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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughter Mandipaisha Theodora Bvindi; let there be no limits for you!
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I would also like to acknowledge my family for the love and support, particularly my oldest sibling Obrien Bvindi, who has never stopped believing in my abilities even when I was unclear of the path I wanted to take.

My sincere gratitude goes out to all of you.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Produce</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>R2P</td>
<td>Responsibility to Protect</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>US</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>WMD</td>
<td>Weapons of Mass Destruction</td>
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<td>9/11</td>
<td>the September 11 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States.</td>
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ABSTRACT

The idea of security in International Relations has for a long time been identified by the vague pursuance of national interests by states. Traditionally, concepts of security focused on the aspect of military protection of a state’s borders and territory. This view has changed over the years to focus on more on human security. The United States (US) foreign policy since the cold war, through the demise of the Soviet Union in the 90s, up to the advent of US unipolarity, has gone through corresponding changes, to guarantee the protection of US citizens at home and abroad. After the September 11 (9/11) terrorist attacks on the US, the Bush administration adopted a pragmatic realist basis of foreign policy. The assumption of power by the Obama administration however ushered in a more progressive liberal tone to US foreign policy in the Middle East. This change in foreign policy approach was expected by the US population, the Iraqi people and the international community, to bring about a matching change in the state of peace and security in the Middle East. The Region has however remained gripped in violent conflict, despite these changes.

This study focuses on the effects of the transformation from the Bush administration’s neo-conservative unilateral approach to the Obama administration’s multi-lateral approach in US foreign policy in the Middle East Peace. Focus will be on Iraq between the years 2000-2013. Qualitative research methodology, focusing on documentary search will be the main tool of research in this study. This methodology will be used to explore the underlying principles of US foreign policy in the Middle East which have always been understood to be; safeguarding US access to Middle East oil reserves’, supporting Israel as a strategic ally in the region, prevent any state from dominating the region and spreading of democracy and human rights.

This study reflects the view that the prevailing conditions of insecurity in Middle East are despite the diplomatic maneuvers adopted by the Obama administration in US foreign policy. Currently in the Middle East, there is continued sectarian violence in Iraq, the ongoing war in Syria and the continued Israeli-Palestine conflict over the West Bank, is nowhere near a peaceful resolve. This study recommends that any meaningful drive towards peace and security in the Middle East should address the divide on ethnic and sectarian lines as the clashes of these groups are leading to escalating conflict.
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This introduces the background to the study by giving and outline of the US foreign policy in the Middle East, before the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US. This forms the basis of understanding the pragmatic realist approach that was adopted by the Bush administration in the conduct of foreign policy in the Middle East. Conversely, it is this hardnosed realism that motivated the liberal approach of the Obama administration, hence a transformation in US foreign policy in the Middle East. This chapter will justify why the transformation in US foreign policy approach between 2000-2013 is a significant area of study. Research objectives, hypothesis, literature review, methodology, limitations, delimitations will be tackled in this chapter, as the guiding principles in interpreting the effects of the transformation in US foreign policy in the Middle East as approached by the Bush and Obama administrations respectively.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

The United States (US) foreign policy in the Middle East after the early 90s was shaped by the perceived “New World Order”. Capitalism had triumphed over communism, and the US was in a position of power without the competition that the Soviet Union had posed earlier. Chomsky (1991: 15) states that “it (the US), had about 50% of the world’s wealth and a position of remarkable security”. US interests in this regard were expected to thrive without any major opposition. The Middle East foreign policy was therefore developed, by US foreign policy makers in this context.

The September 11 terrorist attacks on the US provided the Bush Administration with an opportunity to intervene in Afghanistan and launch a pre-emptive strike in Iraq against Saddam Hussein and his perceived nuclear arsenal. The basic argument was that “a free and peaceful Iraq would be a model for democracy in the Arab world” (New York Times 3 March 2013:1). The magnitude of the attacks, and the pledge made by the Bush administration to fight terrorism afterwards, made many in the US to speculate whether there was a paradigm shift in the way the US was going to handle its foreign policy in the Middle East. Bush sent US troops to Afghanistan first in September 2001 and then followed up on Iraq March 2003. Neither war produced the results anticipated, but rather the toppling of the Saddam Hussein regime, a dragging war in Afghanistan and widespread opposition both at home and abroad.
The use of US military power by the Bush administration is considered to have led to a drastic change in the American foreign policy. This was in comparison with previous administrations that relied heavily on multilateral arrangements for peaceful coexistence. The neo-conservative ideology of some of the leading figures in the Bush administration, like Richard Cheney (Vice President) and Donald Rumsfeld (Secretary for Defence) also motivated the invasion of Iraq. For the neo-conservatives, it was necessary to re-assert American control in the Middle East because of the good moral standing of the American way of life as well as the good of the international system as a whole; Cramer and Thrall (2007:13). The US in playing a leading role in Iraq ignored the United Nations, and some of her long standing allies like Germany that were opposed to the war.

For the senator Barrack Obama, the war in Iraq provided campaign material which contributed to his election as President in 2008. By this time, the majority of the US public was sceptical and weary of the war, whose entry was seen by then, as clearly misguided. Scott (2009:1) states that “during Presidential Campaigns, Barack Obama’s go to lines always incorporated ideas of hope and change, necessary to initiate his new strategies in foreign relations” which included multilateral engagement. Obama recognised that the US was operating in a world riddled with many challenges, including climate change and nuclear proliferation; Lindsay (2011:772) and terrorism, which the Bush administration had focused on, was just one of these challenges. At the same time, Obama believed that the US needed the support of other states to effectively meet these new challenges, hence a need to re-establish diplomatic relationships with friendly and hostile states alike in the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia, Iran and Israel. Obama’s administration supported the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq, addition of combat troops in Afghanistan along with reviving the Israeli- Palestine Peace process, Prosser (2009:10), to aid this new approach.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The transformation from the Bush administration’s use of pre-emptive strike and military strikes to the Obama administration’s liberalism, based on diplomacy and political engagement, has not brought the corresponding peace and security in the Middle East, especially in Iraq. Firstly the deep sectarian divisions between the Sunnis and the Shiite resulting in increased political violence which could potentially escalate into civil war is on an increase; Cordesman and Khazai (2013:5). Progress towards ending the war between the
years 2007-9 never meant that the threat of violence had been removed. Instead the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq, in 2011 resulted in escalated levels of violence. The Obama administration’s provision of heavy weaponry to the Iraqi regime of Nouri Al Maliki, has further worsened the conflict; Huilhon An (2009:9). The resurrection of Al Qaeda in Iraq has similarly scontributed to substantial ethno-sectarian terrorism in the country; Petraues (2013).

Iraq has a deeply flawed electoral system and constitution, coupled with a weak legislature; Cordesman and Khazai (2013: 5). The constitution based on national lists does not address the ethnic and sectarian divisions, but rather went around them such that no geographic area has clear representation in parliament. This weak rule of law, lack of accountability and transparency is a legacy of the US attempt to establish democratic reform in Iraq. The increasing population amid the lack of meaningful infrastructural reconstruction, due to the war, has not improved the lives of ordinary people in Iraq. There is rather increased pressure on services resulting in water and electricity becoming less readily available Cordesman and Khazai (2013: 8). Closely linked to this is the fact that the prolonged war resulted in gross losses of both Iraqi and American lives.

To date, the gains, including establishing a new constitution, holding elections and give the people self governance in Iraq might have been significant but nevertheless fragile and reversible; Serwer and Parker (2008:2).despite some monumental successes in national security objectives, which included the capture of Bin Laden and the withdrawal of non-combatant troops from Iraq, the Obama administration failed to make US foreign policy a resounding success in maintaining Middle East peace and security Crawford( 2013:1). The neo-conservatives behind the invasion of Iraq during the Bush rally behind this notion that a change in policy marked a loss of gains made in securing peace in Iraq, during their time; Petraues (2013: 2). At the same time the Iraqi people and neighbouring states are still living in a constant state of conflict, despite the transformation in foreign policy strategy. The US under the Obama administration has also continued to trade in military weapons; hence focus has been more on military security by the incumbent regimes than the social welfare of their people.
1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 Main Objective
To assess the success of the liberal foreign policy adopted by the Obama administration in comparison to the realist approach of Bush, in the Middle East, between 2000-2013.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives
The study seeks to:

1. Highlight the current state of peace and security in Iraq.
2. Identify the underlying principles that have guided US Foreign Policy in the Middle East.
3. Assess the extent to which the transition from the Bush to the Obama administrations had an impact on peace and security in the Middle East in general and in Iraq in particular.
5. To analyse which factors prohibited and facilitated Obama’s success in establishing peace and security in Iraq.

1.4 Hypothesis
The transformation in US foreign policy as a result of changes in administration has worsened the state of security in the Middle East.

1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY
This study is important in that it will add information to the body of existing literature on US foreign policy in the Middle East. It will be relevant in the evaluation of the human security challenges that the US foreign Policy transformation, from pragmatic realism of the Bush administration, to the liberal approach of the Obama administration, has brought about in the Middle East, particularly in Iraq. This is despite popular belief that a change from the military interventionism of the Bush administration’s foreign policy to focus on more cooperative political engagement, by the Obama Administration bring about a corresponding change in the state of security in the Middle East.

The study will also contribute to the US foreign policy debate, on whether it is viable or not for various US administrations to continue using vast military and economic resources in a
region where conflict is rife, for minimum gain. This is in light of US policies moving towards self-sufficiency in hydrocarbons and petroleum limit the country’s dependence on external sources especially in the Middle East. Identification and consolidation of literature on the US foreign policy will further inform other students of international relations on the underlying principles of US foreign policy in the Middle East and whether they are still relevant in light of the new threats to international peace and security.

Documentary search of various forms of literature will allow the study to show other areas of study that have been the main focus of many scholars on the subject of transformation in foreign policy. The majority of the writings on the liberal approach of the Obama administration focus on either rhetoric or practice with very few assessing the two in one work. This study is also important in that it will bridge the gap in literature by combining and synchronizing relevant materials.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.6.1 US Foreign Policy in the Middle East

The foreign policy of any nation is usually an indication of its national interests and how that state decides to relate with other states when in pursuit of those interest. Schlosser (2014:94) states that Foreign policy consists of strategies and ideologies chosen by the state to safeguard its national interests and to achieve its goals in international relations. The Oxford Advanced Learners dictionary (1997:461) defines foreign policy as “a plan of action dealing with or involving other countries”. Hermann (1969:409) notes that foreign policy consists of plans goals and actions of national governments directed at entities outside the nation. Webber and Smith (2002:10) allude to the fact that foreign policy is an attempt to design, manage and control foreign relations of national societies. These various explanations of what foreign policy is point to the idea that nations and governments can act outside of its borders in a broader framework of states in order to execute and achieve its set ambitions and goals.

For Schlosser (2014:96), foreign policy is conducted under four strategies; trade, diplomacy military force and humanitarian aid. For the US, all four strategies mentioned above have been adopted in the country’s interaction with other states in the Middle East. It can be argued that the motivation for each may have been different. The underlying principles for the US foreign policy in the Middle East after the cold war have however been identified by
Modigy (2003:8) to be safe guiding security for Israel and friendly Arab states, spreading democracy and promoting human rights in the region and securing oil in the region. These were motivated by a shift in global power with the dissolution of the Soviet Union as a threat to US interests in that region particularly and to stability in the Middle East generally. Sharp (2010:2) points out that US humanitarian aid has supported a number of US strategies in the Middle East ranging from support for the state of Israel and Israel’s peaceful relations with its Arab neighbours, to the protection of vital petroleum supplies and the fight against international terrorism.

Mozaffarri (2004:6) alludes to the fact that the Middle East for the greater part has been a static region that had not changed much, since the 1979 Iranian Revolution, but has maintained a false stability which threatens security. September 11 therefore injected a new form of dynamism on the Middle East political arena, but hardly changed the US foreign policy in the region. Sharp (2010:2) expresses the view that the US foreign policy in the Middle East seeks stability in a region with abundant energy reserves but volatile interstate relationships. The Bush Administration simply changed its strategy, from the passive engagement of its predecessors to a more proactive approach, in an attempt to quickly defeat terrorism. The strategic goals however of the US foreign policy under the Bush administration remained the same. These can be summarised as pursuit of military dominance in the Middle East so as to prevent the rise of a regional power that could limit or stop the US access to the region’s oil and natural gas reserves.

1.6.2 Transformation in Foreign Policy
Crowther (1995:638) defines transformation as “a marked change in form, nature or appearance”. The first level of transformation can be seen in the Bush Administration’s strategy in the Middle East after the September 11 attacks, which was seen as a catalyst for the invasion of Iraq by US led forces in 2003. Smith (2006:58) states that the 11 September attacks dramatically increased US sensitivity to states developing WMD and Bush singled out Iraq as his prime concern. For Lindsay (2011:766), neither Al Qaeda nor terrorism figured prominently in the Bush administration’s foreign policy during from year 2000, but September 11 changed that calculation and with it the direction of American foreign policy. The fact that the Bush administration sought to seek out and destroy terrorism was a first in the history of the US, despite previous administrations having suffered at the hands of
terrorists. Secondly pursuit of unilateral action was considered a drastic change from the usual multilateral policies pursued by previous administrations.

There are many significant changes that Obama made to what is commonly referred to as the “Bush Doctrine” which encompassed military force, unilateralism and pre-emptive strikes, particularly in Iraq Lindsay (2011:766). Huihou An (2009:3) states the Obama administration’s focus on diplomatic and political means, highlighting engagement and dialogue, earned it the view that it was transformative. The changes attributed to the Obama Administration’s policy changes in the Middle East include, the shifting of anti-terror battlefield from Iraq to Afghanistan, withdrawing US troops from Iraq step by step, taking a positive attitude towards Palestine- Israeli peace talks, initiating face to face dialogue with Iran and lastly focusing on solving international disputes through diplomacy (ibid: 8). In this regard one can clearly see the changes from the approach of the Bush Administration. It should be noted however that the strategic goals of the US in the Middle East under Obama hardly changed.

1.6.3 Peace and Security in the Middle East

Classical concepts of peace and security focused on military defence of a state’s sovereignty and territorial integrity against external aggression; Peinado (2007:1). This view has changed in light of transnational security risks, which cannot be tackled by military defence; (ibid) attributed mostly to globalisation. The Middle East currently is the personification of this fact, characterised by a range of security threats to its governments and people as well as the external powers that have influence in the region. These security risks include but are not limited to environmental and climate threats, organised crime, human rights abuses, poverty, unemployment, organised crime and the arms race among state and non state actors. Security definitions can therefore be divided into four distinct categories which are political, social, economic and human security.

Political Security has to do with organisational stability of states, systems of government and ideologies that give governments and states their legitimacy; Buzan and Hansen (2007:83). Systems of government and ideologies have a powerful influence on both domestic stability and international security; Baylis and Smith (2008:256). On an economic level, security now includes consideration of individual and state income and how these contribute to well being and development. Boutin (2011:5) expresses the view that economic security considers
popular welfare, attention being given to meeting people’s needs, distributive equity and promoting prosperity through economic development. Social security relates to the human society, classes and their modes of organisation (ibid). For Baylis and Smith (2008:256), when it comes to social security, issues like migration, group identities and environmental scarcity are part of the considerations of social security. Lastly human security means everyone is capable of satisfying their basic needs Peinado (2007:3).

1.6.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Two main theories guiding this study are unilateralism and multilateralism, which echo realism and liberalism respectively.

Unilateralism

Unilateralism, an antonym of multilateralism, is as a policy orientation, which implies imposition of one actor’s interests on another without negotiation. In International politics this is a key concept, which guides policy and politics likewise, but is often misconceived. Malone and Khong (2003; 3) define unilateralism as “a tendency to opt out of a multilateral framework (whether existing or proposed) or to act alone in addressing a particular global or regional challenge rather than choosing to participate in collective action”. Crowther (1997; 1302) defines unilateral as “done by or affecting one person, group or country without the agreement of another of others”. The main characteristic common in the two definitions is the idea of action being undertaken by one party with a disregard of the opinion or consent of the other party. Examples of such action as stated by Mastanduno (2008; 42) are the Bush administration’s “go it alone” strategy in the Middle East and its disregard of the role of the UN:

The Bush administration ... defied both the United Nations Security Council and some of its major allies in NATO in initiating the Iraq war. In the case of Afghanistan, NATO, in the spirit of multilateralism, initially invoked Article 5 of the Treaty after the September 11 attacks, pledging its readiness to come to defense of the United States. The Bush team expressed gratitude at this show of alliance solidarity but chose, in its initial intervention in Afghanistan against the Taliban, to do it essentially on its own.

The second characteristic that can be deduced from the two definitions is that unilateralism can either be a foreign policy or a domestic policy initiative. The first definition points to addressing regional or global challenges, while the second definition is guided by the action of a group, country or individual, which can be interpreted broadly. It is important to note
that often International actors opt out of agreements with other actors or decide to pursue action alone because these agreements are not in line with their interests. This can be seen as a motivation for unilateralism. Essentially, as previously explained, Bush’ predecessors used a mix of unilateralism and multilateralism to pursue their foreign policy initiatives. Bush’s actions are labelled unilateral because after the 9/11 attacks, his administration made a decision to pursue Taliban and Osama Bin Laden at all costs. Cramer and Thrall (209:10 express the view that neo-conservatives, US private oil elites and pro-Israeli supporters in the US motivated the move to invade Iraq domestically, hence supporting the view that unilateralism can be a domestic initiative.

Another characteristic of Unilateralism is that it is one sided action by one actor, with a disregard of other actors, their opinions and a disregard of previous or present multilateral agreements. In this case, an actor can act alone in consideration of a commitment to a certain policy or principle. Sometimes unilateral action may be considered to be more efficient in solving the said challenges that waiting for the cooperation of other actors. Supporters of unilateralism bring to light a like Gaddis (1997;35) argue that multilateral institutions like the UN are morally suspect as they are open to treating undemocratic regimes as being legitimate countries. This is also because they are open to any nation that meets the criteria of statehood, or that has an interest in an issue at hand.

Unilateral action does not guarantee the results as perceived by the actor going it alone. An example is when the US intervened in Iraq and Afghanistan to eradicate terrorism, the Bush administration did not take into consideration the reaction of other states in the Middle East. The invasion did not deter Iran from continuing to develop its nuclear capability, and neither did it help solve the Israeli- Palestinian situation, even though these were part of the motivating factors for the invasion. The peace and security situation in the Middle East has been in turmoil since, partly because of this intervention and a rise in nationalist sentiment towards a need for self-governance. Critics of unilateral action point out to the fact that unilateralism ignores the intricately connected global politics in the 21st century and misjudged how conflict in one state can affect other countries.
Multilateralism
Malone and Khong (2003; 3) refer to multilateralism as “cooperation of three or more states in an area of International relations...on the basis of generalised principles of conduct”. Crowther (1997; 764) defines multilateral as “being with two or more people or groups taking part”, and multilateralism becomes “the policy of seeking multilateral agreements”. Lastly another definition of multilateralism comes from the Merriam Webster dictionary (2013) puts out multilateralism as “involving or participated in by more than two nations or parties”. From the three definitions above, the first characteristic of multilateralism that stands out is that action involves two or more states. Secondly, the course of action taken is based on agreed principle. One can conclude that the characteristics of multilateralism involve a platform were a number of actors in the international system have common grounds for action. The United Nations for example is one such stage which allows member states, to contribute on how the international system can respond to shared challenges.

Multilateralism does not only refer to formal institutions agreements, but also includes informal arrangements. Malone and Khong (2003; 3) state that the various forms of multilateralism include ad-hoc committees, the nature of the commitments and obligations implied, some are voluntary, some legal and some ethical. International law and treaties can be treated as forms of legal and ethical forms of multilateralism, as it requires consensus of actors in the international community. In consideration of the various types of multilateralism, its definition is broad and can be manipulated to suit one’s agenda. It can be argued that the US uses whichever suits their needs at the time. The “coalition of the willing” to invade Iraq provides evidence to support this assertion. The Bush administration coerced other countries to be involved in the military invasion of Iraq by suggesting that if they did not, it would mean they were in support of the terrorists.

Malone and Khong (Ibid;2) further suggest that “multilateralism is a highly demanding institutional form ; it is unsurprising that great powers would find such generalized principles of conduct constraining”. From this statement, it can also be surmised that multilateralism can be limiting by demanding high commitment which may be contrary to state’s interests. The nature of the global system has however created links between nations, and territorial boundaries are no longer a hindrance to policy application. Given this state of affairs, there are instances where multilateral action is very necessary, for example international trade
agreements. Multilateralism therefore can be seen on two fronts, as a serious policy consideration or as rhetoric. The difference between the two is in application and orientation.

The greatest advantage of multilateral action is that it provides a state with access to economic and military resources of its allies while reducing the cost to itself that comes with unilateral action. Podliska (2010:70) states that “multilateralists argue that cooperation strengthens bonds between nations and people” which is also another advantage that countries can enjoy when they engage in multilateral action. Unlike unilateralism which can result in a country being labelled an aggressor, multilateralism builds the perceptions and reputations of countries in a positive light in the international community. However with a division of responsibility in costs and response to conflict situations means a need to divide authority. This ultimately reduces the amount of time it takes for an agreement on intervention, and is one of the greatest disadvantages of multilateral military action.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section will outline the study’s data collection and analysis methods, as a way of determining how the research will be carried out. Kothari (2004:1) states that “research in common parlance is the search for knowledge”. Research methodology therefore refers to the channel used in approaching a specific research area, in this case the Impact of Transformation in US foreign policy in the Middle East. There are different types of research and the researcher will focus on qualitative research in the collection, validation and analysis of data, as this is largely a social study. Mogalakwe (2006:221) states that social research is an activity that is undertaken to find an answer or explanation regarding a particular social phenomenon. For this study, qualitative research is therefore ideal and important as it aims to discover the underlying motives of human behaviour Kothari (2004:3).

1.7.1 Qualitative Research

Documentary search provided the bulk of information, on the US foreign policy in the Middle East with a focus on Iraq and how these policies contributed to peace and security. Payne and Payne (2004: 60) state that documentary methods are techniques used to categorise, investigate, interpret and identify the limitations of physical sources, most commonly written documents. Mogalakwe (2008:221) expresses the view that the
documentary research method is often marginalised or when used, it is only to supplement conventional social surveys. It is a research technique that can produce credible results, compared to in-depth interviews and surveys alike. The main advantages of documentary research summarised by Myers (2008:119) are that “documents are relatively cheap and quick to access, can be invaluable for providing important details of events documents make things visible and are traceable”. These were valuable in the assessment of literature on the impact the change in US foreign policy by the Obama Administration had in the Middle East.

1.7.2 Methods of Data Collection

Documentary research relies mainly on secondary sources of data; hence data collection focused on these. Secondary data means readily available data, that is data already collected and analysed by someone else Kothari (2004:111). For the purposes of this research, use was made of the University of Zimbabwe Library, the UN Information centre in Harare, the Zimbabwean Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Harare and the US information centre also located in Harare. These provided various sources ranging from congressional reports, governments acts, policy reports and books as well as journal on the US foreign policy in the Middle East. E-journals and other resources were accessed online to beef up the information available for a comprehensive analysis on the extent to which the US change in foreign policy contributed to peace and security in the Middle East.

1.7.3 Sampling

Purposive sampling was used to identify material relevant to the study, that is material which focused on the Bush and Obama administrations’ foreign policies in the Middle East as well as the underlying principles of US foreign policy in the Middle East in general.

1.7.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative research has limited rules with regards to the analysis of data. Content analysis was used, by identifying the main themes and aspects relevant to the study and documenting them, as well as quoting the relevant sources.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

- Limited access to classified information of the United States and its foreign policy in the Middle East.
- Unavailability of funds for the research limited scope of the research mainly to
These limitations were addressed by a strong reliance on internet sources for information, and downloadable books. This was a cost effective way of getting information relevant to the study, given limited financial resources. The relevant Information Centres and Embassies provided other classified information like private letters, government acts and policies.

1.9 DELIMITATIONS
This study focused on the US foreign policy in Iraq from the time of the Bush administration to that of Obama, 2000-2013. Attention was on the differences and similarities in the way both administrations handled the war in Iraq and the effects that this had on the overall Middle East peace and security.

1.10 CHAPTER OVERVIEW
This section gives an outline of the following chapters to be discussed in the study as well as a summary of each chapter.

Chapter Two: Historical Overview of US-Middle East Foreign policy
Chapter two traces US foreign relations with Middle Eastern countries from 1800 right up to the time of the Clinton Administration. An examination will be made of the foreign policy strategic goals of the US in the Middle East and how with the changing International system, the US-Middle East foreign policy relations correspondingly changed.

Chapter Three: US-Iraq relations
This chapter gives an overview of US-Iraq relations in the Middle East before the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US. The Bush administration’s foreign policy in Iraq and motivating factors leading to the invasion of Iraq will be scrutinised. The chapter will also detail the Obama administration’s change to liberalism in the US-Iraq relations. A comparative analysis of the two policies will conclude the chapter.

Chapter Four: Impact of the Transformation In Us Foreign Policy In The Middle East
This chapter will focus on the current state of peace and security in the Middle East, giving statistics to validate arguments. The chapter will also express the various security concerns of
the actors involved in the Middle East and give and analysis of whether the Obama administration’s application of liberal policies contributed to peace and security.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations
This chapter draws conclusions based on the results of the study. Recommendations will also be made to the various actors involved in conflict resolution in the Middle East.

1.11 CONCLUSION
There has been considerable literature comparing the Bush administration’s foreign policy to that of Obama in the Middle East, especially in the administration’s early days. This study will conclusively bring out the impact of the supposed change in policy through the prescribed methodology and other important themes that will be handled and alluded to as in the above mentioned chapters.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF US – MIDDLE EAST FOREIGN POLICY

2.1 Introduction

The US foreign relations with the Middle East can be traced back to the mid 1800s, where the substantial trade between US and the Persian Empire resulted in an attempt by the US to get a commercial treaty (Modigy 2003:1). The vast differences in religious, political and commercial ideas between those of the US and the Persians’ limited further interaction. Persia was largely an Islamic state and the US more Christian, with the respective principles influencing both states’ decisions in foreign policy. With the demise of the Soviet Union in the 90s, a more defined US foreign policy in the Middle East emerged. Chomsky (1991:15) resonates with this statement, expressing that US policy in the Middle East was framed in the strategic conception of the New World Order, that is the post-World War 2 era and US interests were expected to thrive with no major opposition.

This chapter will give an overview of how the changing international system correspondingly resulted in changing foreign relations between the US and the Middle East. Key to this section of the study is bringing to light why the US developed a strong interest in one of the world’s most politically turbulent regions in the world. The goals that have for a long time inspired US foreign policy include the protection of Israel as a US ally, Middle East Oil, Spreading democracy and human rights, preventing proliferation of WMDs and protection of pro-US Arab states. These goals will also be clearly defined in this chapter, as applied by the Bush and Obama Administrations respectively as well as by their predecessors.

2.2 Underlying Principles Guiding US Foreign Policy in the Middle East pre 9/11

Cox and Stokes (2008:10) state that foreign policy seeks to explain why a particular state pursues a specific policy at a certain time. Baldwin (2000:167) further expresses the view that foreign policy is purposive behaviour and it is goal oriented. For the US, foreign policy goals can be summarised to include protecting Israeli interests and peace with Arab States, gaining access to Middle East oil, the prevention of proliferation of WMDs, anti-terrorism campaign, spreading of Democracy and Human rights as well as protection of friendly Arab states. With this in mind the discussion to follow will look at the determinants of foreign policy in general.
and link them to the US foreign policy goals as a way of bringing out the underlying principles of US foreign policy in the Middle East. According to Cox and Stokes (2008:8) Roussenau identified potential sources that influence a state’s foreign policy as:

External environment of the International System, domestic and societal environment of a nation state, governmental structure which specifies the policy making process, and the personal characters of individual foreign policy officials and government elites;

The fall of the Soviet Union paved way for the US to pursue confidently its interests in the Middle East, a sign that the external environment is a principle that influences US foreign policy. Black (2008:169) suggests that there was a regional opportunity for American interventions provided by the Soviet Collapse, as aggressive hostile states like Iraq now lacked a sponsor. Closely linked to this is the fact that it became reasonably easier for the US to crush any religions and other nationalist movements perceived as threats to US interests in the Middle East. Chomsky (1991:18) alludes to a CIA study that concluded that if “rebels” (independent nationalists) were victorious, the US would face possible loss of petroleum resources of the Middle East. An example cited was the US involvement in the coup leading to the restoration of the Shah of Iran in 1953 or the perception that Khomeini was a threat to US access to oil hence the US supported Iraq in the Gulf war; (Ibid). Cox and Stokes (2008:8) also state that it is imperative for a state to respond to the external changes in the International System and this is reflected in a country’s foreign policy.

Cox and Stokes (2008:9) state that foreign policy should reflect and seek to promote the core values and ideologies of the domestic political system of a state. This can be explained as one of the reasons why the US aimed at spreading democracy, human rights in the Middle East, before the 2001 terrorist attacks on the US. The post Cold war era presented a defeat of communism and a triumph of democratic liberalism. In light of this and Muslim nationalism that mushroomed at the time Black (2008: 189) states that regional change was necessary to ensure peace, and a global extension of American values was seen as the answer to the new challenges. The spread of democracy would in this way ensure protection of US interests. An example is the intervention by the US and its allies against perceived Iraqi aggression, in the form of an invasion of Kuwait in the 90s. Public opinion is also of considerable influence to foreign policy and foreign policy in turn can make or break an election. Kaarbo and Ray

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give the example of President Carter’s attempt to bolster declining public support by rescuing American hostages in Iran in the 80s, a policy which failed him miserably.

The US foreign policy in the Middle East has also contributed to prosperity of the US industries and economy as well as becoming a source of US economic power. Chomsky (1991:18) alludes to the fact that the Middle East has always provided good support for the US economy, corporations and financial institutions hence it hasn’t been adverse to oil price hikes over the years. An example that can be cited is the 1973 sharp escalation of oil prices which increased the US trade balance with oil producers in the Middle East; (ibid). Overall the facilitation of spread of liberal market systems in the Middle East and the rest of the world by the US improved its economy. Similarly in the 1940s, US firms had acquired oil concessions in Saudi Arabia which prompted a diplomatic presence hence the opening of a legation by the Rooseveldt administration as well as the extension of a sizeable loan to the Arab Kingdom; Herring (2008:563).

The structure of a government largely contributes to the foreign policy of a country. Schmidt states that the US constitutions for example allows for an array of actors to be part of the foreign policy formulation that is the President, Cabinet officials, members of congress, lobbyists and even interest groups; Cox and Stokes (2008:10). An example that can be cited is the support for the alliance that the US has always had with Israel in the Middle East, which is encouraged by a strong Jewish lobby in the US. Chomsky (1991:23), states that there is however considerable debate to the amount of influence that the Jewish lobby contributes to the US foreign policy on Israel, but it is there. The US- Israeli special relationship can be traced back to Israel’s military successes in 1948, which resulted in many US Chiefs of Staff recognising the state as a military power in the Middle East after Turkey hence a need to be aligned with it; (ibid).

Lastly, the personal characters of individual foreign policy officials and government elites have always been in sync with the US foreign policy in the Middle East. The individual source category simply argues that individuals personality, personal convictions, upbringing and personal convictions matter greatly in the making of foreign policy; Cox and Stokes (2008:10). AT the same time individual leadership styles, and how they approach policy making influences foreign policy decisions; Kaarbo and Ray (2011:175). An example that can be cited is the Clinton administration’s approach to foreign policy in the Middle East
between 1993 and 2000. The Clinton Administration was more cautious in the Middle East, threats like Saddam and challenges posed by Islamic terrorism were not adequately met; Black (2008:170). This approach to foreign policy in the Middle East is attributed to the open decision making approach the Clinton administration. In this case for foreign policy to become acceptable to the leader, ideas, attitudes, beliefs, and motives must receive external validation from others; Kaarbo and Ray (2011:175). It should be noted that this could be the reason why the Middle East foreign policy under this administration lacked drive.

2.3 The Bush Foreign Policy in the Middle East

The foreign policy of the Bush Administration in the Middle East was largely shaped by the September 11 terrorist attacks on the US, which resulted in what is popularly known as the Bush Doctrine. This new approach represented a break from the US foreign policy practices and general international law and principles; Kaarbo and Ray (2011:83). Lindsay (2011:767) states that the Bush Doctrine rested on five main assumptions:

- American global military dominance allowed it to fight overseas,
- Washington’s reluctance to respond militarily to terrorists had encouraged Al-Qaeda and Bin Laden to launch attacks on the US, the Cold War Strategy of deterrence and containment did not work with terrorism, terrorism could not operate without state support hence Iraq, Iran and North Korea constituted the axis of evil that could equip terrorists with WMDs and alliances and multilateral organisations might help the US wage its war on terror but there were not essential.

These are the main assumptions that determined the series of “go it alone” Mastanduno (2008:33), policies in the Middle East by the Bush Administration.

US Military dominance posed a considerable motivation for the Bush Administration’s Middle East foreign policy and can be explained as the reason for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Lieberfield (2005:1) expresses the view that the US secured military bases in the Iraq and Afghanistan, putting pressure on Syria and Iran and while securing peace in the Middle East. Military bases in Iraq were also expected to further project US power in the Middle East, compared to the less secure ones in Saudi Arabia after the 1999 Gulf War (ibid). Other scholars on the subject of Us military dominance motivating foreign policy, agree that the Bush doctrine facilitated the exertion of force in the Middle East as a way of stamping US
authority in the region. Cramer and Thrall (2009:9) support this view stating that Iraq was an easy target for the demonstration of US leadership and military strength. This is true in light of the fact that Iran probably posed a greater threat to US security with its nuclear project, compared to Iraq at the time of its invasion in 2003.

The Bush doctrine also articulated a change in foreign policy approach by way of encouraging pre-emptive strike to discourage any further terrorist attacks. This meant a break from the cold war policies of containment and deterrence. Kaarbo and Ray (2011:83) articulate that terrorism presented a new kind of threat, limiting the effectiveness of deterrence and so there was a need to act pre-emptively. This however did not directly contribute to any successes of the Administration in the Middle East. Sewer and Parker (2008:5) state that Bush and his neoconservative allies failed to degrade Al-Qaeda and terrorist organisations in the Middle East. The war in Iraq rather fomented hatred for the US and served Iran as a recruiting post for terrorists worldwide; (Ibid). Similarly Kaarbo and Ray (2011:83) argue that this unilateral action generated animosity and was not effective against the proliferation of WMDs in the Middle East.

Regime change and spread of democracy can also be counted among the factors that contributed to the Bush Administration’s Middle East policy. Lieberfield (2005:1) states that democracies fear autocracies will attack them first and security could be derived from spreading democracy and human rights. Kaarbo and Ray (2011:83) allude to the fact that regime change in Iraq was expected to dismantle support for terrorist networks. LeBillon (2004:14) also quoted the Vice president of the Bush administration Cheney saying

“The problem is that the good Lord did not see it fit to put oil and gas reserves where there are democratic governments”.

While the basic premise was that the spread of democratic principles would improve US security particularly of its Middle East interests this has largely not been the case. Instead this simply amplified the administration’s inability to respond to a non-state adversary through application of vengeful American nationalism; Lieberfield (2005:1). It should also be noted that as a result of 9/11, gross human rights violations occurred at Bagram and Guantanamo bay; Dormandy (2013:42) to the alleged terrorists. This has brought resulted in numerous questions being asked about whether human rights and democratic principles motivated the
Bush administration’s foreign policy.

Cramer and Thrall (2009: 4) express the view that other unstated private interests that go beyond Iraq like oil, Israel and geopolitics, contributed to the Bush foreign policy in the Middle East. Middle East oil has always been a component influencing US foreign policies for a long time, and the Bush Administration was no exception. In support of this view, LeBillion (2004:3) states that resources provide a means and motive for global power hence the western thinking on resources was dominated by the equation of “trade war and power”. The US dependence on oil and major imports from Iraq contributed greatly to the foreign policy of the Bush administration in the Middle East; (Ibid:22). Similarly, Lieberfield (2005:1) articulates that the war in Iraq was aimed at diverting the public from the administration’s failure to prevent 9/11 as well as past ties with Saddam Hussein. All these factors contributed to the aggressive foreign policy the Bush administration pursued in the Middle East.

2.4 The Obama Foreign Policy in Middle East

The election of Barrack Obama into office raised hopes that the tensions, disputes and crises that plagued the US regional and multilateral relations would be a thing of the past Hallams (2011:4). Huihon An (2009:3) mentions that the following were the attributes that contributed to Obama’s adjustment of the Middle East foreign policy:

- Shifting the anti-terror battlefield from Iraq to Afghanistan; withdrawal of US troops from Iraq in a step by step manner, taking a positive attitude towards the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks, initiating face to face dialogue with Iran and settling international disputes by diplomatic means.

It should be noted that the strategic goals of US foreign policy under the Obama administration hardly changed, but the foreign policy approach was much less aggressive compared to that of the Bush administration.

The Obama administration vowed to actively bring to resolve the Palestine-Israeli conflict. Israel was always seen as a strategic pillar for US Middle East foreign policy and this did not change under Obama, Huihou An (2009:6). Obama inherited a situation in which Israel had just invaded southern Lebanon after a Hezbollah border provocation, responding to rocket attacks with a deployment of forces in Gaza, and had begun to expand settlements in the
West Bank; Dormandy (2013: 42). The Obama administration tried to make diplomatic overtures to stop Israeli aggression. The 2009 Gaza reconstruction conference the US pledged to give Palestine USD900 million to facilitate reconstruction; Huihou An (2009:3). In March 2010 Israel refused to stop building the 1,600 Jewish homes in the West Bank; Prosser (2009:10). Despite the solving of the Palestinian–Israeli conflict, very little progress has been made towards making a lasting settlement. Hallams (2011:10) argues that the administration’s efforts are constrained by a powerful Jewish lobby, hence continued pro-Israeli perception of foreign policy.

The US states under the Obama administration decided to take a backseat in Iraq while committing more military efforts in Afghanistan instead. Obama argued that while war was morally justified, Saddam was not an imminent threat, and war would not achieve its political objectives, Rynhold (2008: 3). The US needed to refocus the war on terror by reinforcing the commitment in Afghanistan; (Ibid). This resulted in an addition of 3,500 troops in Afghanistan in 2009 as well as predator drone strikes as a way of combating Al-Qaeda; Hallams (2011:10). Huihou An (2009:4) states that the US anti-terrorism strategy under Obama in Afghanistan changed to sabotage, combat and defeat Al-Qaeda. This stance by the Obama Administration is generally seen as continuing the war on terrorism initiated by the Bush Administration since the September 11 attacks. The Obama Administration’s successes in Afghanistan were limited. Efforts to stabilise Afghanistan with an increase of troops drew the US into a deeper commitment that failed to turn the tide on Taleban; Lindsay (2011:776). Spreading democracy and human rights was also part of the Obama Administration’s foreign policy in the Middle East, with a strong tilt towards self determination of states. Lindsay (2011:773) states that Obama shied away from Bush’s freedom agenda largely because it seemed “democracy promotion exalted elections over what he considered the building blocks of democracy—security and economic opportunity”. This can be argued also as one of the reasons why the Obama Administration did not support the pro-democratic movements in support of maintaining the status quo; Hallams(2011:10). An example can be the continued support of the corrupt Hamid Kaizai government in Afghanistan, despite fraudulent elections; (ibid).

The foreign policy of the Obama Administration, in the Middle East has been characterised by a renewal of multi-lateral relations with international organisations and former allies. Hallams (2011:11) states that the appointment of Susan Rice and payment of over
USD2 million owed in UN dues was a starting point. The US-Iran relations were key to tackling terrorism and preventing WMDs as well as safeguarding the US position in the Middle East; Huihou An (2009:6). Improving the relations with the UN allowed for cooperative effort in appealing to Iran to stop its nuclear project. This resulted in the extended UN sanctions on Iran; Hallams (2011:11) and more recently the Geneva agreement with Iran agreeing to postpone its nuclear project for a period of 6 months. Hallams (2011:11) also states that the US under the Obama Administration appealed to NATO and other European in 2009, to focus on what they could do to facilitate funding and resources for civilian reconstruction in Iraq. In this regard it can be said that the Obama administration did revive the use of cooperation and diplomacy in the US foreign policy particularly in the Middle East.

The Obama Administration can be credited for pursuing US interests in the Middle East, by the use of all methods at its disposal while appearing less aggressive compared to the Bush administration’s approach. Hallams (2011:12) expresses the view that diplomacy is the vanguard of smart power for the Obama administration but it seeks to use the full range of tools at its disposal. Rynhold (2008:4) states that Obama uses the carrot-stick method, for diplomatic engagement to stand a chance of success; it must be backed by the credible threat of a large stick. An example is how the Obama administration seeks to entice Iran and Syria to cooperate by offering them economic and political benefits based on inclusion in the global liberal economic system; (ibid). Bettiza and Phillips (2010:14) state that with Iran, Obama abandoned Bush’s one dimensional confrontational stance, which had achieved little or nothing, preferring a multidimensional strategy of ‘diplomacy, punishment and containment’. This has seemingly yielded results with the November 2013 Geneva interim agreement for Iran to freeze its nuclear program; Katzman and Kerr (2013:2).

Lastly Middle East oil has had considerable influence on the US foreign policy under the Obama administration, just like with previous administrations. Ross and Jeffery (2013:17) express the view that the US and its allies will remain dependent on energy supplies from the Middle East for the foreseeable future. This statement goes to support the idea that Middle East oil features prominently in US foreign policy in general. Momayyezi and Rosenberg (2011:4) state that to ensure the steady supply of oil from Middle East, the US has been forced to support totalitarian regimes who rule their country without any regard for freedom and democracy. An example is the continued support of the Saudi Arabia monarchy which
has for a long time through aid and trade as a way of continuing the relationship that US oil
firms have in the Middle East country.

2.5 Conclusion

In summation, it can be inferred that the US foreign policy in the Middle East took a drastic
change under the Bush Administration after the September 11 terrorist attacks. The Bush
doctrine articulated after was characterised by use of military force and unilateral pre-emptive
action in an attempt to rid the world of terrorism and effect regime change. At the same time
the Bush administration’s crusade in the Middle East was aimed at continuing to safeguard
US interests, namely Middle East oil, military bases in Iraq, preventions of WMD
proliferation and maintain a presence in the Middle East to deter any regional hegemon from
rising to power. For the Obama administration, the same strategic goals were of importance
still, but the means of achieving these now focused on multilateral engagement, diplomacy
and political negotiation, Evidence of this new change in approach is seen in the way the
administration has dealt with Iran as well as the Palestinian-Israeli peace process. It is safe to
state that the Obama and Bush administrations followed almost the same goals in the Middle
East, by way of different approaches.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 US - IRAQ RELATIONS

3.1 Introduction

The US-Iraq foreign relations can be traced back to the time of Iraq’s independence from being a British controlled territory in 1932. The British did however maintain a strong political presence in the Iraq, until after the Second World War, when its power had diminished significantly, and when the US began to rise as a superpower in World Politics. This chapter will briefly describe and analyse the history of US-Iraq relations. The chapter will further express how Iraq’s geopolitical position in the Middle East has influenced US Foreign policy and encouraged the pursuit of US national interests especially after the Cold War, in the early 90s. A comparative analysis will be made of the foreign policy strategies of the Bush and Obama administrations as a way of establishing the motivations, similarities and differences of the two administrations’ involvement in Iraq.

Diplomacy has always characterised US-Iraq relations since before Iraq’s independence in 1932. Formal relations began in 1931, when Alexander Sloan was appointed the Chief of Mission for the US legation at Baghdad up to the reopening of the US embassy in Iraq in 2004; US State Department Website (2014). Smith (2006:45) expresses the sentiment that the strategic alliances between the US and Iraq have always been complex, supported by arms deals, aid and sanctions. Kaarbo and Ray (2011:294) state that diplomacy and bargaining are strategies used by international actors to avoid conflict and the US-Iraq relationship represents a multitude of these strategies.

3.2 Historical Overview: US-Iraq Relations

Iraq is a Middle Eastern country; at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers previously called Mesopotamia in Greek, meaning the land between the rivers (Iraq Country profile 2006:3). Iraq is the second largest oil producer in the Middle East after Saudi Arabia, currently producing 2.5 million barrels of oil a day; Nyemba and Mhandara (2013:43). The collapse of the Turkish Ottoman Empire, which stretched from the Balkans to the Arab Peninsula, in the early 20th Century, opened up new rivalries over energy sources, with the British earning control of Iraq under a League of Nations mandate; Van Der Pijt (2006:64). Throughout the 1920s, nationalist forces in Iraq pressed the British for independence with the
country becoming fully independent in 1932, retaining a special relationship with Britain; (Iraq Country profile 2006:1). The turbulent years in Iraq domestic politics leading up to the end of the Second World War (ibid: 3), diminished the British influence In Iraq, presenting an opportunity for the US to establish its control there.

The main motivating factor for the US’s relations with Iraq is based on the presence of oil fields that the US need for its large industrial economy. In support of this view, Le Billion (2004:22) quotes Paul Wolfowitz as having said “the most important difference between Iraq and North Korea is that economically, we just had no choice in Iraq. The country swims on a sea of oil”. This comment was made in response to a journalist that has asked the Secretary of Defence why the US had invaded Iraq instead of North Korea. The US foreign policy in Iraq, characterised by foreign aid, trade, war and diplomacy, is dominated by a need to control Iraqi’s oil reserves and maintain power in the oil rich Middle East region.

Foreign assistance plays a key role in advancing U.S. foreign policy goals in the Middle East; Sharp (2010:1). In Iraq, US foreign aid is targeted at food aid, health and infrastructural redevelopment from over twenty years of war and sectarian violence, which is the Iraq-Iran war from 1980-88, the first Gulf War 1990-91 and the most recent invasion of Iraq in 2003. This has however improved very little of the Iraqi people’s lives and relieve their suffering, as foreign aid is to facilitate establishment of US power in the country. Kim and Anderson (2012: 12) express the view that using humanitarian aid to further a state’s national interests certainly seems to undercut the important moral foundations on which foreign aid lies. This opinion however true is challenged by the US’s greater need to safeguard its control on oil reserves in Iraq, while keeping Iran in check. For the US, foreign aid to Iraq cannot be divorced from political and economic considerations.

War has had its fair share of influence in defining the US-Iraq relations. In 1991for example, the war resulted in a US led global coalition intervening to eject Iraq from Kuwait; Grey (2007:288). Etes (2006: 1) states that Iraq invaded Kuwait partly out of a need to recover from the war with Iran in which it had borrowed over USD14 billion, quarrels over the Rumelia border oilfields provided an excuse for the invasion by the army of Saddam Hussein. While the intervention is viewed as multilateral action to stop Iraq’s aggression on Kuwait, it can be argued that US interests were threatened by the possibility of a postrate Iraq and therefore maintaining Iraq in check would help balance Ayatollah Khomeini’s fundamentalist
regime in Iran; ibid (2007:5) as after the first Gulf War. Estes (2006: 2) also expresses the view that there was concern that Iraq would move into Saudi Arabia giving Saddam a sizeable share of the world’s oil reserves. The 2003 invasion of Iraq by the US, the UK, Australia and Poland, is also an example of how the US-Iraq relationship was characterised by furthering US interests. Lieberfield (2005:1) states the war in Iraq and the US presence afterwards was expected to project US power in the Middle East, by putting pressure on Syria and facilitating a Palestinian-Israeli accord on terms acceptable to Israel.

3.3 US Foreign Policy in Iraq

3.3.1 The Bush Foreign Policy in Iraq

George W Bush was elected into office in 2000, after a highly contested and controversial election, with hardly any comprehensive foreign policy strategy; Dunn (2003:278. This is to say outside of the usual strategic goals of the US in the Middle East, of maintaining peaceful relations with friendly states, protection of US access to Middle East oil, trade and foreign aid, the Bush administration did not have any specific pressing foreign policy matters. The advent of the September 11 attacks by terrorists on the Trade Center and Pentagon however changed this seemingly passive approach to foreign policy. A resultant “Bush Doctrine” was articulated in speeches and official foreign policy in 2002, and it became the guiding philosophy that contributed to the invasion on Iraq in 2003, Kaarbo and Ray (2011:83).

This new approach emphasised on military pre-emptive strikes and unilateral action that is independent attacks on terrorism, before the terrorists had an opportunity to strike first. The majority of Americans believe the Bush Administration misled the public by proclaiming that war was meant to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, end Saddam Hussein’s support for terrorism and free the Iraqi people; Cramer and Thrall (2009:5). Lieberfield (2005:1) puts forward 5 perspectives that can considered as the real motives behind the Bush Administration’s aggressive foreign policy approach in Iraq. These perceptions are realism, liberalism, elite interests, ideological influences and personality and social psychology.

For the Bush administration, realism contributed to war in Iraq as a demonstration by the US of willingness to use force to maintain its hegemonic status and dispel the idea that its national power was on the decline after 9/11; Lieberfield (2005:1). The view that military
strength is evidence of power is an underlying assumption of the realist theory that the Bush administration took advantage of. The US did not want to be viewed as giving in to aggressors; hence the attack on Iraq which was perceived to house the Al-Qaeda terrorist groups; Dunn (2003: 284). From the above evidence, it can be argued that the need to exert military power in the Middle East was a driving force for the Bush Administration’s military invasion of Iraq. Iraq The projected reason that military intervention was to seek out and destroy Iraq’s WMDs and remove the security threat to the US and her allies, the UK, France, Australia and Poland among others, was a mere fallacy. Iraq did not pose an immediate threat to the security of the US, as proved later by the UN weapons inspectors.

The spreading of Human Rights and Democracy was another guiding strategy for the invasion on Iraq in 2003. In support of this notion, Lieberfield (2005:1) expresses the view that here liberalism was at work, for democracies fear that autocracies will attack them first, hence security was derived from spreading democracy and human rights. This premise is derived from the Democratic Peace theory which postulates that democratic nations do not go to war with each other. As long as states are governed by democracy, they conflict was less likely. Iraq presented a grave security threat to its neighbours and the rest of the world; Kaarbo and Ray (2011:83) and past actions for example the war with Iran in 1980-1988 and that of Kuwait in 1990, showed Iraq’s willingness to commit acts of aggression. In this regard there was a need for regime change. Chomsky (2003:68) states that the invasion of Iraq was carried out to initiate a “vigorous new democratic campaign in the Middle East”. This was in line of the US’ doctrine of transformational diplomacy aimed at building and developing sustainable democratic governments throughout the world. Despite these arguments supporting the spreading of democracy as a universal good, the military intervention in Iraq by the US and her allies, the UK, Australia and Poland, hardly improved the human rights situation of the Iraqi people. In fact, Kaarbo and Ray (2011:88) argue that this war undermined principles of International Law of the right to self determination and state sovereignty.

The US elitist interests also contributed to decision to go to war in Iraq. Most importantly, these included vested interests for example petroleum corporations, a strong Jewish lobby(pro-Israel activists that seek to influence US foreign policy) and other industries that would benefit from the war Lieberfield (2005:1). War was also for partisan a political gain, that is, to divert the public from the Administration’s failure to prevent 9/11 and capture Al-Qaeda (ibid). For Chomsky (2003:68) the war in Iraq was meant to strengthen the Bush Administration’s hold on domestic
political power and boost the President’s popularity. The War in Iraq contributed to a huge boost of business and trade for many US companies further supporting the view that private interest influenced the decision to go to war. The US State Department Website states that under the Generalised System of Preferences, US companies that deal in energy, defense, information technology, infrastructural development and transport are at work in the process of rebuilding Iraq currently. This is proof of the benefits these US companies are enjoying in Iraq.

The power of ideological influence cannot be ignored in addressing the decision leading to the invasion of Iraq and the foreign policy strategy that then defined the Bush Administration. The most consistent argument of the Bush Administration to invade Iraq is attached to the neo-conservative ideology and the grand strategic vision of asserting US dominance that the neo-conservatives supported. Neo-conservatives believed that US was strong militarily, hence the US bore the responsibility to ensure global stability by acting unilaterally. Kaarbo and Ray (2011:88). The administration of George Bush had a number of Neo-conservative figureheads for example the Vice President Richard Cheney and the Secretary for Defense Donald Rumsfeld were very influential in asserting that the US needed to act unilaterally to restore its position of power in the World system. Lieberfield (2005:1) also supports the view that neo-conservative ideology’s belief in the efficacy of unilateral force was also a motivating factor leading to the invasion of Iraq.

In light of the above assertions, the neo-conservative ideology contributed to a radical change in the US foreign policy and determined US-Iraq relations under the Bush administration. Part of the appeal was for the control of Iraq oil fields, a dominant US foreign policy goal since the end of the Second World War. Dunn (2003:284) affirms this position stating that the US is an indispensible power in the international system and its model government based on liberal democratic markets is a universal good. US pursuit of national interests was expected to create conditions that promoted freedom, markets and peace. This view projects the principles of US unilateralism which are consistent with the neo-conservative ideology and a strong underlying policy structure for the US-Iraq relations under the Bush Administration.

It is important to highlight the consequences and risks that came with an invasion of Iraq under the Bush Administration, as a way of further explaining the nature of US-Iraq relations. (Chomsky 2003:77) stressed that an invasion on Iraq would globalise anti-American sentiment, fuel civil and political unrest and a serious humanitarian catastrophe. This assertion rings true when one considers the state of Peace and Security inherited by the Obama Administration in Iraq. Many
people have lost their lives, with a majority of Iraqi people being displaced internally from their homes, because of the war in Iraq and the ethnic and sectarian violence that characterises the war. Nyemba and Mhandara (2013:58) state that at the time of writing, an estimated 100,000 deaths had been recorded as a result of the conflict in Iraq.

3.3.2 The Obama Foreign Policy in Iraq

The election of Barrack Obama into office brought about a new hope of change in the US foreign policy in Iraq.

By campaigning on a platform of change that emphasized the desire to rebuild America’s international credibility, and engage in constructive diplomacy and negotiation with America’s adversaries, Obama raised hopes that the tensions, disputes and crises that plagued America’s regional and bilateral relationships during the Bush years would be a thing of the past; Hallams (2011:9).

The US had been at war in Iraq for about 6 years, and this was the dominant characteristic of the US-Iraq relations inherited by the Obama Administration. However, despite popular belief, there is hardly any drastic changes in foreign policy principles adopted by the Obama administration, but what is of significance are the methods with which foreign policy has been carried out. This is where the change is. Specific foreign policy activities carried out by the Obama administration were the withdrawal of US combat troops from Iraq, support of Iraq’s democratic structures put in place by the Bush administration and coordination of regional and international powers in the reconstruction of the war-torn country.

The withdrawal of US combat troops from Iraq was perhaps one of the most significant actions that the Obama administration carried out. Several reasons can be attributed to this action. Huihou An (2009:3) states that the removal of US troops from Iraq was conducive to the improvement of US national image and remission of anti-American sentiment in Iraq, while lessening the burden of military expenditure on the US. This act should not be assessed without considering the corresponding increase of troops in Afghanistan. In 2009, the Obama administration committed a further 35,000 troops and increased the number of predator drone strikes in Afghanistan; Hallams (2011:10). This is arguably because the US under the Obama Administration had not abandoned its aim of fighting terrorism. Afghanistan had simply become the new frontline for US anti-terrorism; Huihou An (2009:6).
The US’ national interest of promoting democracy and human rights in Iraq is still a priority in the foreign policy strategy for the Obama Administration, underlying the US-Iraq relations. Huihou An (2009: 5) stipulates that the Obama administration strives to spread American democracy, liberty and values steadily, so as to maintain congenial relations with more moderate Arab nations. This is has been the case in Iraq, the Obama administration facilitated elections and the establishment of democratic processes, which resulted in the election of Maliki as the Iraqi leader. However, Cordesman and Khazai (2013:5) allude to the fact that the democratic system is characterised by a deeply flawed electoral system and a weak legislature which has contributed to the rise of a radical leader Maliki. While this explains the current political situation facing the Iraqi people, it is a system the Obama administration came into, on getting into office. Support of the status quo in Iraq indicates a larger failure in the implementation of the initial US strategy of regime change in Iraq, as a buffer from conflict.

The Obama administration has also focused on infrastructural development, economic reconstruction and the equipping, training and development of the security forces in Iraq as a way of improving the US-Iraq relations. Hallams (2011:12) alludes to the fact that the Obama Administration appealed to US allies in NATO and, like France and Britain, to focus on what they could do to increase funding and resources for civilian reconstruction in Iraq. Huihou An (2009:6) notes that the Obama Administration concluded an arms deal promising to sell Iraq heavy weapons worth US$5billion, convinced that this would stabilise Iraq and help the US to control the rest of the Middle East. Lindsay (2011:773) expresses the view that while Iraq made democracy promotion toxic to many Americans, it also reflected Obama’s assessment that democratic promotion exalted elections over the building blocks of democracy, security and economic opportunity. The advisory missions tasked to facilitate democratic reform, also contributed to economic revival by providing ideas and advice to the Iraqi government on the use and accounting of oil revenue. Foreign aid has also largely been for improvement of the water situation in Iraq. Iraq is a desert country with very limited water reserves, and the war destroyed the limited water systems that were there. The health system was similarly deteriorating with the advent of war and aid has helped restore some, but not all facilities. These actions can be characterised as determining the US-Iraq relations under the Obama Administration.
3.3 Comparative Analysis of the Two Polices

There are a number of differences in the foreign policy approaches of the Bush and Obama Administrations in Iraq. Some writers have attributed this to the fact that the two administrations emerged from different political parties, Bush being republican and Obama being democratic. Lindsay (2011:765) expresses the view that the period since September 11 has seen two competing US foreign policy visions, with the Bush administration declaring a global war on terror while the Obama administration tapped into the public’s disillusionment with the war to garner support. These various views have however not deterred either administration from pursuing the US national interests in Iraq, namely the anti-terrorism campaign, prevention of WMDs, spreading of democracy and human rights all in a bid to control the Iraqi oil fields and establish US power in the Middle East. What has been different is the policy approaches to fulfilling these foreign policy goals, hence the statement “it is clear that Obama’s Middle East policy adjustments are mainly about means and tactics not strategic targets” Huihou An (2009:6).

The Bush and Obama administrations’ foreign policies in Iraq can be analysed as the classic case of realism versus liberalism respectively. In a bid to stop the increase of WMDs and to facilitate the anti-terrorism strategy in the Middle East, the Bush administration responded to the security threats posed by the 9/11 attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center with military intervention in Iraq, while the Obama administration has been credited for the withdrawal of troops in Iraq, and shifting the battleground back to Afghanistan. Despite the fact that both administrations approached the challenges differently, the same interests of dealing with terrorism and establishing a foothold in Iraq and the Middle East was the motivation.

One of the leading strategies of the US foreign policy in Iraq is the spreading of Democracy and Human Rights, which was seen to further the influence and control of the US. Nyemba and Mhandara (2013:11) articulate the view that “Democracy is increasingly being seen as a universal panacea for the world’s problems of poverty, underdevelopment, governance, corruption and war”. Dunn (2003:290) projects that the argument put forward by the US was that while democracy would not destroy terrorism overnight, it provided the best hope for the world to do so. For the Bush administration, regime change was a positive catalyst for change from the autocratic regime of the Saddam government; (ibid). This approach however
cost the US government billions of dollars in reconstruction; Serwer and Parker (2008:3). The Obama Administration however recognised that it was important to support the status quo and introduce democratic reform gradually, so that regimes created were not hostile to the US. At the same time, it was important for the US to support reform and democracy movements in the region without generating large-scale responsibilities for the US; Dormandy (2013:44).

Lastly, it is important to note that the foreign policy tactics adopted by the Bush and Obama administrations in Iraq were influenced by the fact that both were operating in different international relations settings. Dunn (2003:284) supports this notion by asserting that the Bush Administration’s approach to Iraq and the world in general was formed by a concern to traditional security threats which were great powers, rogue states and nuclear proliferation. An example is in 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait, it was considered a rogue state, well advanced WMDs project underway. This notion also prioritised states as main actors (ibid), hence the unilateral military invasion of Iraq. Lindsay (2011:772) argues that Obama, however, had become president in an entirely different geopolitical context where rapid economic growth in emerging markets had shifted the balance of global economic power and created new cross-national networks. Threats transcended that transcended borders like climate, coupled with financial crisis, from 2008, the US states suffered a very low esteem at home and abroad (ibid). In light of this context, it was vital to apply policies that encouraged political engagement and multilateral action in gaining confidence in Iraq.

3.4 Conclusion

In summation, the US foreign policy in Iraq under both the Bush and Obama Administrations focused on the same strategic goals. These strategic goals included combating terrorism, stopping Iraq’s development of WMDs, spreading democracy and human rights, establishing firm control of Iraq oil fields as well as creating military bases in Iraq to monitor activities in the Middle East. The Bush Administration tackled these goals from a realist perspective, by instigating unilateral military intervention that was meant to effect regime change in Iraq thereby establishing a democracy. This approach was influenced largely by the geopolitical climate in which the administration operated, where terrorism after the September 11 attacks was considered a grave threat to the security of the US. At the same time, states were prioritised as the main actors, hence it was the view of the Bush administration that the
government of Saddam Hussein was harbouring terrorist, giving the US a reason for military intervention. The Obama Administration on the other hand operated in a climate where the global distribution of power is no longer concentrated on the state and new threats are stemming from globalisation. These threats included climate change, nationalist movements, financial crisis and a decline in US power in the world, the rise of China as a global economic power and the resurgence of Russia in International affairs. To be effective in the prevailing international climate, the administration sought to pursue a liberal approach in Iraq, to gain popularity and reclaim the US’ hegemony in international relations. Trade, humanitarian aid and arms sales under both administrations still remained a dominant aspect of US-Iraq relations. The nest Chapter will focus on the impact of transformation in US foreign policy from the Bush to the Obama administrations, on peace and security in the Middle East.
CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATION IN US FOREIGN POLICY ON MIDDLE EAST PEACE AND SECURITY

4.1 Introduction
The invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, in 2001 and 2003 respectively, by the Bush Administration can easily be said to have been a gross miscalculation as an effort toward maintaining peace and security in the region. The military solution was not enough to curb activities of non-state actors, or the proliferation of WMD. Instead there has been a greater increase in suffering for the general populations of the Middle East. The change by the Obama Administration in strategy to incorporate political and diplomatic engagement, to bring about security, has also proven to have had limited success. This Chapter will therefore focus the various aspects of security and assess to what extent these have been achieved in the Middle East, despite the changes in strategy and application of the US foreign policy by the Obama Administration. The chapter will also give consideration to the various actors in the Middle East affected by the change of strategy in the US foreign Policy, and to what extent their security needs have been met. These include civilians (Arabs, non Arabs), radical fundamentalists (Muslim, Christian and other religious extremists), government officials and the Military (US troops and non US troops).

4.2 The Current State of Peace and Security in the Middle East
Bilgin (2004: 28) expresses the view that the Middle East has four contending views on security attributed to the various world views that have influenced the development of the region. These Security perspectives are the Middle East Perspective, the Arab Middle East Perspective, the Muslim Perspective and the Mediterranean Middle East perspective; (ibid.28). The Middle East perspective is associated with the US and its Allies, deriving from a western concept of security, which are:

- unhindered flow of oil at reasonable prices, cessation of the Arab Israeli conflict, prevention of the emergence of any regional hegemon, holding Islam in check and maintaining regimes that are sensitive to these concerns; Ibid.

To date, it can be argued that the US and her allies have not been able to comprehensively achieve security in the Middle East. Despite overtures by the Obama Administration towards
dialogue with the Israeli government, the Arab-Israeli relations are still nowhere near being solved. In March 2010, Israel refused to halt building the 1,600 Jewish homes in a Palestinian part of Jerusalem; Prosser (2009:10). Clemons states that despite the Israeli-Palestinian relations being a key priority, in November 2012, the US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton and Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi managed to secure a fragile truce which has not stopped the conflict; Dormandy (2013: 44). In fact the Western and Israeli policy of ignoring Hamas and isolating Gaza has contributed to great human misery in the area and encouraged extremism; Lynch (2012:187).

One of the main goals of the US foreign policy in the Middle East was to create a situation where the US would have access to oil without hindrance. Recently, there have been proponents in the US supporting energy independence as a policy that the US should adopt. In November 2012, the Gulf as a whole accounted for 25% of US oil imports; Financial Times (25 February 2013). While this has contributed to part success of the US foreign policy in the region, it has contributed to insecurity in the same. Serwer and Parker (2008:5) state that the war in Iraq contributed to high oil prices in 2008 bringing with it a substantial windfall to the Iraqi government’s coffers. Oil wealth in the Middle East has not improved the lives of the general populations, further impacting negatively on their economic and social security. An example is how oil wealth distribution in Saudi Arabia follows an established network of patronage, in favour of part of the population like the Nadj region, yet it has only 10% of the country’s population; Lynch (2012: 155). Finally, the wealth generated from oil sales has also been attributed to the financing of terrorist and Islamic fundamentalists in the Middle East; IAGS Website (November 14 2007), further threatening security in the region. An example is Iran’s state sponsored terrorism. This has also limited the success of the US’ aim of containing Islam in the Middle East.

The second perspective of security, dominant in the Middle East is that of the Arab Middle East. Bilgin (2004:30), states that this view focuses on security threats to Arab civil societies and states, which are largely external. Furthermore the security needs of Arab States differ from those of the non-Arab States (Israel and Turkey); ibid. Currently, in the Middle East, there is a growing rise in terrorist activity which gives credit to the Arab Middle East approach to security. Palestine for example represents a web of power relations among various actors in Gaza including Hamas, the Salafis and other Palestinian Factions; Lynch 2012:187). Furthermore the US’ support of opposition forces has further worsened the state
of security. In Lebanon, armed political parties and factions like Hezbollah are maintaining significant arsenals not controlled by the Lebanese government Security Council Report (May 2013). The militarism of one group is resulting in the insecurity of another.

The Muslim Middle Eastern perspective of peace and security is based on the premise of lessening anti-Islamic influences and achievement of greater unity of the Muslim people enabling them to be powerful Bilgin (2004:32). However, this perspective is limited in that some concepts of Islam have been contributing to instability in the region, for example Jihad. Jihad is greatly the opposition and war or struggle against non-Islam believers like Christians. The divisions in the Muslim world have further exacerbated the state of insecurity in the region. An example is the Syrian conflict which has contributed to the escalating Muslim Sunni and Shia violence along the border of Lebanon; Security Council Report (May 2013:1). The US, under the Obama Administration, has largely failed to keep Islam in check, or contribute to peace and stability among the warring Muslim factions in the Middle East.

Lastly, the Mediterranean Middle East perspective of peace and security, championed by the Gulf States, prioritises military stability and predictability over democracy and development; Bilgin (2004:34). Instead of facilitating peace and security in the Middle East, this has resulted in an increase in military budgets as well as the autocratic nature of regimes. In 2012, for example, Iraq’s military budget accounted for 7.1% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while in Afghanistan it was 11.2% of the GDP; Global Peace Index Report (2012:17). In the same year, Syria has large proliferation of chemical weapons, and the continuing conflict has resulted in the death of over 70,000 people; ibid. The proliferation of nuclear weapons has hardly been curbed, with 1/5 of the 65 countries in the Middle East announcing an interest in developing nuclear energy CENESS Report (2012).

The perspectives of peace and security projected above hardly cover all the aspects of security in the Middle East. One of the aims of the US foreign policy in the Middle East adopted by the Obama Administration was to promote democratic rule as a way of establishing peace in the region. Minimal changes have been seen for example in 2012, women constituted 27% of the seats in the lower house of Parliament and accounted for 40% of voters in Afghanistan; USIP Report (March 2012). This is in light of the fact that women’s participation is the Muslim world was previously not supported. At the same time, women’s
participation in politics encourages the principles of self determination in democratic states. However, democratic reform in most states in the Middle East has not been smooth and has had adverse effects on political security. In Lebanon for example, the dragging political deadlock over a new electoral law has rendered democratic reform futile Security Council Report (May 2013:2). At the same time, the multi-party system has resulted in armed political parties, like Hezbollah in Lebanon, presenting a security risk to the Lebanese government which does not control the weapon stocks that Hezbollah has.;(ibid.) The Global Peace Index Report (2012) further expresses the view that the new leadership in most post-revolutionary states are struggling to implement orderly democratic transition, resulting in resurgence in violent protests.

On the Economic front, economic policies in the Middle East have changed, but there has been very little corresponding change in the living standards for the general people. Bensahel and Byman (2004:58). The economic changes in many Middle Eastern countries included budgetary balancing, reduction of inflation, market determined prices and a reduction of direct government regulation. This has resulted in increases in non-oil GDPs for example in Kuwait it rose by 3.5% and in Saudi Arabia by 5.2%; IMF Report (12 November 2013:8). In Afghanistan, women’s programming emphasising economic growth supported 2,300 enterprises owned by women and helped establish at least 400 new businesses training over 5000 women; USIP Report (March 2012:1). Contrary to the positive projections of the data, many economies in the Middle East have suffered from large government spending, and insufficient private sector job creation; IMF Report (12 November 2013:28). There is also a high gap in between job creation and labour force entrants which has resulted in rising unemployment rates, further reducing economic security of individuals in the region; ibid. These challenges are despite the transformation in the Obama Administration’s Middle East Foreign Policy.

The Social aspects of most Middle Eastern societies have suffered the greatest challenges hence creating a gross state of insecurity. Conflict and violence have resulted in a lot of religious intolerance. The Pax Christi International Newsletter (2013:1) supports this view by stating that in the Middle East over the past 4 years; at least 27 places of worship have been destroyed in bouts of religious violence. Closely linked to the resulting effects of war and conflict, it is estimated that 2million children are suffering as a direct result of the Syrian conflict; Save the Children (2013:32). With over 2000 schools damaged in the Syrian war, it
is less likely that many of them will return to school after the war, further risking the country’s future; ibid. At the same time, at least 90% of women in Afghanistan’s rural areas are illiterate, diminishing their chances of obtaining job security in an increasingly modernised society; USIP (March 2012:3). Even though laws have been adapted to combat gender based violence and foster equality in Afghanistan, there is a great risk that these gains can be reversed in light of political unrest; ibid. Bilgin (2004:29) postulates that it is women and children that suffer greatly as a result of militarism and valuable resources are channelled into defence budgets instead of health and education.

Spill over from the Syrian conflict has resulted in intensified social and security risks for its neighbouring states IMF Report (12 November 2013:25). There are over 2.1million Syrian refugees in the Middle East, and over 5million internally displaced as a result of the conflict; ibid. The Conflict in Syria is an existential threat for Lebanon, as the refugees account for about 10% of its population, resulting in pressure over resources and increased border conflict; Security Council Report (May 2013:2). Furthermore the conflict has contributed to a decline in bilateral and transit trade as well as tourism in the region; IMF Report (12 November 2013:30). Lastly, children have been recruited by armed groups and used as human shields Save the Children (2013:32), while many women have suffered rape at the hands of militants in the Syrian conflict. This gross moral decay as a result of conflict in the Middle East has contributed to a decline in human security in the Middle East, even under the watch of the Obama Administration.

4.3 The Current State of Peace and Security in Iraq

4.3.1 State Security

Jean (2008:1) reflects that for much of contemporary history, security involved territorial integrity of a state as the greatest threats were posed by war between states. State security therefore implied a nation’s military ability to protect itself in case of aggression from another state. With the withdrawal of US troops in 2011, Iraq has a security force of 700,000 soldiers responsible for safeguarding the country’s territory and fragile democratic state, Mackenzie (2013:1). Despite having a sizeable number of troops, the army is riddled with divisions along ethnic and religious lines. Furthermore, the Shia minority hold positions of authority much to the dissatisfaction of the Shiite majority. These factors have contributed to major challenges in conducting effective operations and the same could be true in the event of war. An example is how between 2003 and 2011, the Iraqi Armed forces were fighting
against the Army of the /men of the Naqshbandi Order, which were Baathists supporters, sponsored by Syria. The state of insecurity in this case is more internal than external. In the same light, the number of insurgent groups in Iraq can be assessed as an indication that the defence forces are not entirely effective in guaranteeing peace and security of a state, in the current international system.

The military budget of Iraq was pegged at 7.1% of the GDP; Global Peace Index Report (2012:7) and in the same year, a US$42 Billion agreement was made with Russia to purchase helicopter gunships and air defence missiles. While this may seem to be contributing to increased military security of the state, this has not been entirely the case. The military has been used by Prime Minister Nouri Al Maliki to relentlessly crush Sunni opposition instead of protecting the state against any external threats. In light of the spill over of the Syrian conflict into Iraq, the military capabilities of Iraq have not deterred threats to the nation’s security from encroaching Iraqi borders.

4.3.2 Human Security

The war in Iraq and the current rising levels of violence have resulted in gross human rights violations, with many failing to meet their basic needs. Peinado (2007:2) states that there are at least six clusters of threats which contribute to human insecurity and these are:

- Interstate conflict, internal conflict that is civil war, genocide and other large scale atrocities, economic and social threats including poverty, infectious diseases and environmental degradation; nuclear, radiological, biological and chemical weapons; terrorism and transnational organised crime.

The Iraq population has been suffering greatly in light of these challenges reducing the level of individual security especially for women and children. Many are struggling to exist because of high levels of poverty and impoverishment. With the overthrow of the Saddam regime and deteriorating security situation less focus has been placed on even women’s rights USIP Report (2012). The Obama administration’s liberal policies in Iraq have been criticised for further opening up the Iraqi population to poverty. Kegley and Blanton (2011: 560) state that that relative deprivation is caused by globalization, not cured by it and so globalization is a part of the problem of human suffering, not the solution.
Political Security

Iraq has undergone gross political changes with the removal of Saddam Hussein from power. A constitution was adopted and a parliament as well as Prime Minister Maliki elected, in a national election with the hope of establishing a democratic state. Also as a result, women hold 26% of seats in Parliament USIP Report (March 2012). It should be noted that this has not been an easy transition, and limited strides have been made towards attaining political security. The Iraqi governance is weak due to poorly planned and constantly changing US advisory missions and efforts at reform Cordesman and Khazai (2013:4). This resulted in a failure to create an elected local government that is representative of the people’s needs; ibid. While adherence of the constitution has brought about administrative competence, it also continues to be interpreted and reinterpreted as events occur; Carnegie Website (14 February 2012). This lack of stability in adopted democratic reform can be interpreted as contributing to corresponding political insecurity in the country.

The 2010 election, though representative of various political interests, left the country with many political fissures, dangerous elements and complex challenges that are shaping a growing level of violence in the country Cordesman and Khazai (2013:5). Although political pluralism is necessary for democracy to be established, in Iraq political parties are defined by religion and ethnic divisions leading to a dangerous polarisation; Carnegie Website (14 February 2012). An example is how there is tension between the Kurds and the Arabs as well as the Sunni and Shia Muslims in central government, which is contributing further to political insecurity. These tensions and divisions along party lines have also resulted in the government’s failure to reach key compromises on patterns of governance and other important political issues; Cordesman and Khazai (2013:5). An example is the different Kurdish political parties which include the Kurdistan Democratic Party, The Kurdistan Islamic Union and the Kurdistan Communist party. All these have different views with regards to a number of issues limiting the success of the multiparty system.

The democratic reform has contributed to the establishment of power by a Muslim radical, Prime Minister Maliki and this has had adverse effects on the political security of Iraq. With continued arms sales by the US government under the Obama administration, to the Maliki government, insecurity is on the increase; Hallams (2011:11). This has resulted in the PM consolidating his grip on power, arresting and intimidating political adversaries and rivals. While it can be argued that Maliki is part of a unity government, which serves as a check on
his power holding him accountable, the rise of Malikiouns suggests otherwise. Malikiouns are a group of people composed of officials, family and friends that help consolidate the power of Maliki in political office and undermine opposition. Carnergie Website (14 February 2012). It is the activities of such groups that are feared to push the country towards civil war and political instability, heightening political insecurity.

**Economic Security**
The Iraqi economy is highly dependent on the petroleum sector, being one of the largest producers of oil in the Middle East, at 2,798 barrels daily; and contributing to its annual GDP of 9.9% in 2011; Meed Website (2012). The US Energy Information Agency estimates that Iraq’s export revenues reached up to USD$83 Billion in 2005; Cordesman and Khazai (2013:9). The greatest challenge however has been that this economic growth has not translated to corresponding development and security of the Iraqi people. Poverty levels are very high estimated at about 25% in 2011, coupled with direct and disguised unemployment mostly of young people; ibid. The petroleum wealth is not progressively allocated to the population, resulting in dwindling economic opportunities for most of the Iraqi population USIP Report (March 2012). Most of the Industries and Service Sectors are government controlled and highly uncompetitive with a myriad of barriers to private investment; Cordesman and Khazai (2013:9). This fact coupled with rife corruption in state owned enterprises has reduced the economic effectiveness and diminished economic security; Iraq Country Profile (2006:3).

Agriculture is an important sector in the Iraq economy, contributing to about 9.7% of its gross GDP, and employing about 22% of the country’s labour force; Cordesman and Khazai (2013:9). The war in Iraq has however contributed to a lot of damage of the land and irrigation infrastructure necessary for agriculture, and climate change has similarly not been kind. In the alluvial plain, soil quality has been damaged by the deposit of large amounts of salts, borne by irrigation overflows and wind and promoted by poor soil drainage Iraq Country Profile (2006). Water scarcity is also contributing to the challenges faced in the agricultural sector. Bensahel and Byman (2004: 74) articulate the view that Renewable water resources per capita have fallen from 3,500 m3 in 1960 to 1,500 m3 in 1990 to 1,250 m3 today. This has also further exacerbated the state of economic security in the country. Closely linked to this view, there are no effective commercial incentives and arrangements for
sustainable development of the agricultural and other industrial sectors in Iraq; Cordesman and Khazai (2013:9).

Social Security
Population Growth in Iraq has been steadily increasing over the last decade. An estimated 14% of the populations are below 14 years of age, which has increased the massive demographic pressure; Cordesman and Khazai (2013:5). This has contributed to pressure on land and water as well as the creation of urban slums, which expose the populations to unhealthy living conditions; ibid. Infrastructure damage has resulted in significant parts of the population with limited water supply or sanitation systems, and sites where municipal and medical wastes have accumulated carry the risk of epidemic; Iraq Country Profile (2006). The war has contributed to destruction of infrastructure especially schools and health centres. It is estimated that currently about 50% of women between the ages of 15 and 24 years of age in rural areas are illiterate; USIP Report (2012). Given the above statistics, social security of the individuals in Iraq is highly compromised because of the prevailing situation.

The country has also been facing violent religious extremism and increase in sectarian conflict, leading to the deaths of many. The USIP Report (2012) expresses that this has resulted in the isolation of women as many have lost sons, husbands fathers and brothers in the conflict. Furthermore an estimated 1million widows and female headed households are disenfranchised as a result; ibid. Internal power struggles, sectarian and ethnic conflict has resulted in at least 1.3million people internally displaced by 2013, with no focus on popular needs and services by the government; Cordesman and Khazai(2013:6). It is generally believed that advancing women’s empowerment is an essential priority for transition in conflict countries as it contributes directly to sustainable stability USIP Report (2012).

4.4 Conclusion
It can be concluded that while the accession of Obama into office was believed by many to bring about a change in the US foreign policy in Iraq and the Middle East, to date his success is far below the expectations of his supporters. The Obama Administration tried to moderate the harsh tone and approach inherited from its predecessor, by reaching out to various actors in the International System, while adopting more diplomatic approaches to brokering peace deals and managing conflicts in the Middle East. This has not stopped the sectarian violence, or improved the welfare of women and children, who are the most affected by the conflict in
the region. There are various people displaced internally and externally in states where conflict is rife, like Syria. Democratic and economic reform has not brought about corresponding development and improvement of the lives of the general people in the Middle East. With this in mind, the Obama Administration’s change in foreign policy approach did not necessarily bring about peace and security in the Middle East.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Despite the transformation in foreign policy approach from the more hard-nosed tone of the Bush administration to the standard approach of the Obama administration, the Middle East still remains embroiled in conflict and unrest. Furthermore the involvement of the US in Iraq and the Middle East has not improved the lives of the ordinary citizen, but they are now plunging deeper into poverty, social strife and economic hardships. This lack of progress towards meaningful peace and security achievements is because UD foreign policy in the Middle East has specific strategic goals, aimed at achieving US interests. This chapter will review and summarise the various aspects of US foreign policy that have been discussed in this study as we as draw conclusions on the impact of the Transformation in US foreign policy in the Middle East with A focus on Iraq. Recommendations to policy makers, CSOs, the UN and other international organisations involved in peace keeping will also be highlighted.

5.2 Conclusion

The US involvement in the Middle East can be traced back to the years when the region was still under the Persian Empire, in the mid 1800s, when Iraq was still called Mesopotamia. Trade in opium and other commodities were the main attraction for the Americans. The region was mainly Islam, while the US was predominantly a Christian state. This limited interaction between the two areas as most of their beliefs clashed. The US later re-engaged its foreign relations in the 1932, with the decline if British influence and gaining of independence of many Middle East states, including Iraq in 1932. By then large oil reserves had been discovered in the region.

World War two presented the US with an opportunity to establish its influence in the Middle East. Most of Europe was going through post-war reconstruction and Middle East oil proved to be important. Increased globalisation also resulted in an increase in the interdependence of the world economic system as proven during the 1970s oil embargo crisis. It became clear that whoever controlled the Middle East oil reserves had a greater change of controlling the world economy.
The US foreign policy in the Middle East after the Cold war was shaped by the perceived New World order after the downfall of the Soviet Union in the early 90s. This marked the fall of communism and a triumph of liberal democracy. Faced with no other threat to its military power in the Middle East, the US was well able to pursue its articulated foreign policy goals without fear of any opposition. These goals were mainly linked to the Middle East oil and safeguarding the US access to it. Oil was important for the increased industrialisation in the US, and proved to be a considerable source of economic power.

The study concludes that various approaches to foreign policy were adopted by the various administrations including military intervention, multilateral action, bilateral relations, foreign aid and trade. Of note, however, was the fact that there were always specific underlying principles governing US foreign policy in the Middle East. These were protection of Israel as a strategic partner, prevention of the rise of a regional hegemon that would threaten US access to petroleum resources, spread of democracy and human rights, maintenance of US dominance in the region and protection of Western friendly states. All other policies were in one way or the other linked to these main strategic goals. An example is the how foreign aid has for a long time been used to peddle US interests in the Middle East.

The study noted that with the September 11 terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center, the Bush administration saw an opportunity to embark on a unilateral campaign in the Middle East to further establish US power. The essential principles of this new foreign policy were articulated as the “Bush Doctrine”, with a focus on pre-emptive war on terrorism and prevention of proliferation of WMDs. This resulted in the invasion of Afghanistan first in 2001 then Iraq in 2003, by the US and a coalition of willing allies, which included Poland, the UK, Australia and Georgia.

Most literature, as observed by the study, noted that the American public saw a new hope in the campaign material and foreign policy rhetoric, of Barrack Obama, leading to his election into office in 2008. Obama saw the war in Iraq as a “dumb war” and articulated the changes that his administration wanted to make towards the Middle East once in office. The changes included re-engaging US allies estranged by the wars in the Middle East, political engagement and diplomatic approaches of friends and foes alike, withdrawal of US troops in Iraq, increase of drone strikes and US troops in Afghanistan as well as actively acting on the
Israeli-Palestinian peace process. This change in approach is what has generally been viewed as transformation in US foreign policy.

In assessing the similarities and differences between the two Administrations, one can safely conclude that the underlying foreign policy principles that guided the Bush Administration were the same that guided the Obama Administration. What were different were the approaches championed by each Administration. The Bush Administration favoured a unilateral use of force to achieve US dominance and a series of go it alone policies. On the other hand the Obama Administration favoured a multilateral approach, using diplomacy as its vanguard but resorting to use of other methods in the event that this did not work. Both Administrations were still focused on the importance of Middle East oil, and US dominance in the region. This is despite the fact that the Obama Administration has also articulated the fact that the US should become self sufficient with regards to petroleum and natural gas.

The study observed that despite the changes in foreign policy approach by the Obama Administration, the Middle East still remains in turmoil and Iraq is on the verge of civil war. The Deep seated ethnic and sectarian differences have resulted in an escalation in violence in Iraq, and other Middle East countries like Syria and Lebanon. The drive at spreading democracy and human rights has resulted in governments headed by radicals for example Maliki in Iraq or the coming to power of the corrupt government of Hamid Karzai in Afghanistan.

An increase in oil revenue, estimated at about US$83 Billion in Iraq, for example, has not directly helped the ordinary people in the region with many living below the poverty datum line. In fact petro-dollars have been channelled to supporting terrorist activities for example Al- Qaeda in Afghanistan and some parts of Iraq has resurfaced. The focus on Military security by most regimes has resulted in the neglect and isolation of women and children. Many schools and hospitals in Syria for example have shut down as a result of the conflict. There have also been gross human rights violations by governments, the US and religious extremists in the Middle East. The change in policy by the Obama Administration did not effectively contribute to peace and security in the region.
5.2 Recommendations

The findings of this study have led the researcher to make the following recommendations on establishing peace and security in the Middle East. It is necessary for any future US Administration that want to genuinely facilitate Peace in the Middle East to bridge the divisions between the various ethnic and sectarian groups in the region. Most of the cases of violence are among these groups, for example between the Sunnis and the Shiites. Most political parties in the Middle East are formed along these sectarian divisions, making democracy difficult to implement. Even though democratic systems allow for a multi-party system, this further contributes to conflict in government and no progressive consensus can be reached. There is therefore a need to identify key differences among the various groups in each state and address those for a lasting solution for peace.

It is also vital for the US foreign policy makers to consider measures by which they can assure human security in the Middle East. An example can be making the safety of the individual, as well as the meeting of their basic needs as a pre-condition for aid and bilateral relations. Civil society organisations and local populations can also be empowered by if developmental aid funds are directly disbursed towards initiatives that focus on the protection of the rights and serving the day to day needs of ordinary people.

The UN, regional organisations and other international institutions should apply the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect (R2P), more consistently to avoid mass atrocities like the loss of life by hundreds of thousands of people, occurring in the Middle East as a result of conflict. There is a need for the UN and the International Community to assess the effects of preventive strikes, as in the case of Iraq. In context with the UN charter and chart a way forward to avoid similar strikes on other states. In becoming more autonomous, the International body can be able to effectively apply decisions.

CSOs working in the Middle East should form a coalition to pool resources and further help the millions of people suffering as a result of the conflict. It would also help alleviate poverty and health risks if CSOs offered aid to the people that are not tied to conditions of donor funds, as has been the case in the past. Furthermore, CSOs should also try to consolidate information in the areas they are working in so that actual figures of the people in need of help are documented and sent to the relevant authorities.
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