



People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Mohamed Khider University of Biskra
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Foreign Languages

MASTER THESIS

Letters and Foreign Languages
English Studies
Literature and Civilization

The US Foreign Policy on Syria: An examination of the Humanitarian Crisis

Submitted by:
Abdelbasset DJELLALI

Supervised by:
Zakarya SENOUCI

Board of Examiners:

Mr. Zakarya SENOUCI	University of Biskra	Supervisor
Mr. Said SMATTI	University of Biskra	Examiner
Mrs. Zeyneb BOUGOFA	University of Biskra	Examiner
Ms. Nadjiba LOULOU	University of Biskra	Examiner

Academic Year: 2022 -2023

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my "Mother," the most beautiful woman in the world.

To my Father, who provided me courage when it was difficult to keep going and who supported me throughout my academic career.

To my brothers, sisters, friends and supervisor who shared their advice and encouragement to finish this thesis.

Acknowledgments

First, I'm grateful to the Almighty ALLAH for giving me power, patience, and capacity to finish this work.

I would like to thank my supervisor Mr. **Senouci Zakarya** for his help, tolerance, advice and guidance.

I would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to our teachers and jury members Mr.

Smatti Said, Mrs. Loulou Nadjiba and Mrs Bougofa Zeyneb

We would like to acknowledge and thank our teachers throughout the entire course of study for their kindness, and guidance.

Abstract

This thesis examines the repercussions of US foreign policy on Arab countries, specifically on Syria. Unfortunately, the Arab Spring did not produce the desired outcome for Syrians. Syria has gone from peace to chaos and terrorism since 2011. Syrians desired democracy; therefore, they asked that Assad go down. Assad has no such intentions. Syrians have been exposed to a murderous conflict at the hands of the Dictator Bashar al-Assad for more than a decade. Since The basic goal of US, foreign policy is to create a safe and democratic world. This thesis looks at how American policy evolved during the Syrian Civil War, which resulted in the world's worst refugee crisis, among other humanitarian crisis. The United States, led by President Barack Obama, chose to participate only for humanitarian grounds. Obama's participation in the early years of Syria's civil war was based on severe declarations and sanctions. The Obama administration's controversial red line threat decision, which implied that the US was not militarily committed to intervene in the fight. This prepared the ground for Assad to continue his aggressions against his people, which went mostly unpunished until President Trump ordered airstrikes in response to chemical-weapons attacks in 2018. Throughout the Syrian crisis, US foreign policy has essentially remained unchanged in terms of regime change. While there is evidence that the US has been seeking to remove Assad from office, there has been relatively little action taken to achieve this aim or aid Assad's take down from Syria's president. This research aims to characterize the United States' foreign policy on Syria, assess the impact of US engagement on Syrian crisis and analyze the causes and consequences of the Syrian Civil War. For seeking the aim, the study addresses the main question on that subject: What has the United States done to address the Syrian crisis?. To answer the main question, the study needs to examine the following sub-questions in three chapters: What are the basic goals of US foreign policy in the M.E and Syria? What were the roots and repercussions of the Arab Spring? How was the US response to the Syrian Civil War and its Humanitarian crises?. I used one methodology in each chapter; the first chapter I used

the power transition theory, the second chapter I used the liberalism theory and in the third chapter I used the hegemonic stability theory.

Key words: Arab Spring. United States. Syria. Assad. Obama. Trump. Refugee crisis. Humanitarian crisis

المخلص

تبحث هذه الأطروحة في انعكاسات السياسة الخارجية الأمريكية على الدول العربية ، وتحديدًا في سوريا. لسوء الحظ، لم يؤد الربيع العربي إلى النتيجة المرجوة للسوريين. انتقلت سوريا من السلام إلى الفوضى والإرهاب منذ 2011. السوريون أرادوا الديمقراطية. لذلك طالبوا بأن يسقط الأسد. الأسد ليس لديه مثل هذه النوايا. يتعرض السوريون لصراع قاتل على يد الدكتاتور بشار الأسد منذ أكثر من عقد. منذ الهدف الأساسي للولايات المتحدة، السياسة الخارجية هي خلق عالم آمن وديمقراطي. تبحث هذه الأطروحة في كيفية تطور السياسة الأمريكية خلال الحرب الأهلية السورية، والتي أدت إلى أسوأ أزمة لاجئين في العالم، من بين أزمات إنسانية أخرى. اختارت الولايات المتحدة بقيادة الرئيس باراك أوباما المشاركة لأسباب إنسانية فقط. استندت مشاركة أوباما في السنوات الأولى من الحرب الأهلية السورية إلى تصريحات وعقوبات صارمة. قرار تهديد الخط الأحمر المثير للجدل لإدارة أوباما، والذي يشير إلى أن الولايات المتحدة ليست ملتزمة عسكريًا بالتدخل في القتال. مهد هذا الطريق للأسد لمواصلة اعتدائه على شعبه، والتي لم تتم عقابها في الغالب حتى أمر الرئيس ترامب بشن غارات جوية ردًا على هجمات الأسلحة الكيماوية في عام 2018. طوال الأزمة السورية، ظلت السياسة الخارجية للولايات المتحدة بشكل أساسي دون تغيير فيما يتعلق بتغيير النظام. في حين أن هناك أدلة على أن الولايات المتحدة تريد إزاحة الأسد من منصبه، فقد تم اتخاذ القليل من الإجراءات نسبيًا لتحقيق هذا الهدف أو مساعدة الأسد للإطاحة به من منصبه كرئيس للدولة السورية. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تمييز السياسة الخارجية للولايات المتحدة بشأن سوريا ، وتقييم تأثير المشاركة الأمريكية على الأزمة السورية وتحليل أسباب وعواقب الحرب الأهلية السورية. ولتحقيق هذا الهدف تتناول الدراسة السؤال الأساسي في هذا الموضوع: ما الذي فعلته الولايات المتحدة لمعالجة الأزمة السورية؟. للإجابة على السؤال الرئيسي ، تحتاج الدراسة إلى فحص الأسئلة الفرعية التالية في ثلاثة فصول: ما هي الأهداف الأساسية للسياسة الخارجية الأمريكية في الشرق الأوسط وسوريا؟ ما هي جذور وتداعيات الربيع العربي؟ كيف كان رد الولايات المتحدة على الحرب الأهلية السورية وأزماتها الإنسانية؟. لقد استخدمت منهجية واحدة في كل فصل. استخدمت في الفصل الأول نظرية انتقال السلطة ، وفي الفصل الثاني استخدمت نظرية الليبرالية وفي الفصل الثالث استخدمت نظرية الاستقرار المهيمن.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الربيع العربي. الولايات المتحدة. سوريا. أسد. أوباما. ترامب. أزمة لاجئين. أزمات إنسانية.

List of Abbreviations

FSA - Free Syrian Army

ISI - Islamic State of Iraq

IS - Islamic State

ISIL - Islamic State of Iraq and Levant

ISIS - Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

R2P - Responsibility to protect

SDF - Syrian Democratic Forces

SNC - Syrian National Council

SOC - Syrian Opposition Coalition

U.N. - United Nations

U.S. -United States

NDF- national defense force

SLF- the Syrian Liberation Front

UNHCR- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

OPCW- Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Table of Contents

Dedication	II
Acknowledgments	III
Abstract	IV
المخلص	VI
List of Abbreviations	VII
General Introduction	1
Chapter one: American Foreign Policy: A Conceptual Framework	
Introduction	7
1.1 American Isolationism	7
1.2 Wilsonianism	9
1.3 The Main Goals of American Foreign Policy	16
1.4 The United Nation (UN)	18
1.4.1 Responsibility to Protect (RtP)	19
1.5 US Relations with the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)	21
1.5.1 American Intervention in Iraq	22
1.5.2 American Intervention in Libya	23
1.5.3 American intervention in Syria	24
Conclusion	26
Chapter Two: The Arab Spring: Historical Context, Roots and Aftermath	
Introduction	28

2.1 The Arab Spring.....	28
2.2 Roots of the Arab Spring.....	31
2.2.1 The Economic Causes	31
2.2.2 The Social Causes.....	32
2.3 The Arab Spring in Syria	33
2.3.1 The Opposition Forces.....	34
2.3.2 Pro Government Forces.....	36
2.4 The Aftermath of the Arab Spring	37
2.4.1 Forced Migrations	38
2.4.2 Forced Immigrations	38
2.5 Chemical Weapons and Indiscriminate Violence.....	41
2.6 The Role of the Islamic State.....	42
2.7 Foreign Intervention	45
2.8 Humanitarian Intervention.....	47
Conclusion	49

Chapter Three: US policy vis-à-vis the Syrian Refugee Crisis

Introduction	51
3.1 The Obama Policy.....	51
3.1.1 The Red Line.....	52
3.1.2 No fly Zone	55
3.1.3 Obama’s Response to Syrian Refugee Crisis.....	56
3.1.4 Obama Policy Execution: The Concerns.....	59
3.2 The Trump Policy	60
3.2.1 The Tillerson Debacle.....	63
3.3 The Biden Policy	64

3.4 American Military Intervention	65
3.4.1 The Legality of American Military Intervention.....	67
3.5 The Effectiveness of the American Sanctions.....	68
3.6 Past (In)Action and Present Deadlock.....	69
Conclusion.....	70
General Conclusion.....	71
Works Cited	76

General Introduction

In recent decades inter-state conflicts have largely increased. In contrast to the Cold War era, which had power concentration as one of its key characteristics, the post-cold war era is marked by the distribution of power and the emergence of multipolar/nonpolar order, both of which have led to an unstable and transitory international system. The ability and desire of great powers to directly intervene in regional affairs has diminished in this new era, which has given regional/newly emerging powers more room to play an active role in the regions. Regional powers are transformed into new active actors in this environment and work to increase their influence and power in the regional setting.

On March 15, 2011, demonstrators gathered in Syria to demand an end to their own oppressive regime after being inspired by the successful "Arab Spring" protests in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya. Bashar Assad, the president of Syria, was not about to go quietly, however, unlike the administrations that had before more-or-less fallen in the face of popular upheavals and violent insurrections. Days after the first demonstrations, Syrian army opened fire on the crowd, killing hundreds of people. These were the first bullets in a civil war that seemed to go on forever and had effects far beyond the borders of the Middle Eastern nation. In Syria, conflicts are more complicated. Along with pitting Assad against a group of rebels, the battle has ensnared a number of countries, including the United States, Iran, Russia, and Turkey, in a complex proxy war. Along the way, it has fostered racial and religious divisions, supported the rebirth of the radical Islamic State militia, caused millions of people to be displaced, and resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths, largely of civilians.

From a political and geopolitical standpoint, the US does not plan to directly interact with the region. Rivalries among regional powers have emerged as a result of the subsequent power vacuum, and neither these regional powers nor the required regional cooperation capabilities can establish the intended unified hegemony. This circumstance, along with bad governance, has facilitated the rise of fanaticism, terrorism, and the dissolution of weak states.

This analysis is carried out to identify first why and how the Syrian Civil War was triggered and the inability of the international community to effectively respond to the Syrian crisis through the Responsibility to Protect (RtP). This study makes an effort to look at the concerns of human

rights in Syria. A cornerstone of the United States' founding almost 200 years ago was the defense of human rights. Since then, the fundamental objective of the United States has been to advance respect for human rights. During the first year of the Syrian Civil War, President Obama's approach to the country was limited to harsh rhetoric and sanctions. This work debates the evolution of US foreign policy toward Syria and the consequences of US participation, both good and bad. This study also examines how the US uses military force to address humanitarian issues.

This study proposes to investigate the main research question on that subject:

- What has the United States done to address the Syrian crisis?

To answer the main question, the present study also needs to answer and examine the following sub-questions in three chapters:

- What are the basic goals of US foreign policy in the Middle East and Syria?
- What were the roots and repercussions of the Arab Spring?
- How was the US response to the Syrian Civil War and its humanitarian crises?

This study investigates the causes and consequences of the Syrian Civil War. Also, characterize the United States' foreign policy toward Syria. Moreover, whether the United States' engagement affected the international crisis in Syria. Being aware that there are currently no diplomatic ties between the two countries.

The Syrian civil conflict, which has severely affected hundreds of thousands of children and their families, has piqued the curiosity of scholars. The largest refugee and displacement crisis in history resulted from it, affecting millions of people and spreading to neighboring nations. Because it is more difficult to comprehend the Syrian civil war, this subject will also examine the tense US relations with Syria over the years and identify other nations, which have not promoted human rights but won allies. In 2012, the United States lost a significant chance to influence the course of the Syrian Civil War and might save the lives of hundreds of thousands of civilians. Now that

Russia has fully backed the nation militarily and the opposition has been severely degraded, the United States lacks any workable strategic alternatives that would result in Assad leaving power.

The investigation's method relies on Theoretical, historical, and analytical methodologies to examine US foreign policy in Syria's Civil War and the country's humanitarian crisis; The theoretical approach examines that American foreign policy had evolved over time in which the country had decided to intervene in other countries' conflicts in an effort to advance peace and prosperity. However, the historical approach is to discuss the context of the conflict. What began as an Arab spring wave and ended as fighting between President Bashar al- Assad's government and forces seeking to dethrone him has resulted in the displacement of about half the nation's population and the deaths of over 500,000 people. The analytical strategy addresses the US intervention in Syria because of violations of international human rights law and some of the US president's responses to that.

The "trend" of the Arab spring, which shook the region in late 2010, had a significant impact on the Syrian Civil War. The Arab Spring has been linked to a number of causes. Among the causes were dictatorship, economic deterioration, and the corruption of the ruling regimes.

A conflict between the Syrian government, which is supported by Russia and Iran, and anti-government rebel groups, which are supported by the United States, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and other countries in the area, quickly developed from protests against President Assad's rule in 2011.

Syria, which has been governed by the Assad family for more than 40 years, had anti-government riots in March 2011. As the violence increased, President Barack Obama urged Bashar al-Assad of Syria to resign in August 2011. Pressure on the United States to support the opposition increased over time as a result of the conflict's mounting death toll and the Assad government's deployment of chemical weapons. Congress approved the latter in 2013 after debating whether to provide vetted Syrian opposition groups with lethal or nonlethal aid. Congress also discussed using force in response to a chemical weapons assault in August 2013 but did not approve it. (“Armed Conflict in Syria”).

In a recent interview with journalists, UN Secretary-General António Guterres noted that despite Syria "It "remains a living nightmare even though it has dropped off the front page." "The depth of the destruction in Syria "is impossible to completely comprehend, but its people have suffered some of the biggest crimes the world has seen this century," he said. Syria's common citizens have been hardest hit. The Damascus regime and its allies have conducted airstrikes against bakeries and hospitals, terrorizing the populace in an apparent effort to undercut the opposition's hold on the region. Additionally, the dictatorship has used helicopters to dump "barrel bombs" on the homes of civilians. Fared al-Hor, a Syrian journalist residing in the rebel-held city of Idlib, refers to it as Assad's army trying to reclaim a territory by pushing everyone to leave, including civilians and fighters. "2016 saw shelling that completely destroyed my home. [The regime] continued to shell until everyone had fled and the region was deserted "He informs NPR. We were attacked by more than 400 missiles in one night". (Sherlock et al.)

The United Nations has estimated that since the war began, more than 400,000 people have died in Syria. According to the UN, more than 5.6 million people had left the nation as of January 2019 and more than 6 million people were internally displaced. Jordan and Lebanon are currently dealing with a severe resource and infrastructure shortage due to the influx of refugees. Over 3.4 million Syrians have fled to Turkey, and several others have tried to find safety in Europe. In the meantime, the situation in Syria is in danger of escalating due to outside military action, which includes sending troops, military hardware, training, airstrikes, and even forces to support proxies. As external actors, including Iran, Israel, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the US-led coalition, move closer together, the civil war becomes more complicated and there is a risk of accidental escalation. The rebirth of terrorist organizations can also be facilitated by ongoing violence and proxy wars (Center for Preventive Action.)

In light of the geopolitical situation at the time, President Obama's approach to Syria during the first year of the Syrian Civil War was limited to harsh declarations and sanctions. President

Obama issued Executive Order 13572 on April 29th, just over a month after the conflict began, which declared.

The use of violence and torture against peaceful protestors, as well as arbitrary arrests and detentions of them by police, security forces, and other entities that have engaged in human rights abuses, are the most recent examples of the Government of Syria's violations of human rights, which pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States (23)

The United States initially provided the Free Syrian Army rebels with non-lethal aid (such as food rations and pickup trucks) shortly after the civil war broke out in 2011, but quickly began providing specific rebel commanders with cash, intelligence, and training. being the Syrian humanitarian effort's largest individual donor (Heath 23).

There will be three chapters in the thesis, establishing the foundation for a deep analysis of the issue and, as a result, a thorough investigation that results in reliable conclusions. First chapter, which is about the US Foreign Policy, examines how American foreign policy has evolved through time and how it has intervened in global affairs in an effort to bring along peace and prosperity. The second chapter about the Arab Spring; its historical context, roots and aftermath which describes Syria's current state of affairs. The conflict's history is covered, as well as the formation of the Syrian National Coalition for Opposition and Revolutionary Forces. Chapter three titled by US policy vis-à-vis the Syrian Refugee Crisis. This chapter examines how the international community got involved in restraining abuses of international human rights law. Specifically focuses on diplomatic ties with the US and several US presidents' responses on human rights violations.

Chapter One: American Foreign Policy: A Conceptual Framework

Introduction

Given that a foreign policy is the development or maintenance of a formal relationship between countries, The United States's foreign policy has undergone several modifications to get to where it is now. In the past, America avoided permanent alliances with foreign countries and solely depended on temporary alliances during emergencies. The United States considered that remaining as impartial as possible in international affairs was best and to pay attention just to stay safe. Suddenly this changed when the US felt threatened by war and had to take an action to defend its neighbors and keep war from frustrating its citizens. As a result, it modified its foreign policy. Because of its global influence, the United States intervenes in other countries to create change. In contrast to its own security interests, such as advancing democracy or reducing terrorism, the US is more likely to engage in military missions focused on protecting human rights.

American foreign policy in the second century was considerably different from that in the first. As America's relative isolation was lessened by the new industrial technologies of communication and transportation, isolationism became increasingly unsustainable with what was referred to as the "abolition of distance" in the later nineteenth century. The US was involved in a string of wars and conflicts that lasted between 1890 and 1914 before abruptly ending in 1989-1991. These conflicts had a significant impact on both international politics and the US's place within the system.

1.1 American Isolationism

The protection of the US and its inhabitants' lives is the primary objective of US foreign policy. The majority of Washington's farewell address is devoted to talking about international affairs and the risks of long-term relationships between the US and other countries, which he refers to as foreign entanglements. He once said, "The United States should has avoid entangling alliances" indicates that the United States can only be secure if it creates temporary partnerships in times of need. This statement influenced American foreign policy for more than a century. The US

foreign policy throughout its first century of existence was mostly focused on North America and, to a lesser extent, the Western Hemisphere. Americans had a strong emphasis on concerns related to internal development. The US has the option of following an isolationist policy because of its relative isolation. Avoiding foreign risk was a guiding principle of American foreign policy since the US was weak. Despite having this goal, the US was a part of a global political and military system that it could neither entirely control nor escape as it had to worry about European exploitation (“Foreign Policy: What Now?”).

The balance that had kept Europe's powerful governments in some measure in check required the US to pay close attention to European politics, commerce and the protection of commerce played significant roles in US foreign policy due to its integration into the global economy centered in Europe. The US was drawn into war with European nations during both the war of 1812 with Britain and the quasi-war of 1790 with France due to these commercial ties. Americans' fear of a big standing force, which they derived from a recent experience building up to an independence war, was another reason why isolationism appealed to them. International engagement was believed to ultimately result in war and hostilities. Isolationism therefore had positive effects on the American constitutional project (Cox and Stokes 33).

The Monroe Doctrine, which stated that the US would not permit European countries to interfere in the internal affairs of new world republics, expanded isolationism to the western hemisphere in 1823 because it was considered that the states of Central and South America only had limited sovereignty, this strategy had an imperialist component. However, the main result was to confirm Europe and the Americas' split. The United States followed a limited policy of imperialism during the Spanish American War of 1898 within a basic framework of isolationism. This one-sided conflict also represented a stride away from isolationism (Cox and Stokes 33).

The first world war marked a turning point in US foreign policy given that war broke out in Europe in 1914. American ideals, which have forbidden participation in the politics of European

superpowers since the late 18th century, were at the forefront of the argument about how the United States should have responded to the Great War in Europe. When World War I broke out in July 1914, the United States steadfastly upheld its neutrality, and President Woodrow Wilson pleaded with the nation as a whole to desist from becoming personally or ideologically involved in the conflict. The phrase "he kept us out of war" became a well-known slogan used by Wilson's supporters. Wilson won a second presidential term in 1916 by running on a platform of non-interference. Americans were more than delighted to stay out of the conflict (Cox and Stokes 33).

1.2 Wilsonianism

When he was re-elected, Woodrow Wilson was steadfast in his decision to avoid starting a war, despite the fact that there was a sizable movement within the American government calling for readiness in the face of incidents that indicated escalating German aggression such as the sinking of the British ocean liner Lusitania by a German submarine, which resulted in the deaths of many Americans. After seeing these and other German acts of aggression for a number of years, Wilson a political scientist by training started to reconsider his mind as he realized that the destructive war in Europe would spread across the Atlantic Ocean. There was a moral requirement that the United States play a leadership role in preserving and supporting freedom, sovereignty, and self-determination for all nations as a result of the significant loss of life. Wilson started making public remarks that presented the war as a way of redressing global injustices rather than merely military showmanship. Thus, American involvement in the First World War, also known as the "Great War," served to create the country's image as a self-declared champion of freedom and democracy around the world and fundamentally impacted U.S. foreign policy (Norwich University Online).

Although most Americans continued to oppose war, they were soon startled out of their daydreams. According to Link, on January 31, 1917, Germany declared a policy of unlimited submarine warfare, which prompted the president to cut diplomatic ties with Germany on February 3, 1917. Despite the fact that breaking up diplomatic ties typically results in conflict, Wilson was

still of the opinion that no war was imminent. Thomas Andrew Bailey, professor of history at Stanford University; claims that the president wanted to wait until there were overt conflicts, particularly because the American people did not fully comprehend the events and wanted the administration to avoid leading "the nation into the bloody abyss" (qtd. in Klein 20).

This attitude altered after a month. According to historian Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, the British had intercepted and deciphered a letter written by the German Foreign Secretary Arthur Zimmermann on January 19, 1916, offering Mexico an alliance with Germany in exchange for regaining control of the former Mexican territories of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona; additionally, Mexico should request assistance from Japan for the invasion. According to Link, the Americans were irritated and persuaded of Germany's hostile intentions when the Zimmerman telegraph was intercepted and exposed a direct threat to the nation. The US took a significant step closer to conflict (qtd. in Klein 21).

In addition to these diplomatic violations, the U-boat war had serious economic repercussions, which drove the United States into war out of a desire for free trade. According to Bailey, because American ships were hesitant to enter the conflict area, supplies piled up in American ports rather than being delivered to the Allies fighting in Europe, which resulted in an economic stagnation that the nation could no longer bear. Wilson was inspired by the circumstance to approach Congress for permission to arm the commercial ships. Duroselle claims that despite these armed efforts, five ships had been sunk by mid-March. America was being coerced into the war by Germany. The US took a significant step closer to conflict. Wilson had little choice but to request a declaration of war from Congress on April 2, 1917, that was approved on April 4 and 6 with a resounding majority (qtd. in Klein 22).

President Wilson stated in his message on the war to Congress, April 2, 1917:

The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind. It is a war against all nations. ... I thought that it would suffice to assert our

neutral rights with arms, our right to use the seas against unlawful interference, our right to keep our people safe against unlawful violence. But armed neutrality, it now appears, is impracticable. ...We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them. We shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts, for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own Governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free (22).

Wilson outlined 14 principles in 1918. These principles included open economic trade, the freedom of the seas, the evacuation of occupied territories, the liberation of non-Turkish populations in Ottoman Empire, and a general group of nation states to offer members territorial integrity and political independence—laying the groundwork for the League of Nations, which would later take its place (Norwich University Online). In his conclusion, Duroselle writes, "The United States increasingly seemed to be the prospective arbiter between states. Herring claims that because the president deviated from American tradition and got involved in European politics, this new "Wilsonianism" had an impact on world affairs and U.S. foreign policy in the years to come. More than a million American soldiers had arrived in Europe by the summer of 1918, which fundamentally altered the trajectory of the war (qtd. in Klein 22).

President Wilson declared on December 28, 1918, "There must now be a single overwhelming, powerful group of nations who shall be the trustee of the peace of the world, not a balance of power, not a powerful group of nations set off against one another." Foreign policy was now his top priority to turn his vision of a peaceful world order into the League of Nations under

Anglo-American leadership. The Covenant of the League also had a number of contentious provisions. Wilson sought to "revert to traditional isolation from the Old World" with the League's assistance, according to Lloyd Ambrosius, a professor of international relations, but he also wanted to project American influence over the globe. Article X, which incorporated a collective security mechanism, was the most contentious. It states that "The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League." The Council shall provide advice regarding how to carry out this obligation in the event of any such aggression. Wilson's opponents were concerned because the covenant blended internationalist and isolationist aspects (qtd. in Klein 23).

Wilson faced an ideological challenge in justifying America's entry into the war and subsequent global engagement. He argued that the conflict was a clash of political morality between the virtuous ideals of liberal democracy and the warped values of militarist autocracy. He also argued that American intervention did not amount to the embroilment of the US in the European system, but rather an opportunity to strike a blow demolishing that order. Despite their long-standing tradition of detachment, he argued that Americans, including himself, had become convinced that the war was not a European struggle, but a struggle for the freedom of the world and the liberation of humanity. Wilson continued People "have a right to live their own lives under the governments which they themselves choose to establish". Wilson justified the conflict as an American struggle for freedom for all by fusing democratic universalism and "Americanism" (Quinn 95-104).

The League on Nations was intended to abolish the alliance system based on national interests and replace it with a new, cooperative order based on moral universalism. Wilson argued that no single nation or group of nations could have a special interest that was not consistent with the common interest of all. Nations would be co-workers in tasks which would weave out of their sentiments a common conception of duty and rights. The war meant that national purposes had

fallen more and more into the background, replaced by 'the common purpose of enlightened mankind' (Quinn 99).

Wilson's ideas faced fierce opposition. Henry Cabot Lodge, the Republican senatorial leader, reportedly had a personal hate for Wilson and generally opposed any democratic efforts. Lodge was initially not particularly averse to the League's plan, but Theodore Roosevelt had persuaded him that "under no circumstances... [should] the United States agree to police the Old World" and that one should not give up the Monroe Doctrine. This is why, according to Duroselle. Lodge warned Wilson against transferring sovereignty to the League, and the public opposed the treaty due to its harshness and lack of Irish independence. Wilson needed to convince the American people of his idea. Wilson refused to compromise, leading to the rejection of the Versailles Peace Treaty and the League, which set the stage for a second war (qtd. in Klein 28).

Franklin Roosevelt needed the support of the party's right wing under William Randolph Hearst, who advocated isolationism and repudiation of the League of Nations. To secure Hearst's support, Roosevelt announced in a speech to the New York State Grange that American participation in the League would not serve the highest purpose of the prevention of war. He argued that with strict adherence to the principles of Washington, America must maintain its international freedom. Franklin Roosevelt believed that the causes of the depression were at the domestic level, and focused on domestic issues instead of international trade relations. The "Good Neighbor" idea was introduced by the president. "I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbor—the neighbor who steadfastly respects himself and, as a result of doing so, respects the rights of others," he stated. According to the historian John Lamberton Harper, FDR's Good Neighbor notion announced a new theory of non-interference in the internal affairs of Latin America and was founded on the anti-European conception of the Monroe theory. FDR accepted conventional isolationist principles as a result. Foreign policy "fell to the bottom of the national scale of

priorities" as a result of FDR's inauguration address, and involvement with the old world was forbidden. The United States entirely shifted its focus to domestic issues (qtd. in Klein 33).

The Spanish Civil War, Italian invasion of Ethiopia, Nazi Germany's remilitarization and territorial conquests, and the takeover of Manchuria by Japan in the 1930s all posed threats to US isolationism. The US Congress responded to these conflicts by passing a number of Neutrality Acts that were intended to stop American engagement in them. According to long-standing diplomatic convention, nations that want to stay out of a war had to maintain absolute neutrality. Economic penalties or the sale of armaments to one belligerent but not the other might be viewed as acts of war. Therefore, the Neutrality Acts provided a definition of American neutrality to the rest of the world. Germany attacked Poland on September 1, 1939, prompting war declarations from both France and Great Britain. More than 90% of Americans who were surveyed shortly after the start of the war opposed joining the conflict yet strongly hoped for Germany's defeat. Even if Nazi Germany destroyed Great Britain and France, the mass of people did not want to fight. Congress passed the Neutrality Act of 1939 in November 1939, two months after the start of World War II, lifting the 1935 arms embargo and requiring any sales to combatants states to be made on a "cash and carry" basis. The Lend-Lease Act in the beginning of 1941. The President was given the power to "lend, lease, sell, trade, or deliver weapons, ammunition, food, or any information concerning a defense to any government whose defense the President deems critical to the defense of the United States." Discussions about American involvement in the Pacific and European theaters of World War II came to an end after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The day after the incident, Congress declared war on Imperial Japan with just one vote against it. Germany and Italy, which were allies of Japan, replied by declaring war on the United States. Ordinary Americans came together to support the war effort after learning these truths and becoming horrified by the attack on Pearl Harbor (Quinn 95). Two days after the attack on Pearl Harbor,

President Roosevelt addressed the nation as follows: “We are now in this war. We are all in it—all the way.” (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum).

When that world war was over, Americans again had to decide whether to engage with the rest of the world more or less. By making sure that America entered the new United Nations, President Roosevelt and many Americans, both Democrats and Republicans, hoped to stop a new wave of isolationism. In any case, the Soviet Union's aggressive actions in Europe and the Middle East essentially decided for them whether or not to get involved in world affairs. American military, political, and economic participation in what was truly a global conflict during the Cold War spanned decades. America's goal that time was preventing communism from spreading beyond other countries such as Vietnam by contributing supplies, munitions, and occasionally troops. Containment was useless after the Soviet Union fell because the United States was the only power left.

Under presidents Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman, the liberal internationalist vision was resuscitated and put forward in new form. Both of these Democratic presidents framed their foreign policies in part as attempts to vindicate hopes for a more open and humane world order, but their 1940s version differed from Wilson's in several significant ways. Both FDR and Truman were more politically adroit than Wilson in recognizing and responding to domestic political critics, and the political mood within the United States had changed to the extent that more Americans were willing to consider truly dramatic departures in U.S. foreign policy. Liberal internationalists claimed that the conventional patterns of power politics would become irrelevant as a result of a combination of multilateral institutions, conflict resolution mechanisms, humanitarian interventions, global democratization, and global governance projects. Although more aware of the limitations of multilateralism than post-Cold War Wilsonians on the right, they nevertheless shared the optimistic focus on global democratization. This makes the tendency a bipartisan one. The Clinton administration sought an international engagement and enlargement strategy in the hopes of

widening the circle of friendly market democracies at the least possible expense to the US. In response to 9/11, the George W. Bush government supported bold initiatives to democratize the Greater Middle East. Additionally, the Obama administration hoped to promote greater international coordination around liberal standards through U.S.-led accommodations, while dialing back on Bush's particular focus (Dueck).

1.3 The Main Goals of American Foreign Policy

In line with the bipartisan consensus that more democracies contribute to a more safe, prosperous, orderly, and just world, promoting democracy and human rights abroad has long been a cornerstone of American foreign policy. Supporting democracy activists and creating alliances among democratic countries have both benefited greatly from American leadership. There are four major goals that can attribute much of what the U.S. government does in the area of foreign policy, despite the fact that the goals of a nation's foreign policy are always up for discussion and revision. (1) the defense of the United States and its people, (2) the preservation of access to vital resources and markets, (3) the maintenance of a balance of power in the world, and (4) the defense of freedom and human rights (“American Government, the Outputs of Government,”).

The protection of the US and its citizens' lives, both at home and overseas, ought to be the first priority. Protecting the nation's allies, or nations with which the United States is friendly and supportive of one another, is related to this security objective. Threats and dangers in the international realm can take many different forms, including military threats from other countries or terrorist organizations and economic threats from trade boycotts and high tariffs. In an economic boycott, the US stops doing business with another nation unless and until that nation alters a policy that the US finds objectionable. When trade is stopped, neither US nor foreign goods can be sold in the other nation (“American Government, the Outputs of Government”).

Assuring that the country continues to have access to vital resources and markets around the globe is the second main objective of American foreign policy. Natural resources, like oil, and

economic resources, like the infusion of foreign capital investment for domestic infrastructure projects in the United States, like buildings, roads, and weapons systems, are examples of resources. Naturally, having access to the global market also gives one access to products that American customers might desire, like Swiss chocolate and Australian wine. Additionally, U.S. foreign policy aims to promote American business interests by promoting the export of home goods and promoting global economic growth especially in developing countries (“American Government, the Outputs of Government”).

The maintenance of the world's power harmony is a third major objective. When there is a balance of power, no country or region has a significant military advantage over the rest of the globe. Perfect balance of power is probably not achievable, but general stability, predictability in how governments operate, strong institutions, and the lack of violence within and between countries might be. Leaders in the United States have often regarded international stability through the prism of Europe. The globe was stable if the European continent was. Nonstate or nongovernmental organizations, such as al-Qaeda and ISIS (or ISIL), made up of various terrorist cells spread across numerous nations and continents, have entered the balance of power equation as a result of the crisis in Europe brought on by thousands of Middle Eastern refugees and Carefully planned terrorist attacks in the United States, Asia, and Europe. (“American Government, the Outputs of Government,”)

The fourth major objective of American foreign policy is the defense of democracy and human rights. Peace and tranquility are the benefits of security that result from other U.S. foreign policy objectives. The United States makes efforts to support international peace through many aspects of its foreign policy, such as foreign aid, and through its support of and participation in international organizations like the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the Organization of American States. However, the United States undoubtedly looks

out for its own strategic interests when considering foreign policy strategy (“American Government, the Outputs of Government,”)

1.4 The United Nation (UN)

As a global organization for maintaining peace, the League of Nations was founded at the conclusion of World War I. Despite US President Woodrow Wilson's passionate support for the League, isolationists in Congress prevented the US from formally joining the organization. While some foreign conflicts were successfully resolved by the League of Nations, it was unable to stop the Second World War from starting. Right up until its official liquidation in 1946, the league of nations was still in operation. The creation of an alternative organization, the United Nations, was already being discussed at this point by the Allied powers.

In order to guarantee global safety during humanitarian interventions, the U.N. Charter outlines specific procedures. As a result, the international community to engage militarily in a conflict through its recognized organizations, particularly the UNSC, gives states. Therefore, when such interventions follow the guidelines outlined in the UN Charter, their legality is verified. Chapter VII, articles 39, 40, and 41 of the UN Charter outline certain guidelines and requirements that must be met before states may engage militarily in the affairs of other states (Qtd in. Ogunnowo and Chidozie 4).

Article 39 The Security Council shall identify any aggressor, peace threat, or act of aggression, and shall recommend or determine the appropriate measures to be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42 to preserve or restore international peace and security (United Nations). Chapter VII: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression (Articles 39-51)

Article 40, before recommending or choosing the measures outlined in Article 39, the Security Council may ask the parties involved to abide by any provisional measures it considers necessary or desirable in order to prevent the situation from getting worse. These temporary steps

are to be taken without compromising the rights, assertions, or positions of the parties involved.

Failure to adhere to such temporary steps shall be properly taken into consideration by the Security Council (United Nations).

In accordance with Article 41, The Security Council has the authority to determine what non-lethal means should be used to carry out its judgments and may request that UN members use those means; These include the severing of diplomatic ties as well as the total or partial interruption of economic relations and train, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other forms of communication (United Nations).

A review of Articles 39 to 41 of the Charter reveals that establishing the presence of any threat, breach of the peace, or act of aggression is the first requirement for military interventions. The Charter does not specify the terms "threat to peace" or "breach of the peace." Wellens made the argument that the idea of a threat to the peace appears ambiguous because it encompasses a broad spectrum of state behaviors in support of this. In order to address this, the UNSC states that acts such as inter- or intrastate conflicts, internal conflicts with regional or sub regional dimensions, terrorist acts, proliferation, and the illegal trafficking of small and light weapons may be considered threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression. Based on the aforementioned, the Syrian civil war can be classified as a breach of peace since it is an internal dispute with implications for the Middle East (qtd in. Ogunnowo and Chidozie 4).

1.4.1 Responsibility to Protect (RtP)

One of the many doctrines, conventions, etc. created to defend human rights through humanitarian interventions is the responsibility to protect. The doctrine supported the "unconditional" protection of human rights while acknowledging their universality. It assigns the state the duty of defending human rights, and in the event that it does not, the international community assumes the duty. This attitude was influenced by the genocide that occurred in Rwanda in 1994 and the subsequent international inaction in response to violations of human rights. The

legal ramifications of an intervention by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1999 that was not authorized by the Security Council also played a role in the creation of the R2P. This sparked debates about the legitimacy of operations that lack Security Council approval. The aforementioned led former U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to advocate for a global standard in favor of interventions to stop and/or avoid violations of human rights (qtd. in Ogunnowo and Chidozie 4).

The overall RtP strategy is divided into three pillars, which are equal in terms of size, strength, and viability. First, states have a responsibility to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. Second, the international community has a responsibility of assistance towards the state in question, as to fulfill its primary responsibilities; third, the international community has a responsibility of assistance towards the state in question; and third, the international community has a responsibility to fulfill its primary responsibilities (Apetroe 76).

According to Alexandru C. Apetroe argued that The interconnectedness of the pillar system and the umbrella concept of "the Responsibility to Protect" ensure that any intervention for the purpose of preventing genocide must be taken as a "extraordinary and exceptional measure" and that it satisfies certain requirements (78), which are represented by its four main objectives: To develop clearer rules, procedures, and criteria for deciding whether, when, and how to intervene. To demonstrate the validity of military action when it is essential and after all other options have been exhausted. To ensure that military action is done only for the objectives specified, that it is successful, and that it is conducted with due regard for the human expenses and institutional harm that will result. To assist in eliminating, where feasible, the causes of conflict while improving the chances for long-term and lasting peace.

The aspects that involve military intervention are only used as a "last resort" after all other preventive (non-military) options have been exhausted. The decision to use military force must be

made under specific circumstances, including having a clear purpose, being proportionate, and having realistic prospects, as well as only with the "direct authority of the Security Council." On these ideas, The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) report has gotten substantial support from governments and law experts, despite criticism from some BRICS countries (such as India, Russia, Brazil, and China), some writers, and divided to somewhat favorable evaluations from others. In particular, the United Nations acknowledged its significance at the 2005 World Summit and has since twice endorsed the RtP initiative; UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has also expressed his support for RtP, with the first comprehensive document released in 2009, during the Annual Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, and then debating RtP in the UN General Assembly for the following year. Since 2010, this procedure has persisted in the ensuing UN Secretariat's Annual Report (Apetroe 78).

1.5 US Relations with the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

The US-North Africa nation's policy is subtly contradictory; while some African nations engage in only cursory exchanges with one another, others maintain close ties. Washington, D.C., the capital of the United States, had to contend with a monarchy in Morocco that had long-standing ties to the country. In contrast, since its independence in the 1990s, Algeria and the United States have had tense political relations. Like Morocco, Tunisia has had close political ties with the US, but due to its republican political system, which posed unique political challenges, it differs from Morocco. Libya was regarded as a dangerous nation. However, Egypt and the US have close ties and numerous cooperative deals ("Middle East - U.S. Foreign Policy").

At the beginning of World War II, the U.S. produced a staggering 60% of the world's oil. Because of its monopoly on energy, the United States was able to supply its allies' militaries, including those of Britain and France, while its adversaries, Germany and Japan, battled to do the same. However, as the Second World War drew to a close, American energy specialists worried that the nation's oil reserves would eventually run dry. Thus, finding new oil sources overseas became

crucial for national security. Roosevelt consequently started to seek closer ties with Saudi King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, whose nation had just recently found its own enormous oil reserves. The two leaders' meeting in February 1945 was a crucial beginning to their ongoing bilateral partnership (“Middle East - U.S. Foreign Policy”).

1.5.1 American Intervention in Iraq

Iraq invaded and occupied its smaller southern neighbor Kuwait in 1990, igniting anger across the globe. Iraq's departure was required by the UN. The biggest military coalition since World War II, comprised of thirty-eight nations, was led by the United States to liberate Kuwait when it refused. President George H.W. Bush of the United States was concerned that a lack of an international reaction might inspire Saddam Hussein of Iraq to attack Saudi Arabia next, possibly giving a tyrannical dictator control over a sizable portion of the world's oil supply. Due to its threats to use chemical weapons against the Jewish nation, President Bush also thought that Iraq presented a danger to Israel's security. He also took action to uphold the sovereignty concept, which states that no country's territory may be taken by force. In the end, more than 500,000 American soldiers participated in the Gulf War, which resulted in the quick destruction of Iraqi forces. However, after liberating Kuwait, coalition troops chose not to advance into Baghdad, the capital of Iraq, in order to overthrow its dictator. The next ten years would pass before American forces would once again carry out that task (“Middle East - U.S. Foreign Policy”).

On February 27, 2009, Barak Obama declared that the war in Iraq will end, saying: "Let me say this as plainly as I can: by August 31, 2010, our combat mission in Iraq will end" ("Obama's Speech at Camp Lejeune, N.C."). For Obama, the war in Iraq had been a disastrously misguided war of choice. American troops have been reduced under his rule until the end of 2011. These incidents allow us to conclude that Obama worked to improve ties with the Arab and Islamic worlds (“Obama’s Speech at Camp Lejeune, N.C.”).

1.5.2 American Intervention in Libya

The demonstrations sparked a wave of revolutions throughout the Arab world. Numerous free speech and democratic reform movements, also known as "The Arab Spring," (AS) have emerged over the past ten years. By providing financial support and pressuring the Arab peoples to ride and control their revolutions in order to protect American interests in the region, the US played a significant and crucial part in these events. The US has lost some of its Arab partners as a result of these events, but it has also made new friends and allies in Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Tunisia, and other countries.

Beginning in Tunisia and Egypt, protests (demonstrations) resulted in the overthrow of two oppressive regimes in North Africa at the beginning of 2011. These incidents sparked anti-Gaddafi demonstrations in Libya, which started in Tripoli and Benghazi at the beginning of February and spread throughout the entire nation. These demonstrations centered on issues like corruption, local issues, and the desire to advance in the political system. As a result of the Gaddafi regime's continued repression of the Libyan people, the United States intervened on February 18, 2011, denouncing the violence and pledging support for democratic reforms and economic freedom in Libya and other Arab Spring countries. On March 16, 2011, Gaddafi troops headed by his son Saif al-Islam moved on Benghazi because of demonstrations by the Libyan populace. The UN Security Council (UNSC) formally approved the no-fly zone over Libya the following day. Two days later, the NATO launched attacks against the Gaddafi forces in order to halt their progress in Benghazi and to defend/protect the Libyan populace from injury. Then Muammar Gaddafi passed away in October 2011, the NATO offensive against Libyan troops came to a stop. President Barak Obama said on October 20, 2011 "The death of dictator Gaddafi marks the end of a long and painful chapter for the people of Libya, who now have the opportunity to determine their own destiny in a new and democratic Libya," (qtd. In Beddada et al. 28).

The Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, put it in 2011, "Gaddafi was not a danger to us anywhere. Only that, he posed a danger to his own people. Obama's invasion of Libya ultimately had rather catastrophic outcomes, including the deaths of two American ambassadors at Benghazi, Sean Smith and Christopher Stevens. These two fatalities not only changed how the American public felt about military action in the Middle East, but they also became a source of controversy and criticism that followed the Obama government. As Obama himself acknowledges, his administration failed to take into account the future of democracy in Libya after the overthrow of Gadhafi, leaving behind a failed state, the emergence of radical groups, and another Civil War in 2014. Obama undoubtedly took into account what happened as a result of American involvement in Libya when deciding whether or not to pursue a similar course of action in the humanitarian catastrophe that was developing in Syria (Heath 26).

1.5.3 American Intervention in Syria

The Syrian Crisis, which started in March 2011 in Darra, as an anti-government demonstration against president Bashar-al-Assad was inspired by the success of the widespread protest movement in Tunisia and Egypt. In an effort to put an end to corruption in the government and violations by the security forces, the Syrian people started protesting all over their nation. Most demonstrations were orderly. However, president Bashar al-Assad abused his power by limiting people's political freedoms and restricting their civil rights. One of the primary causes of these protests is thought to be the misconduct that has developed within the Syrian administration (qtd. in Bedadda et al.29)

The Syrian government continued abusing and practicing human rights violations that caused the death of many Syrian civilians. Foreign aid is being given to both the Syrian government and the opposition groups, which has attracted a lot of interest from around the world. On August 18, 2011, President Barack Obama declared that Assad should stand down. He stressed that the U.S. would not force a change on Syria and would instead leave the option of its leaders to the Syrian

people. The Syrian conflict has provided the United States with major policy problems since 2011, and since 2014, the US has given military operations against the Islamic State (IS, also known as ISIL/ISIS) top priority. More than \$9.1 billion has been allocated by the United States for humanitarian aid linked to Syria, and Congress has also authorized additional billions for security and stabilization projects in Syria and its surrounding countries (qtd. in Bedadda et al. 12)

Concern over the Syrian government's use of chemical weapons against its own people was one of the main reasons the United States decided to engage in the Syrian civil conflict. In 2013, allegations of a massive chemical weapons assault in the Ghouta neighborhood of Damascus that killed hundreds of civilians, including women and children, surfaced. The United States and its allies who claimed that this was a serious violation of international law and a danger to regional security charged the Syrian government with using chemical weapons. In reaction, as a form of retribution and warning for the use of chemical weapons, the U.S. contemplated taking military action against the Syrian government, including attacks. The emergence of extremist organizations, especially the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), which used the confusion and instability of the civil war to create a brutal caliphate, was another reason that led to the U.S. involvement in Syria. ISIS was seen as a clear danger to American national security (qtd. in Bedadda et al. 13).

In addition, the American involvement in Syria has been controversial, with critics questioning its legitimacy, efficacy, and possible repercussions. Some contend that because the United States' involvement in Syria was not approved by the UN Security Council and was not motivated by either self-defense or a request from the Syrian government, it was illegal under international law. Critics are also worried about the possibility of an increase in violence, unintended effects, and innocent fatalities.

Conclusion

In order to advance global security, U.S. foreign policy has frequently entailed involvement in other nations, including wars like the Syrian civil war. The United States has adopted the stance that

dangers to peace and security in other areas may have consequences for American national interests. Concerns about the use of chemical weapons, the emergence of radical groups, and the possible effects on regional security, for instance, have motivated the involvement in Syria. However, there has also been discussion and critique of U.S. foreign policy interventions abroad, with questions asked regarding their legitimacy, efficacy, and unintended effects. In discussions of U.S. foreign policy, the delicate balance between advancing global security and protecting other countries' rights is still under consideration. In order to protect international peace and security, U.S. involvement abroad is generally influenced by a variety of variables, including national security objectives, humanitarian concerns, and geopolitical considerations. Finding the ideal equilibrium between intervention and non-intervention, though, is still a difficult job for American foreign policy.

Chapter Two: The Arab Spring: Historical Context, Roots and Aftermath

Introduction

In 2011, there was a call to action from desperate people who were tired of the system. They stood up for liberty and demanded their rights that had been taken away from them. When a series of democratic movements known as the Arab Spring exploded across the Middle East. Protests in Tunisia and Egypt overthrew their respective administrations in rapid succession, encouraging similar attempts in other Arab nations. However, they did not see the desired change; the Arab uprisings took a disastrous turn when the government used violence against demonstrators, and civil war began. Syria's conflict has been the most complicated to develop from the Arab revolutions of 2011. Syria's civil war has resulted in the world's worst refugee and displacement crises, involving millions of people and spreading to neighboring nations.

2.1 The Arab Spring

The "Arab Spring" is often thought to have been sparked by the way rulers conducted administrative matters of local governments; however, some have ascribed it to general wealth disparity. Several factors have contributed to the protests, including authoritarianism, or an absolute monarchic system of administration, violations of citizens' inalienable rights, political mismanagement and nepotism, economic downturn, unemployment, acute poverty, and a number of demographic structural aspects, such as a significant percentage of educated but disgruntled youth within the population. Another element that led to the Arab Spring was the 2009-2010 Iranian election protests (Abdel Salam 5).

In general, the Arab Spring was fueled by the unequal distribution of wealth among nations and its concentration in the hands of a few elements in society, particularly those who have held power for a long time; insufficient openness in the redistribution of societal wealth, corruption, nepotism, and the constant struggle of the youth to change the status quo. Constant food price inflation and worldwide hunger rates were also key considerations, since they included challenges to global food security and prices that almost reached the heights of the 2007-2008 global food

price crisis. Increases in the cost of living standards and education rates, as well as a rise in the degree of tertiary education, have resulted in an enhanced Human Development Index in the nations concerned. The contradiction between increasing ambitions and ineffective government reform initiatives may have played a role in all of the revolutions (Abdel Salam 6).

The name "Arab Spring" was initially used to describe the current Arab upheavals by the US political academic publication "Foreign Policy". Marc Lynch, an American political scientist, in his essay published in the journal "Foreign Policy", coined this word. The Arab Spring was a movement of violent and nonviolent demonstrations and civil conflicts that began in Tunisia on December 18, 2010 and spread throughout the Arab world. It was against the authoritarian authorities' long-term tyrannical regulations, a perpetual state of emergency in which the police and the Interior Ministry had disproportionate powers to crush the people, unemployment, poverty, inflation, and many more. The attention of international community. All of the regimes affected by the Arab Spring used their power completely to crush the demonstrators, and as a result, the peaceful protesters turned violent. Throughout the Arab Spring, protesters used the slogan "the people want to bring down the regime" (qtd. in Qadirmushtaq and Afzal 1).

The recent wave of unrest was not a completely new evolution, stemming in part from the efforts of dissenting revolutionaries as well as members of a variety of social and union organizations that had been at the forefront for many years in countries such as Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, and many other states in the Maghreb. Rebellions have occurred in the Arab world since the 1800s. However, only recently have these revolutions and clashes shifted from battling foreign rulers or colonial resistance to fighting for the Arab state itself. The public uprising in the summer of 2011 signaled the end of the old concept of national independence from colonialism, colonial rule, and subordination; now, the revolution is internal, aimed at the key concerns confronting the Arab world. Tunisia, in particular, has been plagued by internal turmoil for the previous five years,

with the most notable incident being in the resource drilling area of Gafsa in 2008, when protests lasted several months (Abdel Salam 6).

Rallies, sit-ins, and strikes were among the different types of resistance activities. Since 2004, the Egyptian labor movement has been active, staging various industrial actions. On April 6, 2008, workers took part in a strike at the government-owned textile manufacturing factories in al-Mahalla al-Kubra, located outside the state capital of Cairo. The concept for this type of insurrection spread throughout the country, aided by computer-literate young working-class people and their sympathizers among middle-class college students. A social media-related Facebook page set up to advance the strike attracted a large number of followers. While the government was partially successful in averting a strike, protesters formed the "6 April committee" of youths and labor revolutionaries, which became one of the most powerful forces advocating the anti-Mubarak riots on January 25 in the historic Tahrir Square (Abdel Salam 7).

Though the uprisings occurred in largely Arab communities, worldwide media highlighted the role of minority groups in a number of Arab countries. In Tunisia, for example, the Jewish minority joined the opposition. In Egypt, the Coptic minority has criticized Mubarak's government for failing to repress Islamic militants who attacked the Coptic community. The potential of these fanatical groups seizing power following Mubarak's collapse drove most Copts to stay away from the protests, with then-Pope Shenouda III of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria calling for an end to the protests. According to the foreign media, just a few Copts participated in the protests. Because the uprisings and insurgencies began in North Africa before spreading to Asian Arab states, the Berbers of Libya participated in the revolts and fought on Berber platforms. Some Berbers in North Africa interpreted the revolt as a revival of the Berber Spring. Amazigh became an official language in Morocco alongside Arabic on July 1, 2011. Many non-Arab Darfuris protested against the government in Northern Sudan, while the ethnic Kurdish minority protested against the administration in Iraq and Syria (Abdel Salam 9).

2.2 Roots of the Arab Spring

2.2.1 The Economic Causes

The Middle Eastern and North African economies are in various stages of development. They differ in terms of their developmental status and economic structure. The GDP of oil-exporting countries is much higher than that of the rest of the area. Some nations' revenue is dependent on oil and gas exports, such as Libya and Algeria, while others, such as Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia, are based on manufacturing and tourism. Since the 1990s, North African governments have implemented economic reforms with the assistance of the *The International Monetary Fund* (IMF) and World Bank. In these states, the public sectors have been privatized, and government intervention in the financial sector has been reduced. The drop in oil prices from 2008 to 2009 had a direct negative impact on oil exporting nations as well as other countries in the area. During the crisis, Europe and America, which used to import manufactured goods from the region, reduced their demand (qtd. in Qadirmushtaq and Afzal 2).

The impact of food crises and high food prices in political instability has long been acknowledged, particularly in poor nations that rely on food from other countries. During 2007-8, Arab nations such as Yemen, Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt were subjected to public uprisings as a result of food grain price increases. In the two years preceding the Arab Spring, inflation rates in the impacted nations ranged from 25 to 30 percent. The high inflation rate had little impact on the oil-producing countries. The North African area was particularly hard hit by the high costs, as there is still a link between food prices and food insurgencies. All of this contributes to the region's political turmoil (qtd.in Qadirmushtaq and Afzal 2).

The decrease in manufacture of various items in 2010 increased unemployment in Morocco, Egypt, and Tunis. According to the circumstances of the North African area, the region's unemployment rate was not significantly worsening, at around 10%. One of the major reasons of the Arab Spring was young unemployment, particularly among females. The Arab countries have

the lowest female labor force participation rate in the world. On the eve of the Arab Spring, one out of every four young Egyptians and Tunisians was unemployed. Along with a drop in output, the population surge contributed to an increase in unemployment. This had a negative impact on North African countries, as the average age of the population was decreasing (qtd. in Qadirmushtaq and Afzal 3).

2.2.2 The Social Causes

It is true that the Middle Eastern and North African states are diverse, both economically and politically, yet they share some characteristics. Because the entire region contains around 30% of the population aged 15 to 29, the young unemployment rate is significant. During the previous three decades, the region's educational levels have advanced significantly. This socioeconomic position influenced societal transformation, particularly toward democratization. History demonstrates that youth-rich nations do not dread upheavals, political aggressiveness, or civil wars. During the 1990s, nations with youthful populations saw three times the number of civil conflicts as those with mature populations (Qadirmushtaq and Afzal 3).

The popular Arab riots may be understood from a political economics standpoint by examining the people's social yearning for increased political and civic rights. People, particularly youth, in the area asked their individual governments to improve their social and economic conditions by providing resources for education and jobs, but the governments did not respond, leading to upheavals (Qadirmushtaq and Afzal 4).

To implement structural adjustment procedures, the MENA States followed a strategy of privatization of public sectors, trade liberalization, and deregulation. While structural changes have enhanced the economic development of South African governments, the middle classes and the majority of youngsters have been excluded. It also does not support political measures aimed at guaranteeing commons civil rights. It has only strengthened the existing authoritarian rulers while impeding democracy. Fundamental human rights such as the ability to vote, liberty, expression, and

association have been discouraged by the declaration of perpetual crises by Tunisia and other countries (qtd. in Dirmushtaq and Afzal 5).

2.3 The Arab Spring in Syria

The explosion of protests and social unrest in Tunisia, and then in countries like Libya and Egypt, had a significant political, economic, and social impact on other countries in North Africa and the Middle East, posing serious challenges to the region's security. Syria was one of these countries. (Zuber and Moussa)

The country's ethnic religious divisions between the Sunni majority and the Alawite minority have fueled the decade-long war. Syria is 10% Christian and 87 percent Muslim; 74% of Syrian Muslims are Sunni and 13% are Shia. Hafez al-Assad, the Alawite defense minister, took power from the ruling Baath party in 1970 and launched a brutal administration that lasted nearly 30 years. During his administration, ethnic tensions reached a boiling point in February 1982, when Sunni Muslim Brotherhood members drove Hafez al Assad's security forces out of Hama, which had a strong concentration of Muslim Brothers at the time. In reaction, the dictatorship bombarded Hama, killing nearly 30,000 people (Heath 9).

Hafez reigned with an iron grip until his death in 2000, when his 34-year-old son, Bashar al-Assad, whom he had been grooming, took over. Syrians thought that when it was revealed that Bashar would be the new president, he would depart from his father's authoritarian tactics and modernize the country. Bashar was educated in London and had worked as an inconspicuous eye doctor before becoming president. He also said that he liked being an eye doctor since "there was very little blood." However, Assad soon liberalized the previously state-run economy, benefiting primarily the regime's crony capitalists rather than the majority of Syrians living in poverty. Unemployment and poverty soared during his first 10 years in office, particularly among younger Syrians. To make matters worse, Syria had a catastrophic drought between 2006 and 2010, affecting the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of farmers and causing many to become climate refugees.

While farmers were being driven off their property, people associated with the dictatorship, such as Assad's first cousin Rami Makhlouf, became much wealthier during Assad's reign (Heath 11).

Syria's protests began in Dara'a province, which had been particularly hard hit by the drought, after government officials detained and tortured a group of children who spray-painted graffiti that said "It's your turn, doctor," implying that President Assad would be the next leader to be deposed like it happened in Tunisia, protesters successfully forced President Ben Ali to resign (Heath12). According to the narrative, Rami Makhlouf's business Syriatel sought to acquire some property that was part of a school in Dara'a so that Syriatel could erect a new cell tower, but the Principal of the school objected, so he dispatched some men to physically assault her (Heath 11).

Following the incident, a number of her pupils began to graffiti, for which they were detained. Protests against the dictatorship erupted and swiftly spread as the parents of the jailed youngsters were never notified of their children's location. Unlike in Tunisia and Egypt, these rallies were more about dignity and human rights than the health of Syria's economy, though Assad's crony capitalism was undoubtedly a part. In response to the protests, the authorities fired into the crowd and arrested protestors, further upsetting the rising opposition. By early April, peaceful protests had spread across the country, and by the end of the month, the Syrian government had sent tanks to smash them. By July, at least 100,000 people had joined anti-government rallies across Syria, and regime troops had murdered over 600 civilians. President Assad committed not to give up to "terrorists" in a speech to the country on January 10th, 2012, and to continue defending his government with a "iron fist." When government forces assaulted Homs, the center of the anti-regime rebellion at that moment, on February 3rd, they killed over 200 people in a single day (Heath12).

2.3.1 The Opposition Forces

The Syrian opposition forces, also known as anti-Assad, anti-government, or rebel forces, are made up of several organizations and militias that oppose the Assad forces in the conflict. Scholars have classified the rebel armies in an attempt to classify them. Ford divided the rebel groups into

two categories: Syrian nonjihadi opposition and Syrian jihadi opposition. Each division is made up of several militia and paramilitary organisations. This allegation was supported by the Geneva International Center for Justice, which recognized the moderate and religious fronts. The lack of a centralized authority structure to coordinate assaults is a result of this. According to Sofer and Shafroth, the rebel forces have been hampered by multiple divisions. The Syrian National Council (SNC), the Free Syrian Army (FSA), the Syrian Liberation Front (SLF), the Syrian Islamic Front, and various autonomous rebel organizations are among the Syrian opposition forces (qtd. In Ogunnowo and Chidozie 6).

The SNC positions itself as the umbrella body for the Syrian opposition forces. The SNC was formed in October 2011 in response to the necessity to coordinate rebel forces in order to respond effectively against progovernment troops in the war. The Damascus Declaration, the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, Kurdish factions, representatives of grassroots Local Coordination Committees, and other political parties and platforms, including the Damascus Spring and the National Bloc, signed on to the formation of the council. According to Ulutas, the SNC has a sizable political base that includes Christians, Alawites, Assyrians, Kurds, and other minorities. Despite its enormous membership, the council is not without flaws. Notable among these is the SNC's inability to establish a monopoly on anti-Assad feelings and beliefs. To put it another way, the SNC does not represent the Syrian opposition groups. This problem is directly related to the lack of centralized authority in the Syrian war. According to Ulutas, the SNC's influence on the opposing side of the war has been damaged by a mismatch between the council and the groups of people it purports to represent, as well as its reliance on foreign support (qtd. In Ogunnowo and Chidozie 6).

In Syria, the Free Syrian Army is conducting an attack against the Assad-led government and its military. According to the FSA, it is a Sunni-dominated rebel organisation that was founded to protect and support the revolution's cause. The gang had just 1,000 warriors in its early days. The

institution's numerical strength has increased as the battle has progressed. Jenkins claims that the Sunni-dominated rebel force increased to 50,000 combatants during the battle. This is mostly due to military defections from Syria. Despite its size, the organization is divided into multiple factions, each with its own set of aims and approaches to the struggle (qtd. In Ogunnowo and Chidozie 6).

The SLF is yet another armed rebel group fighting in Syria. The SLF was established in February 2018 to oppose the influence of another rebel organization known as Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham. The Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham is a religious offshoot of the rebel groups seeking to destabilize the Assad regime and establish an Islamic state. Its primary Islamic ideological leanings set it against larger forces such as the SLF. The Ahrar al-Sham, also known as the Harajat Ahrar al-Sham al-Islamiyya (the Islamic Movement of the Free Men of the Levant), was a mostly Sunni organisation that aspired to destabilize the Assad regime and replace it with an Islamic administration. The organization was founded in 2011, Carried out a series of attacks, and then joined with Nour al-Din al Zenki to establish the SLF (qtd. in Ogunnowo and Chidozie 6).

2.3.2 Pro Government Forces

This group of combatants fights for and is loyal to the Assad regime. Its brutal responses to protests in March 2011 precipitated the continuing conflict. The Syrian armed forces, which include the army, air force, and air defense command, are the primary combatants in this category. According to Jenkins, the Syrian state had 220,000 soldiers in the army and 70,000 more in the air force and defense command before the start of the conflict. However, the length of the fight has resulted in a staff scarcity. This has occurred because of conflict-related fatalities and military defections. Foreign powers like as Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah back pro-Assad troops, which in this case is the Syrian military. Within Syrian borders, many militia organizations, most notably the National Defense Force (NDF) and the Shabiha, provide assistance to Syria's armed forces (qtd. in Ogunnowo and Chidozie 6).

The National Defense Force (NDF) is a pro-government militia that aids the Syrian military in its fight against ISIS. The National Defense Force (NDF) was formed by Iran's Quds force to aid pro-Assad forces in the battle. The NDF, as an umbrella organization, has 200,000 employees, the majority of whom are drawn from various religious groups. In exchange, the Syrian military provides the NDF with military weapons and funds. Externally, Iran, Hezbollah, and Russia primarily support the NDF. The Shabiha is yet another pro-government group fighting in Syria on behalf of the Assad regime. It is made up of self-defense units chosen from the Alawite minority, to whom Assad belongs. Sectarianism has grown as a result of the advent of the Shabiha and other ethnic militia groups into the Syrian conflict. As a result, it is difficult to separate politically driven behaviors from ethnic ones. As a result, there are rumors that the Assad regime has launched a campaign of ethnic cleansing against Sunnis. The Shabiha murdered 40 Sunnis in Telkalakh on April 27, 2011. Other sect-related homicides revealed the victims to be Sunnis. The Shabiha's efforts are supplemented by the Jaysh al-Sha'bi, often known as the people's army, which defends Alawite, Druze, and Christian strongholds against the rebels (qtd. in Ogunnowo and Chidozie 6).

2.4 The Aftermath of the Arab Spring

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Syria still has the world's worst refugee problem after a decade of fighting. More than half of the population is displaced, with 5.5 million refugees largely living in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt, and another 6.7 million internally displaced within Syria. According to the United Nations, two-thirds of those displaced are women and children. "The situation is beyond horrible," adds Byman (Sherlock et al.). Some of these nations, like Turkey, have built improvised "tent cities" where migrants are being housed since they are unable to provide fast relocation for the expanding refugee population (Mariwala 13).

2.4.1 Forced Migrations

According to Shannon Doocy, Emily Lyles, Tefera D. Delbiso, and Courtland W. Robinson in their report *Internal Displacement and the Syrian Crisis: An Analysis of Trends from 2011-2014*, many social issues, such as internal displacement in Syria, have arisen since the Syrian crisis started in 2011. The population's movements are violently connected to the greatest number of displaced people from the region where the most violence took place. Since there were threats from both the government and the opposition organizations, displacement is seen as the only option for surviving. Since the conflict has not ended, more people were displaced in 2013, and they were dispersed throughout the nation's cities. Both Syrian expatriates and internally displaced people have experienced violence due to the conflict, despite the fact that their current circumstances in terms of security, human rights, insurance access, and humanitarian assistance vary. According to estimates, more than 210,000 people have been killed and 840,000 injured, usually resulting in long-term disabilities. The associated average future has decreased from 75.9 years in 2010 to an anticipated 55.7 years by the end of 2014 (qtd. in Bouziane 24).

Syrians have suffered a variety of rights violations and misuses, including slaughters, executions, torment, prisoner taking, upheld vanishing, assault and sexual viciousness. Displaced people have fled to other places to find peace, medical supports and material assistance, but have faced great danger and extreme violence, leading to the loss of some lives (qtd. in Bouziane 24).

2.4.2 Forced Immigrations

Since 2012, a large and rapid influx of refugees from Syria has entered the countries nearby. The number of exiles increased from 40,000 in March 2012 to two million in September 2013 during the course of a year and a half. Additionally, this statistic only refers to those who have enrolled or are said to be preparing to join. Since they entered and stayed inside the boundaries first

before spreading to other places to stay safely evading the disasters that regrettably occurred in their own nation, the neighboring countries provided the sole sanctuary for those refugees. The Syrian refugees desperately needed humanitarian help, and those nations' responses were generally supportive (qtd. in Bouziane 25).

With 720,000 arrivals as of the time of this writing and 500,000 Syrian vagrants working there throughout the emergency, Lebanon has been the country in the area most impacted by the flow of Syrian refugees. Two thousand Syrians from the Talkalakh area of Syria crossed over Lebanon's border and unintentionally settled in the country's northern district of Wadi Khaled as a result of the humanitarian situation caused by the conflict between the Syrian opposition and government's forces. Nearly 1.2 million Syrians have registered with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Lebanon by January 2015, making up nearly a fourth of the country's native population (qtd. in Bouziane 27).

No further trustworthy statistics have been made public since the Lebanese government asked the UNHCR to halt the formal registering of outcasts in May 2015. In the end, Lebanon had suffered because of the refugee problem ever since the entry of Syrian refugees. Given that Lebanon had the highest per-capita displacement rate, it was there that the Syrian refugee crisis first materialized. Lebanon is not adequately set up to provide acceptable support to exiles because of its political disarray and lack of institutional boundaries. Any long-term planning and progress the legislature does for the benefit of outcast populations rather than the impoverished Lebanese is also seen as politically toxic because to unfavorable open and political mentalities about exiles. Additionally, Lebanon's system for documenting severely disabled displaced people offers assistance and administrative transportation to these populations. 89% of the Syrian exiles in Lebanon reported going without food or the money to buy it in the last 30 days in 2015. Because of

its political limitations, Lebanon is unable to provide those refugees with humanitarian aid, and its government may view the refugee situation as a top priority (qtd. in Bouziane 28-29).

Report by Davis and Taylor According to the article Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon: A Snapshot from Summer 2013, Jordan and Lebanon have a long history of helping displaced people and handling catastrophes. Syrians have essentially relocated into every town and city neighborhood in Lebanon, although in Jordan they are primarily concentrated in the northern towns and cities, with the exception of Za'atari exile camp and two other smaller camps that are constantly growing in order to safeguard new immigrants. By 2015, more than 500,000 of the roughly 616,000 Syrian refugees living outside the camps in Jordan were Jordanians. Prior to the Syrian emergency, the population of Syrian exiles in Jordan was around 10 for every \$1 of Jordan's total population. This population had a significant impact on Jordan's culture and economics. Jordan assists Syrian refugees in a variety of ways, including by accepting individuals who enter camps after registering or by assisting those who leave them. Syrian refugees are becoming more numerous every year as a result of the ongoing conflict (qtd. in Bouziane 31).

As of November 2014, Turkey had the largest number of exiled Syrians among the countries that border Syria, at more than 1.6 million. Two categories should be used to study the issue of displaced persons in Turkey: those living in camps and those living elsewhere. The total number of Syrians recruited and placed under temporary protection, according to the Turkish government, is 2,225,147. The government of Turkey is establishing a benchmark for evacuee responses throughout the world by including two innovative elements: a non-camp strategy and a legislatively funded method. The government of Turkey anticipated spending \$7.6 billion by September 2015 to respond to Syrian refugees (qtd. in Bouziane 32).

2.5 Chemical Weapons and Indiscriminate Violence

To degrade the opposition movement to the point of surrender, the Assad administration has used overwhelming brutality against civilians. Torturing political prisoners, attacking hospitals, and unleashing chemical weapons on people are all examples of Assad's aggression. Although Assad denies using torture in his jails, the New York Times has obtained Syrian official files that identify fatalities as a result of torture and deplorable prison conditions (Heath 16).

The Physicians for Human Rights group exposed the government's targeting of hospitals during airstrikes, releasing reports of 46 government attacks on hospitals in northwest Syria, 14 of which were on a list provided to the Assad regime by the UN. The UN placed hospital facilities in Syria on the list in the hope that Assad and his allies would avoid them during bombing attacks. Rather of complying with the UN's proposal, Assad opted to target the most vulnerable civilian population, putting pressure on the opposition to surrender. Since the conflict began in 2011, 578 bombings of health care institutions have killed 890 medical practitioners. Government militias have murdered over 11,000 people, including almost 2,000 children, since the war began, using over 82,000 barrel bombs. Assad's forces also bombed funerals of their victims in order to kill anyone they suspected supported the opposition movement (Heath 16).

One of Assad's most heinous war crimes has been the deployment of chemical weapons on people. Although Syria has signed the Geneva Gas Protocol, which prohibits "the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous, or other gasses, and of all analogous liquids," this technically only applies to wars between countries and thus does not preclude the government from using chemical weapons on its own citizens. On December 23, 2012, the Assad administration used chemical weapons for the first time, killing seven people in Homs with an unknown toxic gas. Another claimed incidence occurred in March 2013, when chemical weapons in Damascus and Aleppo murdered 25 people; the Syrian government accused the opposition for these strikes (Heath 16).

Khan al-Asal, a community in northern Syria with a heavy rebel presence, was bombed with chemical weapons including sarin, a powerful nerve toxin that is 20 times more lethal than cyanide, in March 2013. The attack resulted in at least 26 fatalities with scores more injured. The government and the opposition swiftly accused one other, but subsequent UN investigations revealed that the sarin used in the assault was very identical to that found in other Syrian government stockpiles. Other similar strikes on rebels followed, with several media reporting that the Syrian military's backup plan had become the controlled deployment of chemical weapons against rebels (Mariwala 12).

Despite these assertions, one detailed analysis on Syria's chemical weapons use indicated that just 2% of chemical weapon incidents can be ascribed to the opposition, especially ISIS. In August 2013, the government carried out another large-scale strike, killing 1,429 people, including a number of noncombatants and 426 children (Heath 17).

In the early hours of August 21, 2013 several rebel controlled around the Ghouta, Syria were hit by rockets containing sarin, killing hundreds, with death tolls ranging from the 200s to the 2000s. President Bashar al-Assad denied immediately that the Syrian government was behind the strikes, instead claiming that rebel groups employed the chemical weapons because they were losing. According to a subsequent UN study, the sarin used in the assault was highly refined and of considerably higher grade than that produced by Iraq's chemical weapons program (Mariwala 12).

2.6 The Role of the Islamic State

In the aftermath of some of Syria's early Arab Spring uprisings, the Syrian government began to release hardline Islamist terrorists in the first of a series of formal government amnesties in May 2011. Decree No. 61, enacted in May 2011, for example, applied to "all members of the Muslim Brotherhood and other detainees belonging to political movements." Simultaneously, the dictatorship arrested a considerable number of nonviolent demonstrators, students, and human rights advocates. Several of the terrorists pardoned in the early amnesties went on to lead Islamist

extremist organisations in Syria, notably the Islamic State. According to Bassam Barabandi, a former Syrian ambassador with Syria's foreign ministry who later switched to the opposition, "the fear of a continued, peaceful revolution is why these Islamists were released," according to the Wall Street Journal in 2014. For Assad and the administration, the jihadists represent an alternative to a nonviolent revolution. They are structured around the idea of jihad, and the West fears them (Levitt 6).

The Assad administration freed a large number of jihadist terrorists, including not just foot troops but also key Islamic State officials and operations. Consider Amr Abu Atheer al-Absi, an Islamic State kidnapping and European terrorist recruiter. According to a Syrian intelligence official, "the regime did not simply open the prison doors and let these extremists out; it aided them in their work, in the formation of armed brigades." Another notable case is Ali Musa al-Shawakh, nicknamed Abu Luqman, who was detained by the Syrian regime in 2010 on allegations of sedition based on his links to al Qaeda in Iraq, but was subsequently released due to the Syrian civil war. Abu Luqman oversaw the beheadings of two Islamic State group detainees before ascending to the position of director of the Islamic State's security and intelligence agency (Levitt 6).

The release of recognized terrorists from Syrian jails was the consequence of government actions and presidential decisions. In 2014, a former member of Syria's infamous Military Intelligence Directorate stated that the release of terrorists from Syrian jails was "not something I hear rumors about, I actually heard the orders, and I have seen it happen." These directives came from the headquarters of [Military Intelligence] in Damascus." "Syrian security opened the door to the prisons, and they knew what would happen," he said (qtd. in Levitt 6).

Aside from strategically and purposefully releasing jihadists from Syrian prisons, the Assad regime frequently avoided attacking Islamic State group positions and appeared to collude with the Islamic State in an effort to encourage the group to attack moderate rebels rather than the regime. Consider former US Ambassador to Syria Robert Ford's April 21, 2014 assessment of the symbiotic

link between the Syrian regime and the Islamic State: "Basically, the regime is not fighting them [IS]." They're being let go. The Islamic State has a massive headquarters in Raqqa. The regime bombards Aleppo, Dara'a, and the Damascus suburbs with barrel bombs. That massive headquarters has never been bombed. If Syrian intelligence requires assistance in locating it, I hope they will call me so that I may direct them to it (Levitt 7).

Assad's indirect support for Sunni extremist factions aiming to topple his administration proved advantageous. Three major developments contributed considerably to Assad's win in the Civil War. For starters, by encouraging the formation of terrorist organizations, Assad was able to portray the demonstrators as extremists, discouraging international countries such as the United States from acting on the rebels' behalf. Given that, the United States stopped providing help to the insurgents in 2013. This was generally effective. The United States then took the fight on terror to Syria, launching out airstrikes against ISIS with Assad's cooperation in 2014 (Heath18).

In total, nine nations have collaborated to attack ISIS in Syria, thereby assisting Assad's administration in the Civil War. Another tactical reason for fostering the rise and development of terrorist organizations is that it has split and so weakened the resistance movement. Conflict between opposition organizations has grown more widespread than conflict between the opposition and the regime at times. Not only are Sunni fundamentalist organizations at odds with more moderate militias, but the extreme groups are also at conflict (Heath 19).

The third element in Assad's decision to back Sunni fundamentalist organizations was his need to ensure that Alawites and other non-Sunnis remained faithful to him throughout the war. By ensuring that the face of the opposition was Sunni extremist and hence anti-Shia, Alawites, Christians, and Druze would be discouraged from joining the resistance. These minority populations would perceive the conflict as an existential danger and would feel compelled to back Assad (Heath 20).

2.7 Foreign Intervention

Support from Russia, Iran, and China has been one of Assad's most formidable weapons in the Syrian Civil War, if not the most important. These nations have not only helped to pay the Assad dictatorship, but they have also contributed troops and weaponry, trained Assad's army, and served as major political allies at the United Nations. When the UN Security Council sought to approve a resolution condemning Assad's use of violence in 2011, China and Russia vetoed it, blocking its passage.

The first backer is Russia. Russia has used its veto power in the UN Security Council twelve times since the war began to keep Assad in place. Additionally, when the European Union put economic sanctions on Syria in an effort to topple Assad, Russia and Iran gave assistance to lessen the effects of the sanctions. Iran loaned Syria \$4.6 billion, and Putin created Syrian currency in Russia for Assad (Heath 20).

Russia's decision to aid Assad in the Syrian Civil War may be traced back to the "Putin Doctrine" published in 2008. This theory centered on Russia's goal of reducing the United States' global influence and increasing Russia's regional dominance. Russia's final remaining area of influence in the region is Syria. In addition to Putin's concern about losing influence in the Middle East, he believes that if he is given the opportunity, the US will replace Putin's administration with one sympathetic to the US. This worry is not unjustified; in the early 2000s, the US did the same in Afghanistan, Libya, and Iraq. Later in the Syrian conflict, Moscow lost its foundation in Ukraine as a result of the 2014 Ukrainian revolution, which saw a pro-US administration take power, giving Putin even more cause to dread the expanding US influence. As a result, Putin today has an estimated 5,000 troops fighting on Assad's behalf in Syria, as well as an airfield in Hmeimim and military sites around the nation. Putin has also presented Russia's engagement in the conflict as a method of defeating ISIS, yet Russian bombings have killed more civilians and moderate

opposition forces than ISIS soldiers. According to the Syrian Network for Human Rights, there have been 226,247 civilian deaths since 2011, with Russian airstrikes responsible for somewhere between 6,500 and 8,400 of these deaths (Heath21).

Iran is the second supporter. Like Russia, Iran supports the Assad regime because it wants to reduce US influence globally and because it has few other Shia allies in the region. Iran wants to stop the spread of the Sunni Islamic state in Syria, hence it supports the Alawite Assad dictatorship. The Iranian government supports Hezbollah, a Lebanese terrorist group that has supplied considerable military supplies and around 8,000 fighters to Assad's army since 2013. Assad has also received weaponry from Iran, as well as 3,000 men of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Quds Force. According to reports, Iran's backing to Assad costs the country \$15 billion each year. Iran has assisted the Assad administration in a very calculated manner by orchestrating population swaps in which Shia Muslims from Lebanon, Iraq, and other parts of Syria are transported into areas of Syria that were previously controlled by Sunni Muslims before to the war (Heath 22).

Third supporter is China that wants to keep working with Assad in order to achieve economic deals and to include Syria in its Belt and Road Initiative. Assad said in 2017 that China, Russia, and Iran would be given priority in rebuilding infrastructure after the Syrian war ended, and China has subsequently agreed to invest \$2 billion in the nation (Heath23).

Aside from this primary economic interest, China is concerned about the Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP), an extremist organization comprised of Uighur Muslims with a foothold in Syria's Idlib province. The Chinese government wants to defeat hardline Uighur Muslims in Syria before they return to China, where they have already carried out terrorist acts. China has backed the Assad government by providing billions of dollars to help future infrastructure projects as well as investing in Syria's petroleum industry (Heath 23).

2.8 Humanitarian Intervention

Syria has been the target of some political pressure from the League of Arab States (LAS). When the problem first began, it responded before the struggle grew increasingly complicated and globalized. Nine months after the conflict began, LAS unveiled a peace proposal that urged the Assad administration to put an end to bloodshed, free detainees, grant media access, and withdraw armed forces from civilian areas. The LAS suspended Syria's membership and enacted economic penalties in November 2011 when the country failed to comply. A peace agreement was later signed by Syria, establishing an Arab observer mission⁴ to monitor and report on the conflict. However, on January 29, 2012, LAS halted the mission owing to "critical" conditions in Syria. If the mission's goal was to stop the bloodshed, it was unsuccessful. After the LAS observers reached Syria, two weeks later, media sources reported 400 deaths (Ziad et al. 119).

During her visit to Damascus, Valerie Amos, the UN Undersecretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, urged that "more" needed to be done by the international community to help the 9.3 million Syrians impacted by "the dire humanitarian situation." The Special Advisers of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) expressed their concern over the systematic and pervasive attacks on civilians by the Syrian government in a number of public statements and reminded the government of its duty to protect its populace (Ziad et al. 120).

An impartial Commission of Inquiry was given the task of looking into human rights breaches in Syria by the UN Human Rights Council and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in August 2011. For its part, the UN Security Council attempted to resolve the crisis through a number of resolutions, but China and Russia vetoed them. Later, it formed a monitoring mission in Syria and nominated a special envoy. (UNSMIS). The Council aimed to take preventative action with these actions. Unfortunately, there was no possibility for political dialogue

between the conflicting parties because the situation had already deteriorated to the point of serious violence. As a result, UNSMIS had several technical challenges both on and off the ground, such as limited freedom of movement as a result of government constraints, barred entry to locations of widespread violence, and the denial of certain observers' visas. These elements together with the continued violence resulted in the Mission's suspension on June 15, 2012 (Ziad et al. 120).

Kofi Annan served as the UN's special representative to Syria at the beginning of the civil war. He drafted a six-point peace proposal in 2012 that was endorsed by the UN Security Council and called for a cease-fire, humanitarian aid, freedom of the press, and protest. The Assad dictatorship accepted the reforms but did not really put them into action. The UN brokered a truce between the government and the opposition fighters in April of the same year, but it quickly failed. The majority of coordinated attempts made by the international community to stop Assad's indiscriminate murder of civilians were futile (Heath 24).

According to the UN, it can no longer validate the information sources that led to its previous tally of at least 100,000 people killed in late July 2013 and has since ceased updating the death toll from Syria. A spokesperson for the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Rupert Colville, said that the agency was unable to independently verify "source material" since it did not have personnel on the ground in the nation. Colville said that the UN could not support estimates made by other organizations, such as the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, whose most recent estimate is over 130,000 (Ziad et al. 120).

The United States is one of the key nations involved in the Syrian war and has demonstrated its support for the rebel factions both militarily and in other ways. Although American military engagement in the fight started in September 2014, the American government started making inconspicuous contributions earlier. These involvements were expressed in a variety of ways, from demands for Bashar al-Assad to step down as Syria's president to the provision of deadly and

nonlethal support for the rebel forces. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) provided rebel fighters with weaponry worth \$1 billion covertly as part of this aid. Other initiatives included educating opposition fighters, imposing sanctions on the Syrian government, and providing relief to the needy (qtd. in Ogunnowo and Chidozie 7).

The US has actively involved in the Syrian war since September 2014, mostly through airstrikes. It is commonly believed that the deployment of chemical weapons by the Assad regime during the conflict is what prompted America's engagement in Syria. In accordance with this, Yadlin and Golov suggested that the American government had not truly contemplated military involvement in Syria before to the chemical attack in the eastern suburb of Damascus, the capital of the war-torn state. In agreement, demonstrated connections between the Assad regime's use of chemical weapons in Damascus and American military engagements in the conflict (qtd. in Ogunnowo and Chidozie 7).

Conclusion

The Arab Spring did not only damage Syria, but it also undermined its security and made it more vulnerable to terrorist assaults. Nothing except a protracted conflict that resulted in displaced people, starvation, and death were the consequence of the Arab Spring in Syria. The US's positions and behavior in the war have shown more justifications for intervention than the use of chemical weapons that will be discussed in the next chapter. State and nonstate players in the international system have been interested in the long-running crisis in Syria. These actors, particularly the United States, have intervened in the war on multiple occasions, raising concerns about their interventions.

Chapter Three: US policy vis-à-vis the Syrian Refugee Crisis

Introduction

The Arab Spring that continues to devastate Syrians today began in March 2011. Breakout of anti-government protests in March 2011 after decades of Assad family dominance. The demonstrations were not peaceful as they were in other Arab nations. As the death toll increased, Syrians were terrorized with nuclear weapons and bombs were dropped in populated areas in order to evacuate the region. As a result of these brutal actions, the US has to step up to protect the victims from human rights violations. As is well known, the United States is a powerful nation with significant influence over world affairs.

Following the unsuccessful operations in Iraq and Libya, the American people's unwillingness in taking more military action in the Middle East greatly influenced American policy towards the Syrian Civil War. This widespread aversion to involvement affected President Obama's choices not to take a more active role in Syria. Obama was questioned in 2016 about what he thought was the "worst mistake" of his administration. The failure to prepare for the next day, which in his opinion would have been the correct thing to do in acting in Libya, was his response.

3.1 The Obama Policy

During the first year of the Syrian Civil War, President Obama's approach to the country was limited to harsh rhetoric and sanctions. At the end of April, little over a month after the commencement of Executive Order 13572, signed by President Obama, stated:

The recent use of violence and torture against peaceful protestors, as well as arbitrary arrests and detentions of them by police, security forces, and other entities that have engaged in human rights abuses, are just the latest examples of the Government of Syria's abuses of human rights, which pose an extraordinary threat to the nation's security, foreign policy, and economy (28).

Additionally, numerous officials associated with the Assad government were sanctioned by this presidential order, including Maher Assad, Maher Assad's brother, and Maher Assad's cousin,

both of whom served in Assad's security forces. In addition, the ruling sanctioned Iran's Revolutionary Guard for "providing material support to the Syrian government related to the rack down," which included reportedly giving Assad the tools he needed to track down opponents on social media (Heath 28).

Following the executive order, President Obama made the following remarks in a speech regarding American engagement in the Arab uprising: "We have often argued that President Assad must take the initiative in a democratic transition or step aside. He has not led. The moment has come for President Assad to stand down for the benefit of the Syrian people. He then imposed severe penalties on President Assad, the vice president, the prime minister, the defense minister, and the interior minister. President Assad made some pro-democracy promises that he would not ultimately keep as a result of all the pressure from the United States and other Western nations as well as growing internal unrest. Assad laid out a number of reforms, such as increased press freedom and new election laws, but claimed that they would take effect months in the future. The United States kept enforcing sanctions and making remarks when it became obvious that Assad did not intend to put any serious changes into place. President Obama made a formal request for Assad to go from office on August 18, 2011, and soon after that, he imposed severe sanctions on the Syrian Central Bank and prohibited the import of petroleum from Syria. The United States' prohibition on oil imports from Syria had little impact on the country's economy, but the European Union eventually followed suit. Given that almost 92 percent of Syria's petroleum exports to EU nations were made in the previous year, these sanctions severely hurt the country's economy (Heath 29).

3.1.1 The Red Line

The "red line" event, in which the Obama Administration disregarded a warning it issued to Assad over the use of chemical weapons, was undoubtedly the most contentious aspect of President Obama's Syria policy. "We have made it very clear to the Assad regime that if we start to see a lot

of chemical weapons moving around or being used, that is a red line for us," he replied. My calculus would alter as a result (Heath 30). In other words, the use of chemical weapons would cross a "red line" that might theoretically prompt the United States to act militarily, but not all other types of mass slaughter were judged deserving of involvement by the Obama administration. Assad carried out a chemical weapons assault against people on December 23, 2012, despite President Obama is warning (Löwgren 15). It took months for the American intelligence community to come to a formal conclusion that Syria had used chemical weapons. One of the effects of the Iraq war, which the US started based on erroneous information regarding weapons of mass destruction, was their prior hesitation to do so. The Obama administration did not inform Congress that the U.S. intelligence community had good grounds to think that Assad had deployed the lethal nerve chemical sarin until April 25th, 2013. President Obama asked the UN to launch its own impartial investigation into whether or not Assad was responsible for these sarin strikes once these results were made public (Heath 30).

Obama wanted the UN probe to look impartial in part because he was mindful that the rest of the world would not believe U.S. intelligence findings, especially in light of what had transpired in Iraq. Many Americans doubted if President Obama would actually carry out his threat against Assad (Heath 31). Ben Rhodes, the deputy national security adviser, responded to a question from a reporter about whether Obama thought the "red line" had been crossed:

We are working harder than ever to get to a decision about whether or not the boundary has been crossed. President Assad and everyone around him should be aware that the world will continue to closely follow this situation and provide updates as they become available. If he were to deploy chemical weapons again, he would be doing it under our and the international community's close observation ("Background Conference Call").

At a news conference in April, Rhodes made this declaration. Exactly four days later, the Assad government blatantly used chemical weapons to kill its people. When investigators attempted

to enter Syria, Assad did not let them to do so. Despite the United Nations' agreement to conduct their own impartial inquiry there (Heath 31).

In a formal statement released on June 13, the Obama administration admitted that Assad had violated the "red line." In a statement, Ben Rhodes stated that they had "high confidence" in the intelligence information they had received from Syria. Following this formal admission, President Obama's first commitment was a pledge to arm and train the moderate opposition movement in Syria. Rhodes was supposed to describe what President Obama's response would be to Assad's crossing of the "red line" in a news conference, but because the information was secret, he was unable to do so. As Samantha Power notes, "Assad seemed unlikely to be deterred from carrying out further attacks since even he didn't know the specifics of the cost he would be bearing." United Nations investigators were ultimately granted access to Damascus on August 18 in order to complete their investigation. Just three days after the UN inspectors arrived, Assad carried yet another massive chemical weapons strike on his people, displaying tremendous boldness. The danger of a UN report was undoubtedly not of concern to Assad, who had yet to be dissuaded by any sanctions, stern words, or backing for the opposition from the United States (Heath 32)

Obama's decision to avoid military attacks to enforce his "red line" against the Assad government using chemical weapons in September 2013 is widely seen as his most contentious Syria policy decision and maybe of his whole administration. The choice represented a significant, last-minute policy change. The National Security Council's senior members unanimously agreed to have emergency discussions after which preparations were started for an eventual US military response. However, in an unexpected change of events, Obama decided to request Congressional approval for the attacks at the last minute after becoming alarmed by the absence of a valid legal justification, congressional authorization, or public or allied backing. Another major change occurred when Secretary of State John Kerry said that Assad's decision to give up his chemical

weapons stockpile might prevent the strikes. This comment sparked a US-Russian diplomatic drive to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons stockpile (Yacoubian 27).

Putin and Obama met at the G20 Summit to talk about international oversight of Syrian chemical weapons. September 14th, 2013 saw the completion and publication of the "Framework for the Elimination of Syrian Chemical Weapons". In order to guarantee safety and security in Syria, Moscow agreed to use the credible threat of US military action against Syria to compel Assad to accede to the US proposal. Following its evacuation from the nation in June 2014, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) reported in January 2016 that Syria's entire declared chemical weapons stockpile had been destroyed. The OPCW noted that both the Syrian regime and ISIL had "been involved in the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as weapons" in November 2016 and voiced "grave concern about and condemns in the strongest possible terms the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic"(Yacoubian 27).

3.1.2 No Fly Zone

No-fly zones in Syria have been advocated for since the beginning of the crisis, with some doing so in the fall of 2011 six months into it. No-fly zones have frequently been justified by referencing the precedent Libya set. During especially severe instances of regime brutality committed against civilians, the no-fly zone idea would frequently come up in the public discussion on Syria. Every time there was a downturn on the ground or there was pressure from the Hill or the State Department, the interagency would consider the possibility. As the administration adopted increasingly violent and indiscriminate strategies, violence against civilians increased in both 2012 and 2013 (Yacoubian 34).

The idea of a no-fly zone was initially put up in July 2012, as civil conflict broke out in Syria. Additionally, it was discussed at a National Security Council meeting with President Obama in late summer 2015 and was mentioned in a letter from the then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey to Senator Carl Levin from July 2013. To make a no-fly zone unworkable, several

former government officials believed the Pentagon inflated the expenses associated with policing it. Dempsey said, for instance, that it would take hundreds of land and sea-based aircraft, support for intelligence and electronic warfare, and enablers for refueling and communications to create a no-fly zone over the entirety of Syria. Initial expenditures are anticipated to be \$500 million, with annual costs ranging up to \$1 billion per month (Yacoubian 34).

Obama's fierce opposition to the idea coincided with the military's unwillingness to impose a no-fly zone. The president did not appear interested in the possibility, maybe influenced by the unfavorable experience with Libya's no-fly zone as well as his ongoing hesitation towards US military action in Syria. The "sense that President of The US was not going to go there," according to a former top White House aide. 'Let's not kid ourselves,' Obama said to an NFZ. The regime is the target of this conflict. What is the legal requirement? Self-defense, the UN, or the authorization for the use of military force do not permit it (Yacoubian 35).

The White House attorneys' strong opposition strengthened the president's opposition to the choice. Russia's military engagement in Syria in September 2015 effectively ended all further debate for a no-fly zone. An NFZ was no longer a viable option because, as one former senior White House official put it, "the risks of an NFZ changed substantially in the fall 2015"(Yacoubian 36).

3.1.3 Obama's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis

Syrians were greatly impacted by the war in a variety of ways. The world regarded Syria's devastating status from several perspectives, including political, economic, and humanitarian. The conflict left Syria in a terrible situation where access to food, clean water, and education was practically impossible to get, and peace, health, and security were uncertain. President Barack Obama has been sympathetic to the plight of the Syrian refugees and has worked to alleviate the problem throughout both of his presidential administrations. Many people have sought safety

beyond of national borders in neighboring nations like Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey as well as in other continents like Europe and the West (“FACT SHEET: President Obama”).

President Obama pledged more than \$300 million in new life-saving humanitarian aid to help feed, house, and give medical treatment for children, women, and men affected by the ongoing crisis in Syria on June 17, 2013, during his meeting with G-8 leaders in Lough Erne, Northern Ireland. With this latest commitment, the United States has now sent almost \$815 million in humanitarian aid to the Syrian people since the conflict started, maintaining its position as the single-largest donor (“FACT SHEET: President Obama”).

With this \$300 million in extra humanitarian help from the United States, more families suffering in Syria and its surrounding countries will get food assistance, healthcare, clean water, shelter, and other relief materials. Additionally, the United States is stepping up its assistance for initiatives aimed at protecting particularly vulnerable groups, including as women, children, and the elderly, as well as enhancing sanitation and hygiene to help stop the spread of water-borne diseases (“FACT SHEET: President Obama”).

The United States replied by donating more than 513 million dollars for the humanitarian aid after the United Nations agencies covered the plea for 4.4 billion dollars in funding for the Syrian crisis. At the G-20 Leaders Summit in Turkey on November 15, 2015, Mr. President Barack Obama spoke about the ongoing conflict in Syria. Addressing the problem of refugees, he said:

With regard to refugees, it is obvious that nations like Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, which currently carry a heavy load, cannot be asked to do so on their own. All of our nations must simultaneously guarantee our security. Moreover, as president, the security of the American people is my first responsibility. In addition, for that reason, even though we are taking in more refugees, including Syrians, we only do so after thoroughly vetting and security checking them. We must also keep in mind that many of these migrants are themselves terrorist victims, from which they are running. Slamming

the door in their faces would go against all we stand for. Our countries can both accept refugees who are frantically looking for safety and maintain our own security. We should and can do both. (qtd. in Bouziane 50)

President Obama clarified the subject of those Syrian refugees, emphasizing the need to deal with those who seek safety and security outside of their nation. He also outlined why the United States should take more refugees. Obama's administration came under fire for failing to respond to the influx of Syrian migrants into Europe in a meaningful way. In the article, he claimed that just 1,500 Syrian refugees were accepted by the US. The funding caps and checking requirements have been established to the United States' response constraints, notwithstanding what Secretary of State John Kerey said at the outset of September 11. Otherwise, according to President Obama's plan, by 2017 there will be 100,000 refugees accepted annually instead of the current 70,000 (qtd. in Bouziane 52).

Following extensive negotiations with Congress, the Obama administration recommended in 2016 to insure 75,000 refugees. Later, the government announced that it will take 10,000 Syrians in 2016. Up till this point, the United States of America has accepted 12,623 Syrian refugees between the first of October 2010 and the last day of August 2016 (qtd. in Bouziane 53). On September 20, 2016, President Barack Obama attended the Refugee Summit meeting at the United Nations, where he spoke about the plight of those underprivileged people:

We Americans are motivated to contribute in some way. The United Nations [United States] is the world's greatest single source of humanitarian aid, assisting to refugees and Syrian citizens. More refugees are resettled here than in any other country. In my capacity as President, I boosted the number of refugees we are resettling to 85,000 this year, which includes 10,000 Syrian refugees. We have surpassed this objective while maintaining our stringent screening procedures. In addition, I organized this conference because we all need to exert greater effort (qtd. in Bouziane 53).

President Obama promised that the problem in Syria would be resolved if all political figures worked together and insisted on making investments in development and education alongside democratic institutions. The President declared that he would continue to welcome refugees, especially those from Syria, and reaffirmed that the United States will keep its doors open for humanitarian relief from throughout the world (qtd. in Bouziane 55).

3.1.4 Obama Policy Execution: The Concerns

According to international law, a state may invade another state in one of three situations: 1) in self-defense, 2) with both nations' assent, and 3) with the UN Security Council's approval. Given his connection with Assad, Putin would undoubtedly oppose any military assault of Syria, leaving Obama unclear of how to justify the action. In the end, White House lawyers argued that a U.S. invasion would be justified because the Assad regime had already broken a number of significant international agreements. Given the indiscriminate nature of chemical weapons' targets, it was crucial that the U.S. maintain the international standard against their use. The potential for poisonous gasses to flow out and kill thousands of Syrian people was another issue that prevented President Obama from attacking Syrian chemical weapons installations. On the other hand, bombing other military sites would enable Assad to keep gassing his citizens, maybe as punishment for American engagement and support of the opposition organizations. Aside from these worries, Obama was also not interested in mounting a significant military campaign in Syria and was afraid that as long as Assad kept killing his people in unpredictable ways; The U.S. would have to intervene or preserve its credibility. Despite all of President Obama's reservations about getting involved militarily, he was ready to launch airstrikes without consulting Congress as soon as UN investigators departed Syria (Heath 34).

The Assad administration asserted that all members of the opposition movement were violent extremists while the United States was fighting ISIS. He made an effort to defend his use of force to put down the opposition using this reasoning. Up until 2015, when Russian President Vladimir

Putin started sending military aid to Syria to help Assad defeat ISIS (and the opposition movement), Assad's government forces were steadily losing strength. As a result of this new development in the conflict, President Obama was even less likely to intervene and start a proxy war with Russia (Heath 39).

3.2 The Trump Policy

While President Obama's commitment to liberalism significantly affected American foreign policy during that time, it has since been modified to reflect President Trump's values. Because President Trump disagrees with the liberal ideology, he also disagrees with the liberal noninterventionist approach that was praised by Obama when he was president. In contrast, the philosophy of realism predominates in Trump's foreign policy. The philosophy of international relations known as realism places a strong emphasis on state power, strength of military and national interests. According to this view, President Trump emphasizes states as the main actors in the international order, rejects international institutions, and places a strong focus on hard force (Mazza-Hilway 9).

The absence of written, clear policies from the Trump administration on the Syrian war has drawn criticism. Trump's "America First" approach, which prioritizes domestic rather than international issues, is to blame for this. This policy is primarily based on the idea that the United States must first strengthen its position at home before it can turn its attention to other countries. Trump's commitment to realism has kept him from adopting an isolationist foreign policy, despite the widespread belief that his repeated use of the slogans "America First" and "Make America Great Again" would have that effect. Trump's ideas may be derived from his foreign policy dealings even if there is not a real, written policy in place yet (Mazza-Hilway 9).

President Trump's foreign policy toward Syria has two main objectives. The primary objective is combating and eliminating ISIS's presence in the area as well as damaging the group as a whole. ISIS, which he identified as his main foreign policy aim, was one of the few international

policy topics Trump mentioned during his presidential campaign. Resolving the Assad regime's use of chemical weapons is the administration's second objective. To solve this problem, the Syrian government has been the target of several attacks, which has sparked response from other countries. Regime change in Syria has been entirely ignored by the Trump administration, which has only investigated these two objectives. The administration's priorities are limited to countering terrorism and promoting human rights, with no mention of, much less a formal strategy, a regime change in Syria. Terrorism is currently the main concern; whether this changes in the future as a result of effective airstrikes against ISIS might potentially alter the Assad regime's existing circumstances (qtd. in Mazza-Hilway 10).

The foreign policy philosophy of realism is supported by the Trump administration's objectives on the US military and its ideals of power. Keeping America's status as "the world's preeminent military power" is important, according to President Trump, who has pushed for the "rebuilding and modernizing" of the armed forces. One of the greatest budgetary allocations the military has ever received, he has asked for an increase in military spending. Trump firmly believes that a robust, well-maintained military is necessary, and that more spending on the military will enable it to consolidate its strength and competence. The increasing use of drone and conventional bombing in Syria is a clear indication of President Trump's reliance on power. Due to the size and frequency of these military operations, these strikes are sometimes referred to as "annihilation tactics." In comparison to his predecessors, Trump has already increased bombing in the Middle East, particularly in Syria, by about 10%. The two largest airstrikes carried out so far by the Trump administration were in April 2017 and April 2018 (Mazza-Hilway 10).

The United States learned about chemical weapons strikes in Douma, Syria, in April 2017. Numerous people, including women and children, were killed as a result of exposure to chlorine and sarin gas, according to the reports. Despite Syria and Russia's denials of responsibility, the attack's horrific photographs and allegations of casualties sparked a global outcry. The Obama

administration's diplomatic efforts in cooperation with Russia to close the weapons sites and eliminate the remaining chemical weapons in Syria highlighted the significance of the deadly assault. The Assad regime's capacity to carry out the strikes highlighted the previous administration's failure to restrict Assad's access to chemical weapons or to properly dissuade his subsequent acts ("Syrian Civil War"). Trump became aware of these inconsistencies, which prompted him to use military force (qtd. in Mazza-Hilway 10).

The Trump administration launched many assaults on Friday, April 7, 2017, in retaliation for the Assad regime's use of chemical weapons ("Syrian Civil War"). A scientific research facility and a chemical weapons storage facility were among the targets of the missiles that were connected to Syria's chemical weapons program. To underscore the purpose of the assaults and to ensure that Assad faces the worst repercussions for his violations of international law, the United States launched 59 Tomahawk cruise missiles (TLAMs) against these locations and in the targeted regions. In reaction to future chemical weapons attacks on Syrians, the United States, France, and the United Kingdom conducted more airstrikes against the Assad regime on April 14, 2018. The reports described a chemical assault on a neighborhood of Damascus. Once more, just those areas were included in the assault zones connected to the invention, production, or possession of chemical weapons (qtd. in Mazza-Hilway 10).

Two goals for the intervention served as the justification for American military action against the Assad regime. The primary goal was to hold the Assad regime accountable for the use of chemical weapons. The second goal was to discourage Assad from use chemical weapons in future assaults. Trump was resolved to use the strikes strategically to hinder Assad's capacity to produce chemical weapons and perhaps stop him from launching more assaults against his civilian population. Due to Assad's use of chemical weapons in combat, the second wave of bombings in 2018 was intended to do greater harm than the assaults in 2017. The only use of chemical weapons in Syria was the target of the limited attacks. They were intended to address the issue of chemical

warfare and offer consequences for the Assad regime rather than help opposition groups overthrow Assad or make it easier for them to do so (Mazza-Hilway 10).

Trump's discussions with Turkish President Recep Erdogan, who planned to invade Syria and assault the Syrian Kurdish people, contributed to his decision to withdraw American soldiers from Syria in December 2018. Trump made this choice despite Turkey's open determination to invade Northern Syria in order to attack American friends the Kurds and provide a location where they can transfer the millions of Syrian refugees who have fled to Turkey since the war's inception. Erdogan has gone to considerable troubles to avoid the establishment of a Kurdish autonomous state between Syria and Turkey, but President Trump wants to withdraw U.S. soldiers from the area due to his concerns about the rising level of violence there. President Trump removed 50 American soldiers and the remaining 1,000 troops stationed in Syria on October 6, 2019. Republicans and Democrats both criticized this choice because of what it meant for the Syrian Kurds. In response, General James Mattis resigned as Secretary of Defense. Later in October, President Trump made the decision to re-enter the nation with a small contingent of American forces for the primary purpose of operating oil fields. (Heath 40)

3.2.1 The Tillerson Debacle

The new Trump administration's strategy lacked any discernible strategic direction during the first several months. Rex Tillerson, who was then the secretary of state, ultimately came up with a strategy in late summer 2017 that claimed to balance the president's competing interests while really reinforcing the anti-Assad stance and opposing a U.S. departure. That fall, Trump approved it after being temporarily persuaded or being preoccupied. The announcement was made to the public in a speech Tillerson gave in January 2018 at Stanford University, when he pledged to continue his involvement in Syria and use non-military pressure to remove Assad (Lund).

Speaking at a speech, Tillerson said, "A stable, unified, and independent Syria ultimately requires post-Assad leadership in order to be successful." His Syria program included, among other

things, "[rallying] the Syrian people and individuals within the regime to compel Assad to step down." The fact that the Syrian people have been "rallying" for more than ten years is evident, but Tillerson overlooks it. They are as certain as they have ever been that Assad must step down from office. However, Assad's supporters will not give up on him anytime soon. Since Hafez al-Assad held power, many of them have backed the Assad family. They understand that if Assad loses his position of authority, they would suffer terrible consequences. Tillerson is unable to identify a precise policy that would materially alter the path of the Civil War. The opposition's failure to unite in order to overthrow Assad may have been Tillerson's point when he mentioned "rallying," but this is a cultural problem in Syria that the United States is unlikely to address through any particular strategy. The United States attempted to assist the various resistance factions in cooperating earlier in the conflict, but their efforts were ineffective (Heath 70).

3.3 The Biden Policy

Biden Administration has not put out or executed a specific Syria strategy, although it has reaffirmed its support for UN Resolution 2254, which was passed in 2015. A transitory administration is suggested by this resolution. It says:

[The Resolution] expresses its support for a Syrian-led political process that is facilitated by the UN, within a target of six months, establishes credible, inclusive, and non-sectarian governance, and sets a schedule and process for drafting a new constitution. It also expresses its support for free and fair elections that will be held in accordance with the new constitution within 18 months and will be managed under the United Nations' watchful eye (71).

The Biden Administration has not taken any actions to encourage a political transition in Syria, while claiming to support the resolution. Despite this, it is unlikely that there are any workable U.S. policy alternatives that might speed up this shift. Even under American leadership, it

seems unlikely that a diplomatic solution to this crisis can be viable given that the UN has been attempting to support a transitional government in Syria since 2015 without success (Heath 71-72).

The fear that the world community is recognizing Assad's rule is one problem in particular that the United States has to address. As an illustration, Interpol (The International Criminal Police Organization) just restored Syria as a member, which means that Assad may now issue arrest warrants abroad, endangering millions of Syrian refugees who have rebelled against the regime. It was an odd choice for Interpol to make given that Assad is undoubtedly a war criminal. Despite the fact that the Assad dictatorship has destroyed hospitals and perpetrated innumerable other atrocities against its civilian people, the World Health Organization also voted in 2021 to add Syria to its Executive Board. The US cannot start normalizing relations with Syria in the same way that these organizations have. Additionally, the United States cannot permit nations like Russia, Iran, and China to assist in reconstructing Syria after the conflict since this would help the Assad government gain support both domestically and internationally. The Caesar Syrian Civilian Protection Act of 2019 mandates that the US must impose sanctions on any nation that tries to invest in Syria (Heath 72).

3.4 American Military Intervention

Although American military engagement in the war started in September 2014, the American government started making inconspicuous contributions earlier. These activities manifested themselves in requests for the resignation of Bashar al-Assad as Syria's President to the provision of deadly and nonlethal support to the opposition forces. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) provided rebel fighters with weaponry worth \$1 billion covertly as part of this aid. Other initiatives included educating opposition fighters, putting pressure on the Syrian government, and providing help to the needy (qtd. in Ogunnowo and Chidozie 7).

The United States has utilized airstrikes to combat IS throughout the conflict. In 2014, in reaction to the growing number of territory held by IS, the first airstrike was launched. The ultimate

goal was to destroy the terrorist group. The United States assisted the Syrian opposition troops in numerous ways. The US launched a mission to train and arm existing opposition forces and organizations. U.S. strategy in Syria has focused on counterterrorism since 2014, with considerable attention also paid to assisting the opposition forces in their struggle against the government. The US opposes the Syrian regime nonviolently by supporting the opposition groups and engaging in political negotiations and diplomacy. United States carried out airstrikes against the Syrian military and pro-Assad troops while aiding and educating opposition militants. According to the United States, the strongholds of ISIS in the nation are the objective of these strikes (qtd. in Ogunnowo and Chidozie 7).

In 2004, ISIS, an Al Qaeda affiliate, was founded in Iraq. ISIS used the unrest when the Syrian Civil War broke out in 2011 and started spreading terrorist activities in both Syria and Iraq. The United States launched "Operation Inherent Resolve" in August 2014, which involved more than 8,000 airstrikes against ISIS in Syria and Iraq. There were 2,000 American soldiers in Syria as of 2018. Additionally, the United States declared that it would train members of the Syrian opposition movement to battle ISIS and overthrow the Assad government (Heath 34).

The United States began supporting the Free Syrian Army, or rebel forces opposed Assad's dictatorship, under President Obama. The objective of the army was to depose Assad through armed operations. Security officials from the United States and other countries facilitated the election of military commanders and representatives in the army. The Obama administration provided weapons, artillery and financial aid to the rebel groups. The New Syrian Army, a rebel group branching from the Free Syrian Army, further presented an opportunity for military intervention and regime change in Syria. The United States recognized and assumed this goal when military officials chose to support the Free Syrian Army. However, Obama never acted further upon regime change (Mazza-Hilway 6).

The American involvement in the Syrian crisis is distinctive and significantly different from that of other countries, most notably Russia. In September 2015, one year after American engagement in the conflict started, Russia began to intervene in Syria. However, before that, from the beginning of the conflict in 2011, the Russian government had declared its support for the Assad-led government and its soldiers. This is true even when there were discussions about interventions. The invitation extended by the Syrian regime strengthened the desire to enter the lengthy battle. To put it another way, Syria's invitation for Russia to join its fight gave the latter the motivation to do so. This one-off action has elevated the discussion to a new level, relating to the appropriateness of using force in the dispute. The Russian state, in contrast to its Western counterpart, consistently asserts that the use of military action was justified since its activities were based on a formal request from the Syrian government. It also uses this as a talking point, denouncing the West for using force in an "illegitimate" manner on Syrian territory (qtd. in Ogunnowo and Chidozie 7).

3.4.1 The Legality of American Military Intervention

There has been discussion on the legality of US military interventions in the Syrian crisis. According to Beskardes, the topic of military intervention is very concerning in light of UN Charter article 2(4), which outlaws the threat or use of force against any state. The UNSC reserves the right to act militarily in any crisis, according to Articles 39, 40, and 41 of the Charter, which are discussed in the current debate. The obligation to defend (R2P) theory, which lays obligation on members of the international community to defend people of a state when such a state is unable to offer safety, complicates the discussion. In particular, the R2P theory aims to guarantee that nations take action against any and all abuses of human rights (qtd. in Ogunnowo and Chidozie 10).

The philosophy employs a variety of non-coercive techniques to avoid violations of human rights. The international community should adopt measures like the threat or use of economic penalties, weapons embargoes, or threats to send offenders to international criminal prosecution

only when diplomatic methods are futile. All of which have to be administered by the UNSC. The UNSC will consider using military force if one or more of the steps fail (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect). According to the aforementioned, the United States' use of force in the Syrian war does not follow the rules established by the UN Charter or the duty to protect theory. Therefore, it might be said that the United States' involvement in the battle is illegal. Although the United States might claim that the Syrian government failed to protect its residents from violations of human rights, there has been an international law violation by the United States. The U.S. government's unilateral operations, which lack UN sanction or consent, undermine the case for state failure. When the UN Charter's principles of international law are contrasted with America's April 2017 launch of 59 Tomahawk missiles into Syria, this breach is obvious. The United States' activities go against the principles contained in the UN charter, according to which UNSC permission is required before any intervention in a conflict may take place. The United States' interventions are regarded as unlawful in light of the aforementioned (Ogunnowo and Chidozie 10).

3.5 The Effectiveness of the American Sanctions

Although there is considerable doubt about their efficacy, sanctions were one of the main tenets of American strategy in Syria. The most successful of them, in the opinion of Hagar Chemali, who has dubbed herself the "architect of the Syrian sanctions," were the multilateral oil sanctions when the United States collaborated with the European Union to punish Syrian oil. The United States has to collaborate with European nations on these sanctions since it has never imported oil from Syria. According to Chemali, these sanctions caused Syria to lose \$400 million each month, which made it harder for the regime to fund its "war machine." Sanctions, according to Chemali, have never been a "silver bullet" to terminate a conflict, but they frequently work to force the aggressor to the bargaining table or break up the financial networks that fund the offender. She argues that "they are meant to be one prong in a broader strategy"(Heath 54).

Sadly, Chemali observes, Assad was never persuaded to negotiate by the sanctions in Syria. Assad was becoming weaker throughout the first half of the Civil War, in part because of global sanctions. However, Chemali acknowledges that sanctions imposed by the United States and Europe were no longer as effective until Russia opted to join the conflict in 2015 and support Assad financially and militarily (Heath 55).

In her biography, Samantha Power displays strong sentiments on the sanctions imposed on Syria, claiming that Assad was little harmed by those put in place by the United States since the UN Security Council was unable to enforce multilateral sanctions affecting all of its members due to Russia's veto power. Because of this, Assad would always have a place to keep his money, much of which was kept in Russia. The ineffectiveness of sanctions as a course of action was once more highlighted by Power, who wrote: "If we responded with more of the same, I felt sure Assad's regime would continue with more of the same." Although Chemali would argue with Power that sanctions were ultimately ineffective, she agreed that they lost their potency as soon as Russia made the decision to fully support Assad. Today, the only way that additional sanctions imposed by the United States against Russia in response to the invasion of Ukraine may prove successful would be if those penalties seriously harm Russia's economy to the point that they also have an impact on Syria's economy (qtd. in Heath 55).

3.6 Past (In)Action and Present Deadlock

The US has suffered from two interdependent policy incoherencies relating to the Syrian conflict. First, the US treated Syria as secondary to and contingent on other regional policies, such as fighting ISIS, countering Iranian regional expansionism, managing relations with Turkey, and competing with Russia. There has never been a stand-alone and consistent Syria policy by a US administration since the start of the conflict in 2011. Washington could not formulate a sound Syria policy balanced against and attuned to its wider agenda in the region (al-Masri).

The US has been treating Syria's ongoing conflict as if it were more or less stable or static, especially under the Trump administration. Washington has generally been operating as a narrow-minded observer, neither being dynamic nor adapting to the country's shifting power centers. With regard to the Syrian war, these issues not only prevented the two previous administrations—Barack Obama's and Donald Trump's—from understanding strategic goals, but they may also have prevented the US from succeeding in a number of other regional initiatives. While President Trump was excessively broad, transactional, and lacking in depth, President Obama lacked commitment and was only interested in negotiating a nuclear agreement with Iran (al-Masri).

Biden is thus severely limited and without many choices. The problem right now is that it's too late for Washington to take up the Syria issue again in a fashion that would convince the Biden administration that the benefits may exceed the dangers and costs in the short term. The pace and evolution of the fight, as well as the breadth of adversaries' commitments, make it doubtful that the US will muster enough political will to take real action in Syria. There have not been many signs that Washington is trying to gain advantage in Syria since Biden entered office in January (al-Masri).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the United States has not done anything to advance the aim of regime change in Syria or to make Assad's removal from the country's president more likely. Despite the criticism of the Assad government, the U.S. has only used rhetoric or made false pledges as instances of "action". Under the Obama and Trump administrations, the U.S. failed to undertake any credible foreign policy initiatives including the removal of Assad. Although the U.S. has taken the lead in some situations, sending military personnel, troops, and even carrying out multiple bombings, the scope of its foreign policy ambitions ends there. Assad's removal has been the goal since Obama's first term as president, and regime change is still a possibility, but so far, U.S. foreign policy has not been successful in bringing about such a shift.

General Conclusion

This analysis concludes that America's foreign strategy toward Syria is no longer viable. Following the Civil War, the United States was extremely concerned about Syria. US actions were attacked for neither preventing Assad's criminal acts nor forcing him to step down from his monarchy. The United States intervened to protect Syrian human rights and security.

In the first chapter, which served as the conceptual framework the researchers covered the evolution of US's Foreign policy before and after the First and Second World War. For years, the United States used isolationism as a foreign strategy to safeguard its peace and security. The First World War was raging beyond America's borders, but the country remained staunchly neutral. Woodrow Wilson did not wish to be personally or philosophically involved in war. He kept us out of war became a well-known slogan adopted by his supporters, granting him a second presidential term. Wilson later modified his view because he realized that intervention could not be avoided and that in order for America to ascend in the world, it must first demonstrate its power and philosophy.

Woodrow Wilson was adamant about not beginning a war, but he saw that the devastation in Europe would extend over the Atlantic Ocean. He made public speeches in which he depicted the conflict as a means of redressing global injustices, enhancing the country's image as a defender of liberty and democracy. Germany forced the United States into war when the Zimmerman telegram was intercepted, resulting in a declaration of war and the formation of the League of Nations. Wilson's "Wilsonianism" had an influence on international politics and US foreign policy, resulting in the League of Nations and a collective security system under Anglo-American leadership. Wilson contended that the battle was a confrontation of political morals between liberal democracy and militarist dictatorship, and that American action was necessary.

The researchers also discussed the goal of America's foreign policy, which is to promote democracy, and human rights across the world, safeguard the United States and its people, retain access to important resources and markets, maintain a global balance of power, and defend freedom

and human rights. The US strives for a balance of power, predictability, robust institutions, and an absence of violence inside and between countries.

The RtP approach is built on three pillars: states' duty to protect their populations, the international community's obligation to support the state, and the international community's responsibility to fulfill its core tasks. The Responsibility to Protect (RtP) is a linked system that mandates military involvement only as a "last resort" when all other preventative measures have been exhausted. The idea has been approved by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The United States' military engagement in numerous Middle Eastern nations with problems was not always the proper thing to do, such as in Iraq, when the US accused Iraq of possessing mass destruction weapons. The US invasion in Iraq produced several crises and drew widespread outrage. This is why Obama was hesitant to intervene in Syria.

The chapter two contained and discussed the Arab Spring and its origins. Authoritarianism, breaches of citizens' rights, economic slump, unemployment, poverty, and demographic structural factors all contributed to the Arab Spring. It was driven by unfair income distribution, corruption, nepotism, and the youth's effort to overturn the existing order. Arab rebellions have evolved from opposing foreign rulers to fighting for the Arab state itself, signifying the end of the ancient idea of national independence. Minority groups such as the Jewish, Coptic, Amazigh, and Kurdish minorities spearheaded anti-Mubarak protests in Egypt, Tunisia, and other Arab nations.

The escalation of demonstrations and social turmoil in Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt has had a considerable influence on other North African and Middle Eastern nations. Ethnic religious divides in Syria have exacerbated the decade-long conflict between the Sunni majority and the Alawite minority. Hafez al-Assad, the Alawite defense minister, deposed the dominant Baath party in 1970 and began a ruthless regime that lasted nearly 30 years. His 34-year-old son, Bashar al-Assad, liberalized the economy, favoring corrupt capitalists rather than the mass of Syrians living in poverty.

Protests erupted in Dara'a province when government officials detained and mistreated a group of youngsters who spray-painted the words "It's your turn, doctor."

Protests against the rule ensued, with officials opening fire and detaining protesters. By July, 100,000 people had taken part in anti-government protests, and regime soldiers had killed over 600 civilians. President Assad stated that he will not give up to "terrorists" and will continue to protect his administration with an "iron fist." The Assad administration has used brutality against civilians, including torture, attacks on hospitals, and the use of chemical weapons on people, to degrade the opposition and force them to surrender. The sarin used in the attack was highly refined and of a higher grade than that produced by Iraq's chemical weapons program.

With 5.5 million refugees and 6.7 million internally displaced Syrians, Syria has the world's biggest refugee issue. With 210,000 people died and 840,000 injured, internal relocation is viewed as the only way to survive. Syrian refugees have been subjected to a number of human rights breaches and abuses, resulting in the loss of several lives. Since 2012, a massive and quick stream of Syrian refugees has reached neighboring nations, with Lebanon bearing the brunt of the burden. Jordan and Lebanon have a strong history of assisting displaced people and dealing with disasters, while Turkey has the most exiled Syrians of any country bordering Syria. The Government of Turkey is setting a global standard for evacuee response by including two novel elements: a non-camp strategy and a legislatively sponsored method.

Russia, Iran, and China have supported Assad in the Syrian Civil War, using their veto power to keep him in place and providing assistance to lessen sanctions. Putin's "Putin Doctrine" aims to reduce US influence and increase regional dominance. Iran, Russia, and China support the Assad regime to reduce US influence and stop the spread of the Sunni Islamic state in Syria. China has invested \$2 billion in Syria and is concerned about the Turkistan Islamic Party.

The League of Arab States (LAS) and UN Security Council attempted to resolve the crisis through resolutions, but the situation had already deteriorated to the point of serious violence.

UNSMIS had technical challenges on and off the ground. Kofi Annan's six-point peace proposal was endorsed by the UN Security Council, but failed to stop Assad's indiscriminate murder of civilians. The US has been actively involved in the Syrian war since September 2014, mostly through airstrikes, due to the deployment of chemical weapons by the Assad regime.

Third chapter contains the three latest presidents' reactions towards Syria's violations of human right. President Obama's Executive Order 13572 sanctioned Maher Assad, Maher Assad's family, and Iran's Revolutionary Guard for human rights abuses. President Obama made a formal request for Assad to go from office and imposed sanctions on the Syrian Central Bank and petroleum imports, hurting the country's economy. The "red line" event was the most contentious aspect of President Obama's Syria policy, in which he disregarded a warning to Assad over the use of chemical weapons. Despite this, Assad carried out a chemical weapons assault despite President Obama's warning. President Obama's decision to avoid military attacks to enforce his "red line" against the Assad government using chemical weapons in September 2013 is seen as his most contentious Syria policy decision. John Kerry's comment sparked a US-Russian diplomatic drive to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons stockpile, and the OPCW reported that all of Syria's declared chemical weapons stockpile had been destroyed. No-fly zones have been advocated since the beginning of the crisis, but were made unworkable due to inflated expenses. Obama's opposition to a no-fly zone in Syria was strengthened by Russia's military engagement in September 2015, making it no longer a viable option.

The United States has pledged \$300 million in new life-saving humanitarian aid to help feed, house, and give medical treatment to the Syrian people since the conflict started. The United States responded to the UN plea for 4.4 billion dollars in funding for the Syrian crisis by donating more than 513 million dollars. President Obama addressed the problem of refugees, emphasizing the need to deal with those who seek safety and security outside of their nation. He also promised that the problem in Syria would be resolved if all political figures worked together. The US has provided deadly and nonlethal support to the opposition forces, and has used airstrikes to combat IS. It has also trained

and armed existing opposition forces and organizations, and launched Operation Inherent Resolve in 2014. The United States supported the Free Syrian Army and provided weapons, artillery and financial aid to the rebel groups but never acted further on regime change. Russia intervened in Syria in 2015, asserting that military action was justified and denouncing the West for using force in an "illegitimate" manner.

President Trump's foreign policy has two main objectives: combating and eliminating ISIS's presence and damaging the group as a whole, and resolving the Assad regime's use of chemical weapons. His "America First" approach has kept him from adopting an isolationist foreign policy. The two largest airstrikes carried out by the Trump administration were in April 2017 and April 2018. The primary goal of the intervention was to hold the Assad regime accountable for the use of chemical weapons and to discourage Assad from using chemical weapons in future assaults. However, The Biden Administration has not taken any action to encourage a political transition in Syria, and the US must address the fear that the world community is recognizing Assad's rule. The Caesar Syrian Civilian Protection Act of 2019 mandates sanctions on any nation that tries to invest in Syria.

The US is not in a position to overthrow or persuade Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to quit, because both Assad and Putin are highly invested in his survival. Russia would never allow democratic elections in Syria if the incoming President may be sympathetic to the US and promote US interests. For the past eleven years, the US and the international community have attempted diplomatic ways to persuade Assad to surrender power, but none have been effective. It is unclear whether Assad has any desire to relinquish power, given that he profits financially from his position. If Assad does depart the nation, it is unclear who would take his place.

Works Cited

- A. Abdel Salam, Elfatih . “The Arab Spring: Its Origins, Evolution and Consequences... Four Years On.” *Intellectual Discourse*, vol. 23, no. 23:1 (2015) 119-139, 2015, pp. 119–139, journals.iium.edu.my/intdiscourse/index.php/id/article/download/660/520. Accessed 5 May 2023.
- Al-Masri, Abdulrahman. “On the Way out like Afghanistan? The Biden Administration’s Syria Policy Labyrinth.” *Atlantic Council*, 1 Sept. 2021, www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/on-the-way-out-like-afghanistan-the-biden-administrations-syria-policy-labyrinth/
- American Government, the Outputs of Government, Foreign Policy, Defining Foreign Policy.” *OpenEd CUNY*, opened.cuny.edu/courseware/lesson/299/overview.
- Apetroe, Alexandru C. “The Responsibility to Protect. From “Emerging Norm” to a False Promise. A New Challenge to International Security Policy.” *Studia Europaea*, 1 Jan. 2017, www.academia.edu/37836388/The_Responsibility_to_Protect_From_Emerging_Norm_to_a_False_Promise_A_New_Challenge_to_International_Security_Policy. Accessed 3 Apr. 2023.
- Armed Conflict in Syria%3A Overview and U.S. Response Updated November 8%2C 2022 - Google Search.” *Www.google.com*, 8 Nov. 2022, [www.google.com/search?q=Armed+Conflict+in+Syria%3A+Overview+and+U.S.+Response+Updated+November+8%2C+2022&oq=Armed+Conflict+in+Syria%3A+Overview+and+U.S.+Response+Updated+November+8%2C+2022&aqs=chrome..69i57.12649j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#:~:text=Cit%C3%A9%2011%C2%A0fois-](http://www.google.com/search?q=Armed+Conflict+in+Syria%3A+Overview+and+U.S.+Response+Updated+November+8%2C+2022&oq=Armed+Conflict+in+Syria%3A+Overview+and+U.S.+Response+Updated+November+8%2C+2022&aqs=chrome..69i57.12649j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#:~:text=Cit%C3%A9%2011%C2%A0fois-.). Accessed 25 Jan. 2023.

- Background Conference Call by White House Official on Syria.” *Whitehouse.gov*, 25 Apr. 2013, obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/04/25/background-conference-call-white-house-official-syria. Accessed 20 May 2023.
- Bedadda, Bouthaina, et al. *The American-Arab Political Relationships: Cooperation or Domination*. 2020.
- Bouziane, Rania. “Barack Obama’s Foreign Policy towards the Syrian Refugees Crisis 2011-2016”, univ-OeB, 2017. [Memoire.pdf \(univ-oeb.dz\)](#)
- Center for Preventive Action. “Conflict in Syria.” *Global Conflict Tracker*, 3 Aug. 2022, www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-syria.
- Cox, Michael, and Doug Stokes. *US Foreign Policy*. *Google Books*, Oxford University Press, 2018, books.google.dz/books?hl=fr&lr=&id=P1ZYDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=us+foreign+policy+&ots=TeYiqy4WDP&sig=zwGN8Wm6ko7OejYADNNgOWyVHhA&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false. Accessed 25 Mar. 2023.
- Dueck, Colin. “The End of the Wilsonian Century? | AEI.” *American Enterprise Institute - AEI*, 8 Sept. 2019, www.aei.org/articles/the-end-of-the-wilsonian-century/.
- Executive Order 13572 --Blocking Property of Certain Persons with Respect to Human Rights Abuses in Syria.” *Whitehouse.gov*, 29 Apr. 2011, obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/04/29/executive-order-13572-blocking-property-certain-persons-respect-human-ri.
- FACT SHEET: President Obama Increases Humanitarian Assistance to Syrians.” *Whitehouse.gov*, 17 June 2013, obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/17/fact-sheet-president-obama-increases-humanitarian-assistance-syrians.
- “Foreign Policy: What Now? [Ushistory.org].” *Ushistory.org*, 2019, www.ushistory.org/gov/11a.asp.

- Heath, Sydney, "A Critical Analysis of American Foreign Policy in the Syrian Civil War", CMC Senior Theses, 2022. https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cmc_theses/2977/
- Klein, Stefan. "Isolationism in US Foreign Policy from the 19th to the 21st Century by Klein, Stefan - PDF Drive." *Www.pdfdrive.com*, The NPS Institutional Archive DSpace Repository, June 2017, www.pdfdrive.com/isolationism-in-us-foreign-policy-from-the-19th-to-the-21st-century-e50605015.html. Accessed 24 Apr. 2023.
- Levitt, Matthew. *The Role of the Islamic State in the Assad Regime's Strategy for Regime Survival : How and Why the Assad Regime Supported the Islamic State*.
- Löwgren, Manfred . *Humanitarian Intervention, Democratic Peace, and Just War*.
- Lund, Aron. "The Making and Unmaking of Syria Strategy under Trump." *The Century Foundation*, 29 Nov. 2018, tcf.org/content/report/making-unmaking-syria-strategy-trump/. Accessed 22 May 2023.
- Mariwala, Arnav. *The Syrian Civil War*. 2014.
- Mazza-Hilway, Rosa. *Political Analysis Regime Change, Deferred: Regarding United States' Foreign Policy in Syria*. 2019.
- Middle East - U.S. Foreign Policy." *World101 from the Council on Foreign Relations*, world101.cfr.org/rotw/middle-east/us-foreign-policy#united-states-leads-international-coalition-to-liberate-kuwait.
- Norwich University Online. "Isolationism and U.S. Foreign Policy after World War I." *Norwich University Online*, 6 Nov. 2017, online.norwich.edu/academic-programs/resources/isolationism-and-us-foreign-policy-after-world-war-i.
- Obama's Speech at Camp Lejeune, N.C." *The New York Times*, 27 Feb. 2009, www.nytimes.com/2009/02/27/us/politics/27obama-text.html. Accessed 4 Apr. 2023.

Ogunnowo, Oluwaseyi Emmanuel, and Felix Chidozie. "International Law and Humanitarian

Intervention in the Syrian Civil War: The Role of the United States." *SAGE Open*, vol. 10, no. 2, Apr. 2020, p. 215824402091953, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020919533>.

Qadirmushtaq, Abdul, and Muhammad Afzal. *Arab Spring: Its Causes and Consequences*. 2017.

Quinn, Adam. "US Foreign Policy in Context: National Ideology from the Founders to the Bush Doctrine by Adam Quinn - PDF Drive." *Pdfdrive.com*, 2019, www.pdfdrive.com/us-foreign-policy-in-context-national-ideology-from-the-founders-to-the-bush-doctrine-e176116326.html. Accessed 10 Mar. 2023.

Sherlock, Ruth, et al. "Syria's Civil War Started a Decade Ago. Here's Where It Stands." *NPR.org*, 15 Mar. 2021, www.npr.org/2021/03/15/976352794/syrias-civil-war-started-a-decade-ago-heres-where-it-stands.

United Nations. "Chapter VII: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression (Articles 39-51)." *United Nations*, 1945, www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-7.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "The United States: Isolation-Intervention." *Ushmm.org*, 2019, encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-united-states-isolation-intervention.

Wilson, Woodrow. "Joint Address to Congress Leading to a Declaration of War against Germany (1917)." *National Archives*, 16 Sept. 2021, www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/address-to-congress-declaration-of-war-against-germany.

Yacoubian, Mona. *Critical Junctures in United States Policy toward Syria an Assessment of the Counterfactuals Simon-Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide Series of Occasional Papers*. 2017.

Ziad, Abdel, et al. *We Came, We Saw and We Kept Watching: How the UN and the League of Arab States Failed the People of Syria Good Practices on CSO Participation at the African*

Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights How to Maintain the Independence of a Human Rights Body within an Intergovernmental Structure: The Case of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in the Organization of American States Working to Reenergise the Commonwealth.

Žuber, Marian, and Samuel Sahel Moussa. "Arab Spring as a Background of Civil War in Syria."

International Conference KNOWLEDGE-BASED ORGANIZATION, vol. 24, no. 1, 1 June

2018, pp. 245–251, <https://doi.org/10.1515/kbo-2018-0038>

