allies. At its initial draft stage this bill had limitations on imported goods to the US, but later this article was removed to give flexibility to this law. In the same sense, during the tenure of Biden the Russian counter-sanctions continued. According to Bychkov and Efremov on March 1st, 2022, Putin signed a decree which suggested counter-sanctions on the US and its allies. The former prohibited Russians from lending money to foreigner in foreign currency, and prohibiting them from depositing money in foreign banks.

Besides, Russia's response to arms control policies of the US had been different from Trump and Biden. For the former, the Russians were wary that the US would start deploying Missiles banned by the treaty in Europe, as well as, a start of a post- Cold War new arms race. Russia wanted to renew the US engagement in the treaty, this seems apparent through Putin's words "We consider the US withdrawal from the INF Treaty, that entailed its termination, as a serious mistake, which increases the risks of triggering a missile arms race, rise of confrontational potential and sliding into an uncontrolled escalation." Although, the diplomatic rhetoric of President Putin stands in clear contrast of the Russian interests at the time of Trump, he had to show that the Russians were not violating the INF treaty by using such statements. However, that was not granted, as Trump had to terminate the US engagement in that deal. Russia was left with one and only response, which is to deescalate the situation. Putin called for limiting the mistrust that grew over the years between the two countries, and to work for the achievement of global stability ("Statement by Vladimir Putin on additional steps to de-escalate the situation in Europe")

Furthermore, Russian response to the US support of Ukraine has been the same, in the form ferocious criticism of that support. Zakharova explains that the US and Western countries are treating Ukraine as a puppet state, that started to do the bidding of the West after the illegitimate coup d'etat back in 2014. The latter was funded mainly by the US and its allies, the Ukrainians were tricked by the slogans of democracy, freedom, and human rights. However, she claims that the situation in Ukraine has not changed, but more prosecution, corruption, and neo-Nazism had replaced the legitimate government. For her, the Western support of Ukraine is not but a mere mirage that when reached, will disappear into nothingness. Indeed, she claims that the Western support of Ukraine is in vain, as the West promised Ukrainians democracy during the coup, which she believes has never been delivered. She also claims that such Western support is used on innocent people in the

Russian liberated Eastern Ukraine, such acts are not a surprise coming from the neo-Nazi government of Ukraine, a government that uses the Western aid and sells it in the black market for personal gains (“Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova’s comment on the crisis in Ukraine”).

3.2.2 Russia’s Response to the Soft Policies

To begin with, Merica claim that Trump and Putin released a joint statement during the economic meeting in Vietnam regarding the latter’s decision to fight ISIS in Syria. The statement had included that both superpowers are to focus on fighting ISIS and on defeating the terror group, and that a continuation of the fight between Al Assad regime and US troops and proxies will yield futile results. Soon after that, Trump decided to withdrew US troops from Syria, as he laid the claim that the Terror group has been already defeated, Putin welcomed the decision of Trump by saying “As for defeating ISIS, I do generally agree with the president of the United States. We’ve achieved some major advances when it comes to defeating the terrorists” (qtd. in Oprysko). The Russian president continued his applaud of Trump concerning the latter’s talks with Kim Jung Un about denuclearizing North Korea labeling it as a “historic move” (qtd. In “Russia's Putin praises Donald Trump for North Korea talks”). Putin also was willing to share information about the summit he had with the North Korean leader, as he wanted to explain points that were not raised by Kim Jung Un during his meeting with Trump. Soon after the Summit, Putin stated that both Moscow and Washington are working on denuclearizing North Korea, but the latter must be provided by guarantees of its safety first (Isachenkov and Talmadge).

Furthermore, as for Biden, Putin was the one who initiated arms control talks with him. Soon on Febraury 3rd, 2021, both foreign departments of the US and Russia stated that the 2010 New START treaty was to be extended for five more years. The Russian foreign ministry stated that the weight that Russia and the US hold as the largest nuclear powers in the

world hold them responsible to have a level of transparency, so that global stability could be achieved (Reif and Bugos). Concerning climate change, Putin skepticism of global warming had shifted recently to be a main focus for the Kremlin. Putin had been open about this sudden shift, as he stated to the US climate envoy to Moscow John Kerry that both nations have common interests in fixing major problems in this area (“Putin says Russia, US have 'common interests' on climate change”).

Lastly, Putin’s response was the same with Trump and Biden concerning space explorations. As for Trump, the Russian president stated that collaboration with US partners will not be halted because of the extensive sanctions imposed upon Russia, and that projects to explore Mars and the moon will continue (“Putin says Russia will not quit international space cooperation programs”). As for Biden, Putin had stated that he wants to continue the space cooperation with the US, this came after many misunderstood his statements about Russia leaving the ISS by 2024 as a way of Russia cutting ties with the US in that particular field (Smith).

Briefly, the Russian response to the policies of both administration has been characterized by using countermeasures in instances like sanctions, and the use of diplomatic criticism when it come to matters where Russia doesn’t want to escalate matters further. Concerning soft policies of the US, the Russians had either praised the actions of the American administration, or opened the door for more collaboration with the US.

3.3 Areas of Confrontation and Cooperation

The US-Russia relations during both Trump and Biden administrations have witnessed events in which tension rose between the two countries, and events in which both countries worked together to achieve global stability. Both administrations’ policies towards the Russian Federation had inconsistent initiatives. For Trump his inconsistency was due to his

populist attempt at desecuritizing the US-Russian relations, yet he was not able to do so, because of the Congress checks on him. However, Biden was inconsistent because of his liberal internationalist sentiment that required him to work both with and against Russia.

3.3.1 During Trump's Administration

The areas of confrontation during the Trump tenure accumulated in the Ukrainian conflict, Syrian civil war, arms control, opposing NS2, and cyber security. The Trump tenure has marked a shift from that of his predecessor. Trump did not hide his ambition to work with Russia, as he was on the path to desecuritize the relationship between the two powers. Although, his attempt at desecuritization failed, he was able to make some policy actions that were in favor of his ambition. Three areas of cooperation emerged at the time of his tenure such as counterterrorism, denuclearizing North Korea, and space exploration.

3.3.1.1 Areas of Confrontation

Starting with the Conflict in Ukraine, according to Larezenko (3) there are three lenses which the conflict in Ukraine can be viewed from. The first is the Ukrainian nationalistic view, the latter claims that the Ukrainian struggle for freedom started in November 2013. This narrative claims that the authoritarian government of Viktor Yanukovich's refusal of joining the EU, had undermined the will of the Ukrainian people. As a consequence, peaceful protests started taking over in Ukraine, in what would become known as the "Euromaidan". The protests were successful, as Yanukovich fled to Russia; allowing for the people of Ukraine to build a democratic state. The latter was undermined shortly after Russia annexed Crimea on 2014 (4). The annexation of Crimea to safeguard Russian speaking residents of Eastern Ukraine is the first major tenet of the Russia narrative (5). The third and final narrative is a geopolitical one that is used by world leaders, this narrative suggests that the conflict in Ukraine can be explained through the notion of "hybrid war". Ukraine is a battleground

between the West and Russia (7). It is the fact that Russia supports separatists in Eastern Ukraine, because they oppose the Ukrainian government supported by the US and its allies.

Another conflict that has been a source of tension between the two powers is that of the Syrian Civil war. This stems from the fact that the two countries support two dynamics of the war. Russia supports the Assad regime, or the authoritarian government of Syria, whereas the US supports the rebels of Eastern Syria. Consequently, seeking to dethrone the Assad regime, an escalation is expected between the two states. Although, the stance of the US has shifted from dethroning Bashar Al Assad in the Obama tenure to just eliminating terrorist groups in the Trump tenure, a military confrontation between US troops and Russian proxies, like Wagner mercenary group, happened almost too often. According to Gibbons-Neff, on February 7th, 2018, a four hours bloody battle occurred between US and “pro-regime forces”, the latter was formed mainly by Russian private mercenaries. The altercation resulted in about 200 to 300 Bashar regime forces killed, due to the US heavy air support to ground infantry forces. This is just an example of on ground confrontation that occurred often in Syria between US troops and Russian backed mercenaries.

Yet, another source of confrontation is arms control. It all started when the US accused Russia of developing and testing missiles that violated the range approved upon on the INF treaty. Russia did not comply with the INF treaty, as it started developing missile programs that undermined the range of the treaty, the United States was successful in accumulating evidences of Russian violation of the nuclear agreement (“The truth about Russian violation of INF Treaty”). Hence, according to Borger the appropriate response of the Trump administration is to withdraw from the INF treaty. Trump gave a period of 180 days for Russia to destroy the missiles developed since 2000. If the Russians did not comply, the US will eventually complete its withdrawal and start developing missiles to counter the Russian ones. Trump viewed that Russia did not honor its part of the deal, and for that it would be

unreasonable for the US to stick to its own part of the agreement. Trump states “My Administration remains committed to effective arms control that advances United States, allied, and partner security, is verifiable and enforceable, and includes partners that fulfill their obligations” (“Statement from the President Regarding the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty”).

Carrying on, the cyber threat and interference in the 2016 elections also was a point of escalation between the two countries. According to Shad (46) Russia has been launching cyber attacks on previous Soviet Union countries to achieve its foreign policy goals, however, after Putin became President in 2012, the attacks started to be directed at the US. It is worth mentioning that the US also uses cyber attacks on both its allies and enemies. This seems apparent after Edward Snowden, gave sensitive information that the US carried out many cyber malice actions towards friend and foe, as well as, developing the first ever cyber weapon “Stuxnet Virus” (47). The US and Russian cyber tension reached its peak after Russian supported hackers conducted an undermining operation on the 2016 elections, some started labeling it “Cold War 2.0” (48). However, Trump did not want to escalate the situation with Russia over its election interference, as he denounced its meddling, but did not admit that it had any influence on the final result of the election. He states:

I have felt very strongly, that while Russia’s actions had no impact at all on the outcome of the election, let me be totally clear in saying, and I have said this many times, I accept our intelligence community’s conclusion, that the Russian meddling in the 2016 election took place. (“President Trump Acknowledged Russian Meddling” 00:00:00 – 00:00:24)

Eventually, Trump was pressured to impose sanctions and escalate the situation. This resulted in sanctions like in August 21st, 2018, sanctions on two Russian individuals, a Russian

company, and a Slovakian company. Another example would be the September 12th, 2018, executive order. It allowed for further sanction on any state, entity, or individuals that facilitate cyber attacks on the US.

Finally, an area of confrontation between the two super powers during Trump's administration is the Russian growing exportation of gas to Europe and Germany in specific. Trump in various occasions had not hid his anger over Germany, as he blamed Germany for allowing of the Construction of NS2, as well as, imposing sanction on companies involved in the construction of the pipelines. According to McBride, the Germans are the largest consumers of the Russian gas with 40 percent importation compared to other European countries in total, this percentage is presumed to be doubled once NS2 pipelines are fully constructed. The latter would make Germany and potentially other EU states fully dependent on Russian gas, this would allow for some degree of Russian political influence on European countries.

3.3.1.2 Areas of cooperation

Starting by counterterrorism as a point where the two countries have worked together during Trump. Despite the fact that the Syrian conflict was a point of confrontation and escalation between the two, it is also a conflict where the two had been working together to eliminate ISIS in Syria. Although, the Trump policy in Syria was to support the US proxies seeking to dethrone Bashar Al-Assad, that position started to shift to combating the Islamic State militants in the region. This was shared by Russia as well, since both superpowers seem to have fought ISIS together in the region.

Moreover, another point that both countries seemed to agree upon is the North Korean nuclear program. The US during Trump felt threatened by the possibility that another authoritarian regime would possess nuclear power. Hence, the 45th president started a crusade

to make sure that North Korea does not have access to such military capability. This stance was shared also by Russia, who held the stance that no nation aside from those states that detonated nuclear weapons before January 1st, 1967, are the ones that have the right to possess such weapons of mass destruction.

Finally, both countries seem to have worked together with concerns to space exploration during Trump. Although, Trump was pressured by the US congress to take on more firm position with Russia, the relationship of the two countries with concerns to space exploration had continued smoothly. Both NASA and Roscosmos had agreed on collaborating in building a lunar base in the moon by 2025, such achievement would allow for further expeditions to planet Mars.

In brief, during Trump, three areas of cooperation can be found. The first is the war on terror, where both side worked on fighting ISIS in Syria. The other is the case of denuclearizing North Korea. The third and final area is that of space exploration, where the respective aeronautic agencies of both countries agreed to work together.

3.3.2 During Biden's Administration

During the Biden tenure, the US-Russia continued to confront each other when it came to the Ukrainian conflict and cyber security. Different from Trump, Biden had confronted Russia on questions of Human rights and democracy. The US and Russia seem to have found a point of cooperation in arms control and climate change. Similarly, Biden seems to continue in cooperating with Russia concerning space exploration, as Trump did during his Presidency.

3.3.2.1 Areas of Confrontation

Same as his predecessor's tenure, there has been a chance under Biden that the conflict between Russia and Ukraine might expand from the area of battle in which the Russian

proxies in Donbass, Luhansk People's Republic, had been engaged in fighting since 2014. The Russian started amassing soldiers near the borders of Ukraine, starting from November 2021 (Puri). Eventually, on February 22nd, 2022, The Russian president affirmed a special operation in Ukraine. The two main reasons of the latter can be found in Putin's speech when announcing the full scale invasion of Ukraine. In his speech Putin started with what he saw a source of anxiety for the Russians, and that is the NATO eastward expansion, and bringing Western lethal weapons close to Russia's borders. Putin considered such acts as irresponsible by Western leaders, who had been lying and deceiving him all the time. The second reason is the fact that the Ukrainian government that assumed power after "Euromaiden", has been abusing its Russian speaking citizens, and committing various crimes against Russian speaking citizens in Eastern Ukraine ("Full text: Putin's declaration of war on Ukraine"). Biden in a speech on the same day Putin announced his special operation has stated the reasons of US support of Ukraine:

We're united in our support of Ukraine. We're united in our opposition to Russian aggression. And we're united in our resolve to defend our NATO Alliance. And we're united in our understanding of the urgency and seriousness of the threat Russia is making to global peace and stability. ("Remarks by President Biden Announcing Response to Russian Actions in Ukraine").

The US drawing from Liberal Internationalism views the Russian as the aggressor who is attempting at disrupting the peace that the liberal and democratic states had worked to establish. Hence, the US views Russia as a destabilization factor of world peace and security, and so it has committed itself in support of Ukraine in this conflict.

Cyber security escalated the tension between the two countries. Both superpowers had accused each other on several occasions of carrying cyber attacks. In the case of the United

States, it accused Russia of backing cyber malice acts in order to undermine the 2020 elections. In response to that, On April 15th, 2021, the Biden administration had imposed sanctions on 6 Russian technological companies, also 32 entities that helped the Russian government's attempt to affect the result of the 2020 election ("FACT SHEET: Imposing Costs for Harmful Foreign Activities by the Russian Government"). On December 7th, 2023, the US announced that it is taking action against Callisto Group, Star Blizzard, and COLDRIVER for their role in assisting Russia's FSB to carry out cyber attacks on US individuals and entities (Miller). In the case of Russia, on March 29th, 2022, the Russian ministry of foreign affairs announced that the US had backed a campaign of a thousand cyber attacks per day, targeting government and civilian institutions (Dress). In addition, on June 2nd, 2023, the FSB announced that apple had assisted the US intelligence to spy on Russian individuals and diplomatic personals ("Russia says US intelligence hacked thousands of iPhones"). On March 11th, 2024, Russia accused the United States of attempting to undermine its election. The Kremlin accused the US of planning to hack Russia's online voting system in order to alter the results of the Russian elections (Lyons). It appears that both superpowers had been accusing each other of cyber attacks, such accusations would only further escalate the already high tension between the two States.

Same as Trump, the Biden administration had its suspicions about Nord Stream pipelines, and thus confronted Russia with concerns to its expansion of exporting energy towards the EU. Biden got his chance to take action against Gazprom's project through sanctions a day before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Later, after the NS1 and NS2 pipelines got blown up underwater, Putin had blamed the CIA, and in doing so he blamed the US to allegedly ordering the sabotage of NS pipelines.

In addition, Biden's administration seemed concerned with human right abuses made by Russia. The first glimpse of the tension on this area was when Biden met Putin in Geneva.

This was probed by the illegal poisoning and imprisonment of opposition leader Alexei Navalny, initially Russia allegedly poisoned him. The former wanted to make him enter a state of coma, in the hopes that he would miss an obligatory inspection in his motherland. Russia was successful and Navalny was imprisoned, as soon as, he returned home. When meeting with Putin, Biden said that if Navalny dies in prison, Russia shall expect serious repercussions (Klein and Vazques).

The issue of human rights escalated when the Russian full scale invasion of Ukraine began in 2022. Later, Russia was suspended from the United Nations Human Rights Council, as the UN on April 7th, 2022, adopted a resolution to suspend Russia from it. The Resolutions was passed, voted over 193 nations with 93 in favor, 58 abstentions, and 24 against. Before the voting began, the Ukrainian ambassador at the council made a speech. He recounted the various crimes committed by the Russians in Ukraine in order to urge the members to vote in favor of the resolution (“UN General Assembly votes to suspend Russia from the Human Rights Council”). Biden later stated that the US and its allies have worked in cooperation to make this vote successful in order to suspend Russia from the Human Rights Council, because of the crimes she committed against human rights (“Statement of President Joe Biden on the UN Vote Suspending Russia from the Human Rights Council”).

The final point of tension between the two is that of democracy. Biden drawing from his liberal internationalist view, sees that democracy is essential for world peace, this as discussed before views any authoritarian state as a threat to collective security. Russia seems to be an authoritarian state. Its bicameral federal assembly with its federation council and Duma, are fully dependant on the executive branch of the government, this results in a centralized power for the executive branch. Thus, it makes of Russia an authoritarian state (“2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Russia”). Russia’s authoritarianism seems to appear through its oppression of political opposition, as an example the

imprisonment of Alexei Navalny, and later his alleged assassination in prison. Biden accused Putin directly by saying ““Make no mistake: Putin is responsible for Navalny's death" (qtd. in Tanno et al). Biden has been calling for the defense of democracy against Russia since the conflict on Ukraine escalated. On March 8th, 2024, in speech of the union, Biden emphasized the protection of democracy. He stated “Overseas, Putin of Russia is on the march, invading Ukraine and sowing chaos throughout Europe and beyond, if anybody in this room thinks Putin will stop at Ukraine, I assure you he will not” (“Remarks of President Joe Biden — State of the Union Address As Prepared for Delivery”). Russia by invading Ukraine, a country that is becoming a democratic and liberal one, had waged war on the entirety of the democratic world. Hence, The US as the leader of the free world is tasked with facing this threat.

3.3.2.2 Areas of Cooperation

The Biden administration and Russia seem to have found common ground with concerns to arms control. Indeed, soon after Biden got inaugurated as the new president, he received a call from Putin. Both presidents agreed to extend the New START treaty for five more years. The treaty is now the last standing nuclear arms control agreement between the US and Russia. Additionally, there are various reasons of the US extension of the treaty like keeping the US citizens safe from nuclear threats, restoring US leadership in arms control treaties, and monitoring Russian nuclear capabilities (“On the Extension of the New START Treaty with the Russian Federation”). Reif and Bogus claim that Russia’s primary motivation for extending the deal is to bring stability back to the world economy. Given Trump’s inability to extend the INF treaty, it became necessary for the US and Russia to resume their New START renegotiations. Given that these two nations possess the most nuclear capabilities, it is imperative that global peace and stability be maintained.

Carrying on, both countries had given an importance to climate change. Drawing from his Rooseveltian approach Biden had focused on issues like global warming and climate change as serious threats to earth. The stance of Russia towards climate change had shifted from being non interested in such issue, to a stance where climate change is given a grave importance. Hence, the US and Russia have worked together to find better solutions for the latter. The cooperation of the US with Russia on such area has not shifted even after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Especially the fact that Russia holds important information concerning climate change in the arctic; as a consequence, we find the US isolating Russia globally apart from other areas like climate change.

Finally, same as the Trump administration, Biden's administration seems to have found common ground with Russia in space exploration. Although, the relationship between the two superpowers had reached an all time low at the time of President Biden, both nations seemed to have collaborated in space exploration. NASA and Roscosmos continued working together during the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the extensive US sanctions, and isolationist policy towards Russia. Briefly, arms control, climate change, and space exploration had been areas where both countries worked together to achieve global stability, and to improve relationships between the two powers, as well as, to de escalate tensions.

3.4 Confrontation and Conflict

To start off, both administrations differed on some areas of confrontation. For Trump, his administration had raised tensions with the Kremlin when it came to the Syrian conflict, both countries supported different conflicting dynamics. Confrontation between the two states often occurred on Syrian grounds indirectly through their proxies, or through US troops facing off Russian government backed mercenaries. Another area of conflict during the era of Trump is that of arms control. The Russian violations of the INF treaty had been a source of

tension between the two States; consequently, the Trump administration withdrew from the treaty, seeing that it was not enough to secure a world peace. Since other variables that are capable of holding nuclear weapons had risen recently like Iran, North Korea, and China, so Trump sought to terminate the treaty in order to establish a new one that would include those countries. Unlike Trump, the Biden administration had found that Human rights and the spread of democracy to be areas of confrontation with Russia. The latter's invasion of Ukraine, a country that has been molded by liberal internationalism into a democratic state, as well as, the Russian war crimes in Ukraine required Biden to respond firmly and to confront the Russians on their violations.

Similarly, both administrations confronted the Russian Federation when it came with the Ukrainian conflict and cyber security. For Trump, his support for Ukraine can be seen as minimal, compared to the support that Biden had been giving for Ukraine. This is due to the tension between Ukraine and Russia at the time of Trump and Biden. For the former the tension was high, but it wasn't at the scale that the conflict had reached during the Biden administration, as it translated to a full scale invasion of a potential NATO future member. Furthermore, concerning cyber security, both administrations seemed to confront Russia on its cyber attacks and meddling in the US 2016 and 2020 elections. However, for Trump he was pressured by the legislative branch to impose sanctions on Russia and respond firmly, although, he admitted to the Russian meddling in US 2016 elections, he didn't admit that the latter affected the final result of the elections. For Biden, he willingly imposed sanctions on Russia, and worked to improve the US cyber infrastructure in order to combat any future cyber attacks by Russia.

Also, both Trump and Biden had shown a mistrust of European dependence on Russian energy. The construction of Nord Stream 2 pipelines created a danger over US hegemony in Europe, as the total reliance of Europe on Russian energy could accumulate in a

Russian black mailing the EU to do its bidding. Both administrations had shown an aggressive stance towards such an approach by Europe and Germany in specific, and had opposed the Gazprom project through sanctions. For Trump, his opposition to NS2 culminated in his populist ideal of protecting the “folk community”, the potential other states will be puppets of Russia would create various threats for the US and its citizens. Biden’s opposition stems from his liberal internationalist ideal of protecting democracy, the European dependence on Russia’s energy entails that there is a potential for undemocratic regimes taking over the US traditional allies.

Concerning cooperation, the Trump administration seems to have seen eye to eye with Russia concerning war on terror, although, the Syrian conflict had been an area of conflict between Washington and Moscow, yet the approach of the two governments had shifted to fight ISIS and other terror groups in Syria. Moreover, the Russians seems to agree with the US attempt to denuclearize North Korea, the US sees that it is dangerous for another authoritarian state to wield such a weapon of mass destruction, hence it opposes it. The Russian opposition comes from its belief that no state should wield nuclear weapons, apart from the states that tested the weapons before January 1st, 1967.

In contrast, the Biden administration seems to have a cooperative stance with Russia when it came to arms control. Unlike the Trump tenure, both super powers were able to extend the New START treaty for another 5 years. Another area of cooperation during Biden is that of climate change. The US and Russia seems to have a firm approach to climate change and global warming, especially in areas such as the arctic.

In the same light, both the Trump and Biden administrations seem to have had a cooperative relationship with Russia when it comes to space exploration. Even, when relationship between the two reaches an all time low, NASA and Roscosmos relationship

seems unaffected. Agreements to transport astronauts to the ISS had dominated the tenure of the two presidents.

Finally, five main areas of confrontation and other three main areas of cooperation dominated both the tenures of Trump and Biden. The relationship of the US and Russia during both seems to swing to the confrontational side, as both countries have clashing interests, ideologies, and approaches. However, the two countries seem to find ground of cooperation where both seek to achieve global stability.

Conclusion

To sum up, the Russian federation had interests in easing US sanctions, arms control, solidifying the Assad regime's position, and expanding its energy dominance in the European continent. Concerning the Harsh policies of both administrations, the Kremlin response to both administrations culminated in counter sanctions and political criticism concerning the US support of Ukraine. Concerning soft policies, the Russians most of the time applauded the initiatives of US presidents through Putin or through Russian spokespersons. During the Trump tenure, it seems that the US and Russia had confronted each other in areas like cyber security, arms control, Ukrainian conflict, Syrian conflict, and NS2 pipelines. Trump cooperated with Russia in areas like war on terror in Syria, denuclearizing North Korea, and Space exploration. As for the Biden tenure, the US and Russia confronted one another in areas like cyber security, Ukrainian conflict, spread of democracy, and human rights abuses, and NS2 pipelines. Biden had found a common ground with Russia in areas like arms control agreements, climate change, and space exploration.

General Conclusion

The Trump and Biden administrations differed in some grounds, while also shared the same approaches and stances in others. The difference could be interpreted because of the different theoretical backgrounds of the two presidents, as well as, the context that both presidents had found themselves in. Trump was a populist who attempted at desucritizing the US-Russian relations, but was not allowed to do so by the US congress. His context was characterized by the Russian continued support of separatists in Ukraine, Russian support of Al-Assad regime in Syria, the Russian meddling in US 2016 elections, Nord Stream 2 continued construction, North Korean nuclear program, and growing terror groups in Syria. As for Biden he was a liberal internationalist who wanted to securitize the US-Russian relations. His context is characterized by the Russian meddling in the 2020 US elections, Russian full scale invasion of Ukraine, Nord Stream 2 construction, Russian abuse of human rights and democracy, New START agreement near extension, and climate change challenges.

As far as the differences goes, The Trump administration differed from that of the Biden one in various ways. Firstly, the Trump administration's foreign policy draws from the populist ideal. In this view Trump wanted to move against the usual American elites' way of dealing with Russia, he wanted to have a desucritized relationship with Moscow. In difference, the Biden administration drew its foreign policy from the liberal internationalist ideals, for this view Russia is a non liberal autocratic communist state, it stands in total contrast of a liberal democratic one. Since the early days of liberal internationalism, liberal democratic states had always shown an aggressive stance towards non liberal states, since they lack democracy, which is essential to achieve "collective security". Hence, unlike Trump, Biden wanted to securitize the relationship with the Kremlin.

Moreover, another difference between the two administrations is that with concerns to allies, international agreements, and international organizations. The Trump tenure drawing from populism, had a unilateralist approach. Trump often questioned international organizations, his withdrawal from the Paris agreement, and his mistrust and critic of US longtime allies had characterized his tenure with a unilateralist sentiment. In contrast, for Biden multilateralism is essential for the liberal internationalist agenda, as it serves as a shuttle for “collective security”. Thereby, His tenure witnessed the US return in front seat of facing global challenges and restoring the trust of US allies, the Biden return to engage in the Paris agreement seems to be a suitable example.

Furthermore, both administrations differed in their policies with Russia. Firstly, Concerning arms control agreements and treaties, Trump withdrew from the INF treaty. The 45th president claimed that Russia had violated the treaty for a long time, and he gave Moscow 180 days to destroy all missiles that they produced since the year 2000, so that he may be open to reengage the US into the deal. Eventually, he withdrew the US engagement from the treaty, leaving by that the New START treaty as the last standing nuclear agreement between the US and Russia. Biden almost immediately after he got inaugurated, agreed to extend the New START treaty for five more years with Putin over a phone call, later both foreign affairs administrations of the US and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia announced the extension of the New START. The Trump withdrawal of the INF treaty could be traced to his Jacksonian “protection of national honor” ideal, Trump viewed that Russia has been violating the treaty, thus he wanted to avoid an incident that may humiliate the US internationally. In contrast, Biden had to renew the New START treaty because he wanted to keep peace, since the most important basis for the Wilsonian order is peace and “collective security”.

Another area of difference between Trump and Biden is that of cyber security. Trump did not consider making that area a national priority. He either just imposed sanctions, indictment, and expulsions of individuals, entities, or corporations involved in cyber malice attacks against the US. Unlike him, Biden had shifted the position of cyber security to be a national priority. Immediately after his inauguration, he started to enforce US cyber security program through direct executive orders, supporting congress legislations, and through employing capable individuals in that particular field

Also another area of difference between the two administrations was their soft policies towards Russia. The Trump administration cooperated with Russia concerning the war on terror in Syria, although, the Syrian conflict was an area of confrontation between the US and Russia, yet both States had shifted their focus to fighting ISIS and other terror groups by 2019. Denuclearizing North Korea was an area where both nations cooperated during Trump, as the US and Trump worked to unarm Pyongyang of any nuclear weapons; it seems that Russia shared the same focus as the Trump administrations. However, the Biden administration cooperated with Russia with concerns to the New START treaty. Although, arms control was an area of conflict during the Trump tenure, President Biden had agreed with Putin to extend the treaty for five more years. Biden also had faced climate challenges with cooperation with Moscow, the latter had shifted the position of climate issues to be a national priority.

As far as the similarities goes, both administrations seem to have some similar policies towards Russia. Firstly, both had imposed sanctions on Russia, although, at the beginning Trump was forced to impose sanction like CAATSA by the US congress, which checked Trump out of wariness of his desucritization of US and Russian relations attempt. He would later impose further sanctions on Russia concerning various areas like cyber security, Ukrainian conflict, Syrian conflict, and Nord Stream 2 project by Russia. In the same light,

Biden imposed various sanctions on Russia, but unlike Trump, he was not pressured to do so. The sanctions during his tenure varied from ones concerning Russian interference in the 2020 elections, Ukrainian conflict, Assassination of Alexei Navalny, and Nord Stream 2 project.

Another Policy that both administrations shared towards Russia is of their support to Ukraine. Trumps' support for the Ukrainian government was during a time where the conflict was at a smaller scale from what it became during the Biden tenure. At the time of Trump the conflict was at the scale of a proxy war between the US and Russia. The US and Trump administration supporting the Ukrainian government, whereas the Russian government supports separatists militant in eastern Ukraine. So, the Trump support was not as big as of that of Biden. The Trump administration's support culminated in the form of easing arms sales to Kiev and providing aid packages, as well as, imposing sanctions, indictments, and expulsions over Russian individuals and entities involved in the conflict of Ukraine. The conflict during the Biden administration had transformed into a full scale war between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, so we find that Biden had supported Ukraine more than Trump did, by providing military, monetary, and humanitarian aid. Furthermore, both administrations had the same policy towards Russia with concerns to space exploration. Although, relations between the US and Russia reached an all time low during both Trump and Biden, NASA and Roscosmos both worked together and signed agreements to transport astronauts using Russian Soyuz spacecraft.

The research has arrived at the following conclusions in light of the prior examination of both Presidents policies, as well as, the previously indicated analysis of areas of cooperation and conflict:

Both administrations had confronted the Russian Federation in five areas, and have cooperated with Russia in three others. As for Trump's administrations, He confronted Russia

with concerns to the Ukrainian conflict, Syrian conflict, cyber security, Nord Stream 2 pipelines, and arms control. However he cooperated with Russia in areas like war on terror in Syria, Denuclearizing North Korea, and continued space cooperation between the two super powers during his tenure. As for Biden, he confronted Russia in areas like Ukrainian conflict, cyber security, spread of democracy, and protection of human rights. Yet, he cooperated with Russia in areas like arms control, climate change, and space cooperation.

I believe that the inconsistency that dominated both administrations shows that no matter who is in charge of the United States, the last word will always be made by the US deep state. That is to my belief the Jewish lobby that is in control of the US, more specifically the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee. Furthermore, in my opinion both the US and Russia are two faces of the same coin. Although, they may differ in their political ideals, both states are after their own interests. They both view Muslims and Arabs as mere proxies to be used to serve their interests. The difference is that the US when approaching Muslim and Arab leaders always hides behind the mask of peacemaking. The Quran describes the US best, “When they are told, “Do not spread corruption in the land,” they reply, “We are only peace-makers!” “Indeed, it is they who are the corruptors, but they fail to perceive it” (AL BAQARAH: Verses 11-12). However, Russia seems direct in its approach, its support of the Bashar regime in Syria had not been under any mask, as it was only to serve its interests. Hence, in my opinion Muslim and Arab leaders must stop looking up to the framework laid to them by the US, Russia, or any other foreign nation. They should take into consideration their own interests and the interests that serves Islam, their people, and the general will of the Islamic nation as a whole.

Finally, this research has been conducted before the end of the Biden tenure by seven months, other factors and variables may arise before the next US elections, some policies and initiatives taken by President Biden may not be covered by this research. Also, this work has

not taken into consideration the Palestinian conflict during the two tenures, because of the lack of time and sources. It is recommended for further researchers to take into consideration the aforementioned limitations to the work.

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ملخص

هذا البحث يتعامل مع السياسة الخارجية للولايات المتحدة الأمريكية مع روسيا الفدرالية، بين فترتين لرئيسين أمريكيين هم دونالد ترامب و جوزيف بايدن. هذه الدراسة ستتم من خلال عدستي المقارنة التحليلية لسياسات كلا الرئيسين، كذلك السياسات المضادة لروسيا. هذه الدراسة تقدم الفرضيتين الأتيتين إذا كانت العلاقات بين الولايات المتحدة وروسيا مبنية على التعاون، فسوف تعاملان معًا للحفاظ على السلام وجعل العالم آمنًا للديمقراطية والازدهار الاقتصادي و إذا كانت العلاقات بين الولايات المتحدة وروسيا قائمة على المنافسة فسوف يتقاتلان من أجل النفوذ العالمي والتفوق الاقتصادي. يسعى هذا البحث إلى الوقوف على مجالات المواجهة والتعاون بين الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية وروسيا في عهد كل من ترامب وبايدن. كلا الرئيسين لهما قواعدهما الفلسفية الخاصة. ترامب بسبب شعبيته أراد أن يعاكس التيار التقليدي الأمريكي النخبوي في تعاملاته مع روسيا، حيث حاول أن يجعل العلاقات مع روسيا أقل أمنًا من المعهود. محاولاته باءت بالفشل حي أن الكونغرس الأمريكي قد تفتن لمحاولات الرئيس المنتخب وحال دون ذلك. على خلافه، الأهمية الليبرالية لبایدن أجبرته على العمل مع و ضد روسيا. بايدن عمل مع روسيا لحماية الأمن الجماعي للدول الليبرالية و الديمقراطية، ولكنه عمل ضد روسيا كذلك لأجبار بوتين على استرجاع السلم الذي بنته الدول الليبرالية الديمقراطي منذ انتهاء الحرب العالمية الثانية. ولهذا، فانتنا تجد أن العلاقات الأمريكية و الروسية بين فترتي ادارة ترامب و بايدن قد طغى عليها كلا التعاون والمواجهة بين الدولتين.

كلمات مفتاحية: الشعبية، الأهمية الليبرالية، عقوبات، الأمن الالكتروني، أوكرانيا