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# Investigating the Impact of Russian Rise on Russian-American Military Relations during Putin and Obama Era

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of  
a Master Degree in Literature and Civilization

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## **Dedication 1**

My work is dedicated to the greatest and most supportive parents, my brothers, my friends,  
my grandparents, and to all great teachers of English.

I also dedicate this work to my beloved husband who has encouraged me all the way and  
whose encouragement has made sure that I give it all it takes to finish this work.

**Nada CHIHANI**

## **Dedication 2**

I dedicate this work to:

The light of my life; my parents for their dedication and sacrifices.

The candle of my heart; my husband for his encouragement and love.

My daughter Hadil who gives me a great impulse to keep going on in this life.

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To all the teachers of English.

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## **Abstract**

Throughout history, relations between the United States of America (USA) and Russia have fluctuated between a conflict, a rivalry, a coalition, and a partnership from the time of Tsarist Russia to the Soviet Union (USSR) and the disintegration of the latter in the early 1990s. These relations have witnessed a new transformation since 2000, which is linked to the change in the quality of leadership on both the Russian and American sides. This dissertation attempts to investigate the impact of the Russian rise on the Russian-American military relations during the period of Putin and Obama. Accordingly, the current study has two main goals: first, it determines how Putin rose the Russian military. Secondly, it aims at analyzing how this rise affected US-Russia military relations on the era of Putin and Obama. As for the findings, the study reveals that the Russian rise particularly Putin's reforms on the Russian army and the Russian military doctrine had a great impact on the military relations between the two countries during the period of Putin and Obama. Also these relations were greatly influenced by the confrontations in Ukraine and Syria.

**Keywords:** Military Relations, Reforms, Russia, Russian Rise, Soviet Union (USSR), United States of America (USA).

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## **List of Abbreviations & Acronyms**

**CSTO:** Collective Security Treaty Organization

**DHS:** Department of Homeland Security

**DOD:** Department of Defense.

**EU:** European Union

**GDP:** Gross Domestic Product

**GNP:** Gross National Product

**G8:** The Group of Eight

**G20:** The Group of Twenty

**ICBM:** Intercontinental Ballistic Missile

**ISIS:** Islamic State in Iraq and Syria

**MEPhI:** Moscow Engineering Physics Institution

**NATO:** North Atlantic Treaty Organization

**PCI:** Per Capita Income

**NPT:** Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

**NWS:** National Weather Service

**SLBM:** Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile

**UAVs:** Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

**UN:** The United Nations

**UNSC:** The United Nations Security Council

**US:** United States

**USA:** United States of America

**USSR:** The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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## **General Introduction**

## **General Introduction**

In the era of bipolarism, Russia was represented in the Soviet Union as one of the great powers, but it was not an ascendant force. It can be said that it witnessed periods of decline during the 1980s and 1990s. After that period, many efforts were made to regain the dominance of its foreign policy as a superpower where one of its priorities is to remove obstacles in front of it in order to restore the Russian control as it was under the Soviet Union.

The Russian Federation suffered after the collapse of the Soviet Union, where Yeltsin's economic reforms led to a decline in industrial production. Although it can be said that Russia has a presence on the international stage and can not be ignored or canceled its role. Since Putin took power, he managed to regain Russia's status as a major power in the world as a result of the improvement of its economic situation and the stability of its political position.

US-Russia relations went through many events that affected them. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union there was a major shift in these relations where Russia decided to treat the West as a partner not as an enemy because it believes that partnership with the West would bring Russia out of its economic distress. The transformation of Russian-American relations has become a distinctive feature of these relations and this policy has been an alternative to the cooperation policy.

At present, Russian-Western relations are witnessing a period of tension. Because of Moscow's position on the Ukrainian crisis and its annexation to the Crimean peninsula, Western countries imposed economic sanctions on Moscow which led to many expectations of a second cold war between the United States and Russia. In addition to the change of the Russian military doctrine which considered that the movements of NATO led by the United States of America is the most important external threats to Russia. What makes it even more

complicated is that despite the end of the Cold War era and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US administration still views Russia as an ally of the Soviet Union and then the first enemy of Washington.

It can be said that Russia is one of the active countries in the international system but it met many challenges. Recently it managed to achieve a state of development and progress, which has greatly affected the nature of its relations and interactions with the international community.

### **1.Statement of the Problem**

For more than two decades after the collapse of Soviet Union, iron curtain of Cold War has fallen down, and United States of America emerged as the dominant world power. USSR was preoccupied by domestic, political and economic problems.

Indeed, under Putin's leadership, Russia has begun to move towards restoring its international standing. The Russian rise was clearly emerging in the second period of Putin's private rule since 2006, and relations between the United States and Russia are still at a stage of cooperation and have not reached the level of partnership. Yet the two countries sought to improve the relationship between them, especially in the terms of Putin and Obama. Therefore, the researchers find the importance of this study is an attempt to identify the impact of the Russian rise on the Russian-American relations specifically the military relations.

### **2. Research Question**

The present study seeks to examine the following question:

What is the impact of the Russian's emergence on military relations between the United States and Russia during the period of Putin and Obama?

### **3. Research Hypothesis**

The basic assumption of the study is:

The Russian rise tends to have a great impact on the Russian-American relations especially the military side.

### **4. Aims of the Study**

The aim of this study starts from increasing the interest of researchers in studying the Russian rise and its impact on Russian-American relations, especially after the new confrontations in the Ukrainian and the Syrian crises that created a field for competition and conflict between the United States and Russia. This Study also aims at investigating the implication of the Russian rise on US-Russia military relations. In other words to define the factors contributed in the Russian emergence and to determine how this emergence would challenge the US dominance.

### **5. Significance of the Study**

Putin's leadership of Russia is considered an important aspect of the Russian rise, which affected relations between him and Obama where their relations have developed to the point of personal relationship. Analysis of the Russian influence will help the reader to understand the present military relations between USA and the Russian Federation. This research will make an endeavor to find out how Russia is emerging as superpower again and it will affect the US-Russian relations. The importance of this study also lies in enriching the library with all what is new in the fields of international interaction and US-Russian policies in dealing with the Ukrainian and Syrian crises.

## **6. Research Methodology**

Within its general framework, the study attempts to determine the influence of Russian emergence on the US-Russian relations. The descriptive method is used throughout the first and second chapters also the comparative one is slightly used. While the analytical method is used for the third practical chapter. In order to test the hypothesis, sources such as books, journals, newspapers, magazines, will be extensively used to justify outcome and analysis of the study as well as to give the findings a good foundation and to improve the argument of the study. Such materials used to support the central research findings and to arrive at a logical conclusion with regard to the hypothesis.

All the materials to be used in the paper to support the central idea will be properly cited using APA 6<sup>th</sup> Ed style of referencing throughout the dissertation.

## **7. Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is divided into three chapters; the first chapter investigates what factors contribute to the Russian rise, Russian military dimensions and Russian nuclear power. It also examines the major role played by Putin in the Russian emergence. Chapter two briefly contextualizes the American military power and most importantly the threats to the US interests. Moreover it serves to show why specifically Russia matters to the United States. The third chapter deals with the massive clashes and changes that faced the two countries as a result their military relations were affected hugely.

# **Chapter One**

## **Russian Military Rise and Superiority**

## **Introduction**

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War had a major impact on international relations and order. The bipolar system has faded and replaced by US-led system with its military, economic and technological capabilities. But this regime has shown dissatisfaction by major international powers that have begun to support the concept of a multipolar world based on participation and contribution to international decisions. The Russian Federation during the term of President Vladimir Putin was at the top of these emerging powers along with China and India.

The military and economic growth achieved under Putin's tenure has been instrumental in bringing Russia back to important international issues, its rise and standing up to the United States. Since the dissolution of the Soviet and emergence of the Russian armed forces, the country's leadership has worked to reestablish the military's place among its own populace and the world community at large.

Russia seeks to restore its influence and build strength through a number of reforms in all fields, since 1991. It has emerged clearly with the start of Putin era and then the clashes occur with the other pole. It emerged clearly with the Syrian crisis, which considered a complicated issue in the Middle East region because of internal complexities, interventions, and regional and international divisions.

The present chapter will primarily present the rise of Russia, Putin and the revival of the Russian Empire. Also it will include Russian power qualifications, internal stability and economic recovery. It would spotlight on military dimensions, Russian military and its expenditure. In addition, the end of the chapter reviews Russian nuclear power such as the nuclear triad, reconnaissance system and ground forces.

## **1. The Fall of the Soviet Union and the Resurgence of Russia:**

### **1.1. An Overview**

As the Soviet Union's dominance has fallen, the United States began to consider what it meant to be the sole superpower in the world. While the European Union's attention turned moving its integration process forward. Western attention drifted away from Russia.

Meanwhile, Russia ascended upon a dramatic process of economic, political and military reforms. The early post-Soviet period was a time of relative political directness. What played a very important role in this process is Yeltsin's political options and weak leadership along with a rather weak federal system, paved the way for Vladimir Putin to centralize power (Aggarwal & Govella, 2012, p. 2).

### **1.2. The Russian Rise**

The beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century witnessed truly revolutionary changes, transferring the position of the world map that was almost settled from the early 1990s. These changes were the rise of some international powers that tried to remove the unipolar international order and break the monopolistic attempt of the United States of America (USA) of leading the world after the fall of the Soviet Union. For these reasons, the Russian power began to rise.

Twenty years after the fall of the Soviet Union and the emergence of Russia as an independent state, Moscow is no longer America's strategic rival. Although Russia is not an enemy, it has never become a friend. Despite the victory of Washington and Moscow in overcoming the Cold War confrontation but they have not developed permanent cooperative relations. A better-managed bilateral relationship is critical for the advancement of US's vital national interests (Allison & Blackwill, 2011).

The Cold War ended between the United States and the Soviet Union and the bipolarism has disappeared with the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. Since then, Russia as the legitimate inheritor to the Soviet Union; has sought to regain its influence and build its strength through a series of political, economic and military reforms.

It is clear that Russian rise began to demonstrate as Vladimir Putin came to power in Russia. He was the old intelligence man that defeated his opponents and was able to block the opposition with legal and security obstacles. After a short time he managed to control most of the joints of the state in Russia. Thus, he became the only one in a power that is mainly composed of the elite bureaucracy in the Russian state, the security services and groups of businessmen.

Russia experienced a state of dispersion after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the red empire. Also its economy was in a state of extremely violent deterioration, in addition to its influence declined by the control of the mafias and businessmen on the course of political and economic affairs in the Kremlin.

As mentioned before, Putin spent many years in the old Soviet intelligence service. He tried very hard to eliminate these problems, working to restore Russia's regional and international position. The man succeeded in achieving internal stability with an iron fist provided by his security expertise.

### **1.3. Putin and the Revival of the Russian Empire**

What is now known as Russia or the Russian Federation, is the legitimate inheritor of the Soviet Union. The disintegration of the Soviet Union did not lead to the disintegration or demise of the Russian Federation. During Yeltsin era, the Russians suffered a sharp decline in the fundamentals of their power. They went through a shocking and painful transition period towards a market economy and democracy.

One year before Yeltsin left power, at the end of 1998, the deterioration was at its peak. Russia was on the verge of the bankruptcy due to the huge domestic debt deficit and the ruble's devaluation. But despite the decline in human and material resources, Russia remained in its image as a superpower because of its permanent membership of the Security Council, its huge nuclear arsenal and its vast territory which occupies more than a quarter of Europe and Asia together.

Putin was elected to the highest position by Yeltsin, the first Russian president, for reasons not limited to just standing in his row during the 1991 coup. After his election to a first term in March 2000, immediately began to take a series of measures aimed at consolidating his authority also reinforcing his personal power through the working to end separatist conflicts. More importantly, was to finish the oligarchic control and its media, to put it under a state of control then controlling the partisan and electoral systems in Russia.

Putin's first step was the administrative and political reform that focused on strengthening the centrality of the state and strengthening the hierarchy of power. Plus suppressing separatist conflicts that had spread widely in the Yeltsin era. The slogan of "the necessity to preserve the unity of the Russian state and strengthen the center to confront the parties" became one of the components of his ideology during his first term.

Putin was able to strengthen his position internally by bringing together the parties of power in his hands and eliminating opponents of his authority, especially those loyal to previous president Yeltsin. He was able to achieve full central control of power in Russia.

The Russian economy from 1999 to 2008, increased by 7%, GDP doubled and the per capita income (PCI) rose two and a half times as a result of his success in achieving an economic leap due to the availability of fuel and gas reserves. Putin was able also to secure his victory in the presidential elections in 2000 by his controlling to the main television

station at that time, using for the security services in which he was working and marketing to his most prominent achievements. The most important achievement was the restoration of Russian state's prestige, which was lost during a full decade before Putin (Cooper, June 29, 2009).

At that time Putin, to make frequent constitutional amendments under pressure, was able to shift power with Dmitry Medvedev; the current prime minister and former Russian president. Through other constitutional amendments, Putin forced the Russian parliament (Duma) to pass a constitutional amendment that allows extending the terms of both the president from four to six years and the member of the state Duma from four to five years. The amendment was supported by the parliamentary majority which was owned by the United Russia Party led by Putin (Sefanov, December 22, 2008).

The Russian relations with the West have been strained by the crisis in Ukraine and this resulted in entry of the Crimea, which is rich in oil and natural resources, into the structure of the Russian Federation. What helped Putin is that his counterparts in the West are not planning to engage in a long-term confrontation over the conflict in Ukraine. In addition to that the European Union and the United Nations have not been able to effectively resolve this conflict. The United States has established an alliance to legitimize its recent interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, but it has not started the war in Ukraine because Washington lacks the money and the will to impose various sanctions on Moscow.

Since President Putin came to power in 2000, Russian foreign policy has set its goal of further inclusion in global political, economic and security processes on the basis of insertion of its internal development and diplomatic aspirations in the context of globalization. However Putin viewed that Russia must become a modern superpower; economically strong, technically advanced, socially developed and politically influential.

The essence of this approach is the adoption of an effective foreign policy aimed at providing the best conditions for economic growth and encouraging the activity of Russian businessmen in order to join Russia into the World Trade Organization. Also the Russian administration gave priority to economic interests over political and political-military interests. It was believed that Russia would not occupy a prominent position in the world unless it moved quickly to economic growth.

Russia, between 2000 and 2002, did not intend to mention the balance of power nor the protection of areas of influence however in 2003 the change gradually began to take shape. The Russian Federation has declared its openness to security cooperation with the West in all fields of new threats even within the field of the former soviet influence. After September 11, 2001, Russia proved its credibility by not objecting on the deployment of western military forces in a number of Central Asian republics to facilitate the process of the global coalition against terrorism in Afghanistan, but Moscow adopted a sophisticated defense policy with Western expansion in the area of influence of the former Soviet Union, by the United States, NATO and the European Union.

Russia has interpreted the initiatives of the European Union and the United States as restriction and encirclement to weaken it regionally and globally, as a result Russia has returned to maintain its areas of influence. For this cause it has resorted to the military factor as a key tool for maintaining its influence as well as Russia has accused the West for using the "war on terror" to eliminate its vital interests and for geopolitical purposes.

When Putin became a president, he set a goal as a priority which is to make Russia an indispensable partner to the West in international balances. And he has drawn his foreign policy by considering that Russia has a peculiarity in being a global power historically based on its geographical breadth and it is considered as a bridge between the Europe and Asia. For

this reason the western extend in the former Soviet Union's areas of influence raises the excessive sensitivity of the Russian elite and it is an external interference; because the control of these areas threatens the identity of the Eurasian Russia and diminishes its regional and global role. In general if Russia cannot confirm its role in the areas of the former Soviet Union, it will also be unable to assert itself as a superpower.

In his edited book "Russia: Re-Emerging Great Power" Roger E. Kanet (2007) argues that soon after the disintegration of the Soviet Union the international system is undergoing transition and fluctuation of power. Russia is demonstrating strong will to reestablish itself as a re-emergent great power in the international system currently under the domination of the United States. President Putin's assuming in power has reaffirmed the position that Russia is destined to be a global superpower and President Putin's moves in international political arena are markedly manifested by his actions. It is evident from the decisions of President Putin in various international situations that he has taken to re-position Russia as a global superpower as the 'number one' political task during his leadership. Different authors of book tried to answer the various difficult questions of Russia's road to global power. Kanet presents his view as, "Russia will likely gain significant influence in global affairs" and "has already made great gains in reestablishing its role as an important global actor" (p. 223). Moscow's involvement beyond its immediate territory (e.g. Abkhazia and South Ossetia) proves that Putin's leadership in Russia is not soft, rather bold.

#### **1.4. Russian Power Qualifications**

Russia has many privileges that make it an important and powerful country in the world. Among them it is the world's largest country in terms of area, covering 1/8 of the world's inhabited land with an area of 17,075,400 square kilometers (6,592,800 square miles). It is also the ninth biggest country in terms of population in the world with more than 143

million people. Russia extends across all of north Asia and 40% of Europe, it covers nine time zones and includes a wide range of environments and landforms (Synan, August 7, 2013).

Russia has often been described in recent years as a superpower in the field of energy. The country has the largest reserves of natural gas. It is the eighth largest reserve of oil and the second largest reserve of coal in the world. Russia is a superior country in the world in the export of natural gas and it has the world's largest reserves of forests and lakes which are containing nearly a quarter of the world's fresh water.

As one of the five permanent members of the Security Council, Russia plays a major role in maintaining international peace and security. It also participates in the Quartet on the Middle East and the six-party talks with North Korea. Therefore being a member in the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum. Russia usually takes a leading role in regional organizations such as the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Eurasian Economic Community, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

It is the inheritor to most of the former Soviet Union weapons especially nuclear weapons, spy satellites, arms factories and military bases, even those now outside its borders in one of the republics of the former Soviet Union. It is constantly updating its nuclear arsenal.

Also the continued increases in its military spending have made it close to achieving its goal of dominating local and regional wars.

## **1.5. Internal Stability**

The most important component of the emergence of Russia is the end of weak leadership and the resulting domestic political stability. Putin provided the country with a stable and strong leadership. Hence, although one can debate the quality of the Russian democracy, the era of political maneuvering has come to an effective end with Putin. He not only restored confidence in the government but also enabled predictability. Contrasting Gorbachev who mismanaged the fall of the Soviet Union and the Yeltsin who allowed the country to be run by the business oligarchy, in his first term, Putin ended the control of the powerful private interest over the state apparatus.

Political stability is an essential component of economic performance. Be it a parliamentary multi-party, a strict two-party or single-party system, stability greatly helps an economy to deliver sound results. Political performance is a precursor for economic performance. Although one may argue that certain international developments such as the dramatic spike in energy prices due to instability in the Middle East contributed to Russia's hydrocarbon export-based economy, it is unlikely that the same performance would be registered in a politically unstable and weak country.

The changed political reality stresses the European Commission and other international stakeholders to solve their differences with the Russia. It is to be noted that Russia is not in favour of complete reshuffle of the prevalent international norms and institutions; rather it is in favour of demanding Russian needs and interests be taken into account. Russia's desire of re-emergence in the global power spectrum and economic recovery has been sustained by its exports of natural resources. Russia has a greater stake, enjoyed great power status for a considerable period of time and has the propensity and potential to be an emerging power. Russia claimed to be the adherent of the version of

multilateralism which ensures economic and social development of all stakeholders. She also argues that Russia's demands now circulating around putting more multilateralism into the system and Russia should be taken as equal partner in solving global problems. Thus, we concluded that Russia is very stable.

### **1.6. Economic recovery**

The fall of the USSR was more because of an economic weakness than ideological one. The rise of Russia similarly hinges on the country's economic performance rather than the characteristics of its democracy. In sheer numbers, the country has made enormous strides in the past decade as its economy has grown. Russia's per capita GDP, which was around US\$1,000 under the last president Boris Yeltsin yet US\$ 15,000 was reached under Putin in 2012 ("Russia GDP Per Capita 1989-2019", 2019).

In the first decade of the new millennium Russia has established itself as a developing economy. From 2000 to 2008, total output grew by 67%. During the same period, stock market capitalization increased twenty two-fold and foreign trade turnover, five-fold (Crane, Nataraj, Johnston & Aliyev, 2016).

In 2013, Russia overtook Germany to become the biggest economy in Europe in terms of purchasing power parity and the fifth biggest in the world.

A slew of economic reforms, such as the levying of 13% flat tax and creation of a stabilization fund to guard against inflationary pressures, have been implemented under Putin. One of the most publicized policies that Putin performed was the nationalization of energy assets. Having assumed the office, he purged the Yeltsin-era oligarchs and the managers of large state enterprises. As a combined result of extensive reforms, Russia accumulated one of the world's largest financial reserves in 2008 and the Russian currency appreciated 20% in value since 1999 (Gurieiev & Tsyvinski, 2010).

## **2. Military Dimension**

### **2.1. Russian Military**

Russian army entered in a large stage of the sharp decline after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The brutal defeat the Soviet army received in the 1980s in Afghanistan brought up morale of deterioration. In addition to exacerbating the problems of training and discipline. Plus the lack of modern equipment and what made it worse was the prevalent corruption in the Russian army. An example of this decline in the Russian military is the defeat in the invasion of Georgia 2008, despite the small size of the discount but Russia could not defeat it. In August 2011 the Congressional Research Service described that as "Russia-Georgia conflict revealed large-scale Russian military operational failures" (Nichol, August 24, 2011). One from its consequence is the announcement of Russian Defense Minister, Anatoly Serdyukov in October 2008 of large-scale major military reforms aimed at reorganizing the structure of the army and its chain of command, reducing its size and establishing an advanced modern and efficient power by 2020.

The main priorities of the development of the military organization are: first is improving the system of management of this organization and increase the effectiveness of its functioning. Second is to develop the mobilization base of the organization and support the mobilization deployment of the Armed Forces and other troops. Then is ensuring the necessary degree of manning, equipment and support for permanent-readiness large formations, troop units and formations and the required level of training for them. Finally improving the quality of cadre training and military education and to increase military-scientific potential ("The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation", February 5, 2010).

The National Interest, a US military affairs magazine, published a report states:

the force modernization and restructuring program launched by Vladimir Putin and his then Defense Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov in the wake of the 2008 Georgian War has strengthened the capabilities of the Russian military, at a time that the defense forces of many major NATO and allied nations have faced budget cuts and downsizing. The Russian military is now better equipped and more capable of conducting modern combat operations than at any point since the fall of the Soviet Union, which has caught analysts in the West by surprise. (Yates, February 25, 2016)

Russia has exploited the military and has allied with the expansion of European influence to justify the increase in arming its army and to take radical steps to maintain its security system. According to Lukasz Kulesa:

A competing narrative about the regional order gained recognition in Russia. According to the Russian version of history, the post-Cold War order in Europe was built according to a Western design, and imposed on Moscow during the period of its weakness in the 1990s. From the Russian viewpoint, NATO and EU enlargement, as well as the development of cooperation between Western countries and former parts of the Soviet Union neighboring Russia, amounted to an encroachment on Russia's legitimate security interests. Moscow considered the western discourse about principles and values underpinning the European security order as a cynical cover for pursuing Western interests, with interventions in Kosovo and Libya, as well as support for the Maidan revolution in Ukraine, seen as examples of Western duplicity. (2016)

The Russian defense minister, Sergei Shoigu, gave reasons for Russia to increase the size of its arms. First is continuity of exacerbating the military and political situation in the world in addition to the expansion of NATO. Second is concentrating of 200 American nuclear air bombs in the territories of Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and Turkey, with

plans for their upgrade and 310 carrier planes are maintained in various degrees of readiness. Finally is expanding zone of influence of the Islamic State (ISIS).The militants have occupied about 70 percent of Syrian territory and most of Iraq. The terrorists currently number about 60,000 and there is a threat of them spreading to Central Asia and the Caucasus ("President of Russia official website", 2015).

Therefore, it has been announced what was called (the new look) to reform the Russian army in October 2008. In 2010, the ambitious costly and wide-ranging arming program of the country was detected, to be implemented between 2011 and 2020. In order to facilitate this change, the Russian defense budget increased by 22 % in 2005 (Pike, n.d.).

Gustav Gressel (2015) reported that:

The authorities planned the “new look” reform in three phases, starting with the reforms that would take the longest to produce results. First, increasing professionalism by overhauling the education of personnel and cutting the number of conscripts; second, improving combat-readiness with a streamlined command structure and additional training exercises; and third, rearming and updating equipment. (p. 3)

Western analysts’ focus on the rearmament stage of the reforms, which has not yet been completed, has caused them to overlook the success of the other two stages. These have already given Russia a more effective and combat-ready military, as demonstrated by its fast and coordinated intervention in Ukraine. (Gressel, 2015)

The decline in Russian military policy before Putin presided as president of Russia was due to a number of factors, including: the difficulties and problems faced by the Russian economy, the Russian military principles were not clear enough which led to misunderstanding of the real status. In addition to the tools that have existed since the Cold

War, especially with regard to the subject of arms control and disarmament. What was more serious is the many steps taken by the international community, such as the expansion of the Warsaw Pact and its military intervention in Kosovo, as well as the activity of the United States of America. It aimed at withdrawing or modifying the 1972 Arms Control Treaty. So Russia reconsidered about its military policy and doctrine. The issue of rearming the army was one of Putin's top priorities. He believed that Russia will not be able to return as an international force unless it has the three elements: a recovering economy, a cohesive army and a decisive policy.

A former American General in the Washington Post wrote an important report, which reflected the Russian armament in the American minds. The writer said:

In November, while visiting the headquarters of the U.S. Army in Europe, I received a briefing on the performance of the Russian army in Ukraine. In a perfunctory tone, the young intelligence briefer recited the details of the July 2014 Battle of Zelenopillya, in which a single Russian artillery “fire strike” almost destroyed two Ukrainian mechanized battalions in a few minutes.

“You know, guys,” I mused in the moment, “this is the first time since the beginning of the Cold War that an American war-fighting function has been bested by a foreign military”.

Tragically, all of America’s steel-rain munitions — millions of shells and warheads — are gone, intentionally destroyed by the past two administrations in a sacrifice to the gods of political correctness. They agreed to give up all submunition weapons after other nations (which had no steel rain) signed a treaty banning such weapons because they produce too many duds that remain on the battlefield and pose risks to civilians. (Scales, August 5, 2016)

Another important quote from an interview with the General Ben Hodges, commander of US forces in Europe, in his commenting on Russia's performance in its recent interventions:

President Putin, of course, has the ability to move troops inside -- he has freedom of movement on interior lines because he's moving inside of Russia, whereas the alliance is moving across multiple sovereign borders between -- they are E.U. countries, NATO countries in almost every case. But still, it's not quite the same thing.

The -- you know, it's been a very long time since American soldiers have had to worry about enemy up in the sky -- you know, having the ability to drop bombs.

Now, what we're witnessing from the Russians, they've got tiered, multi-leveled UAS's of all types. So they're able to see us just the way we've enjoyed the advantage of being able to see others (“Department of Defense Press Briefing by General Hodges on Operation Atlantic Resolve in the Pentagon Briefing Room,”. (2015)

Certainly, the situation - as the American military Generals had tackled - is quite different at least compared to the period during the invasion of Georgia in 2008, where:

Russian forces were slow in mobilising and deploying to the theatre; troops from different divisions had to be synchronised before the invasion through manoeuvres in the Northern Caucasus, because Russian forces relied on mobilisation to fill the ranks and certain regiments were kept unmanned; and inexperienced and talkative conscripts proved to be a security problem. The Russian military had to rely on superior numbers instead of quality. Coordination between the arms of the Russian forces proved difficult. Tactical and operational planning was poor and inflexible, as was leadership. Situation awareness was poor and led to many incidents of “friendly fire”. Russia

failed to exploit the advantage of air superiority and supply lines were overstretched.  
(Gressel, 2015, p. 2)

## **2.2. The Russian Military Expenditure**

Just as the Russian politics, the condition of the once powerful Red Army undergone from heavy blow after the fall of the Soviet Union. In the mid-80s, the Soviet military had about 5 million men of arms. However, at the time the Soviet Union dissolved, the number reduced to 2.7 million men. Due to lack of morale and training, the military failed to contain the separatist militancy in the Caucasus during the 90s. Russia seemed to have lost its military edge ("Military history of the Soviet Union", n.d.).

With major annual increases in defense spending, Russia then started its largest military buildup since the fall of the Soviet Union, these increases are slated to continue until 2020. According to the Economist, the most influential of these changes is a ten-year, \$720 billion weapons modernization program launched in 2010.

When Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine in March 2014, according to the Moscow Times, its troops were "clearly better trained and equipped" than they had been during the 2008 Georgia campaign (the troops in Crimea were also the Russian army's elite).

According to a December 2014 Newsweek report, Russia continues to maintain a large military presence in the rest of its "near abroad," including stationed troops in Armenia (3,200), Abkhazia and South Ossetia (7,000), Transnistria (1,500), Kyrgyzstan (500) and Tajikistan (5,000). To put this in context, Russia's entire armed forces comprise between 700,000 and 800,000 personnel, with an army of less than 300,000 (Borshchevskaya, September 8, 2015).

Some statistics indicate that Russia's defense budget has risen significantly since Putin took power. It seems that the upward trend in the country's income, due to Russia's huge oil and gas revenues from raising their prices, helped him. That budget reached \$ 31 billion in 2007, bringing a rise in defense spending in the post-Soviet era. Russia deals also in arming with 70 countries, including China, Iran and Venezuela and it exported weapons worth \$ 6 billion in 2006 (Pike, n.d.).

Concerning the modernization and development of Russian military forces, the former Russian president (Dmitry Medvedev) requested the military establishment in his country to carry out a large-scale operation to rearming the army and the Russian fleet, also to focus on strengthening Russian nuclear forces to face the potential dangers. He announced that the operation would begin in 2011. Pointing out that Moscow succeeded in 2008 in supplying of both weapons formations and new military technologies. He stressed that the task of equipping the army is a Russian priority, despite the financial crisis. In reference to a strategic plan, approved in 2008, that included stages for the rehabilitation of the military establishment and supply it with the latest equipment until 2020 (Sayed, 2012).

The Russian military intends to strengthen its forces with more than 70 nuclear missiles and various types of weapons in the coming years, at a cost of about 140 billion dollars; where the government intends to increase the pace of armament with strategic missiles; the Russian army will also receive 48 fighter aircraft, 6 spy planes, more than 60 helicopters, 14 naval vessels and about 300 tanks ("Russia strengthens its military arsenal by 70 nuclear missiles", 2008).

Military expenditure was 1782 billion rubles (\$ 58.7 billion), according to the 2010 indicators, it recorded a decline of 1.4% from 2009 but compared with 2001 it recorded an increase of 82%. However, due to the economic and political transition conditions resulting

from the crisis experienced by Russia in the 1990s, Russian military spending declined significantly by 32% between 1992 and 1998, from 5.5% to 3.3% of the country's GNP. After that, it increased between 2000 and 2004, by an estimated 60%. As a result, Russia ranks second in the world in total military strength according to data for 2011. It currently has 11,000 nuclear warheads, both tactical and strategic, versus 8,500 nuclear warheads to US. The number of nuclear warheads, strategic and tactical around the world is about 20 thousand and 530 heads (Marhoun, n.d.).

President Putin's comments indicate the intention of the Russians to restore their military strength strongly in the coming periods to balance the American force or to ensure the existence of a defence wall in case of any attack. Putin announced a new infusion of 23 trillion rubles (\$ 741m) over 10 years for modernizing the country's military in February 2012 (Clover, 2012).

Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks in Zhukovsky outside Moscow at the opening of an international air festival dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Russian Air Force on 11 August 2012: "Our first priority is to supply advanced, modern technology to the troops. More than 600 new planes and 1,000 helicopters will come into service by 2020." (President of Russia, 2012).

The Chief of the Russian General Staff, Gen. Yury Baluyevsky, in a conference at the Academy of Military Sciences in Moscow said: "We do not intend to attack anyone, but we consider it necessary for all our partners in that to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Russia and its allies, military forces will be used, including preventively, including with the use of nuclear weapons."(Associated Press, 2008).

### **2.3. The Russian Nuclear Power**

It is obviously that the missile shield is one of Russia's most feared threats to its national security, which led the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to declare that, after the conclusion of the agreement on the Iranian nuclear file, there is no longer any justification for this shield which is besieging Russia and its security from Europe in particular. He believes that the continued existence of this shield and its activation is a threat to Russia and its security.

After that, it has been announced the new Russian orientation in military strategy. The strategy includes ensuring the country's defense capabilities in the new circumstances, including the strengthening of the nuclear triad, the establishing of a comprehensive reconnaissance system, that contains satellites and the development of conventional weapons; such as aircraft and warships; and ground forces.

#### **2.3.1. The Nuclear Triad**

On January 22, 2014 President of Russia Vladimir Putin said to students at the famed National Research Nuclear University (MEPhI):

My personal position is that at some point, humanity must renounce nuclear arms. But for now, we are far from this, in the sense that other nations aside from Russia have nuclear arms as well – and many of them – and they are not going to renounce this means of armed combat. Such a step by the Russian Federation would be very strange in these conditions, and could lead to some fairly serious, grave consequences for our nation and our people. (Ground Report, 2014)

There are various nuclear weapons but the most important elements of the nuclear triad are:

### **2.3.1.1. Ballistic Missiles**

Once again, the missiles proved to be one of the strategic military capabilities of countries, especially for remote locations that air launchers may not reach because of distant targets or aviation risks.

From here, the Russian president said that our future priorities are to develop the main components of our strategic nuclear forces, pointing out that the forces of the missile force should not only be strong, but modern, or rather capable of overcoming any missile shield. This year, Russian forces will be equipped with 40 advanced ballistic missiles before 2022 (MacFarquhar, 2015).

One of the most prominent Russian strategic industries is "the Scive missile", which is capable of "staying in the deep sea or ocean, at the right moment and with a fire order it can destroy sea and ground targets". This missile replaces submarines in places where may be considered dangerous to them it means they can be detected and attacked.

### **2.3.1.2. Nuclear Submarines**

Russian submarines suffered from negligence in the era of the former Soviet Union, which was clearly demonstrated by the disaster of the submarine "Kursk", which did not survive one of its crew. When the Russian navy received a submarine "Yury Dolgorukiy" (which carries 16 intercontinental ballistic missiles of "Bulava" model and it has a range of the launch 8,000 kilometers), Putin stressed that Russia intends to modernize the army and the navy, knowing that the new submarine is a powerful weapon and will ensure our security and raise our defense capability ("SSBN YuryDolgorukyBorei Class Nuclear Submarine", n.d.).

### **2.3.1.3. Strategic Bombers**

Russia has 811 strategic missile carriers equipped with 3906 combat consignments. The strategic missile forces have 430 carriers capable of carrying 1605 nuclear warheads. The "Tu-95", known as the "bear", is a four-engine turboprop-powered strategic bomber and missile platform in an aircraft. It is able to perform tasks in all weather, climatic and geographical conditions. It is also equipped with bombs and high-precision air-to-ground winged missiles. Its launch range is over 3,000 kilometers knowing that the ammunition may be conventional or nuclear (Pike, n.d.b).

### **2.3.2. Reconnaissance System**

#### **2.3.2.1. Satellites**

The director of the Russian space agency confirmed that Russia intends to develop and modernize the satellite system, according to the space exploration program approved by the Russian government at the end of October 2005 for a period of 10 years (2006-2015). The director of the Russian space agency Anatoly Perminov believes that the new satellites are designed to work for at least 15 years (Asmus, Dyaduchenko, Milekhin, &Uspensky, n.d.).

#### **2.3.2.2. Precision Radars**

Divided into three sections fixed radars, radar aircraft and early warning radars.

### **2.3.3. Ground forces**

Ground forces are the land forces of the Russian Armed Forces, formed from parts of the collapsing Soviet Army in 1991. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the formation of these forces posed economic challenges and required reforms to professionalize the Ground Forces during the transition.

The Russian leadership has developed a plan to increase the number of ground forces and the quality of armament, as expressed by Russian President Vladimir Putin, saying that Russian ground forces must have 10 units of the Iskander-M Tactical Ballistic Missile System and nine S-300s. Putin also said that the basic requirements of ground forces and air forces are their ability to work effectively with different types of forces, their speed of movement and their combat readiness. The Russian authorities also intend to allocate about \$ 81 billion by 2020 to implement these plans. With the knowledge that the basic armament program of the Russian armed forces by 2020 equivalent to about 625 billion dollars (Rinna, February 17, 2015).

In 2016, Putin approved the GPV-2015 stated that by 2025 the Russian Federation's Armed Forces would be fully equipped with modern weapon systems. It means a ratio of 70 percent modern versus 30 percent old weapons (Haas, 2011).

## **Conclusion**

The theoretical framework was discussed in this chapter. It provided a short overview about the Russian rise which has begun when the president Vladimir Putin came to power in 2002. Furthermore, it showed the main strategies adopted by Putin to revive Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Besides that, it included sources of Russia's power among them its geopolitical location, its population, as well as the possession of many natural resources such as gas and oil, its integration into many international organizations and the only inheritor to the Soviet Union. Finally, the chapter shed the light mostly on the military dimensions of the Russian rise, which has been achieved through set of reforms to all the military organizations and doctrine.

## **Chapter Two**

### **US-Russian Foreign Policy and Relations**

## **Introduction**

The United States maintains a military force for several aims primarily to protect the country from attack and to defend its interests abroad, secondary to assist civil authorities in times of disaster or to deter opponents from threatening America's interests. Otherwise this force's essential purpose is to make it possible for the U.S. to physically impose its will on an enemy when necessary.

In the present chapter, we will present an overview about Obama's presidency concerning his two terms. Furthermore, we will shed the light on Obama's foreign policy and the United States Armed Forces background and brief history. However we will be mostly focusing on the status of U.S. military power. Besides, we will include the major threats of US interests and reasons for US interest in Russia. Finally, we will mention the US-Russian relations during Obama's era.

### **1. The Presidency of Barack Obama**

With the promise of “hope and change”, Obama enters the White House. His full name is Barack Hussein Obama II, (born August 4, 1961, Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.). He is the 44th president of the United States and he is the first African American to hold the office. His two terms were from (2009–2017). Before winning the presidency, he represented Illinois in the U.S. Senate (2005–2008) and he was the third African American to be elected to that body since the end of Reconstruction (1877). Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples in 2009 (Wallenfeldt & Mendell, 2004).

## **1.1. First Term**

Within the first 100 days of his presidency that was remarkable period of time because Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The Recovery Act was a stimulus package that injected about \$800 billion into the economy through tax incentives for individuals and businesses, infrastructure investment, aid for low-income workers. Scientific research and Affordable Care Act (also known as "Obamacare") was passed on March 23, 2010, the act witnessed a hug recognition and support from the public. However, Osama Bin Laden, the mastermind of the September 11, 2001, terror attacks, was killed during a Navy SEAL raid in Pakistan. This was a major victory for Obama and the United States of America (Kelly, 2019).

## **1.2. Second Term**

The first term ended in 2012 and then Barack won the reelection in the same year starting his second presidency focusing on new challenges facing the country. Obama is the first African-American to not only be nominated by a major political party but also to win the presidency of the United States. An agreement was reached in 2015 in which the United States would lift sanctions and steps would be taken to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Thus, He ran as an agent of change. His true impact and his presidency's importance will not be determined for many years to come (Kelly, 2019).

## **2. The United States Foreign Policy**

Asma Taalah defined the United States foreign policy in her thesis as:

Is the policy by which the United States deals with foreign countries. The U.S. is still highly influential in the world as the only superpower. The main goal of the foreign

policy of the United States is to create a secure and democratic world for the American people and international community. (2006, p. IV)

## **2.1. Obama's Foreign Policy**

Barack Obama took office as president with confidence that he could dramatically improve America's relationships with nations around the world.

Obama had a strong interest in foreign policy back in his undergraduate days at Harvard; during his administrations, his foreign policy saw diplomatic and military strategies in South Asia, the Middle East and other regions which were considered as a threat to the United States of America. As president, Obama has taken on various foreign-affair initiatives, including the negotiation of the New Start nuclear arms reduction treaty with Russia, the withdrawal from Iraq and the Arab spring. Former US President George W. Bush left his successor a grim legacy of two wars and a crisis in the financial markets. Barack Obama, on the other hand, will likely be remembered as a president who primarily concerned himself with domestic policy and overcame an economic disaster that was without parallel a recent memory. (Nünlist, 2016, p1) During his presidency, the United States has become powerful, more prosperous and safer.

Obama's approach to foreign policy was piecemeal and pragmatic. He enunciated no sweeping Obama Doctrine analogous to the Monroe Doctrine or the Bush Doctrine, preferring to deal with situations as they arose around the globe on a case-by-case basis. Obama said, his principle was, "Don't do stupid stuff".

### **3. The United States Armed Forces**

#### **3.1. Background**

The military forces of the United States of America are made up of the five armed service branches: Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy. These five armed services are among the seven uniformed services of the US. Active duty (full-time soldiers and sailors), reserve and guard forces (usually work a civilian job, but can be called to full-time military duty), and veterans and retirees (past members of the military) are the three general categories of military people. The President of the US is the Commander-in-Chief of the United States Armed Forces. Also he forms military policy with the Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Both federal executive departments, acting as the basic organs by which military policy is carried out.

#### **3.2. A Brief History**

The present U.S. military organizational structure is a product of the National Security Act of 1947. The latest act is the same act that established the United States Air Force and restructured the War Department into the Department of Defense. On August 31, 1949; to replace separate Army, Navy and Air Force Days; Louis Johnson, who was the United States' Secretary of Defense, announced the establishment of an Armed Forces Day. The event stemmed from the unification of the armed forces under one department which is the Department of Defense. The newly formed day was adopted by the Army, Navy and Air Force leagues. The Marine Corps League rejected to drop support for Marine Corps Day however, it supports Armed Forces Day too (Jones, 2019).

All the branches of the military has their own roles, however the main ground-force of the United States is the Army. Its essential function is protecting and defending the country

and its interests using different weapons among them ground troops, armor (such as tanks), artillery, attack helicopters, tactical nuclear weapons and other. The Army officially established by the Continental Congress on June 14, 1775, for that reason it is considered as the oldest U.S. military service. It's also the largest military service. There are two Reserve Forces support the Army: The Army Reserves, and the Army National Guard. These two reserves can be tapped for trained personnel and equipment during times of need (Jones, 2019).

#### **4. The Status of U.S. Military Power**

The military power of the US was assessed in three areas: capability, capacity, and readiness. The three areas of assessment are essential to the questions of whether the U.S. has a sufficient quantity of appropriately modern military power and whether military units are able to conduct military operations on demand and effectively (Wood, 2015).

First, the U.S. Joint Force's capability was on ample display in many aspects among them its decisive conventional war victory over Iraq in liberating Kuwait in 1991, later in the conventional military operation in Iraq to depose Saddam Hussein in 2003, other operations have conducted since the end of the Cold War. Even more the conventional combat aspect has been seen in places like Yugoslavia, Somalia, Bosnia and Serbia, and Kosovo, and even against the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001. Factually the U.S. military was able to conduct highly difficult operations thousands of miles away in hostile, austere environments. Second, capacity means sufficient quantity of the right capabilities must be had by the U.S. military such platforms (planes and ships) (“Introduction: An Assessment of U.S. Military Power,” 2018).

The Marine Corps has stated that it needs 27 infantry battalions to satisfy fully the validated requirements of the regional Combatant Commanders, yet it currently fields only 24. In 2012, the Army was building up across 48 brigade combat teams, but incremental budget cuts decreased that number over time to 31—less than two-thirds the number that the Army primarily thought was necessary (“Introduction: An Assessment of U.S. Military Power,” 2018).

Thirdly, to have the right capabilities to defeat the enemy is one aspect. Having enough of those capabilities (capacity) to sustain operations over time is another aspect. In fact sufficient numbers of the right capabilities are meaningless if the force is unready to engage in the battle (“Introduction: An Assessment of U.S. Military Power,” 2018).

## **5. Threats to U.S. Interests**

There are six threats to the United States. Each of these actors—Russia, China, Iran, North Korea and terrorist groups in the Middle East and Afghanistan—continued to be particularly aggressive during 2015 (Wood, 2015).

Most of the actors are an "elevated" threat to the U.S. interests, however Russia and China are "high" threats because of the scale and reach of their military forces. Also due to the investments they are making in the rapid modernization and expansion of their offensive military capabilities. Because of the more enduring impact that they are within their respective regions via actions such as the active involvement of Russia in Ukraine's conflict and the provocative building of China of islands in highly disputed international waters in the South China Sea (Wood, 2015). The results are demonstrated in the following table:

	SEVERE	HIGH	ELEVATED	GUARDED	LOW
Russia		✓			
Iran			✓		
Middle East Terrorism			✓		
Af-Pak Terrorism		✓			
China		✓			
North Korea	✓				
<b>OVERALL</b>			✓		

**Table1:** Threats to U.S. Vital Interests (Wood, 2015).

### 5.1. Threat of Regional War

To many U.S. allies, Russia does pose a threat. At times, this threat is of a military nature. At other times, Russia uses less conventional tactics such as cyber-attacks, utilization of energy resources, and propaganda. Today as in Imperial times, Russia’s influence is exerted by both the pen and the sword. Organizations like the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) or Eurasia Economic Union attempt to bind regional capitals to Moscow through a series of agreements and treaties. However, Russia also will not hesitate to use military force to exert influence in the region. (Wood, 2015, p.144)

The quotation above argues that the major threat to the United States is Russia and especially its military power.

### 6. Reasons for US Interest in Russia

It is logical to ask whether Washington needs Moscow as a partner, in view of Russia’s difficult history, relatively small economy and decreased international role since the fall of the Soviet Union. It is believed that Russia must be a fundamental priority for the United States because its conduct can have a deep impact on America’s vital national interests. The following reasons are of the most important reasons that made Russia matter for the United States:

- **Nuclear Weapons.** Nuclear terrorism is the first threat to American national security. The United States and Russia together have 95% of the world's nuclear weapons. Hence, it is known that Russia is the only nation that could destroy America in thirty minutes. Thus, meaningful assistance of Russia is significant to prevent nuclear war (Allison & Blackwill, 2011).

- **Non-Proliferation.** Russia has a main role in U.S.-led international efforts to inhibiting the spread of nuclear weapons, weapons-usable materials and technologies. As well as Russia has generally supported American initiatives combating nuclear terrorism and shared intelligence on al Qaeda with USA. Without Russia's support, the United States will face huge additional obstacles in seeking to slow down nuclear proliferation and combat nuclear terrorism (Allison & Blackwill, 2011).

- **Geopolitics.** In present international system Russia is an important state. US cannot Ignore Russian perspectives that can have substantial costs. The vote of Russia in UNSC and its influence elsewhere is consequential to the success of U.S. international diplomacy on a host of issues (Allison & Blackwill, 2011).

- **Energy.** Russia is one of the energy producers in the world and it is the first owner of natural gas reserves .Russia thus has an essential role in maintaining energy supplies which keep the global economy stable and enable economic growth in the US and around the world (Allison & Blackwill, 2011).

- **Finance.** Russia has a seat at the table for the most important financial and economic meetings and deliberations because of its membership in the G8 and the G20 (Allison & Blackwill, 2011).

- **Strategic Geography.** Russia has a strategic position between Europe, Asia, and the big Middle East. Also it is America's neighbor in the Arctic. As a result, Russia is near to hot-

spots and a critical road for energy and other goods. Reviewing these areas makes clear that Russia's actions impact the vital U.S. national interests significantly (Allison & Blackwill, 2011).

All these qualification and more make the United States cares about its relation with Russia.

## **7. US-Russia Relations in the Obama Era**

The relations between the United States and Russia from 2009-2014 reflected the cyclical way in which that relation has regularly moved since the end of the Cold War. Barack Obama, in his first months in the first term, launched a "reset". Which intended to move the relationship to a more positive place following the 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict, with the goal of obtaining Moscow's assistance on main issues to the Obama administration's agenda. The reset achieved early successes – the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) and enhanced co-operation on Iran and Afghanistan – but progress slowed in 2011 (Pifer, 2014).

The following quotation states that Putin worsen the situation when he returned in 2012 and all Obama's actions, in his first presidency to reset the relations between the two countries into a more cooperative relationship, had gone a waste.

Vladimir Putin's return to the Russian presidency in 2012 seemed to augur a less co-operative relationship, given his view that Washington had not taken serious account of Russian concerns, such as missile defence. The US administration scaled back its expectations for progress in bilateral relations in 2013. Relations between Washington and Moscow, and between the West and Russia, plunged to a post-Cold War low in 2014 following Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea and support for separatism in eastern Ukraine. (Pifer, 2014, p.111)

## **7.1. Obama Administration "The Reset"**

Obama came to office with a plan of a “reset” in relations with Russia. Obama’s optimism was based on the fact that was changing in leadership on both countries. Vladimir Putin had allowed his prime minister, Dmitri Medvedev, to preside in his place. From the outside, this seemed like democracy at work, but later the world has learnt that Medvedev was merely Putin's puppet (Economos & Chindea, 2014).

Obama’s policy of a “reset” was imposed on the notion that the US had acted aggressively and arrogantly. In a visit to the New Economic School of Moscow in 2009, Obama said:

There is the 20th-century view that the United States and Russia are destined to be antagonists, and that a strong Russia or a strong America can only assert themselves in opposition to one another. And there is a 19th-century view that we are destined to vie for spheres of influence, and that great powers must forge competing blocs to balance one another. In 2009, a great power does not show strength by dominating or demonizing other countries. ("The Obama White House", 2009)

When Barack Obama became US president in January 2009, the bilateral US-Russia relationship sat at a low point after the 2008 conflict between Russia and Georgia. US-Russian relations had been on a decline slide for several years before the conflict due to many aspects, among them the two countries differed over strategic arms control, missile defense and NATO relations with Ukraine and Georgia. The personal relationship between presidents Vladimir Putin and George W. Bush did little to arrest this downward way. Because of the desire of President Obama to change relations with Moscow, in February 2009, his

administration announced the reset. Which is an attempt to move these relations to a more positive and co-operative stage. In addition, administration officials stated that the aims of reset were to secure Russian co-operation on priority issues such as nuclear arms cuts, Iran's nuclear program, and Afghanistan (Pifer, 2014).

Obama met then-President Dmitry Medvedev in London on 1 April 2009. By all appearances, the two's discussion resulted in two joint statements. One addressed the potential for co-operation across the broad relationship; the second noted their agreement to begin negotiations on reducing strategic nuclear arms. This eventually produced New START In a key modification to the Bush administration's approach, Obama's negotiators offered to limit strategic delivery vehicles – intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and heavy bombers – as well as strategic warheads.(Pifer, 2014)

Despite differences in national interest such as Iran, the 'reset' tried to foster a positive, cooperative relationship between Russia and the US. Even if Putin believed that slowing Iran's production of nuclear material was the right thing to do, he cannot capitulate on Iran, because to allow the US to make gains would be to sell his own country short. While Obama sees a win-win position where the area in the end becomes more peaceful and thus more conducive to Russian business (Economos & Chindea, 2014).

There are other factors that could lead to re-freezing the relations between the two countries such as:

- The White House accuses Moscow of orchestrating a “military invasion and occupation” of the Crimea peninsula in southern Ukraine, potentially putting the Kremlin and the west on a collision course.

- Obama also travels to his paternal homeland of Kenya for the Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Nairobi. He places sanctions on Russia and expels 35 Russian diplomats from the US in retaliation for a cyber-attack against the Democratic National Committee during the 2016 election that according to US intelligence agencies was intended to help Trump win the election.

## **Conclusion**

The objective of this chapter was to demonstrate a number of aspects related to the United States. This chapter gave a general overview about Barack Obama's presidency in order to show his most important achievements during his two terms. Furthermore, the chapter indicated the scope of Obama's foreign policy and what are the major foreign policy decisions he made. On the other side, the chapter provided a background and brief history on American armed forces and it included the real status of military power during the period of Obama. As a global superpower, it is obvious that the United States has threats. Its primary threats have been identified in this chapter. As a correlative part of this chapter, it was important to explain the major causes that make Russia important nation to the United States. Finally, it was concluded with the relations of the United States and Russia during Obama era.

## **Chapter Three**

### **The Russian Rise Implication on US-Russian Relations**

## **Introduction**

The relationship between the United States of America and Russia is a tied partnership where cooperation and competition co-exist. Russia is rebuilding its strength and is once again growing regional impact twenty-two years after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the military, economic and political domains. Russia is setting its power to project it across the areas serving its national interests. It is propping relationships in the Middle East, especially with Iran and Syria.

The Obama Administration increases intelligence gathering on Russian military modernization, strategic and tactical aims, programs and plans. It is also crucial that U.S. military modernization continues. Russia's resurgent assertiveness presents challenges for the U.S. and Western allies. The new administration will work to keep the post-reset status quo over the next coming years.

The present chapter will tackle the findings and analyze the factors which we went through in order to determine the implications of Russian emergence over US-Russian relations. In doing so, we will highlight the major conflicts, which are \_the Ukrainian and Syrian crises also the prospects that discuss Russia's foreign policy toward US and its most significant treaties such as Nuclear Proliferation, Ballistic Missile Defense, the Arab Spring and the Reset as well as the New START treaty. The chapter will end with the US-Russian relations prospects and the US-Russia military relations and major achievements.

### **1. A Case of Conflicts: Crisis of the US-Russia Relations in Putin's and Obama's Terms**

Conflicts are becoming more global than ever, with more international and state actors like the US and Russia involved. However, the international interventions do not always bring about the desirable outcome while each actor formulates its own foreign policy towards the crisis.

## **1.1. Ukrainian Crisis and the US-Russian Confrontation**

The Ukrainian crisis is one of the most influential crises in the world because of its many components. Furthermore it is influential international economic force, it occupies an important strategic position and this is what made it receiving great attention from the major powers and the arena of international competition, especially Russia and America.

The study will seek to develop a better understanding of the impact of the events in Ukraine on the relations between the Russian federation and US.

Despite, the non-amical or hostile rhetoric, these two old rivals have managed to cooperate in certain' matters of mutual interest –as such fields one could identify: North Korea; Iran; the war on terror; disarmament; and non-proliferation- and to prevent a return to a new Cold War. A new Cold War has always been unlikely as Russia –although resurgent the last few years- is nowhere near as powerful as its predecessor. In fact, Putin during the early years of his presidency did not challenge the unipolarity of the international system of the time. Only after Russia started to regain some of its power and influence, Vladimir Putin started to alter his narrative and express his ideas for a multipolar world without a single policeman.

As Sakwa (2015) states:" this is a “geoideological” contestation where both sides are trying not to reason with the other, but simply de-legitimize the very existence of the alternative views". (p.30)

There lies the key difference between the United States of America and the Russian Federation. They both see the same world through remarkably different eyes (Walt, 2015). As, Ioffe (2015) points out the difference in each countries worldviews can be seen in both Putin’s and Obama’s speeches at the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations. According to the United States, its primary objective is the prevention of human suffering through the

promotion of democracy, human rights and liberal ideas, while Russia sees national sovereignty and the survival of the legitimate states as its core objectives (p. 29).

Because of the Ukrainian conflict, Edward W. Walker predicted the danger of a military conflict between Russia and the United States in his saying:

The Ukraine conflict is the result of an intensifying geopolitical struggle between the West and Russia in general and the US in particular and there is a non-negligible risk of a military clash between NATO and Russia. The immediate impact of the intervention is to increase the risk of a military clash between Russia and the United States or one of its allies. There are also reports today that the US has suspended operations by manned aviation (so excluding UAVs) along the Turkish-Syrian border to the west of the Euphrates River. This includes the so-called “Azaz corridor,” a vital supply line for anti-Assad forces fighting on the Aleppo and Idlib fronts. (2015)

Russia intervened militarily in Ukraine. On the same day, the United States and European countries launched intensive diplomatic bombardment of Russia and threatened to impose sanctions on it. Russian military intervention in Ukraine was described as contrary to international law and violation of the principles of the United Nations document calling for peace and security.

In investigating the impact of the Ukrainian crisis on the relations between the United States of America and the Russian Federation, one would understand that the relations between the two nations –to a great extent- are not ideal especially when a significant number of instances their interests are conflictual. Therefore, one must explore where, when and if the crisis in Ukraine aggravated the relations between Washington and Moscow in some of the vital contemporary issues of international affairs.

The study of Van Herpen "Putin's Wars" analyzes the motives behind Russia's shifts in its current geopolitical course and questions whether Moscow's actions are indicative of a new strategy or a continuation of the Soviet expansionist policy. As the 2014 events of Euromaidan unfolded in Ukraine, the Kremlin took advantage of the political crisis in Kiev to intervene. In what followed, Ukraine's president Viktor Yanukovich fled the country, seeking refuge in Russia; the Kremlin gained and secured control over the Crimea; and Russian forces were regularly spotted in Eastern Ukraine supporting the separatists of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. According to Marcel H. Van Herpen, director of the Cicero Foundation in Maastricht, argues that Russia's involvement in Ukraine was quite predictable. Moreover, Van Herpen would argue that Russia's interest in Ukraine was neither new nor unexpected. Instead, he would assert, Moscow's Ukraine policy is an illustration of Putin's attempt to restore Russia's former imperial glory (Pokalova, 2015).

President Barack Obama announced that they will oppose economic sanctions for the first time on 28 February 2014, where he stated that intervention in Ukraine will cost Russia a lot. The United States and the international community were frustrated of the Russia's illegal seizure on the Crimean peninsula, according to the West. These sanctions increased Russian-American relations tense and complexity.

The Ukrainian crisis has been a milestone in US-Russian relations, affecting the structure of the international system, which seemed much like of the Cold War. The thing about the Ukrainian crisis that makes it a huge is reviving the principle of "Balance of Power" refers to the distribution of power between nations equally or unequally and indicates a situation in which one does not excel over another. Where the countries that do not stand in the weak side of the balance of power must also allied with each other against a dominant state.

Through the study of the crisis of Ukraine in, it turns out to be one of the most complex crises the world witnessed after the Cold War. It made the world live a great debate about the fate of the international order, in contrast to the Russian insistence on the restoration of the Soviet empire.

## **1.2. Syrian Crisis**

In recent years, Syria has been ravaged by a brutal civil war that has taken the lives of thousands of people and has displaced millions. The Syrian Crisis started in the Republic of Syria in mid-March 2011.

On one hand Russia is considered to be one of the major supporters of the Assad Regime whereas America is against it. As a result the Russian and US relations are viewed from the two camp's positions.

As a consequence to the mess in Syria, big countries wanted to intervene to stop the chaos that is happening, each country had a position from the Syrian regime. However the most two big countries that have a major influence on the current Syrian Situation are Russia and the United States thus one can see through the position that Russia claimed toward Syrian as well as the position of the United States toward the Syrian Crisis ("The Crisis in Syria", 2014).

As for the Russian Position, Russia has been considered one of the major supporters and protectors of the Assad regime. Therefore since the Syrian civil war began in the year of 2011 between the government of President Assad and thousands of demonstrators, Russia has played a strategic role in the unfolding of the crisis on the world stage. The reason behind this support goes back to the historical context that the two countries have shared and their close relationship, as Syria is Russia's closest Middle Eastern ally (Nichols, 2014). The shipping of large amounts of weapons to Bashar al-Assad is one of the actions that Russia is blamed for;

hence it is claimed that Russia's present contracts with Syria for arms are estimated to be worth 1.5 billion US dollars, comprising 10% of Russia's global arms sales (Nichols, 2014).

In addition Russia's arms sales raised the anger and criticism of certain Western and Arab nations, hence many leaders encouraged Russia to end arms sales to Syria. Thus the Russian government defended its sales by pointing out that they did not violate any standing arms embargoes. As a response to the American criticism, Russian President Vladimir Putin denied that Russia was shipping any arms "which can be used in a civilian conflict" to Syria (Nichols, 2014).

Therefore Russia had shown constant and vocal support for the Assad government, which is now considered to be Moscow's last remaining ally in the Middle East. Russia is calling its interference a protection of the interest of Syria's people and fighting ISIS (Dergham, 2013).

So far it was nothing but serving its own interests and maintaining its position through its last chance; Syria. If it was about protecting civilians or defeating the ISIS, the mess that we saw in the region would have been solved relatively easier.

In his speech, Obama shows his sympathy for the Syrian people and emphasizes the need for Bashar Assad to step down from his position:

Well, first of all, on Syria, I think it's important to understand that for several years now what we've been seeing is a slowly unfolding disaster for the Syrian people. And this is not a situation in which we've been simply bystanders to what's been happening. My policy from the beginning has been that President Assad had lost credibility, that he attacked his own people, has killed his own people, unleashed a military against innocent civilians and that the only way to bring stability and peace to

Syria is going to be for Assad to step down and to move forward on a political transition ("American Rhetoric", 2013).

In September 2013 President Barack Obama sought Congressional support for military action but postponed the vote - which was not certain to pass - when Syria indicated it would surrender its chemical weapons. Although it has stopped saying so, the US wants Bashar al-Assad out of power and one can see this through the American pushing for a transitional government called for in the Geneva communiqué (Blanchard, 2014)

Last but not least it is clear that the US is against the regime of Assad, however it is trying to fight in an indirect way in which it doesn't include fully itself in the crisis and this is because it might be difficult to win the war especially if Russia and Iran are playing on the side of the game. On the other hand, one cannot deny that America has its own hidden motivation. Thus in America's Middle East strategy, Syria is a country that does not acknowledge allegiance to America but is instead allied with America's regional rival Iran. That's why Syria is a needle in America's flesh. Since the 2011 Arab uprising, America has hoped there would be a regime change in Syria; however, the rebels are so divided that they cannot overthrow the Syrian government and now they have almost been defeated by the Syrian government so the American government is very anxious (Karmi, 2011).

Russian military intervention and the entry of Russian soldiers in Syria were described as unprecedented. This is an evidence of the United States' fear of a direct military clash with Russia because of its military strength.

Also, it is clear that America is eager to use military intervention and the rumor that the Syrian government has used chemical weapons against the rebels is a perfect excuse for America to launch an attack on Syria (Karmi, 2011).

Russia is using Syria as a testing ground for new weapons systems while obtaining valuable combat experience for its troops. According to Lieutenant General Ben Hodges, Commander, U.S. Army Europe, Russia has used its intervention in Syria as a “live-fire training opportunity.” In February 2017, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu claimed that Russia had tested 162 weapons systems in Syria. (Wood, 2017)

While not an existential threat to the U.S, Russia’s intervention in Syria ensures that any settlement in the coming years will be run through Moscow and will include terms consistent with Russian strategic interests. Russia’s intervention in Syria has helped to keep Assad in power, has further entrenched Russia’s military position in the region and has greatly degraded the impact of U.S. policy in Syria, often seeking to counteract U.S. actions and targeting U.S-backed forces on the ground.

When put on the spotlight each of America and Russia gave their own reasons and excused to justify their actions in Syria, however the Syrian Crisis is more of a win/lose game than a matter of settling down the country and saving the Syrian nation. Also both of Russia and America believe that the Syrian crisis won’t end unless a political solution is taken, however the funny thing is that none of the two countries have stopped supporting the fighting powers in Syria with weapons and assistantship, but on the political arena they both appear as the good guy who want to save the situation. Therefore as a conclusion and a personal opinion, I think that the Syrian Crisis has no end and will keep on continuing until the two sides abolish each other or until the big countries (Russia vs. America) grow tired from this endless struggle.

Therefore one can say that the Syrian crisis can also be considered as a war between Russia and American but in an indirect way.

## **2. A Case of Prospects: US-Russian Relations Prospects and Russia's Foreign Policy toward US**

### **2.1. Nuclear Proliferation**

Both the Russian Federation and the United States share a common interest in preventing the further proliferation of nuclear weapons to other countries. This can be examined in their cooperation in both the cases of the Iranian nuclear program and in the case of North Korea. Both Moscow and Washington have been vital parts in the multilateral efforts to reach an agreement with both countries, as well as in the efforts to dissuade any other country from pursuing military nuclear capabilities.

Despite Waltz's argument:

In favor of the proliferation of nuclear weapons as a means to guarantee peace, since in case of war mutually assured destruction would be certain, both the United States and Russia – wisely, taking in consideration their own interests- prefer to keep the most destructive weapon on earth at the hands of as few other nations as possible.  
(Waltz, 2011)

When Barack Obama presides to power the atmosphere was relaxed surrounding US–Russian relations, which by the fall of 2008 had reached their lowest point in the last 25 years.

### **2.2. Ballistic Missile Defence**

Russian political and military figures are already nervous about not possessing enough nuclear weapons to maintain a deterrence capability. The closer the United States comes to fielding its much vaunted Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) shield. Russians become ever more restless (Bettina & Thornton, 2012).

One of the most intense problems of international politics is Missile defense. Russia was triggered by a sharp reaction of Plans by the United States to deploy a third position zone in Eastern Europe for its national missile defense system, which threatened to take countermeasures (Pavel, 2008).

Both Russia and America turned into hostages of Cold War weapons, above all ground-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), which cannot be placed in a reduced launch readiness status without violating the normal mode of operation. The increased readiness of their strategic nuclear potentials in line with the task of mutual nuclear deterrence is the main factor of mutual distrust between the two countries. The main plans of the parties for the employment of nuclear weapons provide for the mutual destruction of each other's facilities. All ground-based ICBMs are in a state of readiness for use in the "launch under attack" mode and can be used on signals from missile warning systems (Pavel, 2008).

### **2.3. The Reset**

The administration 'reset' of relations proposed by Barack Obama has been a success. The U.S.—Russian relations have markedly improved. The threat of a retreat to a systemic confrontation has kind of disappeared. A lot of the conflicts between the two countries have been either resolved or, reduced to a simmer. Both Russia and the United States have displayed pragmatism by lowering the importance of persisting conflicts in favor of the benefits of cooperation (The U.S.-Russia Relations after the «Reset»: Building a New Agenda, 2011).

### **2.4. New START Treaty**

With the new administration of Barack Obama coming to power, Russia managed to reengage the U.S. in arms control negotiations. The "post-START" treaty is expected to bring Moscow status as a global great power, strategic stability and parity with the U.S., as well as

security and economic gains. Despite the differences between the two, the new START treaty offers a win-win situation, which makes agreement probable. Nevertheless, the “post-START” treaty is unlikely to cause spill-over effects that change the overall dynamics of Russian- American relations. Similarly, it cannot be taken for granted that the treaty paves the way for further disarmament. Rather, it may stand out as the essential and only achievement of the “reset” policy (Marcin, 2009).

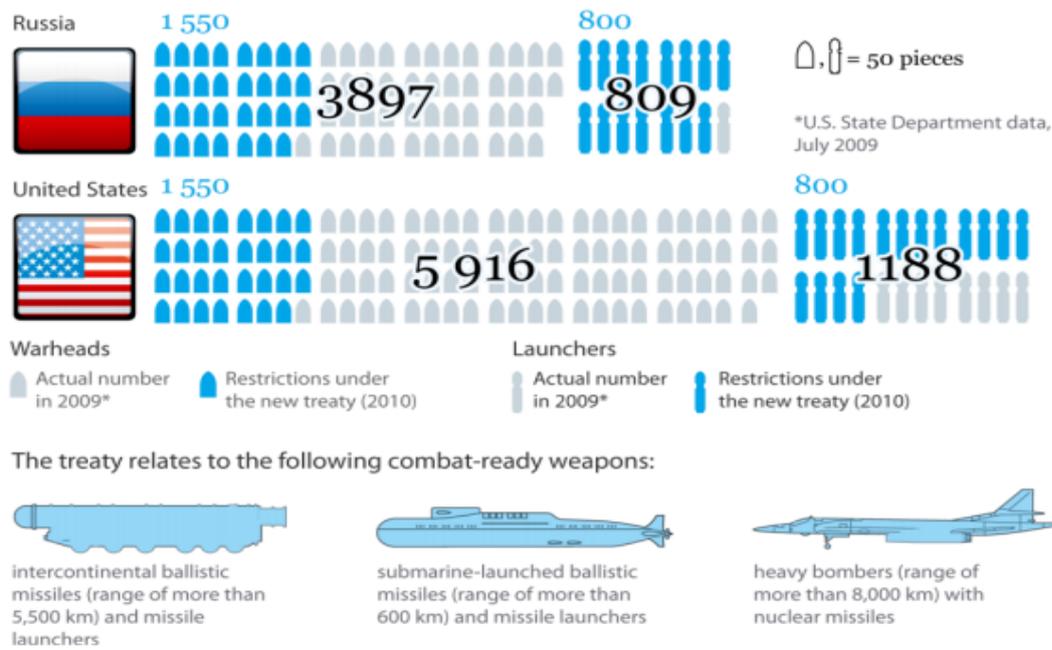
Additionally and importantly, the new START agreement is a win for Russia means that it does not have to lower the number of its tactical nuclear weapons. It has many more of these than the US. These are prized and important assets to Moscow.

They become even more prized when it is borne in mind that Russia feels militarily vulnerable in the midst of its current reform process. The 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) has remained in force much longer than anyone expected as attempts to iron out a successor treaty failed. Now the presidents of the US and Russia are committed to reducing their forces to the level of 500–1,100 strategic launchers and 1,500– 1,650 warheads. Success depends on whether the two sides can agree on counting rules. (Pavel, 2009)

The United States and Russia introduced in what they called a new era in nuclear arms control in April, after that American and Russian Presidents signed an arms reduction treaty and agreed to act in a united fashion against the threat of Iran's nuclear program. The pact, called the New START, had each country promise to scale back their nuclear arsenals:

The U.S. and Russia must lower the limit on deployed strategic warheads and launchers by 25% and 50%, respectively. They will also implement a new inspection regime. Because of resistance among Republicans in Congress, who called the verification provisions inadequate and who were generally unwilling to compromise

with Democrats, it was unclear near the end of the Congressional session whether the treaty would be approved. ("U.S. News: A New Era for U.S., Russia, and Nuclear Arms", 2010)



**Figure 1:** New START treaty (Kvamladze, 2013)

## 2.5. The Arab Spring

Obama faced many other foreign policy challenges that reflected the concerns he raised about the objectives for “Promoting Democracy” in the Arab world. “After Obama took office, some democracy promotion proponents in Washington hoped he might make Middle East democracy a priority” (Carothers, 2012). As many experts refer to, the Arab spring started with government collapses in Tunisia and Egypt in early 2011 and began to spread against other regimes in the region including Lebanon, Yemen, Libya and Syria. The United States though refused to interfere by military actions in the region. However, Obama got on the side of change (Carothers, 2012), joining the NATO mediation in Libya and supporting several sanctions against Syria. Obama has asked Egypt and Tunisia to “Set a

strong example through free and fair elections, a vibrant civil society, accountable and effective democratic institutions and responsible regional leadership.” (Carothers, 2012).

### **3. The US-Russia Military Relations and Major Achievements**

Last but not least the Russian and United States relations were effected by a set of rules. The security strategy of Russia is the pursuit of a “multipolar” world based on balance-of-power relations not unlike those that Europe experienced between the end of the Napoleonic wars and World War I. What the Russian government does not announce publicly is the significance need to humble the United States and to keep checking on unparalleled U.S. military capability (Cohen, 2014).

Moreover, security strategy of Russia seeks for Moscow to be an fundamental party in the settlement of regional disputes as the Syrian crisis has demonstrated, a strong Russian military is one of the pillars of the so-called" Putin doctrine", the aim of which is to recover the economic, political and geostrategic assets lost by the Soviet state in 1991 by dint of a full tool box of state power cultural, economic, but first and foremost, a strong military (Cohen, 2014).

Russian military modernization has an important implications for United States military in many sides; readiness, force structure and military posture in the Central Command, European Command and Pacific Command. Russia's interests are growing in the Middle East and the republics of the former Soviet Union. As a result it affects American forces and allies. However, for the past 12 years to the Middle East and Afghanistan U.S. intelligence capabilities have been committed (Cohen, 2014).

The U.S. and its allies need to know exactly what the growing capabilities of the new Russian weapons systems are, many of which are exported to the Middle East. Russian military modernization affects potential U.S. adversaries and weapons

markets. Russia has been a principal arms supplier to China, India, and Iran, and sold advanced weapons systems to Syria and Venezuela. (Cohen, 2014)

As though with the Russian military strengthening overall, combined with U.S. defense budget cuts, the U.S. military superiority vis-à-vis Russia (and China) is declining. Unlikely a full-scale war between the U.S. and Russia might happen. The Russia is the one and only country in the world that has a nuclear triad comparable to that of the U.S. Russia is modernizing its nuclear arsenal whilst the U.S. is letting its precious deterrent deteriorate (Cohen, 2014).

Furthermore, Russia's military buildup and modernization has serious implications for U.S. foreign policy and security objectives. Eliminating U.S. missile defense in Europe—something Russia desperately wanted—without extracting a penny of concessions from Russia was simply a poor practice of foreign policy (Cohen, 2014).

Cohen (2014) states that in order to address and contain the Russian military buildup, the Obama administration must:

1. Raise the quality and volume of intelligence combination and analysis of Russian military modernization and strategic and tactical goals, programs and plans. Plus a funded new training programs.

2. Focus collection on the dynamics of the Russian technical-military cooperation with other countries.

3. Maintain nuclear and conventional forces in Europe to keep regional security at its current levels, including readiness, capabilities, training and exercises.

4. Expand military cooperation with Central European NATO allies and NATO partners.

Overall nuclear weapons continue to play a major increasing role in U.S.-Russian relations. Relations between Washington and Moscow in this field are defined by a strategic balance characterized by a high degree of mutual vulnerability concerns (Colby, 2016).

The United States deploys a very huge number of warheads on its highly survivable strategic missile submarines; at all times, various of these vessels are at sea and ready to receive instructions to launch a destructive strike that Russia would be powerless to stop. Several hundred fixed-silo intercontinental ballistic missiles that the United States also possesses would be highly difficult to destroy, also a force of nearly 100 strategic bombers that could ready if needed. Russia also deploys a triad of strategic delivery systems qualified of delivering hundreds of warheads against the United States. Russia also has a massive and varied arsenal of shorter-range or “tactical” nuclear weapons, with at least some of these designed to be employable for military effect on the battlefield. Moscow also owns a capable nuclear command and control system besides at least some capacity for early warning of an adversary attack (Colby, 2016).

## **Conclusion**

Putin’s ongoing intervention in Ukraine and annexation of Crimea as well as his military intervention to Syria has undermined the stability of Europe’s order after the cold war unsettling the United States. Russia’s aggressive use of cyber, energy, military strength and nuclear weapon is a threat to the safety of not only its European neighbors’ political systems but also that of the United States.

The third chapter went through pointing out two cases of study, the first one dealt with a case of conflicts containing the most important clashes manifested on Russian-American relations during the period of Putin and Obama. The confrontations between the two countries have been exacerbated by the events of the Ukrainian crisis related to the Crimea and the conflict in Syria. Yet it helped showing Russian rise and its implication. However the second

case of prospects mentions some of agreements and treaties mostly in the military side. This chapter concluded with the US-Russia military relations and major achievements.

## **General Conclusion**

## **General Conclusion**

Russian rise is a significant development in the history of international relations. This emergence has led to a change of the power balance in the world and in the monopolistic pattern of polarization in the United States. Russian embarkation has proved that the United States is not the only leading power in the international system. Russia did not stand idly by in this collapse and sought vigorously to return to the arena of international competition again.

President Vladimir Putin presided in 2000 with a heavy burden; to save Russia from deterioration in various fields. Not only this but also to restore Russia's regional and international standing in order to become a strong player on the international scene.

In this investigation, the aim was to assess the probability of Russia to emerge again as a superpower with strong leadership in Russia, by successive presidents and engagement in numerous international economic and military institutions. The time has come for Russia to rightfully reclaim its position in the evolving world order.

The importance of this investigation is growing researcher's interest to study the Russian rise and its impact on Russian-American relations, especially after the new developments that emerged in Ukrainian and Syrian crises. Consequently it created a field of competition and conflict between the United States and Russia.

This study has examined the factors contributed to Russian emergence as a superpower which are series of reforms economically, politically and militarily used by Vladimir Putin. In the military dimension he did a sort of reforms aiming at modernizing and the developing the military organization and all its branches.

The impact of the Russian rise on the Russian-American relations and especially the military side is clear from the findings that military relations were greatly influenced by

Putin's military reform of the Russian army and military doctrine. All this affected the structure of the force and the American military position in the Central Command, the European Command and the Pacific Command.

The Russian rise has had a great impact on many issues on the international scene, especially the Ukrainian crisis and the Syrian crisis. Russia views Syria as its last entry into the Arab region, which can influence all of its hot events as a result Russia cannot afford to lose Syria after losing Iraq and Libya. As for the Ukrainian crisis, it has reintroduced the term of the Cold War, and Washington has become increasingly aware that the foreign policy adopted by Russian President Vladimir Putin is contrary to its interests and is based on the restoration of some Russian influence and prestige in the world.

To fulfill the research's objectives, both descriptive and analytical methods were adopted. In order to test hypothesis; books, newspapers, magazines, journals, were used to justify the given findings and analysis of the study.

Russian decision-makers have been seen that the partnership with the West would bring Russia out of its economic predicament, which had already caused the collapse of the Soviet Union in the past. Russia has been achieved a range of successes, Russia's partnership with the United States has been transformed into rival relations because of Russia's desire to return to its former international status, something the United States will not allow.

This study has raised important questions about the nature and status of US-Russian relations. What would be recommended is investigating the economic relations to assess its effects on broader and wider scope.

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## الملخص

عبر التاريخ ، كانت العلاقات بين الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية (و م أ) و روسيا تتقلب بين صراع و تنافس و تحالف و شراكة من وقت روسيا القيصرية إلى الاتحاد السوفيتي وتفكك هذا الأخير في أوائل التسعينات. شهدت هذه العلاقات تحولاً جديداً منذ عام 2000 ، الذي يرتبط بالتغيير في نوعية القيادة على الجانبين الروسي والأمريكي. تحاول هذه الأطروحة التحقيق في تأثير الصعود الروسي على العلاقات العسكرية الروسية الأمريكية خلال فترة بوتين وأوباما. وفقاً لذلك ، فإن الدراسة الحالية لها هدفين رئيسيين: أولاً ، تحديد كيف عمل بوتين على صعود الجيش الروسي. ثانياً ، تحليل كيف أثر هذا الصعود على العلاقات العسكرية الأمريكية الروسية في عهد بوتين وأوباما. بالنسبة للنتائج ، كشفت الدراسة أن الصعود الروسي وتحديداً إصلاحات بوتين على الجيش الروسي والعقيدة العسكرية الروسية كان لها تأثيراً كبيراً على العلاقات العسكرية بين البلدين خلال فترة بوتين وأوباما كما تأثرت هذه العلاقات بشكل كبير بالمواجهات في أوكرانيا وسوريا.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** العلاقات العسكرية، إصلاحات، روسيا، الصعود الروسي، الاتحاد السوفيتي، الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية (و م أ).