

**The National Graduate School  
of Political Science**

**The Security Arrangements of U.S. Foreign  
Policy toward the Middle East post-2011  
Arab Uprisings**

**Case Study: the U.S. Security Arrangements against ISIS**

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master degree of political science

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2016/2017

"Power is not a means, it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of terrorism is terrorism. The object of oppression is oppression. The object of torture is torture. The object of murder is murder. The object of power is power."

— George Orwell, 1984

### **Dedication**

To all of those who are driven in this world by hope, not by fear.

To those who give me hope, Daddy, Mummy, Manou and Jiji.

To those who help me through my fear, Maissa and Redha.

### **Acknowledgment**

Two people I could never thank enough,

The one who doubted me and made me believe in myself,

The one who believed in me and never made me doubt myself.

Special thanks to Dr. Tassadite Masih AL-Din

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# INTRODUCTION

## **Introduction**

### **I-General Background**

The United States has long been involved in the Middle East, and its role has only grown since the end of the Cold War. During the Cold War, the Middle East's energy supplies and several communist regimes rendered it part of the US-Soviet chessboard. In the 1990s the United States expended its security presence in the region to contain Saddam Hussein's Iraq and the clerical regime in Iran. At the same time, Washington engaged in an energetic and sustained, but ultimately unsuccessful, effort to bring about peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

Following the 9/11 attacks, US involvement grew even greater. In 2003, the United States invaded Iraq, which led to a sustained US presence in the country until the end of 2011. And just as US forces departed Iraq, the Arab uprisings shook the region, toppling longstanding US allies and creating civil wars in several countries, which led to the emergence and expansion of the so-called the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

The Middle East is disordered now more than at any time before, since the Suez war in 1950s; this disorder has cast a shadow over US interests in the region. Today's US interests the Middle East can be broken down into economic, political, and military fields.

Assessing the posited US interests in the region, presenting the arguments to their importance and raising questions about the validity of many of the justifications on which they are based will be the departure point of surveying quantitative proportionality between the array of US security arrangements in the Middle East and the threats which represent the most worrisome cases in the

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post-2011 Arab uprisings environment in order to reach the final destination, which is the qualitative evaluation of US foreign policy toward the Middle East.

### **II-Problematic**

Accordingly, we raise the following **problematic**:

**Are the US security arrangements put in place in the Middle East able to protect US interests in the post-2011 Arab uprisings era?**

### **III- Sub-questions**

A number of **sub-questions** come under this problematic, as follows:

- 1- What is the impact of widening the concept of security on the practical and the theoretical level?
- 2- How US foreign policy development was influenced by the main debates about this policy, and what are the principle domestic actors responsible for making US foreign policy?
- 3- What are US interests in the Middle East and what security arrangements were taken to maintain them?
- 4- What are the security results of 2011 Arab uprisings on US interests?
- 5- How responded the US to the security implications of ISIS emergence, and how this response can be assessed?

### **IV- Hypothesis**

In order to examine the problematic and the sub-questions listed above, we suggest the following **hypothesis**:

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Increasing the intensity of **the US security arrangements** in the Middle East does not necessarily lead to the achievement of all its **interests**, especially in the post-2011 Arab uprisings.

### **V-Methodology**

This hypothesis, given the dual nature of the security phenomenon (material and moral) and the relative identification of interests, will be examined by two major approaches consisting of a series of methods:

**1- Quantitative Approach:** because Security is addressed as a tangible value, it is necessary to measure the security efforts US pursue in the Middle East with empirical indexes like military spending, human active resources, and diplomatic endeavours by generating quantity data from the available official and non-official resources depending on two methods:

**1-1- Hypothetico-Deductive Method:** which was applied in order to prove or disprove the hypothesis through observable data.

**1-2- Political System Method:** some refer to it as David Easton's behavioral approach to politics, this was used in order to define the exact inputs and outputs of US foreign policy and to identify a coherent feedback to that policy in a form of assessment.

**2-Qualitative approach:** given the socially constructed nature of US interests, and in order to uncover the trends of US foreign policy and explore the security perceptions of US decision makers a series of methods was used in an integrative manner:

**2-1- Content Analysis Method:** it was used to unload the contents of national security documents and political speeches related to foreign policy toward the Middle East: National Security Strategy 2015, Homeland Security Committee

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report 2016, and President Obama's Speech on Combating ISIS on September 11, 2014.

**2-2- Analytical Method:** we used analysis to break the phenomenon down into the elements necessary to address it, such as breaking security as a whole down into military security, political security, and economic security.

**2-3- Comparative Analysis Method:** it was used to compare different trends of US response to Arab uprising in six (6) countries.

**2-4- Case Study Method:** this method was dedicated to addressing the specific security arrangements US took against ISIS. The United States face many threats in the region, but as long as the study is limited, we chose ISIS to be our study case given these factors:

- The great attention ISIS seized from the international community in a short pace of time.

- The revolutionary transition ISIS made from the fourth generation of terrorism to the fifth generation, which appeared with even greater effectiveness and larger threat.

### **VI- Aims of the Study**

The ultimate goal of the study is to measure the effectiveness of US security arrangements in the Middle East in achieving and maintaining the US interests, i.e. the relationship between the aims set in the National Security Strategy documents and the results on the ground.

### **VII- Limitations of the Study**

It is necessary to note that this study is limited by a series of considerations:

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**1- Geographic limitations:** the study will be limited to the Middle East area according to the definition stated in chapter two.

**2- Time limitations:** as mentioned in the title, the study will address US general interests in the Middle East since the 1973 war; however, it will focus on the update of these interests since 2011 Arab uprisings.

**3- Analytical limitations:** considering the formal limitations of the study in terms of size and duration, the study will not be able to delve in analysing the domestic constraints of US foreign policy, or the domestic interactions and results of the Arab uprisings.

### **VII- Importance of the Study**

The significance of the study stems from the significance of the multi-phenomenon it examines, which can be divided into:

**1- The significance of studying security:** Security is the chief goal of all the nations. Presently the security of each nation stands inseparably linked up with the security of all other nations. Hence, world politics agenda is driven by security fears. Today we are witnessing the securitization of all life aspects; therefore, security studies are the way to identify the multi-threats facing human-collective security and how to overcome them.

**2- The significance of studying U.S. foreign policy:** as a leading global power, the United States foreign policy have a significant impact upon international relations both in terms of policy and academic studies; therefore, studying the outlines of US foreign affairs represents a central pillar in understanding the modern world.

**3- The significance of studying the Middle East region:** due to its central location, high energy reserves, and housing divine places for three major

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religions (Islam, Christianity, and Judaism), the Middle east is the hottest political spot in the world where a third of all world politics interactions between super powers are taking place; therefore, any endeavor to understand global politics starts from understanding the Middle East politics.

**4- The significance of studying the Arab uprisings:** the Arab world irrevocably changed after the 2011 Arab uprisings. The social contract governing the relationship between Arab ruling regimes and their populations has been delegitimized resulting an identity problem that developed into a security crisis. This socio-political change had large impacts on Arab politics, relations, and even geographical borders. Therefore, it is quite significant to understand this turning point of Arab modern history in order to contain the chaos some Arab countries are witnessing and reduce the side effects of the transitional phase, but most importantly understand the lessons learned from this experience.

**5- The significance of studying ISIS arise:** ISIS as a terrorist organization was able, in short period of time, to tear states apart, occupying territories, and spread fear all over the world. Therefore, defeating such a threat both on the military and ideological levels can't be achieved unless a broad understanding of its adaptive nature is established. Here appears the significance of putting ISIS under a strict scientific research in order to identify its vulnerabilities and use them in the fight against it.

Moreover, the interaction of these five aspects according to the vicious circle of cause-result elaborated a problematic that is widely discussed but narrowly solved, and it's of major significance to address this problematic both scientifically and practically.

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### **IX- Motivation:**

I was motivated to work on this subject for two reasons:

1- This study is a bridge gap between the security studies and foreign policy analysis and working on this particular subject gave me the chance to position my intellectual concerns in a middle ground between what I love - security studies- and what I have - foreign policy analysis-.

2- This theme presents a continuing point to my previous study which was concentrated on US strategy to fight terrorism in the Middle East from post 9/11 attacks to the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq in 2011. And because my scientific curiosity was not satisfied, I decided to go ahead with research about the American-Middle Eastern interaction, but from a new angle and more recent time phase.

### **X- Literature Review:**

The opposite to what students usually confront of fatal lack of references, our study subject flows a lot of ink which made the process of sorting the “wheat” from the “chaff” ,in order to find worthy objective sources, very sensitive. Therefore, sources from a variety of ideological background as well as religious affiliations were used to give this thesis as objective as bias as possible. This was difficult due to the inherent fact of the topic, “U.S. foreign policy”, which has made the sources overwhelmingly American or written for the American market.

From all the available sources ranging from books, articles or reports the following references are the most used and useful in our study:

1- “United States Foreign Policy in the Middle East after the Cold War” by **Ronny Modigs**. The book discussed that during the World War II, the United

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States and its European allies recognized the long-term strategic value of the region's oil resources. According to Modgis that definitely was the turning point for the United States regarding its interests in the Middle East. He mentioned that three main issues were to influence American foreign policy in the Middle East for the rest of the Twentieth century. The fundamental issues are the Arab-Israeli conflict, the importance of Middle East oil, and the Soviet Union's threat to the United States and its allies.

This literature was of major importance in highlighting the US developing view and growing interests in the Middle East region since the World War II.

2- "The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East" by **Marc Lynch**, this book give an overview of the wave of unrest that has occurred in many countries in North Africa and the Middle East. It provides a thoroughly accessible analysis of the historical and contemporary forces that contributed to the outbreak of mass protests in the region and their implications for US foreign policy. The main focus of the book is America cannot hope to succeed (in the post-uprisings Middle East) without systematically listening to, engaging with, informing, and communicating with the new Arab publics.

This literature was one of the first and most inclusive analyses given to the Arab uprisings, it contributed to the broader understanding of foreign and domestic implications of the so-called Arab spring and the role US played and should play in this phase of history.

3- "The American Military Strategy to Combat the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria" by **Ewelina Waśko-Owsiejczuk**, This article consists of 20 pages but gives a series of concentrated ideas about the creation of ISIS, a comparison between ISIS and other terrorist organizations, and analysis the pillars of US strategy to counter ISIS. Even though it is short in size this article was of vital

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importance in addressing and assessing the US reaction toward the emergence of ISIS and its responsibility in stabilizing the region.

## **XI- Outline of the Study**

Reviewing over 100 literatures enabled us to structure the study within three frameworks, each representing a separate chapter, as follow:

**The first** is the conceptual and theoretical framework that consists of two independent axes, the first discuss security as a multi-faced concept as well as a theoretical building. The second delve in the biggest debates of US foreign policy through a historical narration and quick refer to the most important official and non-official actors in US foreign policy.

**The second** is the analytical and synthetical framework that discussed US security in the Middle East after the Arab uprisings. It was split down into two elements as well; the first is dedicated to understanding the inputs and outputs of US foreign policy in the Middle East. Through stating US different interests and measuring the arrangements it established in order to maintain those interests. The second is about the 2011 Arab uprisings and its broader implications on US security.

**The third** is the practical and critical framework, within this chapter; we examined the case study which is: The U.S. security arrangements against ISIS, starting with giving an overview about ISIS, then analysing US response to it, and ending up with assessing that response.

This division was adopted to respond to the requirements of the subject and to fulfill each element with the necessary analysis in order to achieve objective results.

## **CHAPTER ONE: The Conceptual and Theoretical Framework of the Study**

Keeping the country safe and secure is the first priority of any government's foreign policy. That means identifying security threats and evaluating their costs on one hand and choosing the most effective way to direct foreign policy on the other hand.

The United States, even though it is a sole superpower, is no exception, and the way it makes and implements its foreign policy in order to maintain its security will be the tenor of this chapter under the following plan:

### **ONE: An Overview of Security and Security Theories**

#### 1- Conceptualization and Re-conceptualization of Security

1-1- The Traditional Trend in Security Definition.

1-2- The Compound Trend in Security Definition.

#### 2- Security from the international relations theories perspective

2-1- Security from Realist Perspective

2-2- Security from Constructivist Perspective

2-3- Asymmetric Threats Approach

### **TWO: An Overview of U.S. Foreign Policy**

#### 1-The Historical Development of U.S. Foreign Policy

1-1- The Isolationist Phase (1779-1941)

1-2- The Internationalist phase (1941-now days)

#### 2-The Actors of U.S. foreign policy

2-1- Official Actors

2-2- Non-official Actors

## **ONE: An Overview of Security and Security Theories**

Most discussions over the present and future prospects of security studies in last decade of the 20th century were accompanied with doubts of further purpose and benefits of this branch in considerably changed nature of the international system after the end of the Cold War that caused an alleviation of the probability of armed conflict outbreaks.

Nowadays, it is evident how unreasonable these expectations were. The adaptive nature of Security Studies made it easy for it to maintain its position among the various disciplines of international relations through the development of its epistemological and ontological structures and the presentation of a 21<sup>st</sup> century analysis to the phenomenon of security.

### **1- Conceptualization and Re-conceptualization of Security**

In the language of social science “security” is a controversial concept, a concept on which no consensus exists, it can be understood in different forms depending on people’s ideas cultures and perceptions; however, the changing perception of security that emerged in the 1980s has led to significant changes in security concept.

#### **1-1- The Traditional Trend in Security Definition:**

Security has meant very different things to people depending on their time and place in human history; traditionally, security is defined in military terms with the primary focus on state protection from threats to national interests.<sup>1</sup>

This traditional security model is reflected on national security which according to **George Kennan** (1948) is “The continued ability of the country to pursue the development of its internal life without serious interference, or threat

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<sup>1</sup> Hitoshi Nasu, “The Expanded Conception of Security”, **Amsterdam Law Forum** 3 (2012), p 16.

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of interference, from foreign powers”,<sup>1</sup> i.e. the protection of territory from external military threats and attacks.<sup>2</sup>

Traditionalists define security as freedom from any objective military threat to state’s survival. **Stephen Walt** definition of security expresses this traditional understanding of the problem; he defines security in terms of security studies as “the study of the threat, use, and control of military force”.<sup>3</sup> This view sees security as being virtually synonymous with the accumulation of power: the more power (especially military power) actors can accumulate, the more secure they will be.<sup>4</sup>

However; such a traditional notion of security, as reference to national survival, physical protection of state territory, and military power has expended its scope in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly since the end of the Cold War<sup>5</sup> given to several reasons that emerged as a consequence of globalization:

First, threats have no longer a purely military character, global problems, the majority of which are cross-borders, like organized crime, terrorism, deterioration of environment, disputes over natural resources, uncontrolled refugee flows, illegal immigration poverty and famine have become risks for humanity which seem as important as traditional military defense.<sup>6</sup>

Second, the territorial context of security has changed. Security has traditionally been understood in relation to states sovereignty and its territorial

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<sup>1</sup> Greg Russell, “Searching for Realism’s Grand Design: George F. Kennan and the Ethics of American Powers in World Affairs”, **The Political Science Review** 19 (1990), p 211.

<sup>2</sup> Nasu, **Op.Cit**, p 16.

<sup>3</sup> Vladimir Sulovic, “Meaning of Security and Theory of Securitization”, **Belgrade Center for Security Policy** (2010), p 2.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Williams, **Security Studies: An Introduction**, (London: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2008), p 6.

<sup>5</sup> Nasu, **Op.Cit**, p 16.

<sup>6</sup> Patricia Lasarte, “The Evolution of the Concept of Security”, **Spanish Institute of Strategic Studies** (2011), p 3.

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integrity; however, as technological advancement has enabled exploration and exploitation beyond state borders, security concerns has extended geographically and spatially to different maritime zones, outer space, the Arctic, Antarctica, and even cyber space.

Third, the notion of “human security” has also added a new dimension to the expansion of the security concept,<sup>1</sup> it has subsequently provided a theoretical foundation for the development of the “responsibility to protect” concept as a policy agenda,<sup>2</sup> yet human security according to one popular definition is not a concern with weapons; it is concern with human dignity.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore; some believe that it is necessary to extend the concept of security in multiple sectors and at different levels, and that the territoriality and military defense are not the only main concepts.

The key development within the academic mainstream of security re-conceptualization occurred in 1983 with the publication of **Barry Buzan**’s book ‘**People, States, and Fear**’ plus the contribution of Copenhagen school.

### **1-2- The Compound Trend in Security Definition:**

Security is of vital importance. The term is frequently used to raise consciousness of the importance of particular issues, which are then so labeled in the minds of the population at large;<sup>4</sup> this consciousness revolves around four (4) basic questions: What is security? Whose security? What counts as a security issue? How security can be achieved?

**Barry Buzan** defines security as: “The pursuit of freedom from threat and the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and

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<sup>1</sup> UN Development Programme (UNDP) set it as a policy discours in its 1994 human development report.

<sup>2</sup> Nasu, **Op.Cit**, p 16.

<sup>3</sup> Williams, **Op.Cit**, p 7.

<sup>4</sup> Barry Buzan, **People, States, and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations**, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, (New Jersy: Financial Times Prentice Hall, 1991), p 370.

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their functional integrity against forces of change which they see as hostile.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, so called “wideners” with **Barry Buzan** has challenged this conception of security by widening and deepening security agenda both horizontally and vertically. Having in mind the horizontal dimension, the security concept has expended from exclusively military onto political, economic, societal, and environmental sectors. Vertically, the altered security concept should also be open to referent objects other than state (individuals, social groups, humanity as a whole).<sup>2</sup>

In this context, military security concerns two-levels interplay of the armed offensive and defensive capabilities of states and states perceptions of each other’s intentions. Political security concerns the organizational stability of states, systems of government, and the ideologies that give them legitimacy. Economic security concerns access to the resources, finance and markets necessary to sustain acceptable levels of welfare and state power. Societal security concerns the ability of societies to reproduce their traditional patterns of language, culture, association, religious, national identity and custom within acceptable conditions for evolution. Environmental security concerns the maintenance of the local and planetary biosphere as the essential support system on which all other human enterprises depend. These five (5) sectors do not operate in isolation from each other. Each defines a focal point within the security problematique, and a way of ordering priorities, but all are woven together in a strong web of linkages.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover; this “wideners” view sees that it is necessary to rethink about the term security by using an alternative speech in which individuals and/or

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<sup>1</sup> Barry Buzan, **New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-First Century**, (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991), p 432.

<sup>2</sup> Sulovic, **Op.Cit**, p 2.

<sup>3</sup> Buzan, **New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-First Century**, **Op.Cit**, p 433.

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social groups are the center of attention <sup>1</sup> and more than state-centric definition of security to people-centric definition where the priority is given to human beings as argued some analysts based on a set of dynamics:

First, the complexity and the interrelatedness of both old and new security threats.

Second, these threats cannot be tackled through conventional mechanisms alone. Instead they require a new consensus that acknowledges the linkages and the interdependencies between development, human rights and national security.<sup>2</sup>

In light of this, the concept of human security has been adopted by a number of states as well as regional and international organizations. Chronologically, we can establish three (3) broad stages:

1- Global Human Development Report of the UN in 1994 that sought to seize the opportunity provided by the end of the Cold War.

2- Between the 2001 and 2003 the concept was revived in the debate on the “responsibility to protect”.

3- In the years 2004 and 2005 as the need to readjust to the new realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and in particular to find means of mounting concerted, collective responses to new threats became increasingly clear, human security, conceived of as the linking of security to development.<sup>3</sup>

Back to the UNDP, the commission on human security (CHS) in its final report ‘Human Security Now’ defines human security as: “... To protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhances human freedoms and human

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<sup>1</sup> Lasarte, **Op.Cit**, p 3.

<sup>2</sup> Human Security Theory and Practice, (NY: UN Trust Fund for Human Security, 2009), p 5.

<sup>3</sup> Sharbanou Tadjbakhsh, **Human Security: Concepts and Implications**, (France: les etudes du CERI, 2005), p 11.

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needs fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity.”<sup>1</sup>

Overall, the definition proposed by the CHS re-conceptualizes security in a fundamental way by:

1- Moving away from traditional, state-centric conceptions of security that focused primarily on the safety of states from military aggression, to one that concentrates on the security of the individuals, their protection and empowerment.

2- Drawing attention to a multitude of threats that cut across different aspects of human life.

3- Promoting a new integrated, coordinated and people centered approach to advancing peace, security and development within and across nations.

In sum, regardless of labels given to concepts of security (traditional-compound / narrow-wide / state-centred-human-centred) any security conceptualization must take in consideration the facts that the values to be secured are variable, the degree of security sought is variable, the potential threats to security are multiple, the means by which security may be pursued are many, the costs of security are inescapable and the time period matters.<sup>2</sup>

### **2- Security from the international relations theories perspective**

Beginning in the early twentieth century, the U.S. created its own scholarly traditions of international relations (IR). Eventually, IR became an

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<sup>1</sup> Human Security Theory and Practice, **Op.Cit**, p 5.

<sup>2</sup> David A.Baldwin, “The Concept of Security”, **Review of International Studies** 23 (1997), p 25.

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American social science with the U.S. becoming the epicenter for worldwide IR community engaged in a set of research programmes and theoretical debates.

The first debate occurred in the late 1930s between ‘realist’ and ‘idealist’ followed by a series of other debates included the behavioural approaches and the liberal paradigm down to the last great debate in 1990s between the so-called rationalist and constructivist orientations. In this continuity it is not altogether clear what the current or ‘next’ great debate is especially with the appearance of new approaches in IR.<sup>1</sup>

This study will focus on the contribution of these theories and approaches in explaining the phenomenon of security.

### **2-1- Security from Realist perspective (Realist and Neorealist Theory):**

Realism is often seen historically as the dominant IR theory and this is certainly correct in terms of the study of security.<sup>2</sup> Although definitions of realism differ in detail, they share a clear family resemblance which defines realism as a tradition of analysis that stresses the imperatives states face to pursue a power politics of the national interest.<sup>3</sup>

It is customary to trace realism back to antiquity, with claims that its arguments can be found in important works from Greece, Rome, and India, like Thucydides’ History of The Peloponnesian War, and Kautilya’s Arthashastra from India, or Niccolo Machiavelli.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John Ikenberry, “Liberalism in a Realist World: International Relations as an American Scholarly Tradition”, **International Studies** 46 (2009), p 206.

<sup>2</sup> Roland Dannreuther, “International Relations Theories: Energy, Minerals and Conflict”, **Polinares** 8 (2010), p 2.

<sup>3</sup> Scott Burchill and others, **Theories of International Relations**, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p 29.

<sup>4</sup> Martin Griffiths, **International Relations Theory of the Twenty-First Century**, (London: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2007), p 11.

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Another tradition which realism draws from is that of geopolitics which includes the work of people like Mahan (1890), Machender (1919), Haushofer (1921) this tradition draws from geography highlights the spatial dimensions of state power.<sup>1</sup>

Classical realism is generally dated from 1939 and the publication of Edward H.Carr's **The 20 Years Crisis**, in addition to Carr, works by Shuman (1933), Nicolson (1939), Niebuhr (1946), Wight (1946) formed a part of realist cannon.<sup>2</sup> But **Hans J.Morgenthro** put forward the first comprehensive modern realist theory in his 1948 book, **Politics among Nations: the Struggle for Power and Peace**.<sup>3</sup>

According to classical realism, because the desire for more power is rooted in the flawed nature of humanity, states are continuously engaged in a struggle to increase their capabilities. The absence of the international equivalent of states government is a permissive condition that gives a human appetites free reign. In short, classical realism explains conflictual behavior by human failings. Particular wars are explained by aggressive statesman or by domestic political systems that give greedy parochial groups the opportunity to pursue self-serving expansionist foreign policies.<sup>4</sup>

The 1960s saw classical realism coming under increasing scrutiny, thus by the 1970s the realist world view revived and revised with the publication of **Kenneth Waltz's 1979 Theory of International Politics** and what is known as the Neorealism theory. In this theory Waltz argue that systems are composed of structure and their interacting units. Political structures have three (3) elements: an ordering principle (anarchic or hierarchical), the character of the units

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<sup>1</sup> Dannreutherm, **Op.Cit**, p 2.

<sup>2</sup> Griffiths, **Op.Cit**, p 12.

<sup>3</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, "International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War", **International Security** 17 (2014), p 7.

<sup>4</sup> Griffiths, **Op.Cit**, p 12.

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(functionally alike or differentiated), and the distribution of capabilities. Waltz argue that two elements of the structure of international system are constants: the lack of an overarching authority means that its ordering principle is anarchy, and the principle of self-help means that all the units remain functionally alike. Accordingly, the only structural variable is the distribution of capabilities, with the main distinction falling between multipolar and bipolar system.<sup>1</sup>

The difference between classical realism and neorealism is their contrasting views on the source and content of states preferences. In contrast to classical realism, neorealism excludes the internal makeup of different states; Waltz's theory omits leader's motivations and state characteristics as causal variables for international outcomes.

Today there are at least four (4) strands of neorealism: rise and fall realism, neoclassical realism, defensive structural realism, and offensive structural realism.<sup>2</sup>

The flagship of the offensive structural realism is **John J.Mearsheimer** with his 2001 book, **The Tragedy of Great Power Politics**, Mearshiemer tries to answer one central question "Way states pursue power?" ; therefore, he drives five (5) assumptions about the international system as follow:

1- The international system is anarchic, which does not mean that it is chaotic or riven by disorder. The realist notion of anarchy has nothing to do with the conflicts; it is an ordering principle, which says that the system comprises independent states that have no central authority above them.

2- Great powers inherently possess some offensive military power, which gives them the wherewithal to hurt and possibly destroy each other. States are

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<sup>1</sup> Griffiths, **Op.Cit**, p 16.

<sup>2</sup> The U.S. foreign policy is influenced to a great extent with the principles of the offensive structural realism that is way the study will focus on this theory more than the others.

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.potentially dangerous to each other, although some states have more military might than others and are therefore more dangerous.

3- States can never be certain about other states intentions. Specifically no state can be sure that other state will not use offensive military capability to attack the first state.

4- Survival is the primary goal for every state; hegemony is the ultimate aim of great powers. Specifically, states seek to maintain their territorial integrity and the autonomy of their domestic political order. States can and do pursue other aims of course but security is their most important objective.

5- Great powers are rational actors. They are aware of their external environment and they think strategically about how to survive in it.<sup>1</sup>

When the five (5) assumptions are married they give us three (3) general patterns of behavior as result: fear, self-help, and power maximization.

1- **Fear:** great powers regard each other with suspicion, they worry that war might be in the offing. From the perspective of any one great power, all other great powers are potential enemies.

2- **Self-help:** states in the international system also aim to guarantee their own survival because other states are potential threats from one hand and there is no higher authority from the other hand, therefore; states cannot depend on others for their own security.

Self-help does not preclude states from forming alliances. But alliances are only temporary (today's alliance might be tomorrow's enemy).

3- **Power maximization:** states understand that the best way to ensure their survival is to be the most powerful state in the system. The stronger a state

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<sup>1</sup> John J. Mearshiemer, **The Tragedy of Great Power Politics**, (New York: Norton, 2001), p.p 29-30.

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is relative to its potential rivals the less likely it is that any of those rivals will attack it and threaten its survival. That is way states pay a great attention to how power is distributed among them, and they make a special effort to maximize their share of world power.

It is worth noting that this behavior is enforced by the international system structure led states to find themselves confronting a security dilemma.

The “security dilemma”, which is one of the most well-known concepts in the international relations literature, reflects the basic logic of offensive realism. The essence of the dilemma is that the measures a state takes to increase its own security usually decrease the security of other states. **John Herz** first introduced the security dilemma in a 1950 article in the journal **World Politics** according to Hers: saying that states are power maximizers is tantamount to saying that they care about relative power, not absolute power.<sup>1</sup> Therefore; any defensive action and capabilities are often misinterpreted as being aggressive. Stapes taken by states seeking to preserve the status quo are ambiguous and are often indistinguishable from preparations for taking the offense.<sup>2</sup>

The so-called defensive structural realism, in contrast; believe that domination is an unwise strategy for state survival. They note that seeking hegemony may bring a state into dangerous conflicts with its peers. Instead, defensive realists emphasize the stability of balance of power system, where a roughly equal distribution of power amongst states ensures that none will risk attacking another, thus we can overcome the security dilemma.<sup>3</sup>

In sum, this theory provides a structural explanation of great power security and war, suggesting that the main causes are located in the flawed

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<sup>1</sup> John J. Mearshiemer, **Anarchy and the Struggle for Power**, (New York: Norton, 2001), p.p 55- 57.

<sup>2</sup> Griffiths, **Op.Cit**, p 18.

<sup>3</sup> Anne- Marie Slaughter, **International Relations Principal Theories**, (London: Oxford University Press, 2011), p 2.

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nature of humanity (classical realism) or the architecture of the international system (neorealism), but what matters the most is the number of great powers and how much power each one controls.

### **2-2 Security from Constructivist Perspective (Constructivist theory):**

Constructivist theory or as some call it The Bridge Gap Theory is a theory that came to bridge the still vast divide separating the majority of IR theorists from postmodernists.<sup>1</sup> The need for this bridge gape theory so called constructivism was promoted by three (3) factors which are:

First, the Cold War's peaceful conclusion undermined the explanatory pretensions of neorealists which couldn't predict nor could adequately comprehend the systemic transformations reshaping the global order.<sup>2</sup>

Second, while the threat of great power war appears to be in abeyance, the international community now confronts in transnational jihadist terrorism threat that differs fundamentally from the powerful revisionist states that threatened international peace and security in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this was emphasized by the attacks of 9/11.

Finally, the traditionally state-centric focus of IR has been problematized by both globalization as well as the increasing prevalence of state failure across large swathes of the developing world.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore; beginning in the 1980s constructivism has become an increasingly significant approach in North America IR; however, it has deeper roots, and it can be traced back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century writings of the Italian

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<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey T. Checkel, **The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory**, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p 328.

<sup>2</sup> Burchill and others, **Op.Cit**, p 195.

<sup>3</sup> Griffiths, **Op.Cit**, p 60.

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philosopher **Giambattista Vico** who said: “The natural world is made by God, but the historical world is made by men.”<sup>1</sup>

Constructivism was firstly appeared in sociology when **Anthony Giddens** (1984) proposed the concept of structuration as a way of analysing the relationship between structures and actors. According to Giddens, structures (i.e. the rules and conditions that guide social action) do not determine what actors do in any mechanical way. Structures do constrain actors, but actors can also transform structures by thinking about them and act about them in a different ways.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the notion of structuration leads to a less rigid and more dynamic view of the relationship between structure and actor, IR constructivists use this as a starting point.

Actually, constructivism was introduced to IR by **Nicholas Onuf** (1989) who coined the term, but **Alexander Wendt** was the one that give the major contribution with his 1992 book “**Anarchy is what States Make of it**”.<sup>3</sup>

Constructivism runs from the criticism of other theories, their critique for other theories concern not what this scholars do and say but what they ignore: the content and source of states interests and the social fabric of world politics. Thus, constructivists do not reject science or causal explanations; their quarrel with mainstream theories is ontological not epistemological.<sup>4</sup>

Ontologically, constructivism and realism differ on three (3) points:

First, about material cause much IR theories especially neorealism is materialist, it focuses on how the distribution of material power such as military forces and economic capabilities. Constructivists reject such one-sided material

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Jackson and George Sorensen, **Introduction to International Relations Theories and Approaches**, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, (London: Oxford University Press, 2006), p 163.

<sup>2</sup> **Ibid**, p 163.

<sup>3</sup> Ole R.Holsti, Theories of International Relations, Electronic Article Version, p 19.

<sup>4</sup> Checkel, **Op.Cit**, p 325.

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focus. They argue that the most important aspect of IR is social, not material.<sup>1</sup> E.g. Canada and Cuba both exist alongside the U.S; yet the simple balance of military power cannot explain the fact that the former is a close American ally, the latter is a sworn enemy.<sup>2</sup>

Second, constructivists contend that agents (states) and structures (global norms) are mutually constituted. Normative and ideational structures may well condition the identities and interests of actors, but those structures would not exist if it were not for the knowledgeable (intended) practices of those actors.<sup>3</sup>

According to Alexander Wendt social structures have three (3) elements: shared knowledge, material resources and practices.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, norm-driven behavior, the social and political world, including the world of IR, is not a physical entity or material object that is outside human consciousness. Consequently the study of IR must focus on the ideas and beliefs that inform the actors on the international scene as well as the shared understandings between them. In Alexander Wendt's words "identities are the basis of interests". Tannen Wald gives four (4) types of ideas: ideological or shared belief systems, normative, causal beliefs, and policy prescriptions.

According to the assumptions stated above we can emphasize two points:

1- The international system, according to constructivist theory, is not something 'out there' like the solar system. It does not exist on its own. It existed only as an intersubjective awareness among people; in that sense the system is constituted by ideas, not by materials forces. It is human invention or creation not of physical or material kind but of a purely intellectual and

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<sup>1</sup> Jackson and Sorensen, **Op.Cit**, p 162.

<sup>2</sup> Burchill and others, **Op.Cit**, p 196.

<sup>3</sup> **Ibid**, p 197.

<sup>4</sup> Jackson and Sorensen, **Op.Cit**, p 165.

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ideational kind. It is a set of ideas, a body of thoughts, a system of norms, which has been arranged by certain people at particular time and place.

2- The security dilemma, accordingly; is a social structure composed of intersubjective understandings in which states are so distrustful that they make worst-case assumptions about each other's intentions, and as a result define their interests in self-help terms.<sup>1</sup>

In sum, constructivists emphasis on the centrality of nonmaterial factors as determinants of phenomena in global politics can and should serve the agenda of world politics in the twenty-first century.

### **2-3 Asymmetric Threats Approach (Asymmetric Threats to U.S. Security):**

The rise of asymmetric threats is a consequence of the development of new generation of war, this discussion of 3GW (generation of war) and 4 GW is based on the book "**The Sling and the Stone**" by COL **Thomas X Hammes**, according to COL Hammes, the evolution of war from generation to generation is a function of political, economic, social, technologic, and military developments.

The first of four generations of war grew out of the invention of the gunpowder and political, economic, social developments that grew out of Europe's emergence from feudalism. The first generation of war peaked with the Napoleonic wars of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The second generation of war grew out of the technological developments associated with the Industrial Revolution and the state's ability to levy and collect taxes. Taken together, these developments allowed for the creation of mass armies and the dominance of the defense. The second generation of war peaked with the stalemate of World War I.

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<sup>1</sup> Jackson and Sorensen, **Op.Cit**, p 165.

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The third generation of war - maneuver war – evolved out of the lessons learned from World War I and first showed itself in German invasion of Poland in 1939. The third generation peaked during the Cold War.

The fourth generation of war is unconventional or asymmetric war in which the less capable opponent fights across the spectrum of the political, economic, social, and military activity and uses an equivalent of sling and a stone against its Goliath-like opponent. Another way to think about 4GW is to say what is not, it is not high-technology, short-duration war where technology is vital and essentially machines fight machines. 4GW is the complex, long-term type of conflict that has grown out of Mao's People's War.

Perhaps the most important thing to say about the fourth generation of war is that it is the only kind of war America has ever lost. According to Hammas, the United States lost three (3) 4GW – Vietnam, Lebanon, and Somalia. Indeed, 4GWs continue to bleed America in Iraq and Afghanistan. Moreover; the global war on terrorism is a fourth generation war.<sup>1</sup>

The multiple application of the term 'asymmetry' in military journal – 'not fighting fair' 'attacking a weak point' 'information or cyber war' 'public relation war' 'weapons of mass destruction' – made the definition of the term controversial; however, only very few people understand asymmetry's formal definition.

One civilian lexicon explains asymmetry using mathematical term 'incommensurability', i.e. the relationship between things which have no common measure. Another civilian definition refers to defective, disproportionate correspondence between things or their parts. From the other part U.S National Defense University (NDU), in its 1998 strategy assessment

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<sup>1</sup> John C.F.Tillson, **Learning to Adapt to Asymmetric threats**, (U.S: Institute for Defense Analyses, 2005), p.p 9-10.

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defines asymmetry by listing four (4) asymmetric responses that other nations could take to counter U.S. superiority: acquiring weapons of mass destruction, acquiring high technology weapons, acquiring cyber weapons, and fighting in environment that degrade U.S. capabilities.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore; we can say that asymmetric threats are recognition of an enduring truth: weaker powers, both state and non-state, will seek ways to mitigate the dominance of the strong. The problem with defining ‘asymmetric threats’ is that a definition implies that the universe of threats divides neatly into the symmetric and the asymmetric, Notwithstanding the apparent clarity of some cases, there is no more definitive a test for what is an asymmetric threat than there is for who is terrorist.<sup>2</sup>

The term has been used to describe specific ‘asymmetric’ dangers posed to U.S. security. This approach outlines a range of potential asymmetric threats that the U.S. could face, it identifies a typology of five (5) potential asymmetric threats: Nuclear, chemical, biological weapons, informational operations, and terrorism.<sup>3</sup>

**1- Nuclear weapons:** nuclear weapons rely on nuclear energy produced by either fission or a combination of fission and fusion of atomic nuclear. Nuclear weapons have not been detonated in armed conflict since 1945, and most concerns today tend to center on state selling nuclear weapons to terrorist organizations.

**2-Chemical weapons:** the Organization for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) defines chemical weapons as any toxic chemical or its

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy L.Thomas, “Deciphering Asymmetry’s World Game”, **Military Review** (2011), p.p 32-33.

<sup>2</sup> Steven Lambakis, **Understanding Asymmetric Threats to the U.S.**, (U.S: National Institute for Public Policy, 2002), p13.

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth F.McKenzie, “The Rise of Asymmetric Threats: Priorities for Defense Planning”, **Air Force Magazine QDR** (2001), p 78.

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precursor that can cause death, injury, temporary incapacitation or sensory irritation through its chemical action. Chemical agents can be classified according to the degree of effect (harassing agent, incapacitating agent, lethal agent) or the duration of hazard (persistent agents and non-persistent agents).

**3- Biological weapons:** also refers to as bioweapons, are deadly pathogens – bacteria, microorganisms or viruses – or toxins which can be deliberately released in order to inflict harm.<sup>1</sup>

**4- Informational operations:** is a category of direct and indirect support operations for the U.S. military by definition in Joint Publication 3-13, “Informational operations are described as the integrated employment of electronic warfare, computer network operations, psychological operations, military deception, and operations security, in concert with specified supporting and related capabilities, to influence, disrupt, corrupt or usurp adversarial human and automated decision making while protecting our own”.<sup>2</sup>

**5- Terrorism:** The U.S. Department of Defense defines terrorism as the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to inculcate fear intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.

In sum, asymmetries exist everywhere, of course they can be found in market economics and in political systems. There are also strategic operational and tactical asymmetries. Strategically, theorists discuss asymmetries in the force structure of intercontinental ballistic missiles or information warfare forces, while tactical-level analysts try to calculate the correlation of forces between sides. In these cases, asymmetries refer to quantities, total numbers or different philosophies.

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<sup>1</sup>Beyza Unal, “Use of Chemical, Biological, and Nuclear Weapons by Non-State Actors”, **The Royal Institute of International Affairs** (2016), p 5.

<sup>2</sup> Joint publication 3-13.

## **TWO: An Overview of U.S. Foreign Policy**

The foreign policy of the United States is the way in which it interacts with foreign nations and sets standards of interaction for its organizations, corporations and individual citizens of the United States. The officially stated goals of the foreign policy of the United States as mentioned in the Foreign Policy Agenda of the Department of State, are "to build and sustain a more democratic, secure, and prosperous world for the benefit of the American people and the international community."<sup>1</sup>

### **1-The Historical Development of U.S. Foreign Policy**

New ways of looking at the past have opened exciting intellectual vistas and have aroused the hope that new synthesis of the history of American foreign policy is in the process of creation. American diplomatic history came to life in the 1920s<sup>2</sup>, yet we are not trying here to give the chronology of events but we will try to show the often conflated dimensions of U.S. foreign policy between isolationists and internationalists from one part and unilateralists and multilateralists from the other part through a short historical narrative.

#### **1-1 The Isolationist Phase (1779-1941):**

The 1800s had been largely isolationist century for the United States, American leaders had largely followed **George Washington** and **Thomas Jefferson**'s warnings against making any 'permanent' or 'entangling' alliances.<sup>3</sup> Since World War One U.S. policy has been split between isolationism and internationalism. From debates over joining the League of Nation to intervention in Europe, Americans have found odd comfort in siding with one of these two camps.

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<sup>1</sup> The DOS, **Foreign Policy Agenda**, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> John Braeman, **Twentieth-Century American Foreign Policy**, (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1971), p 57.

<sup>3</sup> Geoffrey Levin, "From Isolationism to Internationalism", **Policies and Politics of the American Emergency State** (2011), p 4.

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The isolationists wanted to avoid being mired in foreign intrigues, wars and crisis. The internationalists argued that without involvement, the world will evolve in ways that lacked U.S. influence and this threatened its national security.

It is worth noting that isolationists were not promoting for absolute isolation, which was impossible given U.S. commercial interests. Rather, they were calling for a minimal level of political engagement; therefore, George Washington made it clear that the U.S. can't be isolated from the world; the question is what should the United States involvement be? His doctrine was to limit American involvement to what was necessary; however, necessity shifts with the circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

After the American Revolution, the foreign policy thrust of the United States focused mostly on regional rather than international issues. In 1823, President **James Monroe** issued the Monroe Doctrine, stated that any efforts by the European powers to colonize the land or people of the Americas would be considered acts of aggression, so the United States found itself embroiled in a foreign policy dispute the Spanish colony of Cuba. Under the leadership of military commander Theodore Roosevelt, the U.S. liberated Cuba in 1898.<sup>2</sup>

During this phase wars were fought with neighbors, invaders, marauders, and rebels, but not against foreign powers for foreign causes, and certainly not for the liberty of others.

When **Woodrow Wilson** became president in 1913, U.S. foreign policy took a different direction. In the events leading up to the outbreak of World War I in 1914 and for several years afterward, Wilson pursued a policy of non-

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<sup>1</sup> George Friedman, "Isolationism vs. Internationalism: False Choices", **Geopolitical Futures** (2016), p1.

<sup>2</sup> Background of American Foreign Policy, (Washington, DC: The Saylor Foundation, 2010), p 1.

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interventionism in European affairs. After Germany sunk several American warships in the Atlantic Ocean, Wilson reluctantly called for war, which Congress declared in 1917. The U.S. joined the Allied Powers of France and Great Britain in their fight against the German. After the Allied victory in 1918, Wilson tried in vain to garner U.S. support for joining the “League of Nation”. The League was roundly rejected by Congress in favor of resumed policy of isolationism.<sup>1</sup>

By the late 1930s, the United States continued its efforts to stay out of the wars in Europe and Asia, Congress passed a series of neutrality acts designed to prevent the United States from being drawn into the widespread international conflict that the U.S. government believed to be inevitable. In 1940, U.S. policy slowly began to shift from neutrality to non-belligerency by providing aid to the nations at war with the Axis Powers. On December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked the U.S. naval installation at Pearl Harbor, and the United States formally entered the Second World War.<sup>2</sup>

On this date (December 7, 1941) the internationalists won the debate, some critics believe that the problem was that the friction was not between true isolationists and internationalists. The fact was; there were no genuine isolationists. The debate was actually between two internationalist strategies that both supported some degree of foreign engagement.

### **1-2-Internationalism phase (1941-now days):**

After the WW II, the United States reoriented itself from a long-standing policy of isolationism to one of potential intervention around the globe. In contrast to U.S. unwillingness to politically or military entangle itself in the League of Nations, the United States became one of the first members of the

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<sup>1</sup>Background of American Foreign Policy, **Op,Cit**, p2.

<sup>2</sup> Historical Timeline of U.S. Foreign Policy, (U.S: information Resource Center, 2009), p 5.

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international organization designed to promote international security, the United Nation.<sup>1</sup>

At this period, the United States faced increasing resistance from the Soviet Union which had rescinded on a number of wartime promises. As the Soviets demonstrate a keen interest in dominating Eastern Europe; therefore, the U.S. adopted a policy of containment formulated by **George .F. Kennan** in 1947. The key goals of containment were to limit the spread of Soviet power and Communist ideology.

In this context, a number of events have evolved starting with the creation of NATO in 1949, to the Korean War between 1950 and 1953, passing by the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 and Vietnam War that ended in 1973, and ending with the fall of Berlin wall in November 9, 1989.

A thaw in relations between the two countries finally began to take form in the late 1989s. Soon after, the Soviet Union collapsed amid a faltering economy and a numerous revolutions among its member counties. With the official fall of communism in 1991 the United States became the World's solo remaining superpower.<sup>2</sup>

The end of the Cold War created a massive shift in the international balance of power, President **George .H. Bush** defined the shift as “a New World Order”. The new environment raised three (3) categories of foreign policy discussion which are of importance when differentiating between the grand strategic approaches:

The first is focused on the view of the international role of the US, whether a hegemonic, a power-concert or a balance of power policy.

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<sup>1</sup> Historical Timeline of U.S. Foreign Policy, **Op.Cit**, p8.

<sup>2</sup> Background of American Foreign Policy, **Op. Cit**, p 3.

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Secondly, the grand strategic approaches can be distinguished by their leading world order concept: an order based on institutionalized co-operation between democratic legal states or an international order based on interstate peace guaranteed by power politics.

Thirdly, the grand strategies differentiate in their attitude towards the multilateral or unilateral approach, and thus in terms of their modus operandi of international engagement.<sup>1</sup>

During the years from 1989 to 2001, a multiplicity of lesser dangers existed – for example, ethnic conflict, weapons proliferation, terrorism, political and financial instability, the impact of climate changes...ect. While no one danger proved dominant, the United States did find itself drawn into a number of military interventions in response to local or regional conflicts, as in the case of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait (1990-1991), Somalia (1991-1992), Haiti (1994), Bosnia (1995), and Kosovo (1999).

These interventions made the issue of isolationism rise again, but only briefly. The real debate was and remains over the degree to which the United States should pursue its foreign policy alone or in partnership with other states. The debate has been framed in terms of multilateralism versus unilateralism.<sup>2</sup>

Multilateralism refers to the cooperation of three (3) or more states in a given area of international relation. As John Ruggie has suggested, the term "multilateralism" describes a state's quest to assert its interests and goals through cooperation and coalitions with other states.

Unilateralism, by contrast, refers to tendency to opt out of a multilateral framework (whether existing or proposed) or to act alone in addressing a

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<sup>1</sup> Sonja Davidovic, "American Foreign Policy between Unilateralism and Multilateralism", *Rheinische Friedrich* (2002), p.p 7-8.

<sup>2</sup> James A.Helsi, *American National Security*, (US: Army War College, 2011), p 186.

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particular global or regional challenge rather than choosing to participate in collective action. If a state pursues a unilateral foreign policy it is supported by its own forces, irrespective of whether these are based on a strong economy, a high technological standard or on a strong military capacity.<sup>1</sup>

Unilateralists argue that the non-negotiability of interests and values calls for their uncompromising pursuit, preferably with the support of others but alone if necessary. They add that one of the main advantages of unilateral approaches to problems is that they provide maximum freedom of action. While allies and partners can bring capabilities to the table, they often bring extra constraints on how their tools can be used.

Multilateralists, from the other hand, argue that most important issues facing the United States in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are not amenable to unilateral solutions, transnational issues requiring multilateral approaches.<sup>2</sup>

The 9/11 attacks settled the debate in favor of unilateralists, in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the Bush administration turned its attention to the so-called “War on Terrorism”. Terrorism was no longer one among a number of assorted dangers to the United States, but a fundamental threat. In response, the United States under the Bush administration launched large scale-military attacks against Al-Qaeda terrorist camps, Taliban government in Afghanistan (2001) and Ba`ath regime in Iraq (2003) in a unilateral way to show American military power that in 2002 accounted for 43 percent of the world`s military spending, nearly as much as the rest of the world combined.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>David M. Malone and Yuen Foong Khong, **Unilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy: International Perspectives**, (US: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), p 2.

<sup>2</sup> Helse, **Op. Cit**, p.p 186 - 187.

<sup>3</sup> **Ibid**, p 185.

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In sum, the debates that the U.S. foreign policy knew and still knowing shows the dynamism of this policy and through the next chapters of this study we'll continue to follow the outcomes of these dynamics.

### **2-The Actors of U.S. foreign policy**

Presidents face various constraints as they construct U.S. foreign policy. Scholars of international relations, particularly in realist school, locate many of these constraints at the international level. An alternative view highlights the influence of domestic actors and politics, but divides on the importance of different domestic agents<sup>1</sup> like Congress and Interest groups and their ability to influence the decision-making process. We'll try to determine these actors and how they participate in the construct of US foreign policy on the official and non-official level.

#### **2-1- Official Actors:**

The United States Constitution divides foreign policy powers between the President and the Congress so that both share in the making of foreign policy. The executive and legislative branches each play important roles that are different but that often overlap.<sup>2</sup> However, on the practical level it is proved that the president monopolizes foreign policy while the congress has only limited powers in this area.

#### **I- The President:**

Article 2 of the Constitution provides legal authority for the President's implementation of foreign policy. Under this title the President of the United States plays various roles, he is the Chief of State, the Chief Executive, the Commander in Chief, and the Chief Diplomat all in once.

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<sup>1</sup> Helen V. Milner and Dustin Tingley, **Sailing the Water's Edge: Where Domestic Politics Meets Foreign Politics**, (California: Stanford University, 2012), p 2.

<sup>2</sup> Richard F. Grimmet, "Foreign Policy Roles of President and Congress", **CRS Report to Congress** (1999), p 2.

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As Chief of State, the President is a symbolic leader of the country, he performs many ceremonial duties. The Chief Executive, in this role, the President runs out the government, he makes sure that laws are enforced, appoints important officials, and coordinates the efforts of over 150 departments and agencies. He carries out these duties with the help of his Cabinet (13 department heads) and the White House Executive Office Staff. The President is also head of all military forces or so-called Commander in Chief.<sup>1</sup> As Chief Diplomat, the President lead, initiate and guide the foreign policy. In this role the Constitution granted the President the power to nominate ambassadors, negotiate treaties, and receive foreign emissaries.<sup>2</sup>

Although the President is the principle decision maker on foreign policy matters, he does not act alone. He is surrounded by large number of participants with whom he consults; here are the most important participants in foreign policy:

### **1- The National Security Council (NSC):**

The National Security Council was established by statute in 1947<sup>3</sup> to create an interdepartmental body to advice the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security.

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<sup>1</sup> Helen and Tingley, **Op. Cit**, p 14.

<sup>2</sup> Jeanette Hamester, "President and Congress: the Making of U.S. NATO Enlargement Policy", **NATO Fellowship Programme** (2000), p 6.

<sup>3</sup> On July 26, 1947, President Harry Ttuman swept away the U.S. national security infrastructure. The signing of the National Security Act of 1947 gave birth to the foreign policy making apparatus. The 1947 act created the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency, and it exchanged the Department of War for the Department of Defense to oversee the military services, including what was then newly independent Air Force.

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Statutory members of the council are the President, Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Energy. Plus the regular attendees which are the National Security Advisor, the Deputy National Security Adviser, the White House Chief of Staff, and the Attorney General. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Director of National Intelligence are statutory advisers, but the President can request other senior officials to participate in NSC deliberations.<sup>1</sup>

The organization and influence of the NSC have varied significantly from one Administration to another, ranging from highly structured and formal systems to loose-knit teams of experts, with the lack of legal restructuring of the Council, President has full freedom to give the NSC the structure he sees fit best, thus number of employees has doubled dozens of times since its inception until today. In the beginning of the sixties, the number of employees was only 10, it has risen to 50 employees in 1970, amounted to 100 employees in the nineties then it triples and reached 320 employees since September 11. The NSC accounts for an estimated \$40 million annual budget.<sup>2</sup>

### **2- The Department of State (DOS):**

This is the chief executive branch department responsible for formulation and implementation of U.S. foreign policy. The department is partly organized along functional lines, with bureaus or offices in charge of such matters as economic affairs, human rights, international organizations, terrorism, and refugees. But it is mainly organized geographically, with bureaus for Europe and

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<sup>1</sup> Recharad A.Best Jr, “The National Security Council: An Organizational Assessment”, **CRS Report to Congress** (2011), p 12.

<sup>2</sup> The Official Website of the White House - [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov), consulted: January 15, 2017 (06:25 GMT).

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Canada, Africa, East Asia and Pacific, Inter American Affairs and Near East and South Asia.<sup>1</sup>

The United States has formal diplomatic relations with most nations. This include all UN member states except for Buthan, Iran, North Korea, and Syria, it has 294 physical embassies and consulates worldwide and the Department of State plays a crucial role in maintaining these relations which explains the enormous budget of the DOS that was approximately \$65.9 billion in 2015.<sup>2</sup>

### **3- The Department of Defense (DOD):**

This is the chief executive branch department responsible for the formulation and implementation of U.S. military policy in order to protect the security of the country. DOD directs U.S. forces from the Pentagon, across the Potomac River in Washington, D.C.

Beneath the Department of Defense are three (3) subordinate military departments: the United States Department of Army, the United States Department of Navy, and the United States Department of Air Force. All are headed by the Secretary of Defense who reports directly to the President.

When the Cold War ended, the US cut its armed forces dramatically, from about 2.2 million military personnel in 1987 to roughly 1.3 million in 2000.<sup>3</sup> Yet, the DOD still accounts for about one-fifth of federal government, the department is considered the largest employer in the world with nearly 2.87 million employer in total divided into 742.000 civilian, 1.300.000 active duty

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<sup>1</sup> Asaf Siniver, **The Machinery of Foreign Policy: Who and What?** ,(UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p 25.

<sup>2</sup> The Official Website of the DOS – [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov) , consulted: January 15, 2017 (06:30 GMT).

<sup>3</sup> Siniver, **Op. Cit**, p 26.

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military, 826.000 national guard and reserve. The DOD annual budget reached \$534.3 billion in 2016.<sup>1</sup>

### **4- Intelligence Agencies:**

The exact size is secret, but US intelligence community is very large. Many observers have argued that more rather than less intelligence efforts are needed in the post Cold War world, to deal with nuclear proliferation, terrorism, etc. Intelligence Agencies are responsible for the collection, analysis, and exploitation of information in support of law enforcement, national security, military, and foreign policy objectives.

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is the organization that coordinates all US intelligence agencies. It also gathers and evaluates intelligence itself and carries out covert operations. The CIA controls approximately 15% of the overall intelligence budget but its role and its notoriety made it a more important part of the intelligence community.<sup>2</sup>

The Spy Technology is the most expensive US intelligence activity consuming 75% or more of the federal intelligence budget and providing most of the raw intelligence information.

There are other agencies that are located in the DOD, these include: the National Security Agency (NSA), the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Official Website of the DOD – [www.defense.gov](http://www.defense.gov) , consulted: January 16, 2017 (23.30 GMT)

<sup>2</sup> Morton H.Halperin, **Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy**, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, (Washington, D.C: The Booking Institution, 2006), p 28.

<sup>3</sup> Siniver, **Op. Cit**, p 26.

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### II- The Congress:

The bureaucratic apparatus made the President very powerful in foreign policy area, but not omnipotent. He must still deal with domestic constraints starting with the Congress. The latter consists of 535 voting members (100 senators and 435 representatives).

From a constitutional standpoint, the Congress as a legislative branch has the power to participate in US foreign policy making. Article 1- section 8 from the US constitutional text gives Congress the power “to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations and among the several States, and with Indian Tribes”, “to declare war, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water”; furthermore “to raise and support Armies”, “to provide and maintain Navy”, “to provide of calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union...”<sup>1</sup>

Congress, or more precisely, the Senate, was given the power to confirm diplomatic, military, and political appointments. Also treaties needed to be negotiated would only be effective after the Senate had given its ‘consent’ by ratifying it with two-third majority vote;<sup>2</sup> therefore, Congress is able to use three powers invested in it by the Constitution: the power of War-making, the power of the purse, the power of oversight and investigation.

However, most scholars that have analyzed the role of Congress in the field of foreign policy have pointed out that there is a discrepancy between the constitutional role of the Congress and the role Congress plays in the actual foreign policy making process, Edwin Corwin, one of the most important American constitutionalists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, highlighted how contradictory

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<sup>1</sup> Raffaella Baritono, “An Invitation to Struggle? Congress and U.S. Foreign Policy”, **ISPI Analysis** 229 (2014), p 2.

<sup>2</sup> Hamester, **Op. Cit.**, p 6.

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the constitutional text was as far as foreign policy was concerned. Corwin claimed that:

“The relations of President and Congress in the diplomatic field have, first and last, presented a varied picture of alternate cooperation and tension, from which emerged two outstanding facts: first the overwhelming importance of Presidential initiative in this area of power; secondly, the even increasing dependence of foreign policy on Congressional cooperation and support.”<sup>1</sup>

Over the years Presidents had little reason to fear Congress, for even though it can amend treaties, cut the budget, or make reservations, Congress has only occasionally used this opportunity. In fact, the executive branch developed new mechanisms to get around Congress like avoiding Congressional involvement in international agreements by negotiation executive agreements instead of international treaties, or military interventions instead of war declaration.

From statistical standpoint and during its history, the U.S. declared war 5 times. However; the country was involved in military interventions almost 130 times. And from 15000 signed agreements we find 13000 were signed as executive agreements.

In sum, experience has shown that cooperation between the two branches executive and legislative is necessary for a strong and effective U.S. foreign policy.

### **2-2- The Non-official Actors:**

Research in international relations has identified a variety of actors who appear to influence U.S. foreign policy, including organized interests groups

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<sup>1</sup> Baritono, **Op. Cit**, p 6.

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(lobbies), experts (epistemic community). These actors influence U.S. foreign policy in different ways and to different extent as follow.

### **I- The Lobbies/Interest groups:**

Interest groups can be defined as associations of individuals who act to influence public policy autonomously from the government. This influence over the course of events comes through the employment of physical force or via the legal targeting.<sup>1</sup>

Interest groups are most active and effective in the United States because of the political characteristics that made the political system open to pressure by lobbyists, these characteristics are the fragmented political institutions and the low degree of centralization or what is known as the decentralized Congress.

Lobbies use two (2) principle means to exercise their influence:

1- Access to policy makers: access is the only mean for interest groups to directly state their opinions to individual official holders. Lobbying success at this level depends on three (3) factors:

First, the engagement of official holders in organizations related to interest groups.

Second, invitation of interest groups representatives to Congressional hearing.

Finally, financial campaign contributions for candidates of the House of Representatives.

2- Coalition-building: the concept of coalition-building can be defined as a 'set of actors who share a policy goal'. In regard to the degree of coalition-

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<sup>1</sup> David G.Haglund, "the 'Germany Lobby' and U.S. Foreign Policy", **Ethno Politics** 321 (2011), p 326.

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building the research relies on official statements of coalition partners or similar goals of interest groups regarding an issue as stated in congressional hearings, data from interviews and publications, the combination of these variables together will make it possible to draw a broad picture of lobbying success.<sup>1</sup>

Lobbying success is qualitatively measured by change in policy outcome by comparing stated goals of a selected interest group to political outputs; therefore, and based on this criterion, the Israel lobby is the most influential on U.S. foreign policy outputs even though U.S. support to Israel sometimes jeopardized U.S. security, this influence outcome in a form of economic, military, and diplomatic support.

Quantitatively, since October War in 1973, Washington has provided Israel with a level of support dwarfing to amounts provided to any other state. The total direct U.S. aid to Israel amounts to well over \$140 billion in 2003. Israel receives about \$3 billion in direct foreign assistance each year, which is roughly one-fifth of America's foreign aid budget; moreover, the United States has provided Israel with nearly \$3 billion to develop weapons systems and gives Israel access to intelligence that it denies its NATO allies. In addition, the United States has vetoed 33 United Nation Security Council resolutions that were critical for Israel.<sup>2</sup>

In addition there are the military-industrial lobby and oil companies that serve as major pressure groups in influencing US foreign policy.

In sum, interest groups wanting to exercise influence in international cases should understand the necessity of trying to shape the manner in which America

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<sup>1</sup> Mirijam Koch, *A Liberal Perspective: The Role of Interest Groups in US Foreign Policy Towards Iran*, Electronic Article Version, p .p 7 – 8.

<sup>2</sup> John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, **The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy**, (US: FSC, 2007), p 30 – 31.

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conceives its foreign policy goals because the U.S. shape events in every corner of the world.

### **II- Think-Tanks:**

“Of the many influence on U.S. foreign policy formulation, the role of think-tanks is among the most important and least appreciated” this quote of Richard Haass - director of policy and planning in U.S. Department of State - highlights the role elites plays in the formulation of U.S. foreign policy .

Public policy research organizations or so-called think-tanks are, according to Domhoff, the intellectual epic center of policy planning process. These non-profit organizations provide the research and early policy proposals that eventually find a home on Capitol Hill.<sup>1</sup>

The expression think-tanks already existed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in English, however; its meaning as an organization dedicated to reflection is dated at the 1959. Historically, these organizations appeared between the two World Wars. The Brookings Institution and Carnegie Endowment as the flagship were established in 1916 and 1910 respectively.<sup>2</sup> Nowadays; America’s approximately 1,830 think tanks comprise a significant share of the world’s estimated 6,618 policy research organizations. Total revenues of American think tanks amount to approximately \$1 billion per year.<sup>3</sup>

Richard Haass describes the role of think tanks in saying that: “today’s think tanks offer five benefits - they generate ‘new thinking’ among U.S. decision-makers, provide experts to serve in the administration and Congress,

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<sup>1</sup> Tugrul Keskin and Patrick R. Halpern, “Behind Closed Doors Elite Politics, Think Tanks, and U.S. Foreign Policy”, **Insight Turkey** 2 (2005), p 104.

<sup>2</sup> Iztok Bojovic, “Think tanks in the USA”, **Western Balkans Security Observer** 12 (2009), p 68.

<sup>3</sup> Alek Chance, “Think Tanks in the United States Activities, Agendas, and Influence”, **Institute for China-America Studies Reports** (2016), p 3.

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give policy-makers a venue in which to build shared understanding on policy options, educate U.S. citizens about the world, provide third party mediation for parties in conflict”.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, two factors play out these roles:

1- Political biases: Think tanks also have different political biases which play out in their recommendations to government. For example, an institute such as the Heritage has a more conservative bias in its policies than one such as the Brookings Institute.

2- Financial support: There are often hidden interests, which play out in policy recommendations that are made. These include the influence of big business, which takes place through membership of business leaders on the board of trustees of these organizations.<sup>2</sup>

Think tanks constitute an opposing force from the side of civil society to institutional powers activating and organizing participatory mechanisms, as pointed out by Abelson, think tanks develop their activities and exercise their influence either directly through connections with important political movers and shakers, or indirectly through publications, meetings and seminars.

The process of bi-directional influence guarantees think tanks the opportunity to participate in decision making, to set priorities on the political agenda, and to contribute to the climate of opinion.<sup>3</sup>

We can understand the role of think-tank influence by observing the role they played in successive US administrations .e.g. during the Jimmy Carter’s

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<sup>1</sup> Keskin and Halpern, **Op. Cit**, p 106.

<sup>2</sup> **Ibid**, p 106.

<sup>3</sup> Olivier Urrutia, “The Role of Think Tanks in the definition and Application of Defense Policies and Strategies”, **Journal of the Spanish Institute of Strategic Studies** 2 (2013), p 22.

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presidency, members of the presidential team came from the Brookings and the Council on Foreign Relations. The Heritage had a prominent role in policy making and their study “Mandate for Change” became the basis of Reagan’s program in 1980. Influenced by Carnegie Endowment’s recommendations on the need to establish the council for economic security, Clinton’s government founded the National Economic Council.<sup>1</sup>

Globalization has contributed to more domestic and global demand for American think tank research, and the internet allows American organizations to have greater influence abroad. US organizations like Carnegie and Brookings have opened multiple locations around the world, and Carnegie now brands itself as “the global think tank.”

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<sup>1</sup> Bojovic, **Op. Cit**, p 73.

## **Summary of Chapter One**

Within this chapter, we discussed the following points:

- 1- The notion of security has expanded its scope in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century both horizontally and vertically, from exclusively military sector to political, economic, social, and environment sectors; and from state-centred view to human centred view.
- 2- The theories of international relations has different standpoint from the nature of security, while realism identifies security in material factors (power) constructivism identifies it with non-material factors (thoughts and identities).
- 4- US foreign policy history has seen a lot of transitions associated with two major debates about the strategies of foreign entanglement between, isolationists and interventionists from one hand, and unilateralists and multilateralists from the other hand.
- 5- The US constitution provides large legal authorities to the President; however, he doesn't act alone. The constraints posed by the bureaucratic stuff, the legislative branch and the social structure play a significant role in the design and implementation of US foreign policy.

**CHAPTER TWO: The Analytical and Synthetical  
Framework of the Study**

**-US Security in the Middle East post-2011 Arab Uprisings-**

The Middle East has always attracted great powers due to its central location, bearing crucial waterways as well as housing diving places of three major religions and possessing large reserves of world oil and natural gas resources. US attitude toward the Middle Eastern countries is shaped by security concerns and energy needs. However, since the Arab uprisings in 2011 the relationship between the United States and Middle East countries has become troublesome.

In this chapter we will analyze the outlines of U.S. foreign policy toward the Middle East and how the Arab uprisings influenced them, according to the following plan:

**ONE: U.S. Security Determinants in the Middle East and Their Implications**

1- U.S. Interests in the Middle East

1-1- Economic Interests

1-2- Political Interests

1-3- Military Interests

2- U.S. Security Arrangements in the Middle East

2-1- Economic Arrangements

2-2- Political Arrangements

2-3- Military Arrangements

**TWO: Arab Uprisings and U.S. Security**

1- An Overview of the Arab Uprisings

1-1- Roots and Definition of the Arab Spring

1-2- The Domino Effect in Arab Uprisings

2- Arab Uprisings' Implications on U.S. Security

## CHAPTER TWO

2-1- U.S. Response to Arab Uprisings

2-2- The Emerging Security Threats after Arab Uprisings

### **ONE: U.S. Security Determinants in the Middle East and Their Implications**

Originally, the Middle East was a British colonial term, which in the middle of the nineteenth century included Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. However, the term ‘East’ goes back to ancient times, it has been used to describe the rest, outside Europe in cultural expressions instead of geographical criteria. Since then the Middle East has represented cultural boundaries not geographical borders.

Today the boundaries of the Middle East are determined in very different ways because of different interests. In a broader meaning, we can say that the Middle East covers the region from Ethiopia in the south, to Turkey in the north, and from Afghanistan and Pakistan in the east, to Morocco in the west. In a narrow meaning, the Middle East is defined according to maritime borders; it is the region between the Black Sea, the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, Arabian Gulf and the Caspian Sea.<sup>1</sup> The exact location of the Middle East is shown in map 1.

The concept of the “Middle East” in this study is the one determined countries on the Arab peninsula and the Arab East plus Israel, Turkey, Cyprus, and Iran. Therefore the Middle East includes 16 states.

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<sup>1</sup> Osman Nuri Ozalp, “Where is the Middle East”, **Turkish Journal of Politics** 2 (2011), p.p 15-16.

## CHAPTER TWO



Map1: The Middle East location in the world

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Given to its strategic location, the Middle East, for more than 2000 years, has been the focus of ambitions and objectives of external powers. Middle Eastern states; however, have used the external powers for their own aims as well.<sup>1</sup> And since the end of the Cold War the Middle East became the hottest political spot in the globe given to the enormous importance the United States dedicated for it in its foreign policy. In the following elements of this study we will examine the inputs and the outputs of the U.S. foreign policy towards the Middle East through a security approach.

### **1- U.S. Interests in the Middle East**

In high-level studies, extensive plans were developed for what was called the “Grand Area”, a world system in which U.S. interests are expected to flourish. The plan was extended to all major areas and issues. The Third World also has its role in the Grand Area: to be ‘exploited’ for the needs of the industrial societies and to fulfill its major function as a source of raw materials and a market. Plans for the Middle East developed within this context.<sup>2</sup>

Since U.S. national interests presented by President George H.W. Bush in the National Security Strategy (NSS) to President Barak Obama 2015-NSS there were no significant change in U.S. strategy toward the Middle East.

#### **1-1- Economic Interests:**

American policy makers view the Middle East as a region of vital economic interests for the US, because it remains a crucial passage for international trade on one hand and because of its growing markets that became targets for US exporters and investors on the other hand. But those interests, though growing, remain overshadowed by oil concerns. The region’s vast oil

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<sup>1</sup> Mary E. Morris, **The Persistence of External Interests in the Middle East**, (U.S. Rand Corporation, 1994), p 13.

<sup>2</sup> Noam Chomsky, **After the Cold War: U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East**, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), p.p 16-17

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reserves are clearly a key component of American strategic interests.<sup>1</sup> Ensuring a reliable and efficient flow of oil from the region is described as a matter of national security for Americans and they relay in defining their energy security on the definition provided by the International Energy Agency (IEA): “the uninterrupted availability of energy sources at an affordable price”.<sup>2</sup>

Before WW I the United States was not much interested in Middle East’s oil, the American oil companies in the region represented purely commercial concerns since the United States was the world’s largest oil producer and exporter. At the end of WW II the Middle East’s oil became very important and a strategic necessity to American war efforts for fueling planes, ships, tanks, and trucks. The increased American diplomatic, economic and military involvement in the Middle East during the war insured that American oil companies have come to play a leading role in influencing United States’ foreign policy toward Arab states until 1973. following the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, where the Arabs used oil as a political weapons against the United States support for Israel and quadrupled oil price generating an energy crisis in the western world,<sup>3</sup> the United States arranged its foreign policy to secure easy access to the region’s oil not only for itself but for Japan and Europe through three (3) energy security arrangements:

First, maintaining a strong naval presence in the Persian Gulf in order to protect oil shipping routes.

Second, adopting the pillars policy that mean building a close alliance with the oil monarchies.

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<sup>1</sup> Hadi Salhi Esfahami, “The Economic Ties and Political Interests of the United States in the Middle East and North Africa”, *SNU American Studies Journal* 35 (2012), p1.

<sup>2</sup> Ronny Modigs, *United States Foreign Policy in the Middle East after the Cold War*, (Kansas: Fort Leavenworth, 2003), p.p 5 - 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p 5.

## CHAPTER TWO

Third, maximizing the participation of U.S. oil companies in the production, refining, and transporting oil.<sup>1</sup>

In numbers, at the beginning of 1990s over 50% of U.S. needs for oil has been met by imports, and large share of that comes from the Persian Gulf area. While U.S. imports only about 15% of the oil exported from the Persian Gulf, the region is of vital strategic importance to U.S. national security due to its global share of the international oil market.<sup>2</sup> For example, in 2015, Persian Gulf states produced almost 30% percent of total world oil production.<sup>3</sup>

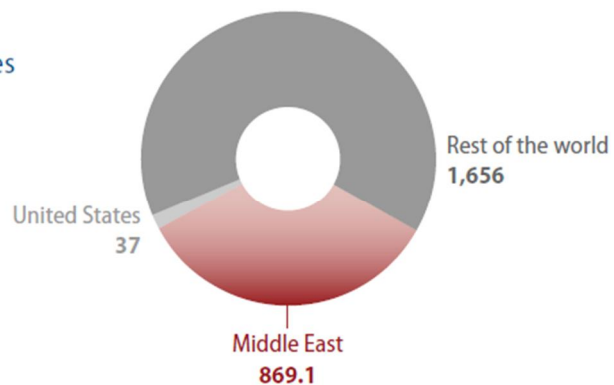
The oil from Middle East is desirable for many reasons:

First, the low cost of production, only about 11 % of what the cost is to produce oil in Alaska.

Second, Middle East resources have not fully explored and developmental drilling continues to find new oil reserves.

Third, the proven reserves of the Middle East are high, as shown in figure 1, in relation to the rate of production, which gives significant influence and power in the world oil market.<sup>4</sup>

**Oil reserves in the Middle East**  
The Middle East's share of global oil reserves  
in 2014, in billions of barrels



**Figure 1**

<sup>1</sup> Nader Habib and Eckart Woertz, "U.S. - Arab Economic Relations", **Middle East Brief** 34 (2009), p 4.

<sup>2</sup> Modigs, **Op.Cit**, p 23.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremi Suri and Benjamin Valentino, **Sustainable Security: Rethinking American National Security**, (London: Oxford University Press,2016), p 7.

<sup>4</sup> Modigs, **Op.Cit**, p 37.

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Meanwhile, the global energy map is changing, especially because of the boom in oil and gas production in the United States through use of advanced technologies. This change is likely to bring about a reduction in dependence on the Middle East oil; and therefore, less dependence than in the past on oil producing states.

US oil production has risen in the past four (4) years by 25 %; analysts now anticipate a fifty percent drop in U.S. oil imports from the region by 2035. Moreover, the International Energy Agency expects that the United States will surpass even Russia and Saudi Arabia and will become the largest oil producer in the world.

At the same time, the notion that the United States will be completely independent of Middle East oil is far from reality. While the United States today produces 60 % of its oil consumption and is expected to supply all of its energy needs by the end of the next decade, even then it will continue to be dependent on the global economy, which is liable to be harmed and harm the US as well if oil sources in the Middle East does not continue to supply the demands of states like South Korea, Japan, India and China. In fact, the Persian Gulf alone has 54.5 % of the total proven global oil reserves and 40.5 % of all proven global gas reserves. Therefore, even if the United States were not dependent on energy from the Gulf for domestic consumption, it would remain dependent on the stability of the global energy market and would need to maintain free access to Persian Gulf oil.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the rise of renewable energy and the emergence of new oil and gas producers -including the United States- the Middle East remains of geo-economic importance due to its supervision of all the key choke points through which global trade passes, these are the Suez Canal, Bab al Mandab, and the

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<sup>1</sup> Yoel Guzanshy, "The End of American Era in the Middle East", **Strategic Assessment** 4 (2013), p.p 31 - 32.

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Strait of Hormuz,<sup>1</sup> the latter, perhaps the world's most important choke point for oil supplies, 33% of all oil shipped by sea and nearly and nearly 20 % of all oil traded worldwide passed through the Strait in 2009. This means that stopping traffic through the Strait would cut off over 80 % of the Gulf States oil exports.<sup>2</sup>

Besides the high oil reserves, the strong economic growth of recent years have led to a sharp increase in the volume of imports by the Middle Eastern countries to 200 % during the period 1997 - 2007 moving from \$75 billion in 1997 to \$ 258.3 billion in 2007, and U.S. exports to these countries rose from \$19.4 billion in 2000 to \$50 billion in 2007.<sup>3</sup> The US is among the top five trading partners with every single Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) state. Exports from the US to GCC countries supported more than 650.000 US jobs, at the same time, more than 700 US affiliated companies operate in the region and employ more than 16.000 Americans.<sup>4</sup>

These facts will push the United States to fight for keeping its influence and market share in the Middle East, especially with the increasing Chinese exports to the region, without mentioning the importance of the Middle East for US arms industry because states in the region also serve as major purchasers of US military equipment. In the mid 1990s US arms exports to the Middle East was 77 % of total US arms export.

### **1-2- Political Interests:**

The right priorities are outlined in the highest - level secret document. They stress that the major threat to U.S. interests is 'nationalistic regimes'. Therefore; the major policy imperative is to block indigenous nationalist forces.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The CPA Middle East Team, "Leveraging U.S. Power in the Middle East", **Center for American Progress** (2016), p 13.

<sup>2</sup> Suri and Valantino, **Op.Cit**, p.p 10-11.

<sup>3</sup> Habib and Woertz, **Op.Cit**, p 8.

<sup>4</sup> Modigs, **Op.Cit**, p 39.

<sup>5</sup> Chomsky, **Op.Cit**, p.p 16-17.

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In order to achieve that the U.S. focused on supporting the status quo in the region relying on two pillars: Israel and the so-called Arab ‘friendly’ states.

There is no doubt that safeguarding the security of Israel is in the center of U.S. security strategy. Since Israel’s founding in 1948, successive U.S. presidents have demonstrated a commitment to Israel’s security.<sup>1</sup> American leaders have primarily explained the foundations of U.S. - Israel special relationship by the “shared values” including the two countries common democracy, and the Judeo-Christian culture. Arguments in favor to the strong ties with Israel are actually dominated by the moral responsibility America bears to protect what they sees as “the nation state of Jewish people”. A third crucial aspect of this relation is the common national interests and collaborative action to advance those interests. However; some analysts have traditionally viewed the U.S. relationship with Israel as one way street, in which the United States protects Israel diplomatically and provide the means for it to defend itself militarily but Israel itself contributes little or nothing to American national interests.<sup>2</sup>

There is an ongoing considerable debate over whether that special relationship with Israel drives from the role of Israel in U.S. strategic planning or from the influence of the “Jewish Lobby”.<sup>3</sup>

Those standing for the first position argue that history provides numerous examples of specific Israeli actions that have benefited U.S. national interests, the most celebrated were Israel’s daring to theft Soviet radar from Egypt in 1969, Israel’s positive reply to President Nixon’s request to fly reconnaissance mission and mobilize troops to help turn around Syria’s invasion of Jordan in

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<sup>1</sup> Jim Zanotti, “Israel: Background and U.S. Relations”, **CRS Report to Congress** (2016), p 2.

<sup>2</sup> Robert D. Blackwill and Walter B. Slacombe, **Isreal: Strategic Asset for the United States**, (Washington, D.C: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2011), p 2.

<sup>3</sup> Chomsky, **Op.Cit**, p 20.

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1970, and Israel's sharing of technical intelligence with the US on numerous Soviet weapons systems captured during the 1967 and 1973 wars.<sup>1</sup> As one high official puts it during the Iran-Contra affair, Israel is "just another federal agency, one that's convenient to use when you want something done quietly". So Israel may have been a strategic asset during the Cold War by serving as America's proxy after the 1967 war, Israel helped contain Soviet expansion in the region and helped to protect U.S. allies (like Jordan's king Hussein);<sup>2</sup> but what about the present time?

Meanwhile, Americans are questioning Israel's strategic value, many U.S. officials view the Israeli government as a source of unpredictability rather than stability, raising the question of whether Israel is furthering U.S. interests or complicating them. In particular, some U.S. national security officials argue that the persistence of the Israeli- Palestinian conflict undermines U.S. interests by fuelling radicalism and anti-Americanism in Muslim communities.<sup>3</sup> So even if Israel was a strategic asset during the Cold War, the first Gulf War (1990-91) revealed that Israel was becoming a strategic burden. The United States could not use Israel bases during the war without rupturing the anti-Iraq coalition. History repeated itself in 2003, although Israel was eager for the United States to attack Saddam, President Bush could not ask it to help without triggering Arab opposition.<sup>4</sup>

After 9/11, U.S. support for Israel has been justified by the claim that both states are threatened by terrorist groups originating from the Arab Muslim world, and by a set of "rogue states" that back these groups and seek Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD).

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<sup>1</sup> Blackwill and Slacombe, **Op.Cit**, p 8.

<sup>2</sup> Mearshiemer and Walt, **Op.Cit**, p 32.

<sup>3</sup> Haim Malka, **the Future of the U.S. - Israeli Strategic Partnership**, (Washington, D.C: CSIS, 2011), p 20.

<sup>4</sup> Mearshiemer and Walt, **Op.Cit**, p 32.

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The actual US role in helping Israel is unclear; Israel does not face a threat from conventional military attacks, Israel's forces are far more capable than those of its neighbors combined, and even without Washington backing Israel's forces will still enjoy a considerable advantage. The actual security threat today comes from terrorism or from rocket attacks from Hamas, Hizbollah, and other quasi-state foes,<sup>1</sup> and here the United States can't help only in the global context of its security strategy in the Middle East.

### **1-3 Military Interests:**

The United States has many military interests in the Middle East, some are often cited by leaders and some are implicit, the most vital of these interests are: preventing weapons of mass destruction proliferation, preventing hostile states from achieving hegemony over the region, and counterterrorism.

These interests, in part, tend to prevent any hostile state or non-state actor from gaining enough power to threaten U.S. interests regarding oil security and also involve concerns relating to the security of Israel.

Since WW II, more weapons of mass distraction attacks have occurred in the Middle East region more than in any other region of the world. Egypt used chemical weapons against Yemen from 1963 to 1967, Iran and Iraq used chemical weapons against each other during the Iraq-Iran war from 1980 to 1988. In addition to the use of chemical weapons against neighbors, Iraq used them on Kurdish within its territory in 1988. These uses and some others indicate that in the Middle East, the taboo against the use of WMD is weaker than in any other region of the world.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Suri and Valantino, **Op.Cit**, p.p 17-18.

<sup>2</sup> David Albright and others, **U.S. Non-proliferation Strategy for the Changing Middle East**, (Washington, D.C: The Project on US Middle East Strategy, 2013), p 20.

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Moreover, the Middle East contains several states with suspected or confirmed offensive biological and/or chemical weapons programs; the region has also been a hotbed of nuclear proliferation for five (5) decades. Driven by security fears, regional ambitions, and nationalism, at least five Middle Eastern states have sought to acquire nuclear weapons capability. Israel was the first and the only successful and Iran is developing the capability to build a nuclear arsenal.<sup>1</sup>

The United States does not view the Israeli nuclear program, which dates back to the 1960s, as a threat because Israel is an ally. However; the biggest risk of proliferation comes from Iran. According to U.S. perception, Iran's pursuits of more advanced nuclear technology and the possibility that it could transfer nuclear weapons or materials to others -whether state or terrorist groups- pose significant danger to the U.S. and its allies in the region and beyond. Tehran denies this accusation and claims that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes. The United States concerns were expressed by Hans Blix, former director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, who suggested that failure with Iran "could create serious risks of escalation and long-term domino effects in the region".<sup>2</sup>

### **2- U.S. Security Arrangements in the Middle East**

Events of the past few years have demonstrated that modern security challenges must be met with a variety of policy instruments. Diplomacy, economic policies, support from allies, and the legitimizing involvement of international organizations, need to be developed alongside military forces.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce Riedel and Gary Samore, **Restoring the Balance: a Middle East Strategy for the Next President**, (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution, 2008), p 20.

<sup>2</sup> Gewdat Bahget, "A Nuclear Arms Race in the Middle East", **Mediterranean Affairs** (2011), p 28.

<sup>3</sup> Stanley R. Sloan and others, **The Use of U.S. Power Implications for U.S. interests**, (Washington, D.C: The Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, 2004), p 10.

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### **2-1- Economic Arrangements:**

The use of economic power by the United States to achieve broad political goals is not a new policy. It goes back to The Marshall Plan which aimed to advance American political objectives and national interests. This policy may take the form of foreign assistance or economic sanctions.

#### **I- Foreign aid:**

U.S. policy makers over time have identified a number of core interests in the Middle East that U.S. foreign aid to the region seeks to advance, ranging from support for Israel and Israel's peaceful relation with its Arab neighbors, to the protection of vital energy supplies and the fight against international terrorism. U.S. foreign assistance continues to support the 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt and the continued stability of the Kingdom of Jordan, which signed its own peace treaty with Israel in 1994. U.S. funding also has sought to promote a diplomatic "two-state" solution between the Palestinians and Israel. The United States also provides military assistance to Iraq and Lebanon that seeks to counter Iranian influence in parts of the Arab world.<sup>1</sup>

Since 1946, the United States has provided an estimated total of between \$282 billion to \$292 billion in foreign assistance to the region.

Israel is the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign assistance since WW II. To date the U.S. has provided Israel with \$ 124.3 billion in bilateral assistance. Egypt comes second with \$ 76 billion between 1948 and 2015, including \$ 1.3 billion a year in military aid.

Overt U.S. military aid to the region distributed as follows: Yemen (\$386 million), Lebanon (\$141 million), Jordan (\$28 million), and Iraq (\$435 million). Another DOD security assistance account that is providing counterterrorism aid

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremy M. Sharp and Carla E. Humud, "U.S. Foreign Assistance to the Middle East: Historical Background and Recent Trends", **CRS Report to Congress** (2015), p.p 1-2.

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to the security forces of various Middle Eastern governments is the so-called Counterterrorism Partnership Fund (CTPF) that was spent to support Jordan with \$ 76.93 million, and Lebanon with \$ 59 million.<sup>1</sup>

These massive spending allows a meaningful measure of control over the behavior of potentially unfriendly regimes.

### **II- Sanctions:**

U.S. uses economic sanctions to adjust the behavior of the so-called rogue states and unfriendly regimes. This was the chosen way to manage Iran's nuclear program. The United States pursued a multilateral approach to addressing Iran's uranium enrichment through the United Nations Security Council which has imposed binding international sanctions that limit Iran's access to relevant technology and materials target Iranian individuals and organizations supporting the country's nuclear and missile programs.

The US, the EU, Australia, Canada, Japan, and South Korea also have imposed additional sanctions unilaterally, these sanctions imposed by the US and its allies have significantly curtailed investment in Iran's energy sector, constricted sales to Iran of food and medical products, and beginning in early 2012, dramatically reduced global purchases of Iranian crude oil.<sup>2</sup>

These sanctions pushed negotiations with Iran on curtailing its nuclear activities.

### **2-2 Political Arrangements:**

The United States role in the Middle East has dramatically increased in recent years; it is involved not only with intensive orientations of its foreign policy toward the region but also with the domestic policies of the region's countries. The US stands in the center of the peace and the democratization

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<sup>1</sup> Green Book, [www.USaid.gov](http://www.USaid.gov), consulted: March 20, 2017 (06:25 GMT).

<sup>2</sup> Albright and others, **Op.Cit**, p 26.

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process of the Middle East where a set of political arrangements are taking place; in hope to enhance stability and security in the region on the long term.

### **I- Democratization:**

U.S. attitude toward Arab democratization and international support for authoritarian regimes are a core impediment to democratization. In this, U.S. strategy in the Middle East has helped maintaining the stability of authoritarian regimes by providing material and legitimacy resources. In fact, the United States has long favored policies of stability over regime change, given that political change is always accompanied by a period of turmoil which could threaten western economic and security interests by a disruption of energy supplies.

However, the attacks of 9/11 triggered a re-orientation of Middle East policy, consigning democracy promotion to the forefront of the debate surrounding the fight against global terrorism. In this context, Condoleezza Rice, former U.S. Secretary of State, declared that: “for 60 years the United States pursued stability at the expense of democracy in the Middle East ... and we achieved neither”.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, the objective of combating terrorism and advancing democratic values seem to converge. In fact, a popular argument maintains that democratic forms of government provide people with peaceful channels to express their grievances and achieve change which reduce the appeal of resorting to violence and terrorist tactics. According to this view, the implementations of democratic reforms would eventually lead to less terrorism.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Caterina Perlini, “Democracy in the Middle East: External Strategies and Domestic Politics”, **IRIA Report** 10 (2015), p 15.

<sup>2</sup> Eugenio Lilli, “The Arab Awakening and US Counterterrorism in the Greater Middle East”, **Journal of Terrorism Research** 6 (2015), p 19.

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In this respect, that overlaps democratization with counterterrorism, two strategies have evolved:

**1- The Greater Middle East Initiative (GMEI):** It is an ambiguously defined set of economic and political initiatives and policies. The George W. Bush Administration launched the GMEI as “a forward strategy of freedom in the Middle East” in November 2003. The Initiative emerged as central plank in the “war on terrorism”. At the core of the Initiative there are a series of bilateral free trade agreements and a program for the development of ‘Civil Society’. Informal parts of the Initiative include substantially increased funding for the Middle East through such organization as the National Endowment for Democracy, which funded educational, political, economic, and women empowerment programs.<sup>1</sup>

**2- Constructive Anarchy / Creative Chaos:** From the perspective of the geopolitical approaches, the “Creative Chaos” conceptually refers to the strategy to develop a solution to the many problems that the situation in the Middle East creates and raises; it can be identified as that state of comfort that is reached as result of anarchic events intentionally caused.

Nathan Sharansky, author of “The Cause of Democracy”, developed on the theoretical foundation of the “Constructive Anarchy”. The eradication of terrorism, says the author, can only be achieved by taking action on two simultaneous levels: the first is security, which inevitably involves the use of force and the remediation of the founding sources of terrorism and the second involves removing the root causes of terrorism that are formed primarily in the

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher Candland, “The U.S. Greater Middle East Initiative”, **International Conference on the Persian Gulf** 15 (2005), p1.

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authoritarian and corrupt politics of the authoritarian Arab regimes which promote the “culture of hatred”.<sup>1</sup>

The theorists of this thesis believe that the caused and controlled anarchy and instability inevitably leads to the building of a new political system capable of ensuring security, prosperity and freedom for societies that are the main subject of this process.

### **II- Peace Process (Israeli- Palestinian Conflict):**

As a third party with an interest in stability in the Middle East, the United States has a unique role to play in resolving the Israeli- Palestinian Conflict. In the past decades, every presidential administration beginning with President Carter has attempted to secure peace between Israeli and Palestinians because doing so promises enhanced stability for the Middle East region. But despite billions of dollars in foreign aid, countless diplomatic visits, and thousands of man hours, no administration had found the magic formula for a resting peace.

Despite the ongoing violence, Israeli and Palestinian leader have undertaken several serious efforts to negotiate a settlement under the oversight of U.S. diplomacy. While none of these negotiations has yielded a conclusive settlement, each attempt illuminates important lessons with respect to the parties’ bottom line positions and the necessary degree of U.S. involvement.

The first notable effort to negotiate an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement took place in the context of formulized international conference in Madrid (1991). Under the joint chairmanship of U.S. President George H. W. Bush and

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<sup>1</sup> Dumitru Chican, “Constructivist Anarchy in the Context of the Middle East”, **Supplement Geostartegic Pusle** 147 (2013), p 5.

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Soviet president Gorbachev, the conference convened representative from Israel, Syria, Lebanon, as well as a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.<sup>1</sup>

Since then, many peace agreements have been signed not only between the Israeli and Palestinian sides but also between Israel and its Arab neighbors, starting with Camp David I (1978), the Oslo Accords (1993), Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty (1994), Way River (1998), Camp David II (2000), and peace negotiations continued with Obama's Administration.

Though past US involvement in the peace process has brought the parties close to an agreement, every attempt has failed to achieve a two state solution. This failure partially stems from Washington's inability to accurately assess which levers it can successfully wield and which options are bound to fail.

### **2-3 Military Arrangements:**

The permanent presence of U.S. military forces in the Middle East has created a new set of parameters for U.S. foreign policy in the broader Middle East region and specifically in the areas of the Persian Gulf. However, the permanent U.S. military presence in the region creates its own dynamics that not only effect U.S. national security interests and strategy, but also have broader global implications.<sup>2</sup>

U.S. military engagement in the Middle East has taken a number of forms, from equipment support to partners and allies, to extensive basing of U.S. forces, all the way to military engagements ranging from brief raids to major ground campaigns.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Karma Adam, **Time for Change: the Role of the United States in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict**, (US: Nelson A. Rockefeller Center, 2015), p 16.

<sup>2</sup> Sedky Sobhy, **The U.S. Military Presence in the Middle East: Issues and Prospects**, (US: Army War College, 2005), p 10.

<sup>3</sup> James F. Jeffrey and Mickael Eisenstadt, **U.S. military Engagement in the Broader Middle East**, (Washington, D.C: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2016), p 17.

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Originally, the permanent United States military presence in various Arab countries of the Gulf was designed as an instrument of U.S. containment policies against Iraq and Iran, however; this role changed and become more complex after the 9/11 attacks.

The United States spends approximately \$250 billion per year to maintain its presence worldwide. There are about 837 bases operating outside the US; these bases cover 7 overseas territories as well as 38 foreign countries 10 of them are in the Middle East.

Location	Army Bases	Navy Bases	Air Bases	Marine Bases	Washington Command	Total
Homeland	2004	1011	1590	123	14	4742
Overseas Territories	29	72	19	1	0	121
Foreign Countries	293	136	261	26	0	716
Total	2326	1219	1870	150	14	5579

Table1: US Military Bases At Home and Abroad  
Source: The DOD Official Website

Among the major US army military installations located in the CENTCOM (United States Central Command) Theater are Kuwait's Camps Arifjan and Buehring. Kuwait is described as "major non-NATO ally" where the United States deploys missile defense systems and air forces.<sup>1</sup>

The Kuwait government allowed the US military forces to occupy as large as one quarter of the nation's territory for military purposes. During Obama's presidency the U.S. military troops in Kuwait were approximately 5000, which forged one of the largest army bases overseas.

Al Bahrain is home of 60-acres military base in Manama, the Capital. It is also the headquarters and the home port of the Fifth Fleet which include one

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<sup>1</sup> Suri and Valantino, **Op.Cit**, p.p 3-4.

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aircraft-carrier, six warships, one attack submarine, three amphibious ships and four anti-mine ships.

The US also sought military bases in Oman, a state controlling Musandam Peninsula and the water of Hormuz Strait. The two countries renewed their Collective Defense Treaty in 2002, in which Oman permitted the US to use three air bases of Seeb, Masirah, and Thumrait. In return, the U.S. government offered \$ 9.4 million military assistance to Oman in 2009, which amounted to as much as \$ 20.27 million in 2010.<sup>1</sup>

Qatar is the forward deployed base of CENTCOM AS Sayliyah Army Base Camp and houses the Combined Air and Space Operations Center. It also hosts a missile defense radar station.<sup>2</sup> Al-Udeid Airbase of Qatar boasts a 14760-foot-long runway, the longest in the Middle East. Its huge concrete bunkers have the capacity of stationing 120 aircraft.<sup>3</sup>

The UAE's Jebel Ali is the most visited foreign port in the world for the American Navy. Saudi Arabia is the only GCC country who doesn't have formal defense agreement with the US but the latter is widely perceived as firmly committed to Saudi Arabia's security.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sun Degang, "The US Military Bases in the Gulf Cooperation Council States", **Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies** 4 (2010), p.p 48-49.

<sup>2</sup> Suri and Valantino, **Op.Cit**, p 4.

<sup>3</sup> Degang, **Op.Cit**, p 52.

<sup>4</sup> Suri and Valantino, **Op.Cit**, p 4.

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Host Nations	Qatar	Bahrain	Saudi Arabia	Kuwait	UAE	Oman	Total
Number of Stationed Troops	3432	1496	500	About 5000	About 546	about26	About 11000
Main Bases	Air	Navy	Air	Army	Air	Air	

Table 2: The US military forces in GCC countries

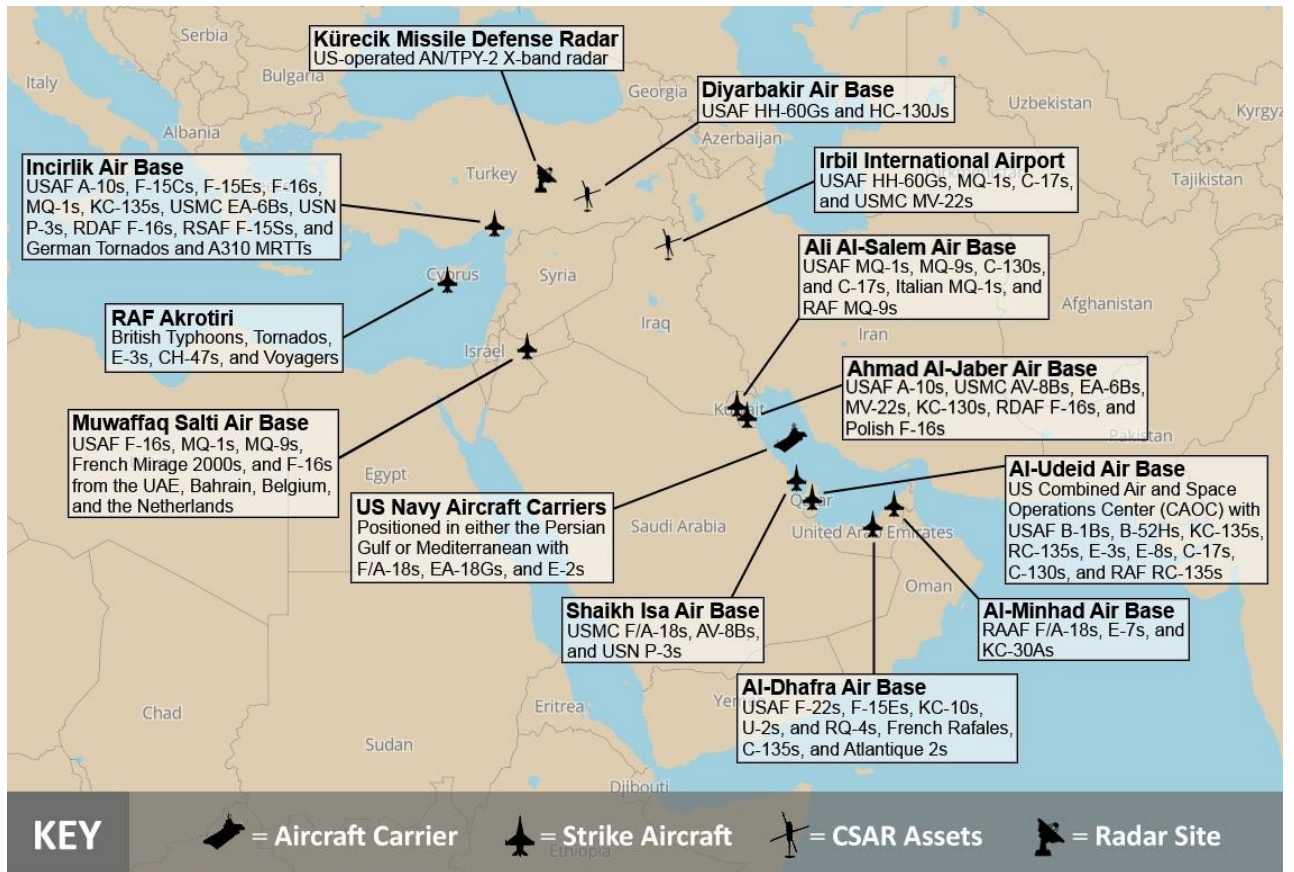
Source: The DOD official website

In addition, the United States signed a “Strategic Framework Agreement” with Iraq in 2011. It also has Airbase in Turkey and it maintains a wide range of security cooperation efforts with Israel and Egypt.

Another major military arrangement the US took in the region was the application of the preventive war in Iraq 2003. Prevention is the taking of military action against a target when it is believed that an attack by the target, while not imminent, is inevitable, delay in attacking would involve great risk. This war, regardless of its circumstances, it was designed to reshape the Middle East to better serve the US interests.

In sum, and given the interests and threats identified above, what level of capabilities can and should the US invest in the region? The US ability to secure many of its interests and influence events is both relatively easy and extremely limited. Therefore, and given the changing dynamics of the Middle East region, the United States must enhance its security arrangements to better stabilize the political environment and enhance its control over all active actors.

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Map 3: Military Bases in the Middle East

Source: The International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS)

## **TWO: Arab Uprisings and U.S. Security**

Since the obscure young fruit vendor named Muhammad Bouazizi set himself on fire in the dusty Tunisian town Sidi Bouzid, the flames that ended his life have spread across the entire Arab world, both figuratively and literally. From the late December 2010, largely peaceful mass protests have spread from Tunisia to most other Arab countries and promoted considerable political change referred to as the “Arab Spring”.<sup>1</sup>

This study does not delve into the domestic politics and society of those countries, but it focuses on the regional and international implications of this phenomenon.

### **1-An Overview of the Arab Uprisings**

Between 1950 and 2010 there were 91 cases of leaving power in the Arab world distributed as follows: 46 cases of forcible removal: only 3 in hereditary regimes and the rest in republican regimes. 18 cases of natural death: 14 in monarchies and only 3 in republics. There are equal cases of exemption from office with cases of assassination: 10 cases each, the exemption from office cases were concentrated in Lebanon with 6 cases, 1 in Algeria and 3 in hereditary regimes (Jordan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia). There were also 5 cases of voluntary waiver of power: 2 of which were due to entry into unit with another country (Egypt with Syria and North Yemen with South Yemen), 2 in Qatar, and the other one in Sudan. 2 cases of resignation, where in Algeria and South Yemen and both cases cannot be understood in isolation of political pressure.

Therefore, power transmission patterns result is clear and not surprising, Arab rulers never leave power only in three (3) cases: if they kicked the bucket,

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<sup>1</sup> Ederhard Kienle, “The Security Implications of the Arab Spring”, **Geneva Papers** 10 (2013), p 6.

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if they were victims of conspiracy, or isolated with popular revolution. The so-called Arab spring can be classified within the third category.

### **1-1 Roots and Definition of the Arab Spring:**

In 1991, Smual P. Hentington published his book “Democracy’s third wave” in which he illustrated how democracy was spread around the world and why it missed some areas.

According to Hentington, between 1974 and 1990, at least 30 countries made transitions to democracy this era of democracy transition constitutes the third wave of democratization in the history of the modern world. The first “long” wave of democratization began in 1820s and continued for almost a century until 1926, bringing into being some 29 democracies. The triumph of the Allies in WW II initiated a second wave of democratization that reached its zenith in 1962 with 36 countries governed democratically.<sup>1</sup>

The question here is why the Arabs missed the third wave and choose to engage in 2010 rather than a decade or two before, even though all the conditions for revolt have been in place for many years?

In 2002, the Arab Human Development Report indicated three main lacunae constituting significant barriers to growth and change in the Arab world; these are freedom, knowledge, and the status of women. With respect to knowledge, the report talked about technological backwardness of the Arab world: internet penetration stood at less than 1 %.

The decade since then brought about a dramatic change in terms of technology: the internet, satellite stations and social networks brought the middle class the knowledge that there are other ways to live, and that they

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<sup>1</sup> Smual P. Hentington, **The Tired Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century**, (US: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), p 12.

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deserve more and more freedom, democracy, human rights, progress for women, employment, and release from the grip of tyrants.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, Arab uprisings were triggered by economic hardships and peoples' democratic aspirations. The issue is based on imbalance in income, widespread poverty, corruption, corrupted administrations and nepotism; descend of governance from father to son and people lacking a word in governance. High rates of unemployment, particularly among the youth, led to insurgencies.<sup>2</sup>

The protests, demonstrations, and upheavals originally inspired by the Tunisians in 2011 have acquired a variety of terms - Arab spring, Arab awakening, Arab Uprisings, Arab movements, Arab revolutions...etc.

The first specific use of the term "Arab spring" as used to denote these events may have started with the American political journal "Foreign Policy" in an article written by **Marc Lynch** the author of the famous book "The Arab Uprising: the Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East". It is defined as a series of anti-government protests, uprisings and armed rebellions that spread across the Arab region in early 2011.<sup>3</sup> Given to the relative success and outcomes of this phenomenon the term is hotly disputed in Arab countries where people wonder whether the so-called Arab spring is an actual revolution or massive violent protests, and if so it is a winter not a spring.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Yoel Guzansky and Mark A. Heller, **One Year of the Arab Uprising: Global and Regional Implications**, (Tel Aviv: Institute for National Security Studies, 2012), p 12.

<sup>2</sup> Sertan Cinar and Ismet Gocer, "The Reasons and Economic and Political Consequences of Arab Spring", **Khazar Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences** 117 (2014), p 40.

<sup>3</sup> Marc Lynch, **The Arab Uprising: the Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East**, (US: Paperback, 2013), p 15.

<sup>4</sup> Brittany Foster, **Muslim Politics and Democracy: an Analysis of the Arab Spring**, (Washington, D.C: Maryland University, 2014), p 11.

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This question is rising because, in spite of the democratic revolts, until now there is no fundamental change of the regime in the Arab countries. The head of the executive power of the established regime has been fallen but not the regime. The revolt did not introduce a rupture with the elite and past of the authoritarian regime.<sup>1</sup>

Today we understand that the phrase “Arab spring” does not properly describe the phenomenon that shook the Arab world in 2011. We are not witnessing the flowering of a revolution leading to liberal, secular, and West European-American model of democracy. We are seen radical Islamic movements taking over the revolutions. The Arab people are again stuck between the devil (authoritarian secular regimes) and the deep blue sea (fundamentalism).

### **1-2-The Domino Effect in Arab Uprisings:**

The best theory to examine the geographical impact on uprisings in the Arab world is the domino theory, which asserts that change and/or events in one place will cause similar events in other areas close in proximity with one another. This theory has been associated with foreign policy and political gains in American history under former President Dwight Eisenhower. Eisenhower’s “falling domino principle” asserted that a change in one country’s political institution would lead to same changes in neighboring countries.<sup>2</sup>

Decades later the promotion of democracy has continued through lenses of domino theory. Initial protests broke out in Tunisia when Muhammad Bouazizi catalysed the revolution on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2010. Then, it spread to other Arab countries with a domino effect.

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<sup>1</sup> Abdennour Benanter, “Arab Democratic Uprisings: Domestic, Regional, and Global Implications”, *New Global Studies* 5 (2011), p 3.

<sup>2</sup> Foster, *Op.Cit*, p 17.

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Protests spread to Algeria on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2010, to Lebanon on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2011, to Jordan on 14<sup>th</sup> January, to Mauritania, Sudan, and Oman on 17<sup>th</sup> January, to Yemen on 18<sup>th</sup> January, to Saudi Arabia on 21<sup>st</sup> January, to Egypt on 25<sup>th</sup> January, to Syria on the 16<sup>th</sup> January, to Morocco on 30<sup>th</sup> January, to Iraq on 10<sup>th</sup> February, to Bahrain on 14<sup>th</sup> February, to Libya on 17<sup>th</sup> February, to Kuwait on 18<sup>th</sup> February, and to West Bank on 20<sup>th</sup> February.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless; since the countries in the region had different socio-economic and political structures, developments and outcomes of the riots varied, most of these movements had turned to no event.

Within months, president Zine al-Abidin Ben Ali of Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak of Egypt resigned, the former after some twenty five years, the latter after thirty years in office.<sup>2</sup> Here it is worth noting that regarding the authoritarian nature of Arab regimes and the penetration of the Arab world by external actors, the change is generally happening according to a top-down approach. With the success of the Tunisian revolt, change happened from bottom-up approach for the first time in modern Arab political history.<sup>3</sup>

However, only six (6) of 22 League of Arab States members have experienced the full force of the upheaval, and in only two of those (Tunisia and Libya - the latter in the wake of external military intervention) has the regime actually been overthrown. In two others (Egypt and Yemen) the leaders has been ousted but major elements of the ancient regime remain in place. In one (Syria) the struggle between regime and opposition continues unabated and developed into a fully fledged war, and in one other (Bahrain) the uprising seems to have been suppressed.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cinar and Gocer, **Op.Cit**, p 42.

<sup>2</sup> Kienle, **Op.Cit**, p 6.

<sup>3</sup> Benanter, **Op.Cit**, p 2.

<sup>4</sup> Guzansky and Heller, **Op.Cit**, p 7.

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In sum, the Arab uprisings have proven that what occurs in one country can influence other Arab states in unexpected and compelling ways, resulting in vast implications for the United States. This will be discussed in the next element of the study.

### **2- Arab Uprisings' Implications on U.S. Security**

In 2005, former national security advisor, Brent Scowcroft made a case that: “protecting the political status quo in the Arab world had been and remained the correct policy for the United States”. Americans saw the status quo as extremely advantageous and any danger to the status quo as a problematic, however; the Arab uprisings have challenged this form of thinking.

#### **2-1- U.S. Response to Arab Uprisings:**

At the end of 2010, came the first of Arab uprisings. There is no denying the “epidemic effect” of this phenomenon and the commonalities of mass protest that toppled dictators in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen; challenged regimes in Bahrain and Syria, and panicked rulers in neighboring states to co-opt preempt upheavals in their own countries.

On the rhetorical level President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton asserted the classical American idealist stance: in principle, Washington supports transitions to democracy. On the realist level, however; prudence was the watch word.<sup>1</sup>

The US has dealt with the so-called Arab spring on a case-by-case basis. Some argue that it is not a double standard operating as some accused the United States, but rather the Middle East is an extremely complicated region and each and every state is completely different, and in reality a specific policy must be

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<sup>1</sup> Clement Henry and Jang Ji- Hyang, **The Arab Spring Will It Lead to Democratic Transition**, (South Korea: The Asan Institute for Policy Studies, 2012), p 133.

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developed towards each country because the makeup environment of each is very different.<sup>1</sup>

As the first to move, Tunisia benefitted from what Charles Tilly once described as “a protected place in time and space”.<sup>2</sup> Although Tunisia was a staunch and useful ally to Europe and the United States in the War on Terror, it was not, in the large scheme of things, very important. Hence, when uprisings began, none of Ben Ali’s foreign partners were prepared to support him against what was largely a peaceful civilian uprising.

The United States hesitated to abandon the authoritarian ally in Egypt, The Mubarak regime exerted a stabilizing effect on the large region and was the linchpin of America’s security architecture for the region, however; the Administration calculated that qualified support for the opposition was the intelligent position to take.<sup>3</sup>

In Bahrain and Libya, oil and other strategic dimensions were at stake. Here, regional and international forces entered what had hitherto been domestic disputes; through they did so in divergent ways.

In Libya, the intervening Western powers had justified the military operation on moral ground.<sup>4</sup> But one of the major reasons the United States took action in Libya was because in reality, except of the 6 % American oil imports from Libya, it had no concrete interests in the country.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, Obama elected to “lead from behind” a NATO- led coalition which used a Security Council resolution calling for humanitarian protection of protesters to destroy the regime and its military force, America’s partaking of a “no-fly zone” did not

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<sup>1</sup> Sheehan Kane, “The United States and the Arab Spring”, **The Young Scholars** 3 (2013), p 7.

<sup>2</sup> Henry and Ji- Hyang, **Op. Cit**, p 133.

<sup>3</sup> **Ibid**, p 133.

<sup>4</sup> Benanter, **Op.Cit**, p 6.

<sup>5</sup> Kane, **Op.Cit**, p 4.

## CHAPTER TWO

entail grave military commitment, by contrast the American oil companies benefitted a welcome back into post- Qadhafi Libya.<sup>1</sup>

In chaotic Yemen, the Administration was torn between the regime of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a willing and complaint ally in the war on Al-Qa'ida terrorism, and a disaffected populace where the opposition included elements considered neither democratic nor pro-American.

Again, “leading from behind” seemed the most prudent course for the United States, in this case behind the multilateral efforts of the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council countries. The same scenario took place in Bahrain where the Obama Administration faced a dilemma. Nobody could doubt the massive popular antipathy to the regime of king Hamad Bin Issa al-Khalifa. But here Obama punted. Under strong pressure from the rulers of Saudi Arabia, who chose to see the Bahrain uprising as a Shi-a-Iranian plot, the Administration criticized the Bahrain rulers for their bad behavior but issued only pro forma protest against the Saudi intervention. Oil and strategic interests as Bahrain is the home where the U.S. Fifth Fleet is stationed trumped democratic principles.<sup>2</sup>

Syria seem as a swamp for the United States, from the beginning it was obvious that the popular discontent was widespread and deeply rooted, ill-advised response was to administer a “shock and awe” dose of brutality in hopes of nipping the uprising in the bud, however; the protests continued and deepened to the point where the conflict became militarized. Syria was plunged into a civil war in which both the regime and the opposition attracted outside military assistance.

For the Obama Administration, Syria was seen both as golden opportunity and a trap. On the one hand there was the prospect of bringing down a brutal

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<sup>1</sup> Henry and Ji- Hyang, **Op. Cit**, p 135.

<sup>2</sup> **Ibid**, p 133.

## CHAPTER TWO

dictatorship, giving democracy a chance, and delivering a body blow to the Iran's regional influence while strengthening the security of Israel, Saudi Arabia and other Sunni regimes.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand American officials believed that the fall of the regime would result in one of two situations. The first scenario involves the potential of increasing sectarian violence, ethnic violence, or both. The second scenario involves the concern that radical Islamic terrorism will take over Syria.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, Syria unlike Libya has legitimate defense, such as chemical weapons, a credible air-defense system, and a real military determined. In fact: Bashar's father, the late Hafez Assed, transformed the military into his regime's central pillar, therefore; when discussing military intervention in Syria, the United States does not have the will or the stomach to deal with the risk and consequences of sustained intervention especially given to the fact that Assad's allies have not abandoned him.<sup>3</sup>

To recap, there are at least three points of view about Obama's handling of the Arab uprising. From the left, there were those who faulted the Administration for not being consistently on "the right side of history". They pointed to the initial reluctance to abandon Ben Ali in Tunisia and Mubarak in Egypt, foot-dragging in Yemen, pusillanimity in Bahrain, and timidity in Libya and Syria. From the right, there was anger at insufficient support for traditional allies in Tunisia and Egypt, and alarm about the possible rise of anti-American Islamism in the guise of the "Arab spring". But from a relatively non-partisan "realist center" there were some commentators who registered approval of Obama's "nimble" Middle East policies, citing his nuanced approach to the complexities of the Arab spring and other regional issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Henry and Ji- Hyang, **Op. Cit**, p 134.

<sup>2</sup> Kane, **Op.Cit**, p 6.

<sup>3</sup> **Ibid**, p 5.

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### **2-2- The Emerging Security Threats from Arab Uprisings:**

Despite the controversy over the efficacy of the U.S. foreign policy in handling the dynamics of the so-called Arab spring, it is obvious that delaying the settlement of political, social, and economic transformation will risk maximizing the security threats in an already troubled region.

Post the Arab Uprisings, the new security environment includes the following threats:

#### **I- Enhanced Risk of Strategic Surprises:**

During the Arab uprising of 2011 Arab military forces performed differently from what analysts had commonly expected. Egypt's and Tunisia's armies did not only refuse to act violently against the people, but rather they facilitated regime change. In contrast to this, Libya's and Syria's armed forces reputedly under iron-fist control and obeying to the regime, remained in parts functional but suffered significant disintegration and desertion, rendering them largely incapable of functioning properly.

Thus, the "Arab spring" raises key questions about the role and anticipated conduct of various security forces in the Arab world under conditions of stress or crisis. The cohesion and regime supporting tendencies of Arab militaries cannot be taken for granted.<sup>1</sup>

#### **II- Evolving Actors and Evolving Threats:**

Non-State Armed Groups (NSAG's) and increasingly fragmented terrorist networks pose the main threat to the United States, because conventional war between two or more states in the Middle East region has become mercifully rare, and appears to be getting rarer. Armed conflict in the region today takes place overwhelmingly either within states (civil wars) or between Western states

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<sup>1</sup> Amichia Magen, **The Crises of Governance in the Middle East**, (Jerusalem: International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 2013), p 54.

## CHAPTER TWO

and non-Western adversaries composed of relatively backward, NSAG's, and terror networks.

This reflects a global trend in the nature of the new generation of war. In the total of 124 armed conflicts recorded in the world between 1989 and 2007, a full 117 took place either within a single state or involved cross-borders conflict between at least one NSAG and a state. Only 7 involved State-to-State warfare.<sup>1</sup>

### **III- The Effect of State Weakness on Regional Security:**

The proliferation of weak and failed states in the Middle East region are both a cause and a result of the rise of NSAG's, new terrorist networks, and pernicious state- NSAG alliance. Weak and failed states are a breeding ground for conflict, since a vacuum in state authority invites pervasive violence on multiple levels: insurgent against regime, intertribal, ethnic and religious.

In weakly governed spaces NSAG's typically prey on unarmed civilians, establish cross-borders criminal "shadow economies", and draw loyalty away from the state. The resulting insecurity poverty and frustration feed illiberal ideologies and jihadi recruitment.

After the launch of the Arab revolts this is now the case in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen.<sup>2</sup>

In sum, post the Arab uprisings, the U.S. Administration face a Middle East challenged by: regional power tension, multiple civil wars, state collapse driven by political legitimacy crises, threats from rapidly evolving terrorist networks, record numbers of refugees, and the biggest challenge is the one posed by the so-called the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, for dealing with the

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<sup>1</sup> Magen, **Op.Cit**, p 55.

<sup>2</sup> **Ibid**, p 57.

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United States developed new security arrangements, which will be examined in the next chapter.

## **Summary of Chapter Two**

Within this chapter, we discussed the following points:

1- US has large interests in The Middle East that vary between economic (insurance of oil flow), political (supporting US's Arab allies and maintain the security of Israel), and military (nuclear non-proliferation and counter-terrorism).

2- The US pursues a range of security arrangements to preserve those interests. Through providing foreign assistance to the region's countries, imposing sanctions on "rogue" regimes, engage in processes of democratization and peace, in addition to a series of military arrangements ranging from army bases, defense treaties, equipment support, and even military direct intervention.

3- Since the end of 2010 the Arab world has seen widespread uprisings across many countries that resulted: in two countries, Tunisia and Libya, the regime has actually been overthrown. In two others, Egypt and Yemen, the leaders have been ousted but major elements of the ancient regime remain in place. In Syria, the struggle between regime and opposition continues unabated and developed into a fully fledged war, and in Bahrain the uprising seems to have been suppressed.

4- The US has dealt with the Arab uprisings on a case-by-case basis following idealist approach where its interests are not threatened, and realistic approach where they are.

**CHAPTER Three: The Practical and Critical Framework  
of the Study**  
**-US Security Arrangements to Counter ISIS-**

The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) took the international community by surprise in the summer of 2014 when defeating the Iraqi military in multiple battles that culminated in the seizure of Mosul. On 30 June 2014, ISIS publicly declared a caliphate that stretches from northern Syria to the outskirts of Baghdad.

The United States find itself in the obligation of responding to the terrorist organization given the fact that ISIS is indirectly a result of the US 2003 invasion of Iraq from one hand, and that the establishment of the Islamic State threatens U.S. allies and interests in the region from the other hand.

However, the U.S. response came, as unexpected, multi-faced instead of purely military. Within the tenor of this chapter, we will examine the security implications posed by ISIS and how the U.S. dealt with it according to the following plan:

**ONE: ISIS and U.S. Security**

1- ISIS's Security Implications

1-1- An Overview of ISIS

1-2- The Threats Presented by ISIS

2- U.S. Security Arrangements against ISIS

2-1- U.S. Response to the Emergence of ISIS

2-2- The Outcomes of U.S. Security Arrangements against ISIS

**TWO: The Assessment of U.S. Security Arrangements against ISIS**

1- Negative Points of U.S. Security Arrangements against ISIS

2- Positive Points of U.S. Security Arrangements against ISIS

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### **ONE: ISIS and U.S. Security**

The Islamic State <sup>1</sup>is a transnational Sunni Islamist insurgent and terrorist group that has expended its control over areas of northwestern Iraq and northwestern Syria since 2013, threatening the security of both countries and drawing increased attention from the international community.<sup>2</sup>

Within the coming elements, we will trace the origins and expansion of the so-called ISIS, the security threats it imposes in the Middle East region and in Western states, and how the United States responded to it.

#### **1- ISIS's Security Implications**

ISIS is a symptom of the broken politics in the Middle East and the fraying and delegitimation of state institutions, as well as the spread of civil wars in Syria and Iraq. The group has filled the resulting vacuum of legitimate authority. For almost two decades, “al-Qaeda Central” leaders Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri were unable to establish the kind of social movement that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of ISIS, had created in less than five years.<sup>3</sup>

##### **1-1- An Overview of ISIS (Origins, Expansion, and Financing):**

The roots of the Islamic State can be found in the invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the American coalition. During the stabilization mission, the administration of President George W. Bush made a series of wrong decisions, and one of the consequences was the creation of suitable ground for the development of extremism in the region. Two major mistakes, the liquidation of the Iraqi Security Forces and banning of members of the Baathist party from working in the public service, led to a situation in which hundreds of thousands of men

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<sup>1</sup>Also known as ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria), ISIL (Islamic State in Iraq and Levant) or by its Arabic abbreviation, Da'esh.

<sup>2</sup> Kenneth Katzman, “The Islamic State Crisis and U.S. Policy”, **Congress Research Service** (2014), p1.

<sup>3</sup> Fawaz A. Geregges, “ISIS and the Third Wave of Jihadism”, **Current History** (2014), p 339.

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found themselves on the margin of social life. This has not only weakened the Iraqi army, but also led to chaos, increased violence and lawlessness. In addition to the lack of security, there was a growing economic, social and political inequality, which created social frustration in Iraq that turned into violent conflict, creating a suitable ground for the operation of terrorist organizations which fed into the ranks of the Sunni extremists group who operated locally under the name of Al- Qaeda in Iraq (2004-2006).<sup>1</sup> As time went on, al-Qaeda in Iraq adopted new alias as the Islamic State in Iraq with one main goal is to establish a transnational Islamic Caliphate ruled by sharia law.<sup>2</sup>

At the end of 2011, there were two important events that intensified the activities of jihadist in the region. The first was the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. The second was the civil war in Syria. In 2013 the organization changed its name to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

Later in February 2014 there was a rift between al-Qaeda and ISIS. Various reasons were given, one been the methods used by ISIS, which paradoxically were too violent for the members of al-Qaeda; as well as divergences in goals and differences in ideologies<sup>3</sup>, while Sunni ISIS leaders fought Shiite, al-Qaeda wanted to unite all Muslims. There was also a struggle

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<sup>1</sup> Ewelina Waśko-Owsiejczuk, “The American Military Strategy to Combat the ‘Islamic State’ in Iraq and Syria”, **Polish Political Science Yearbook** 45 (2016), p.p 319 - 322.

<sup>2</sup> Colin Tucker, “The Islamic State: Origins, Goals, and Further Implications”, **The Eurasia Center** (2014), p2.

<sup>3</sup> The Islamic State’s ideology is known as Salafism, a primarily theological movement in Sunni Islam concerned with purifying the faith. Salafism focuses on eliminating idolatry and affirming God’s Oneness. Salafis view themselves as the only true Muslims. That ideology should be understood on two levels. The first is Jihadi-Salafism, the school of Islamic political thought to which the group belongs. The second level is the Islamic State’s hardline orientation within this school, which is to a large degree what separates it from al-Qaeda today.

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for power between the leaders of the organization, since none of whom wanted to surrender its authority.<sup>1</sup> The coming figure sums up the evolution of ISIS.

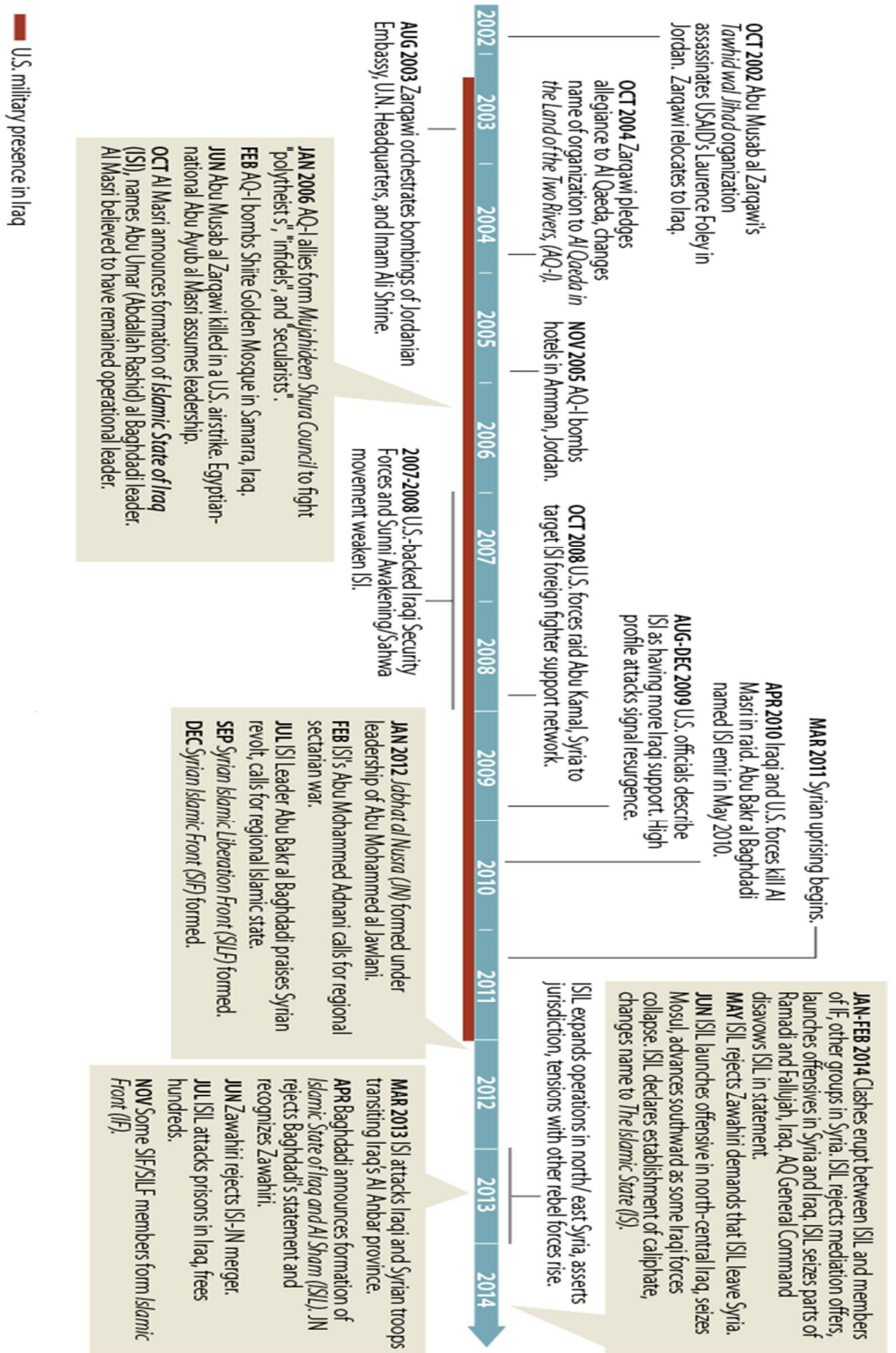


Figure 2. The Evolution of ISIS

Source: CRS report

<sup>1</sup> Waško-Owsiejczuk, *Op.Cit.*, p 322.

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The exact data about ISIS members are ambiguous and controversial, while the CIA estimated in September 2014 that it had 20.000 to 31.000 fighters in Iraq and Syria, the Syrian Observatory of Human Rights estimates that the force number is around 80.000 totals.<sup>1</sup> Regardless of the number of fighters it is certain that many Baathist groups<sup>2</sup>, Sunni tribes, and other moderate Islamist groups have participated in the fighting against the Iraqi government alongside ISIS. In addition many foreign fighters counter to join ISIS's ranks by crossing the Turkish borders into Syria.<sup>3</sup> According to UN report, an estimated 15.000 fighters from nearly 70 countries have travelled to Iraq and Syria to join military groups.<sup>4</sup> According to Soufan Group, between June 2014 and December 2015, over 15.000 fighters joined ISIS, rightly 1.000 foreign fighters a month.<sup>5</sup>

These human resources allowed the Islamic State to follow a strategy called "to Remain and Expand" which consists of two goals: supporting ISIS's defense in Iraq and Syria, and seeking the literal expansion of the caliphate.<sup>6</sup> With the implementation of this strategy ISIS had captured approximately a third of Syrian and Iraqi territories.

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<sup>1</sup> Chanchal Kumar, "ISIS a Global Threat", **Journal of Social Science and Humanities** 4 (2015), p 322.

<sup>2</sup> Former Baathist commanders of the Iraqi army, disbanded after Saddam's fall and resentful about that loss of power, have long been involved in the rebellion in Sunni areas of Iraq against the Shia-led government. Some sources suggest that the majority of top ISIS decision makers are former members of Saddam's army or security services. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, has two deputies. The first, Abu Muslim al-Turkmani, oversees the Iraqi provinces and was either a lieutenant colonel or a general in Saddam's military intelligence and also spent time as a Special Forces officer in the Special Republican Guard. The second deputy, Abu Ali al-Anbari, who oversees Syrian provinces, was a major general in the Iraqi military. The strong influence of the 'secular' Baathists inside ISIS appears to be in total contradiction to the objectives of ISIS: to bring down illegitimate, secular Arab regimes and to replace them with a caliphate. However, it should not be too much of a surprise; the common thread is that they are Sunnis who want to gain control. Despite its avowed secularism, the Baath party served to maintain Sunni minority power and oppress the Shiite majority in Iraq.

<sup>3</sup> Tucker, **Op.Cit**, p 5.

<sup>4</sup> Kumar, **Op.Cit**, p 347.

<sup>5</sup> Lynn E. Davis, "A Strategy to Counter ISIL as a Transregional Threat", **Rand Corporation Perspective** (2017), p 9.

<sup>6</sup> Jessica Lewis MCFate, "The ISIS Defense in Iraq and Syria", **Middle East Security Report** 27 (2015), p 11.

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ISIS gained widespread attention when it launched an offensive in June 2014, overrunning Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, and pressing sought to the outskirts of Baghdad; however, it was active before that. ISIS accomplished many of its military objectives at a rapid pace between June and September 2014. ISIS established control of 11 cities in the outer and middle belts of Iraq.<sup>1</sup>

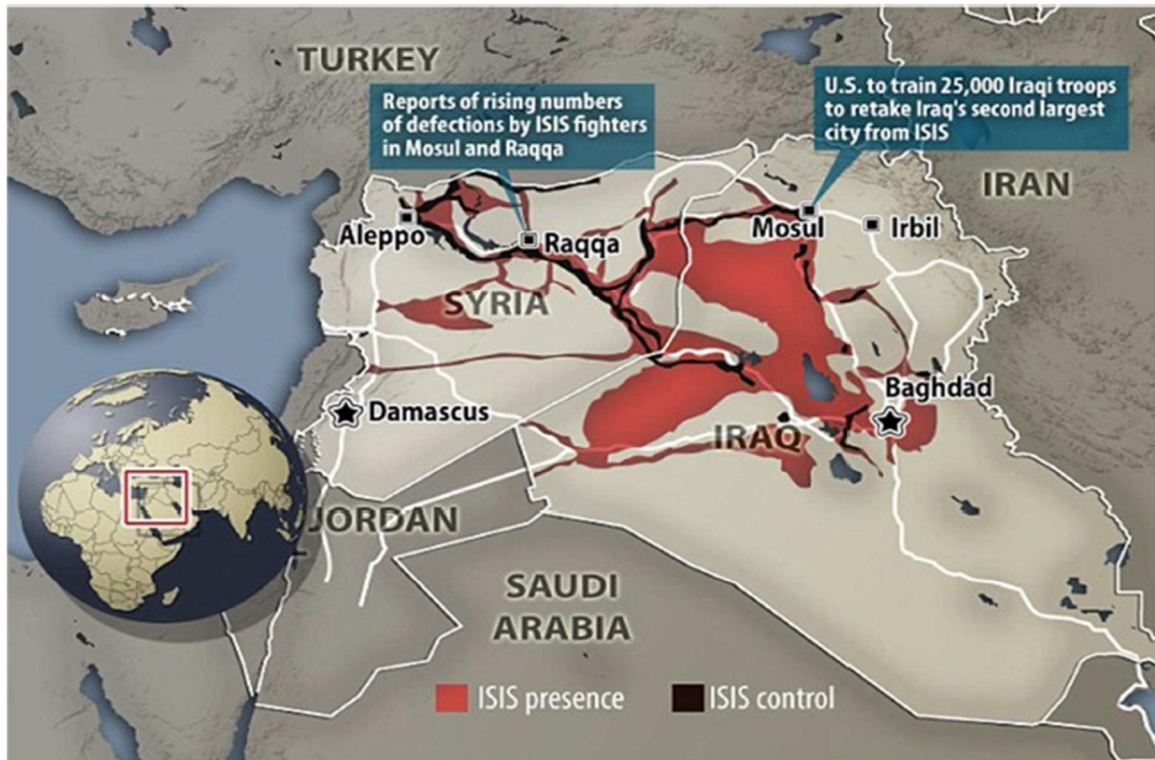
Major cities taken over by jihadists were Fallujah, which had a population of 300.000 residents. Another strategic victory was Ar-Raqqa, which created a strategic route for the movement of weapons and jihadists between Syria and Iraq. With the victory in Mosul, ISIS seized control of the whole province of Najnawa. Further successes of the jihadists increased the occupied territory with the cities of: Baiji, Tall Afar, Al-Awja, Takrit, Rawa, Rutba, Al-Kaim, Rabia, allowing jihadists free movement between the two countries.<sup>2</sup> ISIS came within 30 km of the Kurdish capital of Arbil on August 7, 2014.

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<sup>1</sup> MCfate, **Op.Cit**, p 25.

<sup>2</sup> Waśko-Owsiejczuk, **Op.Cit**, p 322.

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**Map4:** Places of ISIS Control and Presence.

ISIS's military surge in Syria and Iraq in 2014 was a rude awakening for regional and global powers. Despite being trained by the United States and costing anywhere between \$8 billion and \$25 billion, the Iraqi Security Forces were shattered like a house of glass in the summer of 2014 by ISIS's blitzkrieg.<sup>1</sup> It was reported that 30,000 Iraqi soldiers retreated against an opposition of only 800 Islamic State fighters in the attack on Mosul. Two important factors attributed to ISIS's success: the first is Iraqi military incompetence, and the second is Sunni alienation<sup>2</sup> which ISIS used to define the struggle in both Syria and Iraq through the framework of identity. It developed a distinct pan-Sunni sectarian identity, deliberate contrast to the pan-Shia identity represented by the

<sup>1</sup> Fawas A. Gerges, *ISIS: A History*, (US: Princeton University Press, 2016), p 2.

<sup>2</sup> Tucker, *Op.Cit*, p 7.

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sectarian dominated, Iran-backed regimes in Damascus and Baghdad. Of all variables empowering ISIS, the anti-Shia anti-Iranian factors top the list.<sup>1</sup>

Another main factor contributing in strengthening the power of ISIS is its funding resources. Unlike al-Qaeda, the Islamic State is characterized by financial independence. Oil smuggling operations involving millions of barrels have been uncovered. The oil comes from wells and refineries that ISIS has taken over in northern Iraq and northern Syria, which is easy to smuggle toward southern Turkey. One reason it that cheap smuggled oil is a much-prized commodity in Turkey, where oil is so expensive that it almost doesn't matter who the seller is, even if it is your enemy. While the oil field controlled by ISIS in Iraq and Syria are not big by the standard of the region, together with control of smuggling routes, they are providing the group with revenues of about \$2 millions per day.<sup>2</sup>

Besides revenue from oil smuggling, the group receives money through donations from wealthy sympathizers in the Gulf countries. In addition more than a third of Iraq's 12,000 important archeological sites are now under ISIS control and it has hastily begun excavating and selling artifacts dating from 9000 B.C to A.D 1000 through intermediaries to collectors and dealers. These sales represent ISIS's second largest source of funding.<sup>3</sup> ISIS also has looted over \$425 million in Iraqi dinars and gold bullion from Mosul's banks, this make ISIS the richest terrorist organization in the world.<sup>4</sup>

In sum, ISIS is primarily the result of conflict and power vacuum in Iraq and the Syrian conflict has served as a catalyst as ISIS could take power in areas where the Syrian regime had lost control; therefore, ISIS is not the cause but result of the conflict in Iraq and Syria. But even if the chaos in both countries

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<sup>1</sup> Gerges, *ISIS: A History*, **Op.Cit**, p.p 16-17.

<sup>2</sup> Kumar, **Op.Cit**, p 348.

<sup>3</sup> **Ibid**, p 348

<sup>4</sup> Tucker, **Op.Cit**, p 5.

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provided ISIS with fertile ground to implant, expand, and consolidate itself, it is in fact the failure of Arab states to represent the interests of their citizens and to construct an inclusive national identity strong enough to generate social cohesion that really contributed to its growth.

### **1-2- The Threats Presented by ISIS:**

In June 2014, a few weeks before ISIS captured Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, with a population of almost two million people, US President Barack Obama described the organization as amateurish and said that ISIS did not pose an immediate or a strategic menace to the U.S. homeland, critics seized on his comment as evidence of the Administration's underestimation of ISIS's strength.<sup>1</sup>

However, the Islamic State indeed pose a threat to important US and Western interests. But the severity of that threat is smaller than one might suppose given the tenor of public debate to date. The fact is that the Islamic State threat to West, while real, falls into an awkward middle ground between the vital and the negligible.<sup>2</sup>

ISIS represents a threat with three different faces. To the United States and its western allies, it is a terrorist organization. However, for the Arab states, it represents an insurgency without political boundaries that threatens the survival of such countries as Iraq, Syria and Libya, in the midst of civil wars, puts at risk weak states desperately trying to avert civil wars, like Lebanon and Jordan; and poses a challenge to the legitimacy of even stronger states like Egypt and Saudi Arabia. When examined from a regional perspective, ISIS represents the spearhead of a broader movement threatening to sunder the Arab

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<sup>1</sup> Gerges, ISIS: A History, **Op.Cit.**, p.p 16-17.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen D. Biddle, "Assessing the Islamic State Threat", **Center for Strategic International Studies** (2015), p 39.

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political order that has existed since the end of WWI, and potentially threatening non-Arab states such as Iran, Turkey and even Israel.<sup>1</sup>

To the Western states there are two main interests that the Islamic State threatens: homeland security and humanitarian security.

### I- **Homeland security:**

Perhaps the most widely discussed danger the Islamic State poses is its potential to mount terrorist attacks against the United States or its allies. That danger needs to be kept in context. ISIS terrorism is not a threat to any Western nation's way of life. The fact is that any major terrorist attack would pose grave political risks for any elected official on whose watch it occurred.

In fact, terrorism has never posed existential costs to any Western state, nor has it ever been a major contributor to aggregate morbidity and mortality in any western society. Even in 2001, the most lethal year in U.S. history for deaths of U.S. citizens due to terrorist attack, 2,996 victims, more American died of peptic ulcers than died of terrorism.

Nowadays, the U.S. intelligence has assessed that ISIS in fact poses no imminent threat of terrorist attacks on U.S. soil, for the foreseeable future the Islamic State is preoccupied by wars with its 'near enemies', the governments of Iraq and Syria and a variety of hostile militias and other local non-state actors.<sup>2</sup>

Of course, this does not mean that ISIS never posed such threat; ISIS went global, according to CNN report, since declaring its caliphate in June 2014, ISIS has conducted or inspired 143 attacks in 29 countries other than Iraq and Syria, those attacks have killed at least 2,043 people (as shown in map 5). In 2016, 267

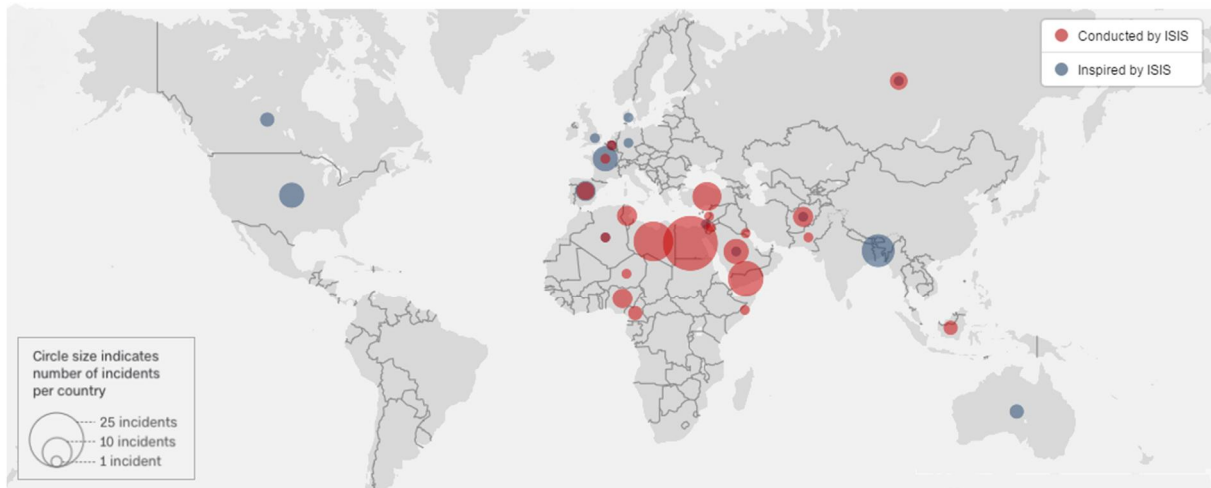
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<sup>1</sup> Ross Harrison, "Towards a Regional Strategy Contra ISIS", *Parameters* 44 (2014), p 37.

<sup>2</sup> Biddle, *Op.Cit*, p 41.

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people have been murdered by the Islamic State in Europe;<sup>1</sup> even though this numbers are high the success rate of ISIS plots is only 44 % while 56 % of the attacks were disrupted by security services, according to homeland security committee report.<sup>2</sup>



Map5: Terrorist Attacks Conducted or Inspired by ISIS around the World

Source: CNN Report

France, Greece, Belgium, Germany, Australia and other states came under attacks by ISIS. The United States too took its share of ISIS terror. On December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015, 14 people were killed in an attack in San Bernardino, California. The San Bernardino attacks indicated sympathy with ISIS on social media. This appears to be the case in the shooting of Orlando, Florida.<sup>3</sup> These attackers did not fought in Syria or Iraq, thus they increased awareness about two major dangers. The first is about the so-called lone wolves, the second is about foreign fighters.

ISIS leaders have taken advantage of its proto-state to engage in an extensive social media campaign aimed not only at local audiences inside Syria and Iraq but also to Muslims worldwide. As part of this campaign, ISIS has

<sup>1</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/12/17/world/mapping-isis-attacks-around-the-world/>, consulted: February 13, 2017 (06:25 GMT).

<sup>2</sup> Homeland Security Committee, (U.S. Terror Gone Vital, 2016), p 4.

<sup>3</sup> Davis, **Op.Cit**, p 9.

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encouraged Muslims to travel to Syria and Iraq to either fight or help building the caliphate. If they cannot migrate to the Levant, ISIS urges sympathizers to conduct local attacks, especially in North America, Western Europe, and Australia.<sup>1</sup>

U.S. officials report that as many as 15.000 foreign fighters from 80 countries have travelled to Syria or Iraq, including more than 1.000 Europeans and more than 100 U.S. citizens.<sup>2</sup>

These fighters are returning to their country of citizenship and authorities are becoming increasingly more aware of the threat potential that these radicalized and battle-ready people can pose. It does not require much imagination to understand that as more and more Western governments become involved in the fight against ISIS, the leadership of the organization will seek to carry out battle home to these countries as a means of retaliation. The intention behind this policy is clear: to spread fear in Western societies about ISIS's revenge and to build up enough domestic pressure to force governments to cease their operations against ISIS in the Middle East.<sup>3</sup>

### **II- Humanitarian Security:**

The humanitarian stakes in the Syrian and Iraqi civil wars are enormous. In Syria more than 50.000 civilians already have died, with no end in sight, in Iraq more than 120.000 were killed between 2003 and 2011.

Wars of this kind are notoriously difficult to terminate and typically drag on for years, historically, civil wars of this kind often spill across borders, of 142

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<sup>1</sup> Davis, **Op.Cit**, p 8.

<sup>2</sup> Katzman, **Op.Cit**, p 1.

<sup>3</sup> Bernhard Blumenau, "ISIS: Understanding the Threat and Its Implications for the West", **Papier d'Actualité** 6 (2014), p 6.

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civil war fought between 1950 and 1999, fully 61 ones saw major military intervention by neighboring states at some point.<sup>1</sup>

The risk grows the longer the war drags on but the main concern for western states is the refugee crisis. All agree that the dislocation of population, often associated with wars, is a humanitarian tragedy. Statistics said that the number of forcibly displaced people worldwide reached almost 60 million at the end of 2014, the highest number in the past 70 years. Among these, 14.4 million were refugees, an increase of about 25 % since the end of 2013. This abrupt increase is mostly due to the civil war in Syria and unrest throughout the Middle East.<sup>2</sup>

By the end of 2014, an estimated 7.6 million people were internally displaced and 3.7 million Syrians have fled the country since the conflict began. During 2014, more than one million Syrians were newly registered as refugees in neighboring countries, bringing the total number of registered refugees in the region to 3.688.402 by year-end.<sup>3</sup>

This massive number of refugee waves didn't stay in the region but reached Europe through different means. The number of asylum seekers arriving at the EU borders is unparalleled in recent times. In 2015 about 995,000 first-time asylum applications were submitted in EU countries through October, more than twice the number over the same period in 2014, especially in Germany, Hungary, and Sweden.<sup>4</sup> Europeans fear that waves of refugees will mean more terrorism, but terrorism is not the only concern Europeans have about refugees, many are also worried about the economic burden.

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<sup>1</sup> Biddle, **Op.Cit**, p 42.

<sup>2</sup> Shekhar Aiyar and others, "The Refugee Surge in Europe", **SDNs** (2016), p 6.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), (Geneva: Syrian Regional Refugee Response, 2014).

<sup>4</sup> Aiyar and others, **Op.Cit**, p 7.

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In addition to the security concerns stated above, the United States fear that ISIS will spread in the Middle East and threat other states or its allies like Saudi Arabia or Jordan but its biggest concern is that ISIS might eventually carve an area of control along Israel's borders, particularly on the Galan where the Syria state is disintegrating.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, several analysis of the threat ISIS poses to Israel or Arab state seem to be unnecessary alarmist. Some pundits argue that the threat from ISIS is exaggerated, as the Islamic State had three structural weaknesses:

First, the group has too many internal conflicts to sustain itself. There is some validity to this claim, as its leadership consists of both religious and those from more secular, Baathist party background<sup>2</sup>; the basis of this alliance is opposition to the current regime in Baghdad rather than a shared vision of governance in the future. A stalled military campaign will refocus attention within the coalition on governance and intra-coalition power-sharing, and this is likely to contribute to split in the relationship.<sup>3</sup>

Second, on the strategic level, ISIS is primarily successful where there is a political void. Although the offensives in Syria and Iraq showed the Islamic State's tactical capabilities, they were directed against failed states with weakened militaries. Here it is worth noting that the success of ISIS is partly the result of the role played by Turkey. Ankara allows overseas volunteers to flock to ISIS training camps in Iraq. The same Turkish route is used by foreign experts that operate the oil infrastructure captured by ISIS. It is money from the Gulf States that subsidized ISIS activities. This means that it is misplaced to view ISIS as posing an independent serious strategic challenge. It is true that

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<sup>1</sup> Efraim Inbar, "How Dangerous is ISIS to Israel", **BESA Center Perspective Paper** 306 (2015), p 3.

<sup>2</sup> Harrison, **Op.Cit**, p 39.

<sup>3</sup> Brian Fishman, "The Islamic State: a Persistent Threat", **Counterterrorism Research** (2014), p 9.

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ISIS has ignited immense passion among many Muslims all over the world, but the relevant question is: what can ISIS do without outside support? ISIS on its own is capable of only limited damage. The magnitude of the threat has been greatly exaggerated, while the states that help it need to be treated adequately.<sup>1</sup>

Third, jihadists do not have a strong track record of governance. From Algeria to Afghanistan, they have squandered military gains by failing to govern effectively, and the specter of these failures hangs over the Islamic State.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the assumption a sustainable policy can be built on a jihadist Sunni Islamic identity has yet to be proven.

However, we must be clear-eyed about the resilience of the Islamic State; it is unlikely to be destroyed any time soon and returning to the status quo. The Islamic State has essentially upended sovereignty and post Ottoman national borders in the Middle East.<sup>3</sup> It's not appropriate to talk about the end of Sykes-Picot, because what we are dealing with is not really about borders, and changing borders is no magic bullet for resolving the existing inter-communal conflicts. Instead, one can envision the conflicts raging across the region as along three distinct axes:

- One is about the nature of the state – a conflict between the traditional governments and the movements of political Islam.

- A second is about the balance of power – a conflict between traditional Sunni Arab states led by Saudi Arabia and the revolutionary Shia Islamic Republic of Iran and its allies

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<sup>1</sup> Inbar, **Op.Cit**, p 2.

<sup>2</sup> Fishman, **Op.Cit**, p 9.

<sup>3</sup> **Ibid**, p 1.

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- A third is about the purpose of governance – an argument between the apocalyptic forces of ISIS and everyone else.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, any U.S. policy to counter ISIS should reflect those practical facts rather than hew to the whims of mapmakers a century ago.

### **2- U.S. Security Arrangements against ISIS**

Fifteen years after the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the United States remains in war with terrorists. But despite years of conflict, terrorist groups do not appear to be losing, in many ways, they are thriving.

9/11 marked an inflection in U.S. history; the George W. Bush Administration dramatically expanded the government's counterterrorism resources, authorities, and capabilities. President Bush placed terrorism at the top of Washington's national security priorities list. By the end of his tenure, the United States was committed to two wars.

Soon after taking office, President Obama sought to turn the page on what he perceived to be a troubled chapter in American history. He ended several controversial programs, pulled U.S. forces back from overseas, president Obama pursued a far narrower counterterrorism strategy, while his Administration achieved some of its tactical goals, including killing terrorist leaders, it failed to stop the broader Islamist terror wave, especially with the rise of ISIS.<sup>2</sup>

The Islamic State put the Obama Administration between two evils: from one hand, if the United States does nothing that could open a vacuum to Iranian influence and spread chaos all over the region. But from the other hand, if the U.S. wages another military intervention in the Middle East it will lose a lot on

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<sup>1</sup> Tamara Cofman Wittes, "Regional Impact of U.S. Policy toward Iraq and Syria", **The Brookings Institution Report** (2015), p 2.

<sup>2</sup> Homeland Security Committee, (U.S. A National Strategy to Win the War Against Islamist Terror, 2016), p 4.

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both the economic and moral level. Therefore, Obama chose to use smart power (i.e. mix hard power with soft power) to respond to the security threats ISIS imposed.

### **2-1- U.S. Response to the Emergence of ISIS:**

On the eve of the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, President Obama delivered a speech in which he identified the Islamic state of Iraq and Syria as a significant threat to the United States, its allies and the overall stability of the Middle East. He also articulated several pillars of a counterterrorism strategy to “degrade and ultimately destroy ISIS”.<sup>1</sup>

The American strategy to fight the Islamic State was based on four pillars:

The first assumed the deployment of systematic air campaign against the terrorists, in order to assist Iraqi Security Forces fighting on the ground. Even then, the US president announced that the airstrikes may be extended to Syria.

The second pillar assumed increasing support for forces fighting the jihadists on the ground. This was connected with sending nearly 500 American strategists to the Middle East to provide Iraqis and Kurds intelligence support, training, as well as the necessary equipment and armament.

The third pillar was based on the strengthening of international cooperation in counterterrorism operations. It was meant to help with various issues, starting from the elimination of funding for ISIS by strengthening intelligence cooperation, to stopping the influx of foreign volunteers.

The fourth pillar assumed humanitarian aid to civilians displaced from the territories occupied by jihadists.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Harrison, **Op.Cit**, p 1.

<sup>2</sup> Waśko-Owsiejczuk, **Op.Cit**, p 326.

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Immediately following the elaboration of this plan, US authorities announced the creation of a broad international coalition to fight the Islamic State. In the end, over 60 countries<sup>1</sup> made commitment to fight against these terrorists. The resolution 2170 of the UN Security Council of 2014 was to serve as the legal basis for the actions of the international coalition.<sup>2</sup> Each country is contributing to the coalition in a manner commensurate with its national interests and comparative advantage. Contributions include both military and non-military assistance, although reporting on non-military contributions tends to be sporadic, as many countries donate humanitarian assistance directly to local governments or non-governmental organizations operating on the ground. Still, some illustrative examples of the kinds of bilateral counter-ISIS assistance countries provided as the coalition was being formed in September 2014 include: Switzerland's donation of \$9 million in aid to Iraq, Belgium's contribution of 13 tons of aid to Iraq generally, and Japan's granting of \$6 million in emergency aid to specifically help displaced people in Northern Iraq.<sup>3</sup>

One of the fundamental difficulties of countering ISIS is that the conflict rages across two countries of differing political and security environments that demand a differentiated military effort and distinct political situation.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> According to the U.S. State Department, there are currently 66 participants in the coalition, including Afghanistan, Albania, the Arab League, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, the European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malaysia, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States.

<sup>2</sup> Waško-Owsiejczuk, **Op.Cit**, p.p 326 - 327.

<sup>3</sup> Kathleen J. McInnis, "Coalition Contributions to Countering the Islamic State", **Congressional Research Service** (2016), p.p 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth Quintana and Jonathan Eyal, **Inherently Unresolved: The Military Operation against ISIS**, (London: The Royal United Services Institution, 2015), p 3.

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In Syria, the problem is relatively easy to state, but extremely difficult to solve. The Assad's regime has lost control of the majority of the territory of the Syrian state. It has also lost its legitimacy as a member of the international community. His actions have fueled the rise of violent Islamists, particularly ISIS. U.S. strategy aims to ensure that none of these two actors control all Syria while helping the development of an alternative, inclusive Syrian state over time.<sup>1</sup> The problem in Syria is that there is no standout actor on the ground to cooperate with, while the US, among others, has so far refused to collaborate with Assad against ISIS.<sup>2</sup>

In Iraq, the government has lost control of majority-Sunni provinces including most of Ninewa and Anbar as well as portions of Salah-ad-Din.<sup>3</sup> But at least the Iraqi government is regarded as legitimate by most powers. This means that military intervention, after a request from Baghdad, is easy to justify legally and the Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi is a partner the coalition can work with.

In light of these facts, targeted airstrikes against ISIS forces near Irbil began on 8 August 2014. US Air Forces and Navy aircraft, including drones have conducted hundreds of airstrikes in Iraq in order to protect US citizens and forces in and around Irbil.

Airstrikes against ISIS targets in Syria began on 23 September 2014. Fighter and bomber aircraft, alongside land-attack missiles, targeted ISIS training camps, headquarter, command and control facilities, logistics hubs, leadership figures<sup>4</sup>, and oil facilities precisely to cut off the groups funding.

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<sup>1</sup> Kimberly Kagan and others, "A strategy to defeat the Islamic State", **Middle East Security Report** 23 (2014), p 14.

<sup>2</sup> Quintana and Eyal, **Op.Cit**, p 3.

<sup>3</sup> Kagan and others, **Op.Cit**, p 15.

<sup>4</sup> Kumar, **Op.Cit**, p.p 350 - 351.

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The operation started on 8 August 2014 and, as at 9 January 2015 had cost a total of \$1.3 billion with the average daily cost being \$8.3 million,<sup>1</sup> 90 % of the airstrikes in Iraq and Syria were conducted by the United State.

In addition, the US government appropriated \$1.62 billion for the Iraq train and equip fund to rebuild the Iraqi Security Forces capabilities to conduct offensive operations to liberate ISIS held territory through the equipping of 65.000 personal across twelve brigades.<sup>2</sup>

It is worth noting that there are over 8 ground forces counter-ISIS, but the United States collaborate only with six of them, which are:

### **I- In Iraq:**

1- **Iraqi Security Forces:** The ISF an army of 14 divisions with estimates of actual serving soldiers range from 54,000 to 81,000.

2- **Counter-Terrorism Service (CTS):** Iraqi special operations element has being the main Iraqi forces against ISIS campaign. It has long been considered as the most capable element of the Iraqi forces, with a fighting force somewhere between 6,000 and 7,000 troops.

3- **Kurdish Security Forces (KSF):** include the Peshmerga and the interior ministry Zerevani. They are valiant, motivated, and capable forces that have pushed back ISIS in northern Iraq, and in the process, expanded territory held by the Kurdistan Regional Government by 30 percent.

4- **Sunni Tribal Forces:** The program to raise Sunni tribal forces to fight ISIS proceeded slowly in 2015, as of July 2015, some 22,000 Sunnis had been nominated by their provinces to serve, but only half that number had been

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<sup>1</sup> The Official Website of the DOD – [www.defense.gov](http://www.defense.gov) , consulted: March 29, 2017 (18:00 GMT).

<sup>2</sup> Quintana and Eyal, **Op.Cit**, p 20.

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approved, about 5,400 officially enrolled and paid, and only 3,000 had been armed.

### **II- In Syria:**

5- **Syrian Opposition Forces (SOF):** were those elements recruited, trained, and equipped by U.S. with a number of 15,000 fighters over three years.

6- **Free Syrian Army (FSA):** comprises eight to ten major groups and hundreds of small factions that once represented the majority of the moderate opposition forces (it absorbed the Free Officers Movement after 2011). Their ranks estimated at 45,000–80,000 troops.<sup>1</sup>

The training, advice and assistance component is being provided through the deployment of more than 5.900 ground forces 16 coalition members. In the territory of Iraq there are about 3.700 personal from the United State advisory or training position.

The United States has spend more than \$7 billion for operations against the Islamic State, nearly 50 % of this amount was spend on airstrikes, more than 20 % on ammunition.<sup>2</sup> Given this large amount of human and material resources, the question arises: what has the United States achieved in its war against ISIS?

### **2-2- The Outcomes of U.S. Security Arrangements against ISIS:**

The term “defeat” means to break the enemy’s will or deprive him of the capability to continue to fight. ISIS is unlikely to lose the will to fight because it is an ideological enemy. Defeating ISIS; therefore, requires rendering it incapable of fighting.

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<sup>1</sup> Linda Robinson, **Assessment of the Politico- Military Campaign to counter ISIL and Options for Adaptations**, (California: the RAND Corporation, 2016), p.p 26 - 35

<sup>2</sup> Waśko-Owsiejczuk, **Op.Cit**, p 328.

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In its campaign to defeat ISIS the United States set a number of strategic goals supported by a range of tactical aims in order to preserve its interests in the region. Strategic objectives in the campaign against the Islamic State are:

1. Defeat and destroy ISIS; or reconcile their locally-focused violent Islamist partners.

2. Restore sovereign, legitimate states in Iraq and Syria so that they can secure their own territory in ways that are compatible with U.S. national security objectives.

3. Prevent Iran from establishing regional hegemony in order to preserve U.S. allies and diminish sectarian polarization.

4. Ensure the survival of sovereign states, especially Jordan and Lebanon, which are most threatened.<sup>1</sup>

These goals can only be achieved through a tactical advance against the Islamic State which consists of these goals:

1. Restore territories held by the organization.

2. Attrite the human resources of ISIS.

3. Cut the funds of the Islamic State.

4. Degrade ISIS operational capability.

Within this context, large scale airstrikes by the US- led coalition against ISIS have been underway since August 2014. Since the airstrikes began there has been a heated political debate, on both sides of the Atlantic, as to whether air strikes alone will prove sufficient to enable the West's Iraqi and Kurdish allies to destroy ISIS on the ground in Iraq and Syria. While Western leaders continue

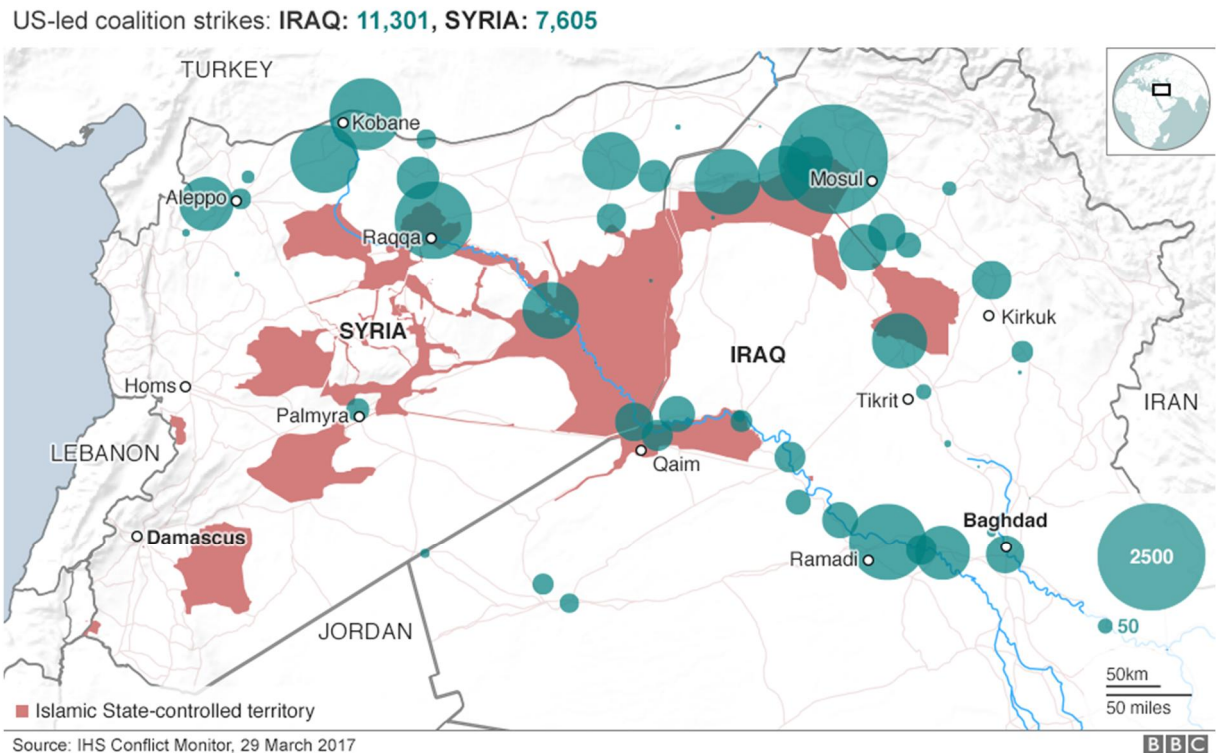
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<sup>1</sup> Kagan and others, **Op.Cit**, p 21.

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to insist that, with time, a train and equip program supported by sustained air power will ‘degrade and destroy’ ISIS, there has been a marked lack of progress on the ground.<sup>1</sup>

According to the DOD, as of June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the coalition conducted 13.470 airstrikes, 9.099 of those in Iraq and 4.371 in Syria (as shown in map 6).<sup>2</sup> The great majority of the strikes in Syria were launched in the battle of Kobani. The average rate of American attacks stands at 43 munitions and 11 attacks per day.<sup>3</sup> By May 2016, 26.374 ISIS targets were destroyed including 196 oil infrastructures, and resulting 10.000 losses of fighters in the ranks of ISIS.



Map6: US-led coalition airstrikes against ISIS as of 29 March 2017

Most notable achievement is that Iraqi and Kurdish forces have wrested 40 % of the territory ISIS once held in Iraq and about 20 % of its Syrian territory (as shown in map 7). Fighters regained territory in the largely Kurdish areas of

<sup>1</sup> Quintana and Eyal, *Op.Cit*, p 11.

<sup>2</sup> McInnis, *Op.Cit*, p 3.

<sup>3</sup> Yoram Schweitzer and Omer Einav, *The Islamic State: How Viable Is It*, (Tel Aviv: Institute for National Security Studies, 2016), p 267.

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northern Iraq and Syria, in cities of Takrit and Baiji in central Iraq, and in Ramadi, the capital of largely Sunni Arab province in December 2015. Key crossroads for ISIS in Syria were taken: Kobani, Tal- Abyad, Al-Hawl, and Shaddadi. Although this is mainly due to the work of ground forces, without the support of the international coalition from the air, they would not have experienced such victories. However, ISIS remained deeply entrenched in two provincial capitals which are Raqqa and Mosul.<sup>1</sup>

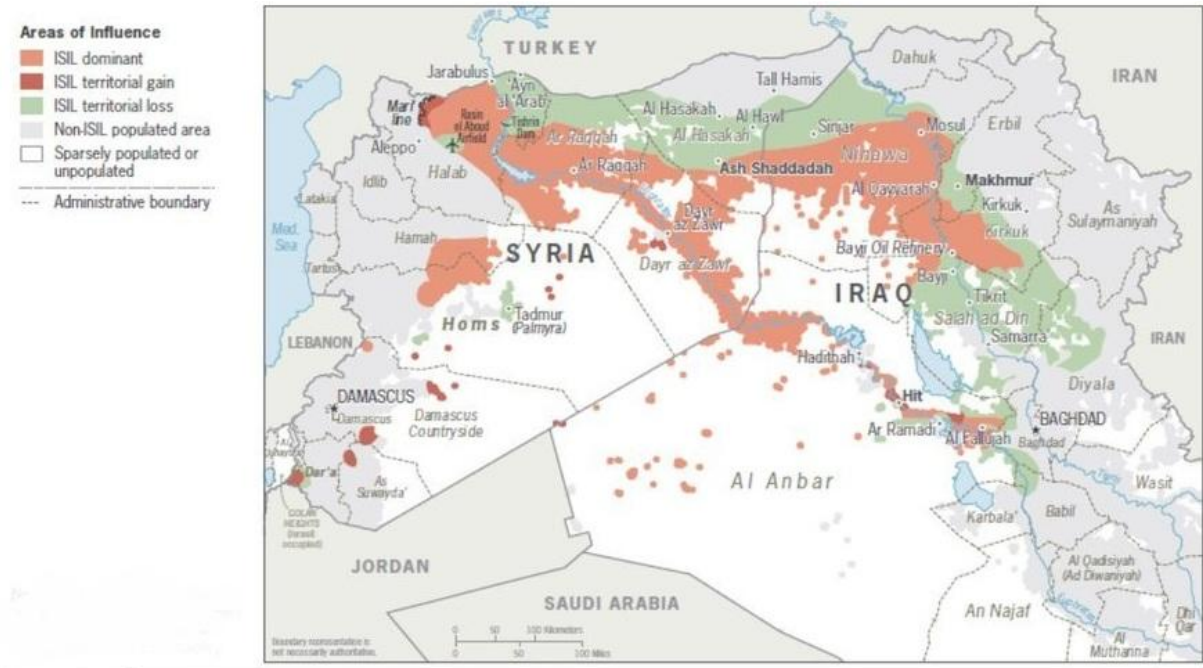
Even though as many as 10.000 fighters out of an estimated force of 20.000 to 31.000 were killed after U.S. airstrikes began in August 2014, ISIS has been able to regenerate and resupply its force through internal supply lines in Syria and Iraq, and externally, primarily through Turkey. U.S. officials estimated the number of ISIS fighters at 25.000 in February 2016, which is less than the high-end figure of 31.000 but would indicate a net gain of 13.000 since the war began. As all these estimates are subject to debate, the primary point is that ISIS has managed to compensate for the attrition. If this trend continues it also suggests that an attrition- based strategy will not succeed in defeating ISIS.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Robinson, **Op.Cit**, p 21.

<sup>2</sup> **Ibid**, p 21.

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**Map7: ISIS Areas of Influence, August 2014 through April 2016**

The U.S. air campaign resulting in over 13,000 strikes was able to degrade but not cripple ISIS operations. ISIS total attacks decreased from 1,090 attacks in 2014 to 931 attacks in 2015. While ISIS was responsible for 31% fewer terrorist attacks in Iraq (741 in 2015 compared to 969 in 2014), the number of attacks carried out by ISIS in Syria increased by 39% (147 in 2015 compared to 90 in 2014).<sup>1</sup>

The U.S. mission to defeat ISIS is at risk of achieving tactical successes that do not translate to strategic victory, and this can be attributed to several factors:

First, the “Iraq first, Syria second” sequencing did not lend itself to seeking synergies between the two fronts. ISIS erased the border between Iraq and Syria and freely resupplied fighters and materiel in both directions. While a single commander was appointed for both countries, the decision was made to prioritize operations in Iraq. The prioritization was premised on the idea that a

<sup>1</sup> Anthony H. Cordesman, "Defeating ISIS: The Real Threats and Challenges", **CSIS Working Draft** (2016), P 4.

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more-capable ground force existed in Iraq, and headway could be made more easily there. This proved true in the case of Kurdish forces in northern Iraq in 2014, but, in 2015, the Syrian Kurds achieved the most-notable headway against ISIS on the northern border of Syria.

Second, the U.S. coalition effort to build capacity, advise, and provide air support to partner forces in Iraq was far more modest and circumscribed than is generally understood. Roughly 3,400 to 3,870 U.S. troops were deployed in Iraq, plus approximately 2,000 coalition troops. The close attention to keeping troop numbers down impeded some efficiencies and effectiveness.<sup>1</sup>

Third, the lack of coordination between ground forces, the anti-ISIS forces, which consist of over eight (08) different principal forces (e.g. The Iraqi Security Forces, Kurdish Security Forces, Syrian Opposition Forces), besides their limited capacity and capability, varying intentions, and an overall lack of coordination among them, they are not exactly the partner that the U.S. can count on.

So Obama counter-ISIS strategy, today, is coming under increasing scrutiny and high critics given the fact that the coalition efforts against ISIS have not generated the desired outcome.

### **TWO: Assessment of U.S. Security Arrangements against ISIS**

Despite president Obama's determination to end America's involvement in wars in the Middle East, American forces have returned to Iraq, and even shipped into Syria because of the fundamental change ISIS has imposed in the region since June 2014. The return of U.S. forces to the region has identified objectives ranging from containing the Islamic State to destroying it.

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<sup>1</sup> Robinson, **Op.Cit**, p.p 45 - 46.

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In countering ISIS, president Obama didn't offer such a 'strategy' he has instead announced a plan which consists of U.S. air support to Iraqi and Kurdish ground forces and a humanitarian mission in a framework of international partnership. Experts and officials are debating the effectiveness of this plan, while the Administration has argued that the strategy will take a long time, measured in many months, not weeks, to reach its objectives.

### 1-Negative Points of U.S. Security Arrangements against ISIS

The U.S. strategy against the Islamic State has come under increasingly sharp criticism from neoconservatives and liberal interventionists who have long been critical of the Obama administration's relatively "soft touch" approach to the region.<sup>1</sup> They claim that he should have take decisive actions in Syria and Iraq, including sending U.S. troops to fight the jihadists on the ground. They stress that the current strategy did not significantly weakened ISIS. Critics are calling for more aggressive use of military force by the US to degrade the potential of ISIS and end their control over jihadist occupied territory.<sup>2</sup>

The question here is whether the sending of U.S. ground forces would solve the problem of ISIS? On the tactical level, yes, but on the strategic level, a short-term mission does not solve the problem. ISIS, as one jihadist terrorism organization, will be defeated but jihadist terrorism as a whole will not, it will return after the withdrawal of US troops.

History proved that US efforts over the past 15 years<sup>3</sup> have had a significant and negative relationship with terrorism. The data show countries the U.S. invaded has 143 more terror attacks per year than countries the U.S. did not

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<sup>1</sup> Joe Barnes, "Rethinking US strategy in the Middle East", **Institute for Public Policy** (2015), p 3.

<sup>2</sup> Waško-Owsiejczuk, **Op.Cit**, p 331.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. war on terror over the past 15 years have cost more than 4 trillion dollars, two and half million military members sent into harm's way, and nearly 7.000 service member losing their lives.

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invade.<sup>1</sup> Thus, without a political reconciliation, the effectiveness of any military operation will be short lived.

However, there are some more credible critics to US strategy to counter ISIS which emphasis two main points:

The first see that the lack of a clear Syria policy toward Syria is the weakest link in the Obama administration's effort to degrade ISIS. The Syrian civil war has created the vacuum in which the terrorist organization and other extremist forces have thrived. It is hard to see how ISIS can be defeated in the long run if the Syrian civil war continues to rage with no conceivable end on the horizon.<sup>2</sup>

Obama's larger strategic problem in regard to ISIS relates to Syria. Unlike the case of Iraq, where the U.S. can cooperate with a state government to degrade ISIS's operating capabilities, the United States has no such partner in Syria. The U.S.'s late-term training of small numbers of "vetted" Syrian armed opposition members as a counterweight to ISIS in Syria seems to be less-than-promising method to address the absence of an on-the-ground partner to fight ISIS, and more importantly, to fill any power vacuum that comes from moving ISIS out of its urban strongholds.<sup>3</sup>

The second is related to the effectiveness of airstrikes, whether the campaign against ISIS can be won by air power alone. And because the Obama Administration has riled out the use of U.S. ground combat forces against ISIS, success in Iraq and Syria will ultimately depend on the effectiveness of local

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<sup>1</sup> Erik W. Goepner, "Measuring the Effectiveness of America's War on Terror", **Parameters** 46 (2016), p 111.

<sup>2</sup> Hardin Lang and others, "Recalibrating the Anti-ISIS Strategy", **Center for American Progress** (2015), p 14.

<sup>3</sup> Barnes, **Op.Cit**, p 16.

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partners on the ground.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, U.S. strategy cannot focus only on attacking the Islamic State. It must also work to reestablish legitimate states that will be able to ensure that ISIS won't return.

In Iraq, the government will have to partner with the country's alienated Sunni population and take steps, once again, toward building a non sectarian-professional military.

In Syria, success will depend on building up the moderate opposition into an effective fighting force to counter ISIS and to put sufficient pressure on the Assad regime to accept a diplomatic solution to the conflict.

Moreover, airstrikes' negative impact should be assessed. According to information made public by the US Administration, since the beginning of operations, as a result of airstrikes and drop bomb, only 55 civilians have been killed. Other resources, such as Amnesty and Airwars, indicated that the airstrikes have killed at least 500 civilians, mostly children, women and elderly. A growing number of dead among the civilian population weakens the position of the coalition in the fight against jihadists, as it reduces the credibility of its moral mission.<sup>2</sup>

### **2- Positive points of U.S. Security Arrangements against ISIS**

Barak Obama's counter ISIS policy has been most often described by such terms as leading from behind, strategic restraint, strategic patience or multilateral retrenchment.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, these descriptions seem to be valid in the Middle East. And thanks to these criteria, Obama prevented the United States

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Eisenstadt, "Defeating ISIS", **The Washington Institute for Near East Policy** 20 (2014), p 3.

<sup>2</sup> Waško-Owsiejczuk, **Op.Cit.**, p 330.

<sup>3</sup> Gergely Varage , "Evaluating Obama's Middle East Strategy", **CSDS Analyses** 4 (2016), p 1.

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from dragging into another war in the region which is considered as the biggest achievement for U.S. strategy against the Islamic State.

During its response to the threats imposed by ISIS, the U.S. foreign policy tried to place itself in a middle ground, between the calls for military intervention in such places as Syria, and demands that the United States stays away from foreign entanglements altogether.

Therefore, the outputs of U.S. security arrangements against ISIS were based on a realistic approach where the American military power is only used if core national interest is at stake. However, when ISIS rose it did not threaten vital American interest that is why Obama made it clear that other states should bear the burden. And U.S. military force will be reserved for most dire threats while less pressing challenges will be faced with more cautious and multilateral effort that does not squander American resources.

Although, the US-led airstrikes against ISIS-held territories was careful to limit the US commitment, President Obama declared that he “will not allow the United States to be dragged into another war in Iraq”. He has avoided costly quagmires such as the 2003 Iraq invasion.<sup>1</sup>

### **Summary of Chapter Three**

Within this chapter, we discussed the following points:

1- ISIS is a terrorist organization that emerged in 2014 as a result of the political vacuum in Iraq and the civil war in Syria, which allow it to control large space of territory and threaten the survival of sovereign states.

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<sup>1</sup> Steven R. David, “Obama the reluctant realist”, **Mideast Security and Policy Studies** 113 (2015), p 41.

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2- ISIS represents a threat on two different levels, on the international level ISIS threat the homeland of US and its western allies, on the regional level it threatens the survival and stability of US's Arab allies and Israel.

3- The American strategy to combat the Islamic State was based on four pillars: systematic air campaign, support for ground forces, strengthening of international cooperation, and humanitarian aid to civilians.

# CONCLUSION

## Conclusion

To sum up:

1- The concept of security has expanded, particularly after the end of the Cold War, in terms of both security threats and security objects. With respect to threats, they moved from being exclusively military onto political, economic, social, and environmental threats. As for objectives, they moved from preserving the state's sovereignty to enhance the human dignity. These changes made the international community adopt the notion of human security that shows up in the "responsibility to protect" which is considered as the major impact of Copenhagen scholar studies or the so-called "security widening" on the policies where states intervene to protect individuals for humanitarian reasons. This was last applied in Libya.

2- The expansion of the security concept didn't only influence policies but also political theorization. International relations theories included in their analyses the non-material dimensions of security moving away from the rigid interpretation based on power as a determinant (realism) to more flexible interpretations that take the influence of social structures as a primary basis(constructivism).

3- Major events in US foreign policy history were often related to large debates; the first major debate occurred in the post WWI era between isolationists and interventionists and was settled in favor of the second group after the WWII. The second major debate was about the intervening burdens, whether the United State should take the burden (unilateralists) or share it with the rest of the international community (multilateralists), this debate is still ongoing especially when it comes to the Middle East.

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4- US foreign policy is made in different ways involving different combinations of decision-makers. Even though The Constitution divides the powers in foreign policy-making between the President and the Congress, there is no doubt that the executive branch enjoys primacy in foreign policy-making; but it faces various constraints by series of official (congress and bureaucracies) and non-official ones (lobbies and think tanks) institutions.

5- The United States has long reiterated a consistent set of interests in the Middle East that have guided U.S. policy in the region. These interests range from economic to political and even military.

The primary interest is ensuring access or rather the monopoly on the region's energetic resources, especially oil; despite the changes in the global energy map this interest will likely remain in position for years, if not for oil itself it is for the oil market stability given the large reserves of the region.

The Second interest turns around safeguarding the security of Israel. Indeed, the foundations of U.S. - Israel special relationship comes from the strategic role Israel played in favor of the United States during the Cold War. Nowadays, this interest stems from the shared values and the common enemies such as terrorism and rogue states.

The last strategic interest is preventing weapons of mass destruction proliferation and counter-terrorism. These Military interests are of a dual nature between being a goal and a means at the same time.

6- In order to maintain its interests in the Middle East, the United States pursues a range of security arrangements that consists of large military spending, massive diplomatic involvement, and economic means. The latter comprised foreign aid to the region's countries, economic sanction against "rogue" regimes to adjust their behavior. In addition, the United States spent \$250 million on democracy programs in the region from 1991 to 2001, while \$23 billion spent on

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Oslo peace process alone. Furthermore, the U.S. established 12 military bases in the Middle East mostly in gulf countries, with 11.000 permanent US troops in the region, in addition to the war in Iraq that has cost \$1.7 trillion.

7- Regardless of whether domestic, regional or international factors are the cause of 2011 Arab uprisings, there is no doubt that these uprisings that occurred in several Middle Eastern countries had significant security implications ranging from state failure, terrorism emergence, to chaos and violence spread. This is not to say that the Arab spring caused the turmoil we are witnessing today. It is to say that today we are witnessing the outcome of a long-standing crisis in state-society relation in the Arab world that the Arab spring brought it into the open in 2011.

8- The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria took advantage of the political vacuum in Iraq and the civil war in Syria to gain control of a large territory space in both countries. Therefore, it should be addressed as a symptom to the conflict in the Middle East, not a cause.

The threats posed by ISIS are not confined to its areas of influence but extend to the whole world. ISIS represents a new generation of terrorism one that is characterized by financial independence, global operations, and territory control. Therefore, traditional approaches to deal with terrorism seem ineffective.

9- US response to counter the Islamic State was based on four pillars: systematic air campaign, support for ground forces, strengthening of international cooperation, and humanitarian aid to civilians. This strategy was able to regain territories, kill thousands of jihadists, but failed to end ISIS for good.

## CONCLUSION

Accordingly, our problematic can be answered by saying that the Middle East is in turmoil, and U.S. interests are in flux. In this troubled environment the United States has relatively achieved its interests:

1- The United States succeeded in ensuring the oil flow, but not with "cheap" cost as the erroneous belief says. Given the large military spending to secure oil monarchies and trade choke points in the region, it is understandable why the United States worked hard to get rid of its dependence on the Middle East oil. However, the new global energy map, even though reduce American need for oil, won't end US involvement in the region on the short-term.

2- Despite the failure of the peace process to bring about the two states solution as the US wish for, its efforts had a significant role in securing the existence of Israel and even empowering it. Israel today faces a little conventional military threat from its Arab neighbors; however, other types of threats from non-state actors are still on.

3- The United States succeeded in preventing nuclear proliferation in the region especially after signing the agreement with Iran in 2015; this success remains fragile given the sectarian tensions in the region.

4- US counter-terrorism approach is yet to prove its effectiveness; on the contrary, US efforts to eliminate terrorism seem to thrive terrorist organizations instead of ending them. This was confirmed with the emergence of ISIS.

5- The campaign to counter ISIS tells two things about US entanglement in the Middle East post-2011 Arab uprisings:

The first is that the United States is adoption a multilateral-realistic approach that depends on a regional and international coalition at its core and sharing of financial burdens.

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The second is that US policy has long been one of crisis management leaving the region to solve its own myriad political, economic, and social problems without interference. This is a reasonable policy given the fact that, first and foremost, ISIS is a challenge to the region and a symptom of the tensions racking the Middle East. The United States can organize, help and lead the response, but the region must own the solution.

At the end, we must approach U.S. policy in the Middle East with a firm understanding of the practical limits of its power to shape events there. The United States is, without a doubt, the most powerful country in the world in both absolute and relative terms given its ability to project decisive military power across vast distances. Moreover, it has routinely deployed the full panoply of its strength in the Middle East. The U.S. has military bases in the region and it boasts formal and informal alliances with a number of regional powers such as Israel, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, showing itself prepared to go to war in the Persian Gulf, as manifested in the Desert Storm Operation in 1991 and in Iraqi Freedom Operation in 2003.

In short, the Middle East is a region where the United States possesses immense power and has been willing to use it; but the question today is whether the US is still willing to use that power?

According to the way it addressed ISIS problem, the answer is no. Simply, because it learned that military solutions in the Middle East troubled region are only of short term efficacy, instead long-term political action may yield positive results. Therefore, the ability of the United States to succeed in this era will depend on the diplomatic efforts rather than the military arrangements.

It is obvious now that ISIS will be defeated only when a new political order is presented in the region, one that offers greater justice, less corruption, and more responsive governments and economic systems. The process of

## CONCLUSION

building those systems will take years, and the burden for doing so will be on the region.

This was summarized by US President Barack Obama own words:

"It is time we take some of the money that we spent on wars; use it to do some nation-building right here at home."

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## Abstract

The U.S. foreign policy toward the Middle East has always been shaped by security concerns, which led the United States to establish a series of security arrangements for the region in order to maintain its interests.

However, post-2011 Arab uprisings, the maintenance of those interests was threatened by the terrorist organization ISIS, which led the US to reconsider its arrangements.

The effectiveness of those arrangements and their ability to maintain US interests is the tenor of this thesis.

## Résumé

La politique étrangère des États-Unis envers le Moyen-Orient a toujours été façonnée par des préoccupations sécuritaires, ce qui a conduit les États-Unis à établir une série d'arrangements sécuritaires pour la région afin de maintenir ses intérêts.

Cependant, les soulèvements arabes postérieurs à 2011, le maintien de ces intérêts a été menacé par l'organisation terroriste ISIS, qui a conduit les États-Unis à reconsidérer leurs arrangements.

L'efficacité de ces arrangements et leur capacité à maintenir les intérêts des États-Unis est le contenu de cette thèse.

## ملخص

لطالما تشكلت السياسة الخارجية للولايات المتحدة تجاه الشرق الأوسط بالمخاوف الأمنية، الأمر الذي دفع الولايات المتحدة إلى وضع سلسلة من الترتيبات الأمنية للمنطقة من أجل الحفاظ على مصالحها.

ومع ذلك، فبعد الانتفاضات العربية لعام 2011، أصبحت المحافظة على تلك المصالح مهددة من قبل تنظيم داعش الإرهابي، الأمر الذي دفع الولايات المتحدة إلى إعادة النظر في ترتيباتها.

إن فعالية هذه الترتيبات وقدرتها على الحفاظ على مصالح الولايات المتحدة هي محور هذه الرسالة.