The Obama doctrine - a multipolar foreign policy.

A case study on how the Obama administration is renewing American primacy in world politics.
This paper will clarify the debate surrounding contemporary American foreign policy, and it seeks to bring awareness to the vast field surrounding the topic. This essay is a case study, and it focuses mainly on the Obama doctrine, it does also shed light to the former foreign policy of the Bush administration. The research questions seek to investigate what theory of polarity characterises the Obama doctrine. It does also investigate how the United States foreign policy has changed under the Obama administration, by applying the methodology of a text analysis, the three theories of polarity: “Balance of power, hegemonic theory, and multipolarity” are in turn applied on three challenging areas for contemporary American foreign policy. The results show that the foreign policy led by the Obama administration, is heavily influenced by the theory of multipolarity.

Keywords: U.S.A Foreign policy, polarity, multipolarity, balance of power, Libya, Hegemony, Doctrine, Strategic restraint.
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1. Introduction:

The events of September 11th introduced a new turning point in the history of American foreign policy. The Bush administration sowed the seeds of tension along its futile attempt to reinstate democratic institution building wherever it was deemed to be necessary. The failure of a unilateral foreign policy contributed to the image of a United States that was seen as a lone superpower that prioritised domestic interest over international commitments. The image changed with the election of Barack Obama. The current administration has introduced a transformative foreign policy shift, better enabling the nation to move beyond the state of war and to concentrate the attention on a broader set of nations and institutions. This has been pushing the United States foreign policy towards institution building alongside foreign governments within the areas of counterterrorism, humanitarian interventions, nuclear de-escalation. The administration’s foreign policy has thus been influenced by one of the three theories of polarity: The multipolar world order. This shift could explain the rise of international institutions and alliances. It could consequently explain that other nations can challenge American hegemony. These emerging nations do nevertheless hold out opportunities vital for coordination and cooperation. The administrations multipolar foreign policy promotes thus regional and global security.

1 Krauthammer, Charles.1990. The Unipolar moment. Foreign affairs. Vol 70: No 1 America and the world PP 23-33

1.1 Purpose of study

The purpose of this essay is to gain a better understanding of contemporary American foreign policy under the presidency of Barack Obama: I will analyse how the presidential administration has steered American foreign policy towards a multipolar strategy. This essay will contribute to the vast field of research that is being made of contemporary American foreign policy. This would indeed contribute to a better understanding of the role and behaviour of the United States in world politics. This essay does also connect the theories of polarity to the study being made. It is vital for future research to investigate whether or not the United States hegemonic power has been reshaped to fit into our current multipolar world order. This is a world order where leading states conserve their power with emerging nations in tandem institutions.

Based on my purpose of study, the following questions are to be answered:

- How has the United States foreign policy towards the rest of the world changed under the presidency of Barack Obama?
- What could be the potential motives behind a foreign policy shift?
- What international order characterizes the foreign policy doctrine of the Obama administration?
2. Research Design

This essay is a case study, and it pursues the research by selecting a theory-consuming research design. By using a theory consuming research design, this essay shall explain the selected case with the existing theories of polarity. A theory consuming study case explains; “Why it happened, as it happened” A case study on the other hand, is according to John Gerring “A method that concentrates the attention on a single example of a broader phenomenon” Studies that pursue a case study design employ two levels of analysis. Case studies involves the study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of similar units, in this case a unit can be a state. Esaiasson argues that it’s essential to have at least two levels of analysis when one has conclusions regarding cause and effect: “How it was before and how has it developed” A case study is also characterized through its intention of focusing on one, or a few units. To further explain the attributes of a case study, it is important to mention that a case study is built on a formal and an informal unit. In this study, the formal unit is the one chosen for an intensive analysis where as other phenomenon’s are brought into light in a peripheral way. This means that they can be studied through the use of secondary literature. According to Gerring, informal units are studied superficially when compared to the formal unit. As the nature of the essay is explanatory, it aims to explain the foreign policy shift under the presidency of Barack Obama with the help of the three theories of polarity. I have chosen three cases where I apply the Obama doctrines multipolar stance. This is because I am aiming to increase the coherency by applying the Obama doctrine in the context of

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3 Esaiasson, Peter Et al. 2007 P.42-43

4 Esaiasson, Peter Et al. 2007.P.100

5 Gerring, John: What is case study and what is it good for? American political science review. Vol 98, No 2. 2004


7 Gerring, John: What is case study and what is it good for? American political science review. Vol 98, No 2. 2004
• Civil unrest in Libya

• Combatting extremism in Afghanistan and Pakistan

• Seeking a world free from Nuclear weapons

These specific areas are in turn selected due to the fact that they are presented as challenging factors for contemporary American foreign policy. The choice of Afghanistan and Pakistan is important to study, as it is central for the analysis on how the ongoing war on terror is being developed. The area is also delimited to Afghanistan and Pakistan mainly because of the reason that the area itself is the epicenter for violent extremism. The reason behind the choice of applying the Obama doctrine in the Libyan intervention is because of the nature of behavior the American administration chose. It is important to analyze what motivated the president to apply a different foreign policy as similar interventions were acted in a different manner. Third, the stance of promoting a world without weapons of mass destruction is also included as it is important to combine these cases and to analyze what international theory of polarity is being highlighted here. By studying the selected cases, the essay increases the understanding of the theories of polarity that influence the Obama doctrine.
2.1 Material

This essay will be using both primary and secondary sources. The primary material will be official statement from the White House. The material relevant for my study is first and foremost, foreign policy doctrines. By analysing the “National Security Strategy” of both the Bush administration and the Obama administration, one gains a better understanding of various administrations’ foreign policy, and how they have responded to different matters. This essay has also examined public statements, and it is also built upon empirical scientific articles and theoretical materials related to the topic of foreign policy. Two theoretical findings that are central to this study are the works of John Ikenberry, and Bruce Russet and Harvey Starr:

- “After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major wars.”

- “World politics: The menu for choice”

These books heavily impact this study, and this is because of the contribution the authors have made to the field of foreign policy. They have presented ground breaking theories of polarity – which the author of “After victory” calls “The big bang theories of international relations.” These theories will then be used to analyze the foreign policy of Barack Obama, as they shape the outcome of the decisions made by American foreign policy. The essay is have also built upon different scientific articles ranging from the databases from “Council on foreign relations” to the scientific database “Google scholar.” The essay has also selected a number of articles ranging from BBC to The Daily telegraph. By implementing this approach, one faces the risk that the articles could be biased. While reading the work of a specific author, one could be affected by the author’s own thoughts and judgement. This could in turn be reflected in later studies and it could then be difficult to divide my own thoughts from the author’s thoughts. An effective way to work against this is by using a criterion that is well known in circles of social sciences: closeness of the source. This marks the
awareness of the nature of the source:” *Is it a secondary source or a first-hand source?*” Objectivity is the main purpose behind this idea. The sources could also lack scientific credibility; this does not mean that I have not been thorough with my empirical findings. I have compared the evidence these sources present. Why are they inconsistent with the material a scientific article presents? This is because of the reason that the journalist presents his or her own views. This is also one of the reasons why this essay crosschecks, verifies and checks the legitimacy of the source chosen. Through this way, the essay gets confident knowledge over the opinions that are gathered from the different media outlets.

### 2.2 Method:

The empirical material will become subject to a qualitative text analysis. This sheds light to the essential content by applying a thorough examination to the relevant parts of the text and the contexts it presents. By adopting this method, I read and examine the parts of the texts that present the vital areas important for this research. According to Esaiasson et al, the importance of shedding light on the central aspects of the text is one of the main reasons why a qualitative text analysis is suitable for a case study. Another reason is that certain parts of the text are far more important to the study than the other remaining parts of the text. A content analysis is important when it comes to clarifying the important parts relevant for a research study of this nature. The parts a reader could be in search for can be scattered across the text, meaning that the rest of the text could in turn not be that vital for the study being made. One could nevertheless use these parts to strengthen the reasoning that is formulated. This essay shall also use the concept of analyzing the motives behind an alleged foreign policy shift that has occurred during the presidency of Barack Obama. This is done by using an intentional analysis, these methods are common in the field of social sciences, but it is difficult to present an actor’s actual motive behind a decision with credibility. An intentional analysis aims to map and explain why a foreign policy shift has occurred,

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what are the intentions behind this and what are the goals?\textsuperscript{9} The unit that is targeted during the intentional analysis is the foreign policy doctrine of the Obama administration. There are different types of intentional analysis. A type that this essay is using in this study is an analysis that has pre-defined the motives, it in turns helps to present a detailed explanation to why an actor acted in a way that this essay is trying to explain\textsuperscript{10}.

2.3 Operationalization

An operationalization is important because the three theories of polarity are non-applicable on the empirical findings. An operationalization clarifies the collection of the material. A number of theoretical concepts are also selected to become operationalized. This is a method to simplify the empirical findings. In this case, the essay will be applying the theories of polarity on the three different cases to examine how American foreign policy is becoming “Multipolar”.
A strong indicator could be how a state pursues its foreign policy. For instance, if we see that a foreign policy is being outlined under cooperation through international alliances, then it could strengthen my statement regarding a multipolar American foreign policy.

\textsuperscript{9} Esaiasson, Peter, Giljam, Mikael, Oscarsson, Henrik, Wägnerud, Lena: Metodpraktikan: Konsten att studera samhälle, individ och marknad Norstedt juridik: Stockholm 2010 P. 238

\textsuperscript{10} Esaiasson, Peter Et al. 2007 P.331
2.4 Structure of Study

Based on the purpose of study, as set out in the introduction above, this study is structured into six parts. The first part consists of an introduction and a statement of purpose that presents the research problem. The second part explains the chosen method and material, the third part consists entirely of the theoretical findings, focusing on the theories of polarity and it addresses the various types of international orders that are on the menu for a leading state: Unipolarity, Balance of power and Multipolarity. This section will also explain possible incentives a leading state has when it shapes a world order in regard to its foreign policy. The fourth part of this essay will provide an historical background of the former Bush Administration’s foreign policy doctrine, and an analysis of the contemporary foreign policy of the Obama administration. This is necessary in order to fully understand the fifth part, which highlight the areas that are of a certain importance to American foreign policy. It does also address the declarations and important foreign policy actions made by the Obama presidency in relation to the heritage of former U.S. President, George W. Bush. The sixth part consists of a conclusion of the study made and it highlights the important results. This part does also discuss potential studies to be made in the future.

2.5 Delimitation

As this topic covers a wide area, there have been many factors that have impacted American foreign policy. It is important to distinguish the fact that there have been different foreign policies during various administrations. The Obama administration is the one that is heavily analysed whereas the Bush administration is subject to a brief background analysis. There is also a range of different theories of polarity as well as there are a wide range of theories that can help to explain a nation’s behaviour in
global politics. The delimitation of this essay will therefore be held within a timeframe covering the years of 2001-2011. The three cases that will be brought to light are major foreign policy challenges during the chosen timeframe. One could also apply this method on other cases, thereby creating a cumulative research process\textsuperscript{11}. This will in turn simplify the analysis of contemporary American foreign policy.

\textsuperscript{11} Esaiasson, Peter Et al. 2007 P.18
3. Incentives for constructing a foreign policy

A turning point is a dramatic historical juncture. The old order is destroyed, and a powerful state re establishes the basic rules and arrangements. These turning points tend to come after major wars. The advantageous position a leading state finds itself in, lets it shape the new rules and principles of international relations, and by doing so it rearranges the international order. This is indeed an extraordinary opportunity to shape world politics. Robert Gilpin refers these turning points as “systemic changes” this is because of the reason why institutions and rules of governance are remade to suit the interest of the preponderant hegemon. The following chapters will present these three different theories of how a leading state can rearrange the post-war world according to its own preferences, and the incentives behind its specific choice. It will also analyse how a powerful state can convince weaker states to join in an institutional settlement.

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3.1 Levels of analysis

The intention behind foreign policy is to affect the behaviour of other states, and to maximize a state’s power; this is to keep the state locked in a favourable position in the international hierarchy. In the international system, nothing is distributed equally. Every state requires economic goods, military capabilities and political support and least but not last: coordination with other states. Much of foreign policy concerns behaviour, and the links between the intention of behaviour and the consequences that follow. A way to approach this concept is to break down foreign policy into five levels. According to Russet and Starr, a decision-makers incentive to make choices is constrained by his own nature. There are five levels that are important to present, but this essay shall use the final one as it highly relevant for this study. The first one is called the individual level. The second level is enclosed by the structure of the government: the sphere where the decision-makers operate. The third marks the level of society where the decision-makers govern. The fourth one marks the web of relations that the state shares with its global allies. The last one is the world system, and this is the level of analysis that will be the concentration point of this essay. By presenting and distinguishing various levels of analysis, this simplifies the clarification of what kind of questions might be answered and from what perspective. In the fifth level, nation states operate within a context that is shaped by other states and other international actors. Some of these nations can either be large or small entities, and they control resources; this is called geopolitics. The international system is the starting point of this analysis. The international structure offers the arena where we see the environment that surrounds states and their foreign policy makers. It is an important component to the menu from which the decision makers choose their behaviour.

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13 Russet, Bruce, Starr, Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P. 117
14 Russet, Bruce, Starr, Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P. 120
15 Russet, Bruce, Starr, Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P. 17
16 Russet, Bruce, Starr, Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P. 14
17 Russet, Bruce, Starr, Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P.P 30-42
18 Russet, Bruce, Starr, Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P. 32-96
In the analysis of American foreign policy, we will see what type of international order characterises the foreign policy doctrine of the Obama administration. These circumstances matter since they will cooperate or coordinate their actions with other international actors. J David Singer argues that the international system is the most comprehensive level of analysis. It is here external influences, which arise outside state boundaries shape global patterns of behaviour among states, and the unit of interdependence among them is highly visible. It is here that we see the states level of capability and its status in world politics. Singer continues to argue that it is up to the observer to choose and to focus upon the parts or upon the components of the system.

To ease the understanding of the international system, it is important to use an important theoretical concept that concern the number of major actors, or used in a different term – poles. A state could be called a pole if it possesses the combination of preponderant military, economic and political power. Each pole acts with a significant independence that separates it from the other actor. There is a wide selection of possible behaviour. The foreign policy of a state could determine the behaviour of that state in particular. Before presenting the types of orders and how power is distributed among states, and what restraints power itself has, we must understand what order itself is. There are two different types of order, world order and international order. World order can be summarized as the people and the totality of relations among them. The latter, consist of a system of rules and the expectation that states have of them. This means in short: “Pattern of activity that sustains the elementary or primary goals of the society of states, or international society”. Political order is thus in this context, the arrangement of governance between states, rules, principles and institutions. This helps to clear the understanding of the relationship between states and their arrangements of interaction.

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19 Russet, Bruce, Starr; Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P. 11

20 Krauthammer, Charles.1990. The Unipolar moment. Foreign affairs. Vol 70: No 1 America and the world PP 23-33

21 Russet, Bruce, Starr; Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P. 86

3. 2 Theories of polarity

The disparities of state power determine the dilemma that a leading states face after a turning point, how does a state create and maintain a post-war order? This hinges on the capacities a state has, and it stems from the political character of a specific state and the strategic thinking regarding the overall orientation of the international order it possesses. John Ikenberry presents an explanatory theory that eases the understanding on how a leading state may choose to shape the strategic behaviour of the post war order. The constructivist theory sees institutions as socially constructed views that will shape the behaviour of states. Institutions are thus viewed as patterns of relations that in turn reproduce the interest and actions of groups. Behind state interests lie prevailing norms and ideas regarding the purpose and the overall orientation of the state in the wider set of the international system. This view explains the organization of the post-war order; it reflects the thinking of the entity that shapes the post-war order. There are varieties of orders where the leading state can shape a possible outcome, as well as there are different motives for constructing a post-war order. Each model has various underlying conditions that by itself present different ways in which power is distributed. Each of these models captures the most general variations. The first order that can be created is called “The balance of power.” In this order; the basic organizing principle is anarchy. During this order, political authority does not exist; states involved do not stand in any hierarchical relationship with one another. Naturally, in a world where anarchy is prevalent, incentives exists for states so that they can balance against other states; this is indeed the goal for the need of ensuring one’s security, the fundamental goal of states. States will seek protection in countervailing coalitions of weaker states; the secondary states will thus balance against stronger states. This is where alliances emerge as they are seen as temporary coalitions of states and they are formed to counter the concentration of power. The second outcome of an international order is referred to as the “Hegemonic order.” The basic organizing principle here is based on the relations of power and authority, and in turn defined by the principle of hierarchy. States are assigned to subordinate and to superordinate roles. The political authority is very centralized. The order is also ruled

by the preponderance of the strongest state, in this case referred to as the leading state. The order will eventually break up when the power shifts. The rules of the game in this order are enforced by the capabilities of the leading state. Robert Gilpin argues that “The evolution of any system has been characterized by successive rises of powerful states that have governed the system and have determined the patterns of international interactions and established the rules of the system”\textsuperscript{24}

As the hegemonic order develops into a more benign form, a form that includes restraints on the exercise of power, it begins to resemble the order of “Multipolarity”: The basic organizing principle here is focused upon legal and political institutions that in turn, limit the exercise of power. The institutionalized process present here, reduces the stakes involved in the political struggle. The institutionalized process specifies in turn the rights and limits involved states have. Once established, they are binding, limiting the exercise of power. In a multipolar order, a state can transform its power into a durable order that involves the state in institutions with weaker states; it transforms its power to “stick” with weaker states, thereby giving them incentives to join the newfound strategic alliance. The capacity of the leading state to create institutions as a tool work of political control is dependent on two variables: the extent of power disparities after a turning point and the type of states that are willing to join a potential alliance with the leading state: The bigger the power differences after a turning point, the greater the capacity of the leading state to create and involve weaker states in alliances\textsuperscript{25}. The leading state employs this method precisely because it finds the long-term goals more satisfying than the short-term goals. Restraining power for institutional arrangements is thus the incentive in this case. Just as power disparities are in favour for the leading states, they are also incentives for a weak state to join an alliance because this reduces the risks of domination. The table below simplifies the overall view of the varieties of order.


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<th>Balance of power</th>
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<th>Constitutional Order</th>
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<td>Organizing principle</td>
<td>Anarchy</td>
<td>Hierarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restraints on concentrated power</td>
<td>Counterbalancing coalitions</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of stability</td>
<td>Equilibrium of power</td>
<td>Preponderance of power</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3 The Balance of power order

If two states have the majority of influence of military and economic power and if this impacts the international community as a whole, leading to the development of spheres of influence, then this order can be referred to as the “Balance of power order”. In this order, states develop the arrangement that aggregates their power within temporary coalitions; this is done to counterbalance potentially threatening states in the international arena. The balance of power order operates in the terms of gaining material benefits for balancing purposes; it can also be operated under the management of self-conscious rules and norms. In a balance of power order, a single coalition cannot be allowed to be preponderant. Stability has to be visible between the two strong coalitions. The coalitions have to be in turn equal in terms of military might and political strength. Stability would be enforced when one state weighs out the other. When the competition between two strong states occurs, it provides the costs and benefit to some less powerful states. Smaller state can then have the incentives of playing off the two poles against each other in the competition of allocating resources. The presence of equal strength between the contending states and shifting alliances is visible as this is important to preserve the equilibrium. This order forces states involved into the position where they develop their own security arrangements; arrangements that will allows them to aggregate their power in temporary alliances that will offset and counterbalance threatening powers. The state involved in an alliance does also pursue a course of action that would have been significantly different had it not been involved in that alliance in particular. States that are involved in alliances behave differently from states that are not. The policy of a state becomes less constrained and consistent with the term of the alliance. This does in turn interpret that a state can participate in armed hostilities that in turn can

26 Russet, Bruce, Starr, Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P. 86
27 Russet, Bruce, Starr, Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P. 74
have been provoked by other states in that same alliance. It would thus be very likely to presume that one alliance member can drag the other reluctant partner into a conflict. Small states could use this opportunity of being involved in an alliance to manipulate a larger state involved. Larger nations could in turn also use the alliance for the purpose of dominating the smaller states involved. Alliance members check the restraint and concentration of power and they all accumulate opposition power. This is the characteristic used by weaker states, and it will be referred to the term “bandwagoning.” Weaker states are persuaded to join a coalition by a powerful state that offer benefits that are attractive and important to weaker states. The weaker states decides that the cost of opposing a powerful state could exceed the benefits; benefits could in turn include trade agreements or military aid. Kenneth Waltz defines “Bandwagoning” as a risky alternative for weaker states: If “Bandwagoning” involved strong commitments and binding institutions, and if it lessened the extreme forms of exploitation by the weak then “Bandwagoning” itself would be a mix of balance and cooperation. The theory behind stability is thus achieved by the competitive nature of states in an environment of anarchy. On the other hand instability is seen as a result of power shift where counterbalancing is not as successful as it is in a stable order. In this order, fear drives states to duplicate successful policies since failure in the anarchic international system results in the disappearance of the state itself. Charles Tilly argues that great powers act and look alike. This is a prime example on how great powers are similar but still different. Charles Tilly continues to argue: “The need to protect against external danger compelled states in early modern Europe to develop administrative and bureaucratic structures to maintain, supply and to finance permanent military establishments.”

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30 Russet, Bruce, Starr, Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P. 76


States function differently, but by adopting different strategies and approaches; they must all in the end be able to perform the same security related tasks necessary to survive. Kenneth Waltz continues the discussion, claiming that anarchy is the essence of the international system. The only incentives that exist for a state is to counter balance; survival is thus the fundamental goal of the state involved. States will seek coalitions in order to minimize the risk of domination. This is the way alliances behave under this order. Balance of power counters the impact of power through the use of coalitions. The order minimizes the risk of other peripheries outside the two leading blocks. The other is bound to understand that a counterbalancing move is always imminent, and a balance of order is thus maintained by this order. Stability does also ensure that neither side advances towards expanding its sphere of influences due to the understanding that they both share the precise amount of power. This order reduces the challenges of international violence, as there are only two strong blocks, and weaker peripheries. This argument is based on the theory of a solid and deterrent balance among the power and national interest areas. If one side decided to expand its sphere of influence, then the countering pressure would discourage the other states next move. Kenneth Waltz argues that the slightest improvement of one position invokes the other power bloc to adapt itself. “This is the intensity of the “zero sum game”. It is also important to understand that changes, no matter how small or big, affect the order. A balance of power order could be different from theory and in practice. Two states could be equal in military might but totally different in terms of economic power. Alliances could exceed the other alliance through this advantage but the military strength would keep the two in check.

36 Waltz, Kenneth. 1964. The stability of a bipolar world. The structure of the international system. PP 63-68
38 Waltz, Kenneth. 1964. The stability of a bipolar world. The structure of the international system. PP 63-68
39 Waltz, Kenneth. 1964. The stability of a bipolar world. The structure of the international system. PP 63-68
40 Russet, Bruce, Starr; Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins
41 Gustavsson, Jakob, tallberg, Jonas. 2009. Studentlitteratur AB
3.4 The Hegemonic World order

This system is marked by the pattern of interaction that involves a dominant state and a less powerful, subordinate state. The terms “hegemonic stability” and “unipolarity” are used interchangeably. This order does also highlight a state’s ability to establish and enforce its will on to the international arena. The character of a strong hegemon refers to a powerful state, and its dominance rests solely on the disproportionate share of resources. Hegemonic orders are established and maintained exclusively by the concentration of power. This order is characterized by the distribution of power, and by the hierarchical position of superordinate and subordinates. Authority is naturally centralized as the disparities of power have created the conditions necessary for a hierarchical order. If the hegemonic power declines or is passed along to another state, then the order will decay. There are no states or coalition of states that are willing to challenge the hegemon militarily, or politically, the hegemon offers incentives to weaker states allowing them to be dominated. This is often seen as absolutic, simplistic and aggressive. Unilateralism is likely to weaken global coalition and undermine multilateral efforts. Robert Gilpin argues: “Steady and inevitable shifts in the distribution of power among states give rise to new challenger states who eventually engage the leading state in hegemonic war, which in turn gives rise to a new hegemonic state that uses its dominant position to establish an order favourable to its interest.” This order is characterized by the material power a state has. It uses its material power and establishes a hegemonic order. If the hegemonic state declines, so will also the international order. The capacities and the rules established by the hegemonic state are built on the direct coercive domination of weaker states. Factors of determinants are military power, technological advantages and ideological

42 Russet, Bruce, Starr, Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P. 87

43 Russet, Bruce, Starr, Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins P. 87


attributes\textsuperscript{47}. The leading state extends materialistic, security and other benefits to weaker states under its umbrella\textsuperscript{48}. Weaker states within the hegemonic order automatically become part of the hegemonic states sphere of influence.\textsuperscript{49} Weaker states see this as an incentive and this discourages them of obtaining potential power resources that can be used to oppose the hegemonic state. Charles Krauthammer argues that instead of counterbalancing against the hegemony, other nations under it should bandwagon alongside, as there are clear benefits for this. Unlike the previous order, the hegemonic order does not have a clear line that separates the balance against threats and power. In this order, weaker states are able to retain their sovereignty and control over domestic affairs. The hegemonic state protects its members from outside influence by modifying the status quo; the hegemonic state does not try to abuse its hegemony. When a hegemonic order shapes into a more benign form, a form that has real restraints on its exercise of power, the order then begins to take the shape of a multipolar world order.\textsuperscript{50} The hegemonic order does contain the seeds of its own failure. The “\textit{Unipolarity}” that stems from this theory of hegemony eventually creates a blowback effect that will lead to a multipolar order. The unbalanced power that is created in this the environment is conducive to the rise of new challengers in the international system. The emergence is in turn affected by different growth rates that will eventually push the subordinate state to increase its own capability in external environment\textsuperscript{51}. The uneven distribution of power in this system is unbalanced, as this pressure a state to increase its own capabilities rather than following the guidelines of the hegemonic state\textsuperscript{52}. All of this could ultimately erode the hegemonic pre-eminence. The criticism of the hegemony's ability to impose policies that compel other states to accept “underling roles” are all products of the

\textsuperscript{47} Joseph Nye: This is No Time for Unilateralism.” Press Release, Harvard University, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, April 14, 2002.

\textsuperscript{48} Hook, Steven, Spanier, John.2007. American Foreign policy since world war II. CQ Press.


previous statements that criticise this international order of hegemony.

3.5 The Multipolar world order

Why would a hegemonic state conserve its power in a multipolar order? In the hegemonic order a leading state reflects upon its power, and it concludes that its power and advantage over other states is temporary. This will eventually perish in a foreseeable future. It decides to conserve its hegemonic power in an institutionalized order. The multipolar world order is designed to promote transnational and intergovernmental cooperation among states. Factors of determinant are cooperation and the renunciation of temporary advantages. In this order, the distribution of power lies in where more than two states have equal preponderance in the terms of military and economic might. States involved in a multipolar order respond to potential threats through the use of institutions. The institutions established here have an impact since they have the nature of restraining state power. Through the use of institutional binding, states involved create a long-term security commitment that in turn is difficult to retract. An institutional commitment can include a treaty that sets out agreed upon standards that are of a fundamental part of the institution. This is one important attribute of the multipolar order; states mutually agree to constrain their power. Cost and benefits are spread in this order, and the principles of conduct, which derives from the norms proposing universal mode of relations to other states. Institutional transparency increases as soon as the rules regarding state cooperation

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55 Harvey, Frank. 2011. The Obama doctrine and multilateral "legitimacy" The Chronicle Herald

becomes codified\textsuperscript{57}. Treaties involved, formalizes alliances, and constitutions specifies the institutionalized rights and rules that shape the power within this order. These are the shared agreements over the “rules of the game”. The constraint of power does also ensure that the separation between the checks and balances is present\textsuperscript{58}. As a result of this, powerful states within this order must exercise their power within an institutionalized political process. The constraining and connecting effects of this order reduces the weaker states incentives of opposing against the stronger state\textsuperscript{59}. The multipolar order is developed by a leading states incentive to create and build a mutually accepted cooperative framework of order among states\textsuperscript{60}. Member states participate willingly and agree to the overall orientation of the system. To actually gain the compliance of secondary weaker states, the leading state is compelled to restrain its power. This strategic restraint assures weaker states that they would not to become subordinates if they agree to be involved in an institutional framework alongside the leading state\textsuperscript{61,62}. The secondary states commit to this framework under assurances of not being dominated or exploited. Strategic restraint is possible because of the binding effect and “stickiness” that locks a state into a predictable course of action. This is acceptable to weaker states, since liberal features like transparency exists, these institutions are all embedded in the society.\textsuperscript{63}. Weaker states involved do not have any incentives of balancing against the leading state, nor are they trying to replace it as they benefit from the cooperation alongside the leading state. This is seen as an investment where the interest is pushed into a durable multipolar order. During the previous hegemonic order the state pays the cost of enforcing the power to maintain order\textsuperscript{64}. The reason why weaker states join is because


\textsuperscript{60} Hook, Steven, Spanier, John. 2007. American Foreign policy since world war II. CQ Press.


that they do not have a better option; it would indeed be wise to wait until they can balance against the hegemony. But without an institutional agreement, the secondary states would lose more than they would if they had joined a constitutional framework. Robert Gilpin argues that:

“International order is at any particular moment in history the reflection of the underlying distribution of power of states within the system, over time the distribution shifts leading to conflict and ruptures in the system, hegemonic war and the eventual reorganization of order so as to reflect the new distribution of power capabilities. It is the rising hegemonic state or group of states whose power position has been ratified by result of warfare that defines the terms of the post-war settlement and the character of the new order”

By persuading other states to join the institutional settlement, a state has consequently convinced a weaker state that the state itself will be a subject to strategic restraint. This has led other states to participate in “sticky” institutions where the decision-making procedure is based upon agreed rules and principles of institutional cooperation, sticky institutions do thus limit the power. This is also where the implications of advantages are reduced. This sets the limits on what powerful actors involved in institutions can do unilaterally. The leading state must engage in voluntary compliance. This hinges on the ability to demonstrate its reliability, commitment and willingness to restrain its exercise of power. This will lead to power being rendered responsibly in a predictable fashion. Institutional binding, does also establish institutional links with other states, and this limits the autonomy. Binding does also restrict the range of freedom of states, as it does not matter whether the states are weak or strong. It reduces the role and consequence of power in their relationship.

This is best seen in security alliances where members face a common threat. A multipolar order is also created by the framework of doing “business”, when treaties are ratified they become legal agreements for Trans-governmental routines, which engage the on-going interaction between states. The absence of security dilemmas and with the incentives weaker states have against balancing against a stronger state marks the presence of a mutually constrained environment of power, binding and creating opportunities for an institutional commitment; this in turn allows the states to convey assurances amongst each other in this soft power approach. The multipolar framework contributes to the relationship among advanced industrial states and this is characterized by an intergovernmental routine and an organized relationship. Conflicts are thus solved and negotiated within these associated channels.69

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4. Foreign policy doctrines

The theoretical finding presents three various types of world orders, and by analysing the Obama doctrine along with a brief analysis of the Bush doctrine, we shall see that the multipolar order is the one dominating the current administration’s foreign policy. We shall also see why the second order of hegemony, was prevalent under the Bush administrations eight years.

Foreign policy doctrines justify decisions that relate to a state’s foreign policy. The bureaucracies of a state spend important resources drawing out detailed policy conclusions. Doctrines are unilateral declarations designed to procure public support and to serve as axiomatic policy guidelines. Doctrines do also serve the purpose of announcing basic policy statements to foreign governments. This is intended to serve as axiomatic guides to policies; by definition, it must be simple, and concise. The Obama administration and the former Bush administration underwent different turning points September 11 or the war-weariness that shaped the end of the war in Iraq can be referred to as Ikenberry argues “Historical junctures”. They have all seen the world differently out of these three orders. Both administrations did also have differences in state-interest and the prevailing norms and ideas that shaped American foreign policy were also different under these junctures. The current administration's foreign policy shift, from a unilateral to a multipolar doctrine has been shaped by the previous administrations attempt of adapting its policy posture onto a self-perceived world order.


73 Hook, Steven, Spanier, John.2007. American Foreign policy since world war II. CQ Press.


75 Hook, Steven, Spanier, John.2007. American Foreign policy since world war II. CQ Press.
4.1 Background analysis of the Bush doctrine

The Bush administrations pessimistic worldview changed the trajectory of institution building that was implemented under the direction of former President Clinton\(^76\). President Bush pointed sharp criticism against this initiative, arguing that this was not in the prime interest of the United States. A multipolar foreign policy was perceived to tie the nation to unrealistic international commitments, and a unilateral agenda was seen the best way of ensuring American primacy on the international system\(^77\). The foreign policy of the Bush Administration called for a hegemonic world order with the United States at the front. The events of September 11 presented a new turning point for American foreign policy, the nation had unprecedented power and it created a world order that led the nation to dominate other states by commanding the material capabilities. Robert Gilpin argues that the logic behind this order is captured in the rise of powerful states that govern the international system. This does in turn determine the pattern of international interaction, establishing the rules of the game. These rules established and enforced by the capacities of power by the hegemonic state, can rightly be applied to the post 9/11 world. The American foreign policy under Bush preferred to lead among nations involved in “Ad hoc” coalitions. This was built around the direct and coercive domination of secondary states; and it was maintained by the concentration of power, through the direct coercion of secondary states that were in league with the hegemon. The international community was after 9/11 a world where weapons of mass destruction, could allegedly be found in the hands of fundamental networks. They were believed to be sheltered by rouge states, where the arm of international law was cut short\(^78\). The roots of extremism were found in societies that ignored human rights, and they were scattered across the eastern globe. Despite popular belief, pre-emptive warfare was not the main pillar. The goal was to fully implement democratic institution building and to engineer

\(^{76}\) Holmes, Kim Ph.D et al. 2010. Defining the Obama doctrine, its pitfalls and how to avoid them. The heritage foundation. Back grounder #2457

\(^{77}\) Hook, Steven, Spanier, John.2007. American Foreign policy since world war II. CQ Press.

political change for rouge states\textsuperscript{79}. The Bush doctrine believed that this approach would multiply the number of friendly nations, in turn creating regional stability, which would benefit the nation’s homeland security. The United States would now primarily be interested in its national interests, and it would secure those interests wherever it was deemed to be necessary. This is evident in President Bush’s rhetoric in his second inaugural address 2005: \textit{“The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands; the best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world”}\textsuperscript{80}. The Bush doctrine was clearly built on American primacy; as this notion is clearly argued in the doctrine itself.\textsuperscript{81} The unipolar path was further defended by the claim that without a leading hegemonic order, the world would face more threats from religious extremism. American hegemony would thus also minimize the risk of instability and uncertainty. The \textit{“Bandwagoning”} theory that was earlier introduced practically invited other umbrella states to \textit{“free ride”} economically and militarily. The reason why this works is because the hegemonic state has the capabilities of including any physical object that can alter or affect the behaviour of others. The promises the hegemon gives to the weaker states are credible. The weaker states do also believe that the other party is able to carry out what it promises because it is willing to impose the costs that are vital to force others to behave as the state wishes. This leads to further credibility as the hegemon shows that it is willing to carry out promises and threats in a way that gets direct results\textsuperscript{82}. The foreign policy of the Bush administration proved that there was no patience with diplomacy\textsuperscript{83}. Criticisms was also pointed to the abuse of sovereignty with the use of pre-emptive strikes, drone strikes produced collateral damage that did not only anger the Muslim masses, but it de-legitimize the Bush administration’s relationship with Islamic region.\textsuperscript{84}. This led to further isolation where

\textsuperscript{79} Keller, Patrick.2008. Barack Obama’s foreign policy: what can NATO expect from the next U.S. President? Research division NATO defense college, Rome - No.43

\textsuperscript{80} George W Bush – Second Inauguration speech 2005


\textsuperscript{83} Hook, Steven, Spanier, John.2007. American Foreign policy since world war II. CQ Press.

\textsuperscript{84} Gerges, Fawaz- The Obama doctrine in the middle east. Institute for social policy and understanding the Duke Islamic Studies Center (2012)
the increase of moral support on the world stage was now becoming evident. To some, the United States acted as an international sheriff under Bush\textsuperscript{85}: It enforced its will in a hegemonic fashion. The ideas and characteristics behind the Bush doctrine is bound to the normal nature on how a hegemony reacts in an international arena where it is convinced that it has to establish and continue to protect this order\textsuperscript{86}. By understating the benefits of cooperation and the payback present for the umbrella nations, it leads to the conclusion that the hegemonic system is attractive for both competitors and allies that pursue a strong position in the international order. This did indeed lead to the tarnished image of the United States; as Samuel Huntington labelled the US as the "The lonely superpower"\textsuperscript{87}. The US was according to Huntington seen as: intrusive, exploitative and hegemonic\textsuperscript{88}. The trust in American foreign policy was also analysed in Europe, and it was measured to 20 % during the final years of the Bush administration. This is in sharp contrast to the Obama administration’s current 85 % popularity in Europe\textsuperscript{89}. The gap in power between the United States and its umbrella nations was so unprecedented that it became unique to history: Unipolarity was a fact during the Bush years\textsuperscript{90}. If the Bush administration’s foreign policy doctrine did not reflect Unipolarity, then nothing ever will\textsuperscript{91}. The Bush doctrines Achilles heel was to conclude; it’s decision not to engage in a multipolar approach to counter international terrorism. By producing an inadequate criminalizing of the problem of dealing with extremism, the unilateral approach increasingly isolated the United States until the two terms of the Bush administration came to an end.

\textsuperscript{85} Hook, Steven, Spanier, John.2007. American Foreign policy since world war II. CQ Press.


\textsuperscript{87} Samuel P. Huntington Foreign Affairs Vol. 72, No. 3 (Summer, 1993), pp. 22-49 Published by: Council on Foreign Relations

\textsuperscript{88} Smith, Dennis - Europe and America: Strategies for survival. Karlstads Universitet (2009)

\textsuperscript{89} Pew Research global attitudes project - Global opinion of Obama slips, International policies faulted- June 13 2012


4.2 Declaring the Obama doctrine.

Barack Obama was elected on the promises of hope and change, and the President entered the White House after a moment of unique opportunity. The American population and the international community longed for the end of the Bush administration hegemonic stance in world politics. The end of the war in Iraq presented a new turning point for American foreign policy. The Obama administration’s foreign policy approach toward a ranging set of issues can be viewed as “concert diplomacy” which existed after the decades of Napoleonic wars. Nations with strong power worked together in concert to enforce international norms. This resembles the trademarks of multipolarity, where states work together in institutions and they do also respond to potential threats through the use of institution, which in turn is restraining state power. A multipolar institution building creates a long-term security commitment that is very difficult to retract once established. If George W Bush’s foreign policy doctrine was the ideal image of unilateralism, then Barack Obama’s foreign policy doctrine is clearly built on the hallmarks of international engagement and cooperation. The United States foreign policy calls for a reengagement to the rest of the world through a multipolar approach. The incentive used to lock in institutions in a favourable policy orientation exists in the order of multipolarity. The reconciliatory policy was clear in the president’s first speech in the general assembly of the United Nations 2009:

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“The time has come for the world to move in a new direction. We must embrace a new era of engagement based on mutual interest and mutual respect, and our work must begin now.”

It was during this speech that President Obama clearly marked that the interest of all nations is shared, and that the different capabilities of power only matters when they were creating new bonds which in turn strengthened the path to peace. By further assuring those who viewed the United States with scepticism the president argued that: “We have paid our bills. We have joined the Human Rights Council. We have signed the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We have fully embraced the Millennium Development Goals. And we address our priorities here, in this institution — for instance, through the Security Council.”

The Obama doctrine is seeking a world of international relations where common action grows out of a set of shared convictions, power would thus grow out of a sense of community, and it could further be exercised by the division of responsibilities related to a country’s resources. This is done in the order of multipolarity, where powerful nations lead through strategic restraint, and it involves the framework consisting of institutional building. This approach is visible through the use of a new “National Security Strategy” that promises weaker nations in terms of resources and influence, that they will be seen as equal partners.

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4.3 A Conciliatory Approach.

The realities of this century’s shift to a multipolar order, can explain the rise of industrial nations, but it should not be paralleled to the overall decline of American hegemony.\textsuperscript{101} Without an international order dependent on collective action to confront common challenges, disorder will undermine global security. A realignment of international institutions with shared interest is thus needed;

\begin{quote}
\textit{“Those nations that defy international norms will be denied the fruits that come with greater integration within the international community”}\textsuperscript{102}
\end{quote}

This means that the United States \textit{“National Security Strategy”} is committed in partnering with a stronger European Union; this is in the goal of the foreign policy of the Obama administration, as a stronger European Union is vital for advancing American and European values for nations that still compete with the difficult task of democratic transition\textsuperscript{103}. This approach will in turn also attract other states that are not as integrated with the United States in various institutional commitments. If states outside the multipolar world realize that the decision making process is based upon formal and \textit{“sticky”} rules, then they will not resort in interfering with multilateral institution building. In the multipolar order, a state has consequently convinced a weaker state that the powerful state itself will become a subject to strategic restraint. This has led other states to participate in \textit{“sticky”} institutions where the decision-making procedure is based upon agreed rules and principles of institutional cooperation\textsuperscript{104}. This is also where the implications of advantages are reduced, it sets the limits on what powerful actors involved in institutions can do unilaterally. The leading state must engage in voluntary compliance. This hinges on the ability to demonstrate its reliability, commitment and willingness to restrain its exercise of


\textsuperscript{102} The White house - National security strategy. Washington D.C 2010 P. 40

\textsuperscript{103} The White house - National security strategy. Washington D.C 2010 P. 3

power. This is indeed an effective mechanism of forging international cooperation, challenges like nuclear proliferation and terrorism acknowledge no borders, and international institutions are the key of tackling these issues. The “National Security Strategy” argues that “Cooperation cannot be accomplished simply by working inside formal institutions and frameworks. It requires sustained outreach to foreign governments, political leaderships, and other critical constituencies that must commit the necessary capabilities and resources to enable effective, collective action.” Alliances are thus force multipliers; it is by building up these alliances that will allow the United States to foster cooperation effective to confront important challenges. “The National Security Strategy” calculates a pragmatic and a less assertive foreign policy approach, which in turn can be analysed as turning away from the previous administration’s power minded approach on preserving American interest. The seed of a multipolar foreign policy is clearly visible in Barack Obama’s inauguration speech; “America would acknowledge itself as a partner and an equal to other nations who seek a future of peace and dignity.” As the United States, under Obama is increasingly ceding power and sovereignty to the international community; it is also by doing this, strengthening the global frameworks that can promote US interest. In return, this could also ensure that other countries share the burden of securing global security. “The structure of world peace cannot be the work of one man, or one party, or one nation…. It cannot be a peace of large nations — or of small nations. It must be a peace which rests on the cooperative effort of the whole world.” By engaging the country in international institutions, it has promoted an open, transparent and a rule based cooperative network. It is in this area that the Obama doctrine will be the guarantor for the stability of the order.

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President Obama reassures the international community that the United States is ready to lead once more. The "primus inter pares" stance is in sharp contrast to the Bush administrations rhetoric of being prepared of “leading alone” policy which was evident in one of the paragraphs of the Pentagon’s official security doctrine during the years of the Bush administration, it in turn argues that: "While the United States will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community, we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-defence by acting preemptively." 110 The Obama administrations National security strategy shows awareness over the fact that the United States is still the only country capable of exerting great military power at a great distance, just as it did against Iraq in 1991 and 2003. But its economy is not capable of sustaining a global reach, meaning that it no longer plays the role of a single dominating hegemon.111 This limits the influence of American dominance on the world stage, by pursuing a multipolar agenda, the Obama administration seeks to spread the ideas of democracy, freedom and justice by emphasizing the benefits of the collective security, and the rule of international law. The idea of a United States in a concert of states, where institutions and linkages exists between states does in turn facilitate and progress international coordination. The cooperation does in turn increase the image of the United States in the world. The new foreign policy approach is to the total opposite of the former administration, who by using unilateral policies on the global stage; breed resentment and hostility towards the United States.112 By conserving the nation’s hegemonic power into an institutionalized order, it is a long-term investment. The nation will not allow itself to strategically restrain its own power in order to lead other nations in institutional building. This is also possible by the notion behind strategic restraint; it locks all the states involved into a predictable course of action that is acceptable to weak states. This is also evident in secretary of State Hillary Clinton's argument that:"The US is now a participant of the new era of engagement based on common interest and shared

110 The White house - The national security strategy of the United States of America - Washington D.C September 2002

111 Russet, Bruce, Starr; Harvey, Kinsella, David. 2000. World politics the menu for choice. 6th Ed. Bedford: St martins

112 Hook, Steven, Spanier, John.2007. American Foreign policy since world war II. CQ Press
values of mutual respect.”

5. Three areas of a multipolar foreign policy

“It is a well-established historical fact that what candidates say about foreign policy is not always an exact guide to what they will do if elected.” – Richard Holbrooke.

In the following sections, I will provide evidence of a multipolar foreign policy by showing three important areas where the Obama administrations have changed the trajectory of American foreign policy.

5.1 Civil Unrest in Libya

The Libyan uprising was substantially different from the social upheavals that Egypt and Tunisia faced. This uprising presented another challenge to the United States and to the rest of the international community. When the former leader of Libya, Muammar Gadhafi resorted to violence, the Libyan people requested the help of the international community. The risk of a potential genocide was met by the risk of repeating the failed interventions in the Balkans, and the United States was reluctant of involving itself in yet another Middle Eastern country, the memories of Iraq was still an open wound\textsuperscript{114}. The situation worsened as the sanctions that were imposed on the Libyan regime proved to be effortless; the rhetoric used by Gadhafi echoed the same rhetoric that marked the relationship between the Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda. With the risk of an imminent genocide, the UN Security Council authorized NATO to implement a \textit{“no fly zone”} and to \textit{“take all necessary action”} under UN security Resolution 1973. This had been advanced from the earlier sanctions of the UN security resolution 1970, which intended to obstruct the regime of using deadly force against its own population\textsuperscript{115}. The President motivated this decision of involving the nation in a multilateral intervention by using humanitarian rhetoric and by stating that the interest of the United States and the global security was at stake:

\begin{quote}
\small
\textit{“We cannot stand idly by when a tyrant tells his people that there will be no mercy and his forces will step up their assaults on cities like Benghazi and Misurata, where innocent men and women face brutality and death at the hands of their own government. So we must be clear. Actions have consequences, and the writ of the international community must be enforced. That is the cause of this coalition and we}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{114} O'Hanlon, Michael - Libya and the Obama doctrine. Council on Foreign Affairs. August 2011

are acting in the interest of the US and the world”116

The Obama administration also argued that it was in the interest of the nation itself and all member states of the U.N. to endorse the concept of the “Responsibility to Protect”. By recognizing this, the nation is taking under the responsibility of preventing genocide and mass atrocity; this does also mean that sovereign nations are responsible for the safety of their own inhabitants. The responsibility passes to the broader international community when sovereign governments prove unable or unwilling to take necessary action to respond to crimes that occur inside their borders117. This stance is in turn clearly visible in the “National Security Strategy” of the Obama Doctrine, which in turn argues that

“The United States is committed to working with our allies, and to strengthening our own internal capabilities, in order to ensure that the United States and the international community are proactively engaged in a strategic effort to prevent mass atrocities and genocide. In the event that prevention fails, the United States will work multilaterally to mobilize diplomatic, humanitarian, financial, and—in certain instances—military means to prevent and respond to genocide and mass atrocities.”118

The Libyan intervention marked the first time the United States military took a “back seat driver role” and with a pressed economy at home, President Obama forced France and the United Kingdom to take the control of the majority of the military operations in Libya119. This was also in sharp contrast to the methods that the Bush administration took when it lead the unilateral Iraq. Before embarking on the Libyan intervention, President Obama did also seek support from not just the Security Council, but also from the Arab league, making it more legitimized in the Arab world120. It is valid to claim that the Obama doctrine and its “National Security

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116 The White House – Remarks by the President on Libya. Brazil 2011
119 Holmes, Kim Ph.D et al. 2010. Defining the Obama doctrine, its pitfalls and how to avoid them. The heritage foundation. Backgrounder #2457
Strategy” were acting in accordance of a multilateral effort of haltering a possible genocide in Libya.\textsuperscript{121} This did also assure the NATO partners that the US would: \textit{“never hesitate to use military force swiftly when it is necessary”}

5.2 \textit{Combatting Extremism in Afghanistan and Pakistan}

The goal in Afghanistan and in Pakistan has always been about disturbing and dismantling Al Qaida and the Taliban\textsuperscript{122}. The dangers from this region will continue to expand if the collective security of both Afghanistan and Pakistan continues to decline. The administration believes that this is vital for the collective security of the world; this requires the United States and its allies to work within an institutional commitment. The danger of violent extremism continues to haunt the rest of the world\textsuperscript{123}. The Afghan campaign concerns the security of not just Washington, but Madrid, London and other neighbouring nations like Pakistan. In the aftermath of the years of conflict in Afghanistan, the United States is working alongside the international community to stabilize the Afghan nation, in order for these directives to be fully effective it is vital in investing in capable partners for the future\textsuperscript{124} By building a capacity that is central to the foundations of global security, it is also a necessity that there is trust and a political will from Afghan leaders. A nation like Afghanistan cannot meet the challenges of a turning point alone; The Obama administration has thus forged cooperative approaches among nations that will


\textsuperscript{122} The White house - National security strategy. Washington D.C 2010 P. 19

\textsuperscript{123} The White house - National security strategy. Washington D.C 2010 P. 50

\textsuperscript{124} The White house - National security strategy. Washington D.C 2010 P. 22
eventually show results. This is in the goal of dismantling Al Qaida and its affiliates in Afghanistan and in Pakistan: a former safe haven and breeding grounds for extremism. By using a comprehensive strategy in this frontline, the Obama administration proves that the foreign policy is prepared for the challenges\textsuperscript{125}. Three important areas show a multipolar stance. The "National Security Strategy" provides a framework of cooperation and coordination that is vital in combatting radical groups and breaking the Taliban’s momentum in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. To achieve stability, three strategic objectives are important for delivering a desired result

- "First, our military and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) partners within Afghanistan are targeting the insurgency, working to secure key population centres, and increasing efforts to train Afghan security forces."\textsuperscript{126}

By assisting and educating the Afghan army, the United States continues to work within its timetable of leaving the Afghan nation\textsuperscript{127}. The guidelines of strengthening the Afghan community are also essential for the security of major cities in Europe as the threat of an attack is stemming from the areas in Afghanistan and Pakistan. For Pakistan, the Obama doctrine have been pushing to expand the relations with the Pakistani government in securing defence contracts and development aid necessary to stop the expansion of radical networks\textsuperscript{128}.

\textsuperscript{125} The White house - National security strategy. Washington D.C 2010

\textsuperscript{126} The White house - National security strategy. Washington D.C 2010 P. 21


\textsuperscript{128} The White house - National security strategy. Washington D.C 2010 P. 22
Second, we will continue to work with our partners, the United Nations, and the Afghan Government to improve accountable and effective governance. As we work to advance our strategic partnership with the Afghan Government, we are focusing assistance on supporting the President of Afghanistan and those ministries, governors, and local leaders who combat corruption and deliver for the people.”

This is a result of the Obama administration’s commitment and faith in international institutions. By conducting a cooperative sphere of multipolar tendencies, the work in Afghanistan is not just becoming legitimized in the eyes of the Afghan people, but also in the eyes of western institutions. This is evident in the “National Security Strategy”

Third, we will foster a relationship with Pakistan founded upon mutual interests and mutual respect. To defeat violent extremists who threaten both of our countries, we will strengthen Pakistan’s capacity to target violent extremists within its borders, and continue to provide security assistance to support those efforts.”

The relationship between Islamabad and Washington is a one that has seen a lot of lows, but the relationship has expanded since the two nations have mutual interest in combatting extremism. The United States has since 2002 donated almost five billion dollars in the war against extremism. The Obama doctrine is also responsible for the relocation of an additional 30 thousand troops to Afghanistan, which is in accordance with managing a quick withdrawal. This is also needed to strengthen the Afghan army and its security establishments. The purpose of relocating them is to eradicate the epicentre of Al Qaida, and by working alongside these nations with regards to mutual respect, the doctrine is denying Al Qaida a safe haven. This is made possible by a

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strategic partnership with both Afghanistan and Pakistan\textsuperscript{132}.

\section*{5.3 \textit{Seeking a World free from Nuclear Weapons.}}

The international order that is advanced by American leadership is a one that promotes peace, security and a stronger commitment to facilitate cooperation that can endure the test of global challenges. By conducting a foreign policy approach that pursues diplomacy and a development that in turn supports the emergence of a new ally internationally, it is imperative for advancing a constructive cooperation on issues like nuclear proliferation. The Obama administration is committed to pursue a world where the spread of nuclear weapons is reversed\textsuperscript{133}. This goal will probably not be met under the Obama administration, but one thing is clear, fundamental groups are still determined to buy, or steal a nuclear weapon\textsuperscript{134}. To confront this challenging issue, the Obama administration is committed in containing these issues in a global non-proliferation regime. This approach seeks to increase global security and it keeps American commitment under the Non-proliferation treaty. The Obama administration does also believe that this will also build cooperation with Russia and other states, states like Iran and North Korea are presented with a clear choice: denuclearization. The administration believes that this approach is not about singling out the two nations, but merely about the responsibilities that all nations have towards a world

\textsuperscript{132} Holmes, Kim Ph.D et al. 2010. Defining the Obama doctrine, its pitfalls and how to avoid them. The heritage foundation. Backgrounder #2457

\textsuperscript{133} The White house - National security strategy. Washington D.C 2010 P. 23

\textsuperscript{134} The White house - National security strategy. Washington D.C 2010 P. 23
free of nuclear weapons⁹³⁵. If both of these nations meet their international obligations, it will put them on a path to greater international integration. The “National Security Strategy” does nevertheless pursue meaningful consequences for countries that fail to meet their obligations under the non-proliferation treaty, meaning isolation from the international community⁹³⁶. The goal is focused toward minimizing the role nuclear weapons play in American national security. The concept of the non-proliferation treaty is simple; nations like the United States and Russia should move towards disarming their nuclear arsenal, nations like Iran and North Korea are advised to forsake their nuclear aspiration; this does not mean that nations can have access to peaceful nuclear energy. The “National Security Strategy” under the Obama administration clearly points out that the Non-proliferation treaty should be funded with more global resources and increased authority for international inspection. The global nuclear security summit of 2010 gathered 47 nations behind the goal of securing all nuclear material from transnational non-governmental groups⁹³⁷. This is within the goal of securing vulnerable material and enhances the protection and cooperation through the use of international institutions⁹³⁸. A multipolar approach is essential, new partnerships are vital to track and lock down sensitive nuclear material. The United States under the Obama administration is committed to reach its goal by working through the program of a proliferation security initiative and a global initiative to combat nuclear terrorism by using durable international efforts. By doing so, the foreign policy of the United States should be centred on sustaining a broad based communication with other nations and institutions that enable the continued efforts to protect nuclear materials from ever evolving from mere threats to actions. The pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons will continue, and the Obama administration stresses that as long as any nuclear weapons exist, the United States will sustain its safe and effective nuclear arsenal. The national security strategy argues that this is important of deterring potential adversaries and this assure American allies and other international partners that the nation is upholding the nations security

6. Conclusion and discussion:

Based on the results and theoretical finding, the Foreign policy doctrine of the Obama administration is anything but unilateral. The theory of polarity that gives strength to the foreign policy of the Obama administration is the theory of multipolarity. By working in institutions and the choice of conserving its hegemonic power in international alliances and coalitions, American foreign policy has been renewed to fit into the current multipolar world order. This does indeed encourage other nations to pursue a similar path of cooperation and in turn, it renews American leadership in world politics. After applying the theories of the “Balance of power, unipolarity and Multipolarity” on the three selected cases, it is evident that the Obama doctrine is built on the theory of “Multipolarity”. The motives behind a foreign policy change lies in the shift of the presidential administration that took place when Barack Obama was elected into office, therefore it is vital to say that the ideas and norms present during the Bush administration is different from the ones that the current administration has. These prevailing norms and ideas have steered contemporary foreign policy in the international system. After entering a turning point, the foreign policy was subject to a strategic restraint, better enabling the nation to withstand the challenges the new world order holds. The days of a subordinate and a super-ordinate position that is evidently present in the hegemonic order is gone, and the multipolar order lets the United States lead through a strategic restraint in a cooperative framework of order among states. The Obama doctrine does acknowledge this century’s changing international system; it affirms the decline of US influence by a

\[139\] The White house - National security strategy. Washington D.C 2010
result of a number of fundamental changes in the world stage. American interests are now aligned with multilateral and global strategies that will address the sources of instability, and in turn build new spheres of cooperation. It does also point discreet criticism to former president Bush’s administration by highlighting that the nation never succeeded by stepping outside the currents of international cooperation. To meet the challenges of the current international order, it is imperative to strengthen old alliances, and to continue modernizing them in order to meet the challenges of this century. The United States foreign policy seeks to strengthen international standards and institutions by continuing to build deeper partnerships in every region of the world. This is done by pursuing a comprehensive engagement through an active foreign policy that expands American institutional building beyond its own borders. Constructive cooperation is thus essential for tackling issues ranging from violent extremism in Afghanistan and Pakistan to countering nuclear proliferation, challenges that all nations meet and that no nation alone can endure. This is the core of the Obama doctrine.

Future studies relating to this topic can for instance continue the debate around the development of American foreign policy, one could get another result by applying the theories of international relations (Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism) on the selected areas that are of importance to the Obama doctrine. One could for instance do another case study as soon as the presidency of Barack Obama finishes. This could highlight the larger picture and the development of the Obama doctrine in its full disguise would be visible.

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142 The White House 2010- National Security Strategy P. 9

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