

*Prioritising Diplomacy as an Instrument of the United States'
Foreign Policy in the Aftermath of the 'War on Terror'*

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ABSTRACT

The Obama Administration in the United States has announced and started implementing foreign policy that is distinctly different from that of its predecessor, the Bush Administration. A new foreign policy doctrine, based on the concept of 'smart power', is now emerging and acknowledges that a combination of 'hard power' and 'soft power' is required for the US to build an appropriate framework within which to tackle unconventional threats such as terrorism. In essence, the prioritisation of soft power indicates a return to intangible power resources, such as culture, ideology and institutions, and most importantly, prioritises diplomacy as an instrument of foreign policy. This study will determine why this dramatic shift has occurred, and will investigate the diplomatic fallout of the Bush Administration's 'war on terror' during which 'hard power' tools were favoured and diplomacy was marginalised or, at best, combined with unilateral and even coercive tools of foreign policy. The study will also interrogate the preliminary assumption that the foregoing has convinced policy-makers in the US that the country, despite its superpower status, will not be able to achieve its long-term goals on its own and, if it acts unilaterally, will undermine those political alliances and institutions that are vital to its foreign-policy goals. This has arguably prompted the Obama Administration's recent embrace of global diplomatic norms, *inter alia*, transparency, inclusiveness, multilateralism, respect for international law, and basic civility in international relations.

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ACRONYMS

BRICSA	Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
EU	European Union
ICC	International Criminal Court
IR	International Relations
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US/USA	United States of America
PRC	People's Republic of China

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and Identification of the Research Theme

On 11 September 2001, al-Qaeda, a then little-known terrorist group based in Afghanistan, mounted daring and deadly attacks on American soil, killing thousands of United States (US) citizens and foreign nationals in both New York City and Washington, DC. These acts of terrorism were met with a variety of policy responses, which included the use of instruments of national power that were diplomatic, economic, political, informational, and military in nature.

The US, under the Bush Administration, 'crafted an extensive, publicised and executed policy response to the events of September 2001' (Snauwaert 2004: 121). However, Crenshaw (2006: 2) characterises this period as a rupture in American foreign policy as a consequence of the resulting diplomatic fallout. The events of 9/11 (as the 11 September 2001 terror attacks came to be colloquially known) incited nations against each other, and in other cases prompted states to close ranks against terrorism. The US took the lead and brought several nations under one umbrella to join in its 'war on terror'. Nevertheless, the policy responses of the US constituted a 'radical doctrine of pre-emptive action which was not morally justifiable and consisted of war on terror and preclusion of rivals' (Crenshaw 2006: 2).

Nye (2006: 139) argues that George W. Bush's bid for a legacy of transformation rested on 'reducing Washington's reliance on permanent alliances and international institutions, expanding the traditional right of pre-emption into a new doctrine of pre-emptive war, and advocating coercive democratisation as a solution to Middle Eastern terrorism'. These changes were codified in policy format in the National Security Strategy of 2002, which had at its core a doctrine of unilateral pre-emption. Before the al-Qaeda attacks of 2001, the policies of the Bush Administration had focused primarily on domestic issues such as the cutting of taxes, which initially occupied centre stage in that administration's policy environment (Bacevich & Prodromou 2004: 48), but heralded by the crisis brought about by the 9/11 attacks, the focus shifted to foreign policy. Before Bush was

elected US President in 2000, he appeared to be a conventional realist in foreign affairs and expressed criticism of the open-ended nature of the preceding Clinton Administration's policies, notably its indiscriminate use of military force in instances not involving vital national interest (Owens 2009: 23). Bush ascended to the presidency a relative foreign policy novice and, therefore, assembled a strong group of national policy advisers: Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, all with foreign policy experience. The collective foreign policy orientation of these advisers – embracing an approach that can be described as neo-conservative – placed emphasis, *inter alia*, on the development of a new national security strategy and, as Stewart (2009: 26) argues, a 'robust pursuit of US primacy' which diluted the traditional US commitment to self-restraint. In this spirit, the 9/11 events were declared 'an act of war' and the use of force became a defining element of the Bush Presidency (Snauwaert 2004: 121; Guzzini 2002: 296; Kellner 2002: 29). According to Winkler (2005: 4) Bush's role in the 'war on terror' gave rise to 'excesses of nationalism and stubborn unilateralism'. The 9/11 attacks brought to the fore unique threats to US interests and signalled a defining moment in US foreign policy. US diplomacy, as it was known at the time, was in decline.

During his 2008 election campaign, US presidential candidate Barack Obama voiced criticism of the 'war on terror', and when he assumed office it appeared that a change of course from that pursued by the Bush Administration was imminent. Obama's philosophical lineage was clearly revealed in his first speech to the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, where he quoted Franklin D. Roosevelt who declared in 1949 that 'we have learned ... to be citizens of the world, members of the human community' (Obama 2009). In a 2007 edition of *Foreign Affairs*, Obama stated that 'our global engagement cannot be defined by what we are against; it must be guided by a clear sense of what we stand for'. In this regard, Obama emphasised that the fundamental principles, values and beliefs of the US, as enshrined in its Constitution, should be the guiding force in foreign policy. He made it clear that he did not underestimate the threat posed by non-state actors, and terrorist groups in particular, but that he also realised the limits of US power in tackling these threats unilaterally. This change was welcomed by most of the US electorate and, for that matter, by most of the international community. Europe, a traditional ally of the US, had grown estranged from the US under the Bush Administration because of disagreement on the strategies

and choices the US had opted for in fighting terrorism. Jones (2009: 63) frankly states: 'Europeans broadly abhorred the Bush Administration's approach to multilateralism and were eager for a change which would emphasise diplomacy and multilateralism.' Obama's new emphasis on consultation with allies was very well received by Europeans, who welcomed his initiatives to change US counter-terrorist strategy and to co-operate with other major powers (De Vasconcelos 2009: 21; Hamilton & Foster 2009: 39). Accordingly, a new foreign policy doctrine, based on the concept of 'smart power', emerged in the US. This doctrine relies on the notion that a combination of 'hard power' and 'soft power' will allow the US to build an appropriate framework within which to tackle unconventional threats, such as terrorism. Traditionally, the US has tended to rely on its uncontested 'hard power' but, as Nye (2004: 5) asserted, even during the Bush Administration's 'war on terror', US success depended upon the development of 'a deeper understanding of the role of soft power and developing a better balance of hard and soft power in ... foreign policy'. According to Kegley and Wittkopf (2004: 457), 'soft power' is associated with intangible resources such as culture, ideology and institutions, and can be contrasted with 'hard power', which is usually associated with tangible resources such as military and economic strength. In essence, the prioritisation of 'soft power' indicates a return by the US to diplomacy as a preferred foreign policy instrument.

Since Obama took office, he has been on a diplomatic offensive and, among other changes, has been paying much attention to restoring relations with Europe. However, he has also been stressing that it is essential that Europe shares more responsibility with the US in responding to the challenges of the contemporary world. The US, for its part, has been attempting to restore the trust of both its allies and enemies. Obama's intention to consolidate and stabilise, as embodied in his multilateralist rhetoric, has thus far assisted in enhancing US diplomatic standing within Europe, as well as in the Islamic and Arab world. Unlike his predecessor, whose policies arguably reflected insecurity and even negativity -- that had, in turn, eroded US global prestige -- the Obama Administration projects a less confrontational approach. It would seem that the US has realised that, despite its superpower status, it will not be able to achieve its long-term goals on its own, and if it acts unilaterally it will undermine those political alliances and institutions that are vital to its foreign policy goals.

1.2 Literature Review

A review of the available literature has been done in the following four relevant areas: foreign policy responses that marginalise diplomacy; US foreign policy responses during the Bush Administration's 'war on terror'; the diplomatic fallout as a result of the 'war on terror'; and the Obama Administration's revision of foreign policy instruments, notably the prioritisation of diplomacy.

1.2.1 Foreign Policy Responses that Marginalise Diplomacy

In his definition of foreign policy, Magalhães (1988: 4) argues that it refers to an 'activity of a state in the external domain -- that is, beyond its political boundaries'. Identifying various foreign policy instruments, he divides them into reciprocal and unilateral tools. He makes the point that reciprocal instruments, including diplomacy, are by their very nature always peaceful. Unilateral instruments, on the other hand, may also be peaceful but lack international legitimacy. Those that involve coercion or violence include deterrence, the threat of use of force, economic war, military pressure, and outright war. Diplomacy, as a strictly peaceful instrument, can therefore be viewed in stark contrast to war, which is not just unilateral but also the most violent on the foreign policy continuum. Magalhães (1988: 12) does, however, describe various unilateral foreign policy instruments which can be used in a non-violent manner: among these are propaganda, espionage, economic intervention, and political intervention. A potential grey area, where diplomatic activity can overlap with unilateral foreign policy behaviour, is described by Du Plessis in his analysis of 'defence diplomacy'. Du Plessis (2008: 89) explains that defence diplomacy fuses two apparently incommensurable extremes, namely violent coercive (armed force) and pacific persuasive (diplomatic) means, in the pursuit of policy objectives. He argues, as does Magalhães, that diplomacy constitutes the traditional, peaceful and most direct instrument of foreign policy, but whereas Magalhães insists on a 'pure' concept of diplomacy, Du Plessis contends that diplomacy can be implemented through political, cultural, and military means, in which (latter) case it becomes coercive.

Wiseman (2005: 410) also argues that 'diplomacy is usually associated with the general idea that states should use peaceful means rather than military force in dealing with each other'. Asserting that diplomacy is composed of norms and values, which encapsulates the desirability of continuous dialogue through mutual recognition and representation, he postulates that, what he refers to as 'diplomatic culture', involves five norms: the use of force as a last resort only, transparency, continuous dialogue, multilateralism, and civility (Wiseman 2005: 412). He argues that the first transgression of diplomatic culture on the part of the Bush Administration was its eagerness to use force rather than to exhaust diplomatic negotiations. Under international law, military force may be used as a last resort only. However, the US violated this principle. In terms of the second norm, transparency, negotiations are more likely to succeed if information is obtained overtly rather than covertly and if policies and views are accurately conveyed to all the parties concerned. Bush's use of a discredited intelligence report as justification for the attack on Iraq constitutes an extreme violation of this transparency norm. In terms of the third norm of continuous dialogue, Wiseman maintains that war is less likely if there is an engagement in diplomatic dialogue and communication. But the US policy of isolationism has tended to estrange it in both bilateral and multilateral forums. Moreover, the US also transgressed the fourth norm of multilateralism. Initially, its response to the 'war on terror' was both unilateral and pre-emptive and it shunned a collective response under the UN umbrella. Finally, it would appear that the US displayed little regard for, or sensitivity to, the last and well-established diplomatic norm of civility. Wiseman (2005: 424) states that, according to Sir Ernest Satow, diplomatic tact is the very essence of diplomacy. The US Administration drew criticism for its 'war diplomacy' and its insensitive way of dealing with both friends and foes alike, as it appeared to be impervious to any need for tact. The resultant diplomatic and public fallout damaged the US in terms of both its international standing and image.

1.2.2 US Foreign Policy Responses during the 'War on Terror'

In the area of international relations, the realist school of thought – as exemplified by the classical realist, Hans Morgenthau -- emphasises the maximisation of power and the preservation of 'national interest' and, accordingly, 'interest is defined as power' (Erdem 2004: 36). Thus, the essential goals of a state are the maximisation of its power and the preservation of its 'national interest'. There are those who argue that the Bush team (in particular, Vice President Cheney,

Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld, and Assistant Secretary of Defence Paul Wolfowitz) had manifested the specific ideological orientation of neo-conservatism by prioritising national interest above all other considerations.

Erdem (2004: 142) quotes Henry Nau when he lists four different traditions in American foreign policy, namely neo-isolationism or nationalism, realism, primacism, and internationalism. This theoretical orientation explains the hawkish and interventionist policies of the Bush Administration. Nye (2006: 142) argues that 'George W. Bush began his presidency as a traditional realist with little interest in foreign policy; his ambition to transform US grand strategy developed only after 9/11'. He observes that a crisis 'is usually needed to liberate a president from the constraints of pressure groups and bureaucratic inertia' – and this is, arguably, exactly what happened when the 9/11 attacks occurred.

Halper and Clarke (2004), as quoted by Wiseman (2005: 415), maintain that after the 9/11 attacks the neo-conservatives were quickly galvanised into action under President Bush and articulated an aggressive American foreign policy. In doing so, they rekindled American animosity towards traditional diplomacy. The State Department became isolated, as it was primarily seen as a product of its perceived liberal-minded, appeasement-prone biases and fraternisation with foreign elites. According to Noam Chomsky (cited by Wiseman 2005: 415), the post 9/11 response of the Bush Administration gave rise to a robust diplomatic reaction in terms of which the Administration's foreign policy was militarised and diplomacy, both bilateral and multilateral, was marginalised.

Indeed, the US response to 9/11 resulted in a new assertiveness in US foreign policy. According to Kellner (2002: 20) the 'global campaign against worldwide terror networks requires multilateral and co-ordinated efforts across many fronts: financial, legal-judiciary, political, and military', which caused many countries to be reluctant to participate in the 'war on terror' mainly 'because of ... secret military courts, lack of standard legal procedures, and [the] dangers of capital punishment that are banned in ... [many parts] of the world'. The US thus adopted the strict and narrow path of a unilateralist approach and, in so doing, undermined developing a more global and multilateral campaign against terrorism. According to Collins (2008), given the geopolitical landscape, the US was in urgent need of Pakistan's support for the war. However, these two countries had not

previously been allies as Pakistan had faced US sanctions. As it turned out, the US was able to gain Pakistan's support for the war only through coercive diplomacy that involved a combination of threats and incentives.

The preventive war waged by the Bush Administration was problematic, not only because it promoted unilateralism, but also because it contributed to the breakdown of international organisations and alliances. Xego and Olivier (2003: 82) argue that there are two schools of thought in this debate. The first school is based on the view that 'states are allowed to take unilateral action in situations in which certain key policy considerations require such unilateral action, even if such actions contravene existing international law'. Accordingly, this school supports US unilateralism even if it violates international law, citing the need to act in the national interest. The second school posits that 'unilateral actions are only lawful if taken within the framework of established rules and principles of international law' (Xego & Olivier 2003: 82). However, this school rejects the tradition of diplomatic bargaining, multilateralism and mutual co-operation among allies, as well as the notion of a balance of power in the modern era. The Bush Administration seemed to view alliances and multilateral platforms as distractions which may impede the elimination of threats to its domestic security. Hence the National Security Strategy of 2002 states that the 'US must defend its interest, identify and destroy [any] threat before it reaches its border, enlist the support of the international community, but will not hesitate to act alone if necessary by acting pre-emptively' (Snauwaert 2004: 123). There are several historical precedents for the US acting unilaterally and taking a preventive stance: for example, the Cuban missile crisis, and the US rejection of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Kyoto Agreement on Global Warming, and the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Thus, the attacks of 9/11 merely reinforced the traditional trend in US foreign policy towards unilateralism.

1.2.3 Diplomatic Fallout as a Result of the 'War on Terror'

Yew (2007: 2) proffers that US foreign policy during the Cold War was characterised by inclusiveness – 'a willingness to embrace any country that opposed communism, whatever type of government'. But, apart from the 'coalition of the willing' during 'the war on terror', the US had not demonstrated inclusiveness, as had been the case during the war against communism. In pursuit

of its national interest, through both its unilateral action and its neglect of the central multilateral platform of the UN, the US developed new rules of engagement, namely national security in the case of Iraq, as a corollary to the 'war on terror'. However, the challenges facing the US were projected not as threats to the US alone, but as a worldwide threat which required a strategy that maximised the opportunities for collective action.

Eadie (2007: 1) contends that the European Union (EU) and the US perceived the events of 9/11 quite differently – the 'EU tended to present terrorism as a crime, whilst the US articulated it as an act of war'. These divergent viewpoints explain the contrasting policy responses from the two regions. In the course of events, the US defined certain countries as dangerous, and different descriptive terminology was used, such as 'outlaw states', with President Bill Clinton using the term 'rogue states' and the Bush Administration referring to the 'axis of evil' (Feinstein & Slaughter 2004: 139).

According to international law, preventive force must always be multilateral and authorised by the UN Security Council and also adhere to the basic principle of just cause. Yew (2007: 3) argues that 'US unilateralism triggered an informal counter-coalition of necessity amongst countries that were opposed to the coalition of the willing'. These countries included China (People's Republic of China – PRC), Russia, and European countries such as France. Multilateral diplomacy was, therefore, the first casualty in the quest for a decisive response to terrorism. Kellner (2002: 20) posits that the resultant response was seen as 'highly flawed and potentially disastrous in its short and long-term effects'. In the case of the US, Bush's foreign policy 'received resistance in much of the world and hostilities from allies and enemies alike' (Henderson 2008: 31). Thus, the unilateral action on the part of the US both polarised relations between states and disempowered the UN as a centre for negotiation and mediation of peaceful relations among the nations of the world. This unilateral approach became a defining image of US diplomacy (or lack thereof) and US foreign policy.

With the array of foreign policy instruments at his disposal, Bush prioritised unilateral instruments and hard power, relying on instruments such as threats, deterrence, military pressure, and war. This position provoked condemnation from, and sowed discord among, countries which had been sympathetic to the US. According to Gordon (2006: 75-76) Bush's policy left the US 'lacking the

reservoir of international legitimacy and domestic support necessary to pursue other key national interests'. Thus, the Bush Administration ignored both political and diplomatic realities and allowed the 'war on terror' to bog down the US in an unsuccessful war which overshadowed all its other international priorities. Tucker and Hendrickson (2004: 18) contend that legitimacy arises from state action that proceeds within the ambit of law and which does not violate a legal or moral norm. In addition, Feinstein and Slaughter (2004: 149) make the point that 'all military alternatives that could achieve the same ends must be tried before force may be used, unless they are reasonably futile'. According to these authors, the Bush Administration firstly lacked confidence in international institutions, and secondly neglected to dig deep in its search for alternative responses to the crisis it faced. The authority of the UN Security Council was not sought and, thus, the unilateral preventive war it waged without recourse to international law enlarged the threat to international peace rather than mitigate it.

Henderson (2008: 31-32) states that 9/11 'demonstrated that public diplomacy was the weakest link in the US foreign policy arsenal' and displayed a 'lack of strategic direction, leadership gaps, insufficient resources, and ineffective co-ordination'. This situation was even worse in the Middle East and the Gulf region where, arguably, it mattered most. Gordon (2006: 79-80) cites the Pew Global Attitudes Project which found that the percentage of people with a favourable opinion of the US fell between 2002 and 2005 from 72 to 59 percent in Canada, 63 to 43 percent in France, 61 to 41 percent in Germany, 61 to 38 percent in Indonesia, 25 to 21 percent in Jordan, 61 to 52 percent in Russia, and 75 to 55 percent in the United Kingdom (UK). Edwards (2007: 20) also quotes findings from the Pew survey to the effect that the US approval ratings plummeted between 2002 and 2006, particularly in Muslim countries which are of strategic importance to the US. This trend points to a battered US public diplomacy in the wake of the 'war on terror'. It became essential that the US restore its image in what became known as the 'battle of ideas' and 'winning the hearts and minds' amidst extreme anti-American sentiment in a swathe of countries around the world. It also became clear that, following the 9/11 events and 'war on terror', public diplomacy needed to be utilised as a critical instrument of statecraft.

1.2.4 Prioritising Diplomacy as a Tool of US Foreign Policy

The approach to diplomacy underwent a major change when the Obama Administration ushered in a more responsive diplomatic policy of reaching out to enemies and friends alike and also shifted focus to the liberal principles of prioritising multilateralism and bilateralism in foreign policy. Liberal scholars usually manifest 'a benign attitude towards international institutions and co-operation amongst states' (Nuruzzaman 2007), and they tend to view institutions as both playing a mediating role and acting as the principal means by which to achieve and maintain co-operation among various countries. States become willing and co-operative partners once institutions have put in place rules and practices that prescribe roles, constrain activity, and shape the expectation of actors (Nuruzzaman, 2007). Neo-liberalism is far more optimistic than neo-realism in terms of international co-operation and the effectiveness of international institutions. It holds the view that states are rational actors and that they maximise absolute gains through co-operation. Accordingly, states are also less concerned about the relative gains by other states. However, Powell (1994: 313) argues that 'the extent to which a state is concerned about relative gains depends on its strategic environment, for example, its offensive and defensive balance and the intensity of the security dilemma'. He goes on to say that 'the potential for joint gains usually creates distributional disputes that tend to impede co-operation'. Liberals also emphasise the role of international institutions, while they maintain that institutions must be treated as independent variables with significant impact on the behaviour of states in terms of formulating preferences and choices (Nuruzzaman, 2007).

The Obama Administration initiated a liberal foreign policy agenda that marked a clear departure from that pursued by the outgoing Bush Administration. President Obama faced numerous pressing tasks which included, *inter alia*, restoring the position of the US in the world and repairing its image tarnished by the negative diplomatic fallout of the 'war on terror'. Obama thus began his term as US President with ideas of reform which embraced 'smart power' and a multi-power international perspective, as well as prioritising development, defence and diplomacy as pillars of American foreign policy (Peng 2010: 1). This meant playing down ideological antagonism, and being able and willing to work with other countries in a multi-partnered fashion irrespective of their preferred political and social systems. Obama stated during his election campaign that he

'considered the Bush Administration as having miscalculated the situation by attacking Iraq and ignoring the situation in Afghanistan' (AMEC 2010: 2). He also realised the urgent need to involve all the allies of the US, and the reality that it was essential that their needs be unified and synchronised at the military, political and economic levels -- hence the active role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in Afghanistan. During Obama's first week in office as President he gave an exclusive interview to al-Arabiya Television, directed 'to Arabs and Muslims in a way sensitive to their concerns' (AMEC 2010:3). This move may be seen as part of the Obama Administration's attempt to improve the public image of the US in the Arab and Muslim worlds -- what Peng (2010: 1) refers to as the 'Obama doctrine'. Key foreign policy team appointments heralded the most striking diplomatic changes implemented by the Obama Administration. Many of his foreign policy advisers were drawn from the Clinton Administration, including -- as Kornegay (2008: 9) puts it -- 'the most forward-thinking members of the Democratic foreign policy establishment'. All of these efforts of the Obama Administration have been geared towards improved diplomatic relations with the rest of the world, thus signalling a change from unilateralism, war rhetoric and disregarding the role of multilateralism.

1.3 Identification and Demarcation of the Research Problem

The major research question which this study seeks to answer is why diplomacy rather than other instruments of US foreign policy is being prioritised in the wake of the Bush Administration's 'war on terror'. In addition, the study will attempt to explain the imperative of the strategic review of US foreign policy, which took place with the change of Administration from George W. Bush to Barack Obama.

In addition, the research will attempt to answer the following subsidiary questions:

- a. To what extent did US foreign policy during the 'war on terror' marginalise diplomacy?
- b. How did US foreign policy responses impact on its standing as the only superpower in the world?

- c. What reassessment of the use of US foreign policy instruments has been done by the Obama Administration, and what prominence is given to diplomacy vis-à-vis other instruments?

In response to these questions the following preliminary research assumptions are offered:

During the 'war on terror' the US tended to over-rely on 'hard power' through a constituted radical doctrine of pre-emptive action. This, in turn, reduced Washington's reliance on permanent alliances and international institutions. The Bush Administration embraced the doctrine of unilateralism as its core strategy and this was exemplified in the National Security Strategy of 2002. The US 'war on terror', including its advocacy of coercive democratisation as a solution to the political problems in the Middle East and elsewhere, marginalised diplomacy.

Preliminary evidence indicates that US foreign policy during the 'war on terror' left the world's superpower with a dented diplomatic image. Other states accused the US of endeavouring to be above international law and of promoting double standards. Based on its prioritisation of diplomacy in its approach to the 'war on terror', Europe became more effective and also more attractive than the US in the management of terror and relations with other countries. The prioritisation of 'hard power', which had landed the US in the quagmire of a protracted war, proved to have its limitations when utilised without an adequate combination of reciprocal foreign policy instruments, specifically diplomacy.

The Obama Administration signalled a review of foreign policy instruments, thus indicating a new beginning in US diplomatic relations with the rest of the world. Obama has, for instance, adopted a constructive tone towards both allies and enemies of the US. This has been illustrated in his reaching out in a constructive dialogue without preconditions to countries that were considered as the 'axis of evil' (Iran, North Korea, and Syria). There is no longer any mention of regime change, a central tenet of the Bush doctrine. There is now, *inter alia*, a return to global climate change negotiations, the closing of the Guantanamo Bay prison, and the setting of a timetable for US withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan – all signalling the prioritisation of diplomacy.

1.4 Methodological Aspects

A qualitative approach will be adopted in explaining the legacy and diplomatic choices that were made in the Bush Administration's 'war on terror' and its effects on US foreign policy, as well as the changes that were initiated in a review of foreign policy by the successor Obama Administration. Qualitative assessment is associated with interpretative epistemology; the study will, therefore, identify the theoretical realm of the topic and apply this to the main body of the study. Accordingly, there will be no reliance on quantitative assessment in this study. A case study method (namely the US' prioritisation of diplomacy respectively during the Bush and Obama administrations) will be employed in the analysis of data. Case studies offer an opportunity to obtain relevant and validated, critical information and the results of the analysis may, potentially, be interpreted within a wider context of application.

Information from primary source materials will include, *inter alia*, policy documents and speeches generated by senior US officials and other foreign policy think-tank institutions. Some of the relevant materials will be sourced through the internet. These materials will include unpublished documents such as reports filed by international agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and also commentary reports. In addition, the study will draw on academic research on both diplomacy and US foreign policy. The researcher will not conduct any interviews, and only documents available in the public domain will be utilised – therefore, no ethical implications are foreseen. The sources used will form part of the evidential materials required for this study: explaining what actually happened, why certain policy choices were made, and why those choices had to be reviewed. In terms of a chronological timeline the 9/11 attacks will serve as a starting point for the analysis of US policy up to and including the first two years of the Obama Administration.

1.5 Structure of the Research

This first chapter is an introduction to, and a motivation for, the research, outlining the research problem and preliminary research assumptions. Contextualisation of the topic within the realm of

diplomatic studies has been done and methodological choices have been explained. The next chapter will elaborate on the theoretical and conceptual framework: it will commence with an explanation of the theoretical underpinnings of US foreign policy. The theoretical analysis will be contextualised within the wider framework of International Relations (IR) paradigms that have been employed to explain US foreign policy behaviour, notably neo-realism (associated with the Bush Administration) as opposed to neo-liberalism (associated with the Obama Administration). The complexity and ambiguity entailed in any interpretation of the concept of diplomacy, especially the grey area occupied by coercive (or defence) diplomacy and its role in 'hard power' versus 'soft power', will receive attention. This will be followed by a discussion of various foreign policy instruments in order to situate diplomacy conceptually as a distinct tool of foreign policy, yet one so versatile that it can be combined with other instruments at the strategic level. Finally, the discussion in Chapter Two will evaluate US adherence to global diplomatic culture.

Chapter Three will discuss the 'war on terror' in the context of the Bush Administration's foreign policy and explain US foreign policy responses which marginalised diplomatic options. Key in this chapter is the discussion on the internationalisation and continuity of US foreign policy, its shift away from multilateralism during the implementation of the so-called Bush Doctrine, and the resultant diplomatic fallout with traditional allies. The consequences of foreign policy choices and the effects of those on the US's diplomatic standing as a superpower will be analysed.

Chapter Four will consider the strategic changes to foreign policy implementation which have been announced by the Obama Administration. This entails a regeneration of reciprocal foreign policy instruments which were neglected by the Bush Administration, notably diplomacy at the bilateral as well as multilateral level. A background discussion will be provided, elucidating Obama's paradigmatic underpinnings in the foreign policy arena which led to the 'resetting of the diplomatic button' with the rest of the world. Notably, this chapter will reflect on whether there is observed change or continuity in US foreign policy as concerns the prioritisation of diplomacy vis-à-vis other instruments of foreign policy.

The final chapter will present an overview of the research, and will offer a critique of the strategic review of US foreign policy by the Obama Administration. It will reflect on whether, and to what

extent, US foreign policy is indeed characterised by a new prioritisation of diplomacy as an instrument of foreign policy. In conclusion, the areas of study that warrant further research will be identified.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: DIPLOMACY AS AN INSTRUMENT OF US FOREIGN POLICY

2.1 Introduction

Guzzini (2002: 291) states that US foreign policy had hitherto 'suffered from a neglect of diplomacy'. In light of the fact that this study will investigate the prioritisation of diplomacy within the context of US foreign policy, this chapter will begin by situating both US foreign policy and diplomacy within the discipline of IR theory.

Waltz (1990: 32) warns that 'a theory is not a statement about everything that is important in international political life, but rather a necessarily slender explanatory construct'. Nevertheless, it is important to contextualise two major positivist IR paradigms, namely liberalism and realism – and more recently their neo-neo synthesis – have traditionally been the dominant conceptual frameworks within which American foreign policy has been analysed. Thereafter, conceptual clarification of diplomacy will be provided in the light of widespread ambiguity in its interpretation within the IR literature. Theoretical demarcation of the concept of diplomacy is crucial as the remainder of the study will explore the consequences of the use of various foreign policy instruments, particularly those of a coercive or unilateral nature, in US responses to global terrorism since the 9/11 events. This chapter will therefore contextualise the position of diplomacy vis-à-vis other instruments of foreign policy.

A grey area in the typology, namely coercive diplomacy, will be investigated, as this form of diplomacy apparently negates a widely-held assumption that diplomacy necessarily and exclusively entails peaceful and reciprocal international actions. Quite succinctly articulated by the Bush Administration's diplomatic mantra of 'you are either with us or against us', this aggressive form of diplomacy involves a combination of threats and incentives.

With due regard for the US position as a global superpower and its unprecedented as well as uncontested reserves of military and other forms of coercive power, the issue of 'hard power' versus 'soft power' in its foreign policy will also be discussed, as this has a bearing on the deliberate prioritisation of diplomacy. Global diplomatic culture mandates a foreign policy emphasis on 'soft power', in order to protect 'the weak against the strong' as Wiseman (2005: 409) contends, but the so-called 'war on terror' disregarded international norms to the extent that the US acted 'outside and against the system' as Watson (quoted in Wiseman 2005: 413) asserts.

2.2 IR Theory and the Study of US Foreign Policy

IR theories, which encompass diplomatic theory, are generally macro-level theories, which reflect on the nature of the international system and general patterns of inter-state relations. Walt (1998: 30) makes the point that there is no single best approach and diverse, competing ideas are indeed more appropriate in explaining international relations than a single theoretical approach.

As with broader IR theory, diplomatic theory is dominated by the positivist, traditional paradigms, specifically the realist and liberal traditions and at the current juncture, the 'neo' version of each. Neo-realism and neo-liberalism are both systemic theories, and states are considered the central actors in world politics. The international system is seen as anarchic and the major determinant of state behaviour, rather than the primacy of national interest. However, the two approaches have important differences in analysing international affairs and these differences are rooted in their respective realist and pluralist traditions.

Of the two, realism has proved to be the most prevalent IR paradigm, and its enduring tradition provides its proponents with a reputable platform from which to provide explanatory insights in world politics. This applies, in particular, to US foreign policy as Walt (1998: 37) argues that it is generally consistent with realist principles, insofar as US actions are (still) designed to preserve its predominance and to shape a post-Cold War order that advances American interests.

According to the realists, the international system comprises rational and unitary actors. These are mainly states that are in constant competition and conflict with each other on account of the

absence of an overarching world government (Walt 1998: 30). This vacuum forces states to think strategically about how to survive in a milieu of power politics, because they can never be certain about the intentions of other states, particularly concerning the use of offensive military capabilities. The most basic driver behind the foreign policy of states is therefore their own survival and the need to maintain their sovereignty (Mearsheimer 1994: 7). This reduces international relations to a struggle for power, fuelled by self-interest – hence the dominant narratives of national interest and power (Morgenthau & Niebuhr, quoted in Walt 1998: 31).

The realist frame of reference is not sensitive to the changing nature of the contemporary international system, and the idea of the sovereign independent state pursuing its own interests continues to dominate a realist interpretation of world politics (Stone 2002: 69). From this perspective, President George W. Bush, who presided over the US ‘war on terror’, was viewed as a traditional realist (Nye 2006: 142). Zeborowski (2008: 17) describes Bush as a ‘hard-headed realist, cautious about diplomatic and military engagement, sceptical about nation-building, unsentimental in his decisions, and instinctively unilateralist’. His emphasis on national interest and nationalism as foremost in interacting with other states in the international system, and his refusal to enter into multilateral agreements, such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Rome Statute that established the International Criminal Court, illustrate this point. Thus, the so-called Bush Doctrine that guided Bush’s ‘war on terror’ could be explained as a calculation of power within the international system. In this regard, his approach was consistent with the ideology of American nationalism and hegemony and, as some authors argue, not unique in the history of US foreign policy – the Monroe and Truman Doctrines were also, for example, essentially unilateralist (Gaddis 2008: 2).

It is important to note that realists do not necessarily underestimate diplomacy as a tool of statecraft or, for that matter, propagate unilateralism: indeed, even during the Cold War, diplomacy played a significant role in the policies of containment and détente, which helped the US in establishing a balance of power (forces) against the Soviet Union (Nau 2010). However, realism is useful in looking at US foreign policy during the heightened tension of the Cold War years, as well as during the ‘war on terror’, when the foremost consideration seemed to have been the issue of security and the necessity for states to resort to self-help.

The emphasis on enduring insecurity in the world implies that realists have limited trust in the value of international institutions. The latter are seen as reflective of the distribution of power in the world order, and of little effect on international anarchy. This, then, allows a form of justification for states to pursue selfish national interests to the detriment of international interests. As Nuruzzaman (2007) asserts, depending on their narrowly defined interests, great powers create institutions to prop up their interests; but once these interests are achieved, they promptly discard these institutions.

Of course, there are many policy-makers and IR commentators who believe that institutions hold great promise for promoting international peace. These are the pluralists, who give prominence to concepts like co-operation, regimes, and institutions. This approach to international politics rests on the belief that institutions are a key means of promoting world peace, in that institutions can alter state preferences and, therefore, change state behaviour (Mearsheimer 1994: 5). The liberal school of thought and its sub-schools share the realist view that states are rational actors, but contend that states maximise absolute gains through co-operation. This denotes the potential for a community of nations, depending on each other for co-operation, living side by side in peaceful coexistence. For this to be possible, all conflicts should be solved by agreement, and diplomacy should find primacy in the foreign policy environment. In contrast to realism, liberalism assumes that ideas, values and domestic politics impact the foreign policy of states no less than systemic variables do. For instance, pluralists contend that an over-emphasis on the role of the state tends to overlook the heterogeneity of peoples, the role of non-state actors, and the important place of issues such as human and economic rights.

Stemming from the pessimism of realism about human nature, neo-realists are generally cynical about prospects for the elimination of conflict and war (Walt 1998: 31), and they perceive international institutions as incapable of maintaining international peace and order. It is believed that the only way to achieve security in the international system is by creating a balance of power among the most powerful states, who are in a minority but nevertheless monopolise the structure of the world order. Neo-liberalism is far more optimistic than neo-realism in terms of international co-operation and the effectiveness of international institutions in reducing security competition and creating a peaceful world (Mearsheimer 1998: 48-49). It should also be noted that US President

Woodrow Wilson's theory of collective security succeeded in 'establishing the conviction that collective security represents a brand of international morality vastly superior to that incorporated in the balance of power system' (Mearsheimer 1998: 27).

Indeed, the idea of collective security, as espoused by Wilson, is a fundamental theme in liberalist theory. The idea is rooted in notions that directly challenge realism, namely that states must renounce the use of military force to alter the status quo and must agree to settle disputes peacefully. Moreover, responsible states must not think in terms of narrow self-interest when they act against aggressors, but must instead choose to equate their national interest with the broader interests of the international community. Collective security recognises that military power plays a central role in international politics, but aims to create automatic obligations of a collective nature (Mearsheimer 1998: 29).

However, liberal theory is limited by its emphasis on trust and demilitarisation in an uncertain, competitive and anarchic international system, and neo-liberalists acknowledge that in practice collective security is not easily achievable (Mearsheimer 1998: 29). For example, the structure of the UN Security Council, specifically the power wielded by the five permanent members, makes it difficult to reach consensus on any issue before the Council – any one of the five permanent members could, therefore, scupper efforts at collective security. This frustrating scenario has historically prompted states, notably the US, to bypass the UN in addressing their most pressing security concerns (Snauwaert 2004: 123). In his 'war on terror', for instance, Bush did indeed initially enlist the support of the international community. But, eventually, he did not hesitate to act unilaterally, because he held the view that the US must defend its interests and thus identify and destroy a threat before it reaches its borders -- even to the point of acting pre-emptively. This approach clearly rejected the notion of collective security and assumed instead that states remained imprisoned by self-interest. The opposite, and distinctly neo-liberal approach, was demonstrated when Bush's successor, President Barack Obama, pro-actively sought to restore US relations with the UN, as will be explored shortly.

If neo-liberalism thus implies that leaders are primarily focused on absolute levels of gain, also in cooperation with one another and regardless of what competitors achieve, neo-realism maintains

that comparative or relative gains, by means of competition, are drivers in the decisions of leaders. However, the neo-neo debate has in fact tended to focus on what the two approaches have in common, namely that states are 'utility maximisers', which implies that they are less concerned with international morality than with the pursuit of national interest. This convergence around the national interest theme has elicited the criticism that the narrowing of the liberalism versus realism debate into a neo-neo synthesis, has concentrated on the international relations among western powers, reflecting only a partial reality of global relations. The debate has thus (and this is a weakness in much of the analysis on US foreign policy analysis) excluded reflection on issues that are prominent in the non-western world, *inter alia* identity, nationalism, economics, religion, gender and state-building (Lamy 2001: 192-197).

2.3 Conceptual Clarification of the Relationship between 'Diplomacy' and 'Foreign Policy'

Both neo-realists and neo-liberalists would agree with Walt's (1998: 30) contention that diplomacy is concerned with mitigating the anarchical nature of the international system. In this regard they continue an intellectual theme that was embraced most distinctly by the International Society approach of the so-called English School within IR theory. One of the latter's most prolific theorists, Hedley Bull (1977: 166), asserted that diplomacy fulfills 'the function of symbolising the existence of the society of states'.

Before continuing with an analysis of US diplomacy in the framework of its foreign policy, it is however imperative to differentiate between the two concepts, because 'diplomacy' and 'foreign policy' are so often (and erroneously) used interchangeably. Magalhães (1988: 4) defines foreign policy as the 'activity of a state in the external domain; that is, beyond its political boundaries'. Foreign policy and diplomacy should therefore not be equated, as the former is a much wider concept and inclusive of a range of instruments, many of which are distinctly 'undiplomatic' in nature.

2.3.1 Foreign Policy and its Instruments

Magalhães (1988) identifies a range of foreign policy instruments and divides them into peaceful and coercive/violent categories. Peaceful instruments, he notes, are not all necessarily reciprocal in nature; in other words, some of them are unilateral. But the reverse is also true: reciprocal instruments, of which diplomacy is a prime example, are by their very nature always peaceful. (Other peaceful, reciprocal instruments are direct political negotiation and mediation.) This renders diplomacy a very particular and universally legitimate tool of foreign policy.

Unilateral instruments of foreign policy, according to Magalhães (1988: 12), can be either peaceful or violent in nature. Unilateral foreign policy instruments that can be used in a non-violent manner include propaganda, espionage, economic intervention, and political intervention. When standard diplomatic practices are seen to be insufficient in achieving the foreign policy aims of states, it is most common for them to resort to economic instruments. These include economic sanctions, such as imposing trade restrictions against a target state. It is often said that the importance of sanctions lies more in its symbolic value as a sign of displeasure with a particular state than its actual effect upon that state, which means that they are applied as a pressure-bearing instrument. Sanctions can be targeted to isolate leaders, but can also be applied more broadly so as to inflict economic hardship on citizens, in the expectation that they will bring pressure to bear on their leadership to comply with political demands. In this regard, Binnendijk and Clawson (1995: 96) observe that 'when America is prepared to inflict heavy collateral damage, a coercive economic tool such as sanctions can have a discernable effect'.

Violent foreign policy instruments include deterrence, threat of use of force, economic war, military pressure, and war – as Schelling (1996: 22) articulates it, the use of 'brute force' to destroy an enemy's capabilities. War is obviously the most extreme of foreign policy instruments and the ultimate expression of a country's willingness to pursue its foreign policy. Coercion thus offers options when reciprocal or peaceful unilateral tools are deemed insufficient. Many commentators consider this to be the case when the US deals with terrorism. Guzzini (2002: 294) notes that military might 'without a vision for which it should be used' could possibly secure short-term gains, but would not suffice to combat terrorism. Military threat is a tool available from the tactical to the

strategic level, and its essential element is the threat of overwhelming use of force, convincing the adversary to stop a certain action or comply with the coercer's demands. In combat, it is used to obtain favourable conditions to end fighting without a total military victory over the adversary. Therefore, successful threat is usually less costly than total military victory and, given the lower cost, generally seen as more attractive (Tarzi 2006: 3). Schelling (1996: 22) explains the utility of intimidating or coercing an adversary, noting that an expressed or postured gesture of power to hurt is an essential bargaining power in the international realm. The negative implication of using violent foreign policy instruments is the militarisation of foreign policy, which is a dangerous development in the international system as it escalates the arms race. Another negative consideration is that coercion, even when applied without military force, lacks international legitimacy. Under international law, military force may therefore be used as a last resort only.

Diplomacy has a distinct advantage in the sense that it enjoys universal legitimacy. It is also the most versatile of all foreign policy instruments, as it can be used to communicate the use of any other policy tool. This is why George Modelski (quoted by Hill 2003: 129-134) identifies diplomacy as the prime currency of the international system and an expression of foreign policy that occupies the bulk of activity between states. Indeed, diplomacy never functions in isolation from other foreign policy instruments. A combination of foreign policy instruments can at times be considered more appropriate than the use of one single instrument, especially in light of the fact that foreign policy can be a very complex policy terrain to navigate. This makes it imperative to diversify policy instruments and consider an array and variety or combination of instruments in the process of conducting the affairs of state.

2.3.2 Diplomacy

Most commentators agree that diplomacy is a mode of behaviour within the realm of international relations that implies a peaceful dialogue and interaction between political units. A diplomacy that stresses military might when the political situation calls for persuasion and compromise is likely to fail, as the art of diplomacy consists in putting emphasis where it belongs at any particular moment in time (Zeborowski 2008: 17). Diplomacy is essentially a communication process between international actors that seeks to address common interests and, through negotiation, accords

primacy to the peaceful settlement of international conflict (Baylis & Smith 2001: 318). Du Plessis (2008: 89-90) observes that diplomacy emphasises negotiation rather than force. He adds that diplomacy has various connotations, *inter alia*, that it constitutes a pacific approach to the management of IR in pursuit of order and justice, and that in a foreign policy context it is not only the master instrument but also an instrument in the utilisation of other techniques. Diplomacy is, therefore, an important, but not the only instrument for consideration by foreign policy-makers.

Wiseman (2005: 410) also argues that 'diplomacy is usually associated with the general idea that states should use peaceful means rather than military force in dealing with each other'. He asserts that diplomacy is composed of norms and values, which involve the desirability of continuous dialogue through mutual recognition and representation. Hans Morgenthau purports that 'a diplomacy that ends in war has failed its primary objective, which is the promotion of national interest by peaceful means' (see Rice 2005). Despite its normative implications, diplomacy does not preclude the pursuit of national interest. Berridge (2002: 1) argues that diplomacy's chief purpose is to enable states to secure the objectives of their foreign policy without resort to force, propaganda or legal means (law). Hill (2003: 138) puts this more bluntly by asserting that 'diplomacy is the humane face of getting your own way in international politics, as well as a crucial instrument for building international stability'. In classic realist mode, Morgenthau considers diplomacy to be an element of national power and he puts forward eight elements for measuring national power: geography, natural resources, industrial capacity, military preparedness, population, national character, national morale, and the quality of diplomacy.

2.3.3 Coercive Diplomacy

Diplomacy can even be used in conjunction with instruments that are distinctly not peaceful or reciprocal, such as military force, to enable the achievement of foreign policy objectives (Baylis & Smith 2001: 318). This wide and flexible application of diplomacy lends itself to a propensity for ambiguity and the phenomenon of an apparent contradiction in terms, namely the idea of 'coercive diplomacy' (see Binnendijk & Clawson 1995: 83-96). This runs contrary to the idea, as Satow proposed, that diplomatic tact is the very essence of diplomacy (referred to by Wiseman 2005: 424). Although diplomacy is traditionally portrayed as a conservative foreign policy instrument,

concerned primarily with negotiation and communication, its means include not only persuasion and compromise, but also the threat of force. This is nothing new in the history of diplomacy: Berridge (2002: 72) recounts, for instance, that in 17th century France, Cardinal Richelieu's methods were to weaken his Habsburg enemies by a 'combination of subversion, indirect and limited war'. This was the case even as Richelieu insisted on prudent 'continuous negotiations' amongst states -- a strategy he believed would procure power and prestige for France.

A potential grey area, where diplomatic activity can overlap with unilateral foreign policy behaviour, is described by Du Plessis (2008: 89-90) in his analysis of 'defence diplomacy'. The latter concept fuses two apparently incommensurate extremes, namely violent coercive (armed force) and pacific persuasive (diplomatic) means with which to pursue policy objectives. Du Plessis notes that military instruments involve the use of armed force (offensive, defensive, or deterrent) and also includes military threats, aid and assistance, intervention and other pacific use of the military in peace-support operations. He argues, as does Magalhães, that diplomacy constitutes the traditional, peaceful and most direct instrument of foreign policy, but whereas Magalhães insists on a 'pure' concept of diplomacy, Du Plessis contends that diplomacy can be implemented through political, cultural, as well as military techniques, in which case it becomes coercive. The advantage of diplomatic coercion, before initiation of hostilities, is that it may enable concessions from an adversary without the high cost usually associated with conventional military action.

Alexander George (as quoted in Tarzi 2006: 8) mentions seven conditions that increase the chances of coercive diplomacy, namely clarity as to the objectives of coercive diplomacy, or what is demanded of the adversary; strong motivation by the coercing state's leadership to accept the costs and risks of coercive diplomacy; sufficient domestic and international support for coercive action; strong leadership by the coercer; clarity regarding the precise terms of settlement of the crisis; a sense of urgency created by the coercer in the mind of the target state; and the target's fear of unacceptable escalation and asymmetry of motivation in favour of the coercer. Schelling (see 1996: 2-18) posits that the 'adversary must still have the capacity for organised violence but choose not to exercise it' in order to posture coercively. It is an unpredictable strategy, but at the same time it offers the possibility of a more human face, compared to the other alternative which is warfare.

Tarzi (2006: 3) argues that American foreign policy has been predisposed to the use of coercive diplomacy because the strategy offers the potential to prevent, at relatively low cost, acts of military aggression to the core of American interests and values. This proved to be particularly important for the Bush Administration, which faced several simultaneous global threats and could not conduct many wars at the same time without overstressing its capacity (Schelling 1996: 22). For instance, according to Collins (2008), given the geopolitical landscape of the 'war on terror', the US was in urgent need of Pakistan's support for the war. The Bush war mantra of 'either you are with us or against us' was the central premise to coerce states into support for the 'war on terror', and for instance, Pakistan faced US sanctions if it resisted. Although the two countries had not previously been allies, Pakistan bowed to the combination of US threats and incentives and, as a consequence, supported the 'war on terror'.

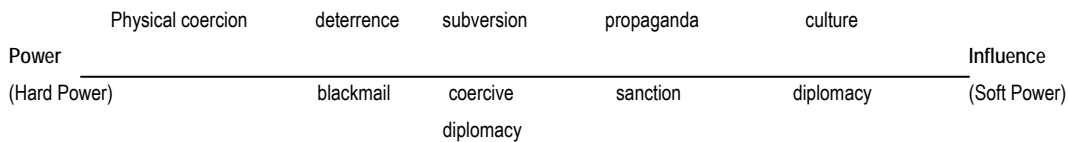
2.4 Diplomacy and 'Hard Power' versus 'Soft Power'

It would seem from the foregoing that global force projection is seen as a measure of state power, and that foreign policy actors operate in an environment where they cannot logically disregard power. Susan Strange (as quoted in Hill 2003: 129-134) contends that foreign policy actors have to cope with power structures, and also face the issue of who has the power to set the structures. It is in the manipulation of these structures that states are able to promote their foreign policy objectives in the international system. Hill (2003: 19) suggests that there are three ways of interpreting the role of power in foreign policy which are '... as an end in itself, as a means to an end, and as a context within which states operate'. Power can be exerted in two ways: through direct action (force or coercion), or through indirect action (influence or persuasion), normally referred to as diplomatic means.

Joseph Nye (2003) has introduced a useful nuance in the debate on power in foreign policy behaviour through his differentiation between 'hard power' and 'soft power'. He observes that the ability of a state to induce others to adopt its own foreign policy preferences is 'soft power', which implies the ability to get desired outcomes because others want what you want. On the other hand, 'hard power' is the ability to get others to do what they otherwise would not do through threat of

punishment or promise of reward. Hill (2003: 135) describes hard power as ‘that which is targeted, coercive, often immediate and physical’, whilst soft power is ‘that which is indirect, long-term and works more through persuasion than force’. He furthermore explains that the use of slow-acting, opinion-shaping instruments can still be a form of coercion, albeit barely understood by the target. Power can be wielded through an ability of the state to cause another state to take actions which are to the first state’s advantage and which the latter state might not otherwise pursue. Persuasion involves compelling the target state through diplomatic means, appeals to reason, and other sources of influence which could include appeals to common interests and historical considerations.

Hill (2003: 135) aptly illustrates the contrast between the use of power and influence in what he refers to as a continuum of power in foreign policy:



The selection of specific instruments by foreign policy-makers has traditionally depended primarily on geo-strategic considerations. However, in the post-Cold war era, geo-strategic threats have emerged that cannot be contained inside political borders or through the implementation of national policies. Issues such as international crime, mass migration, communicable diseases, and environmental threats transcend national boundaries and often are not susceptible to traditional tools of statecraft designed for the conduct of relations among sovereign states (Binnendijk & Clawson 1995: 83). This changing face of global politics has complicated the implementation and effects of hard power, and more commentators are calling for the prioritisation of soft power, or at least a combination of the two.

A key method in this regard is the use of public diplomacy, which has at its core the promotion of the values of the state. Nye (2004: 117) explains that public diplomacy is about conveying information and selling a positive image, and involves building long-term relationships that create an enabling environment for the implementation of foreign policy. Within the US context, Rugh (2009: 1) defines public diplomacy as a programme ‘carried out by the government aimed at

understanding and engaging with foreign publics, in order to serve American interest'. US public diplomacy, therefore, in principle seeks to build on America's 'soft power', namely its ability to gain respect and support abroad because of its 'social, cultural and political principles and behaviour, as contrasted with the 'hard power' of military force and economic leverage'.

Henderson (2008: 31-32) states that 9/11 'demonstrated that public diplomacy was the 'weakest link' in the US foreign policy arsenal' and displayed a 'lack of strategic direction, leadership gaps, insufficient resources, and ineffective co-ordination'. This situation was even worse in the Middle East and the Gulf region where, arguably, it mattered most. This view is strengthened by Gordon (2006: 79-80) when he cites the Pew Global Attitudes Project which found that the percentage of people with a favourable opinion of the US fell between 2002 and 2005 from 72 to 59 percent in Canada, 63 to 43 percent in France, 61 to 41 percent in Germany, 61 to 38 percent in Indonesia, 25 to 21 percent in Jordan, 61 to 52 percent in Russia, and 75 to 55 percent in the UK. Edwards (2007: 20) also quotes findings from the Pew survey to the effect that US approval ratings plummeted between 2002 and 2006, particularly in Muslim countries which were of strategic importance to the US. These trends point to a battered US public diplomacy in the wake of the 'war on terror'.

For the latter part of Bush's presidency -- and especially evident in the foreign policy projection of his successor, Barack Obama -- it became essential that the US restore its image in what became known as the 'battle of ideas' and 'winning the hearts and minds' amidst extreme anti-American sentiment. It follows that, after the negative fallout of the 'war on terror', public diplomacy needed to be utilised as a critical instrument of statecraft. The US Information Agency plays this critical role through presenting the US perspective and promoting its values in order to sway public opinion in the face of terrorist propaganda (Edwards 2007: 20).

2.5 The US and Global Diplomatic Culture

Wiseman (2005: 412) refers to 'diplomatic culture' as involving five norms, namely the use of force as a last resort only, transparency, continuous dialogue, multilateralism, and civility. He explains that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the global dominance of the US impacted on its foreign

policy in terms of its perceived responsibility to guarantee global stability within the international system. This new-found dominance set the US on a collision course with the generally accepted norms of international conflict resolution, in which diplomacy takes centre stage. He argues that the first transgression of diplomatic culture on the part of the Bush Administration was its eagerness to use force rather than to exhaust diplomatic negotiation. In terms of the second norm, transparency, negotiations are more likely to succeed if information is obtained overtly rather than covertly, and if policies and views are accurately conveyed to all parties concerned. Wiseman cites Bush's use of a discredited intelligence report as justification for the attack on Iraq as an example of a violation of this transparency norm. In terms of the third norm of continuous dialogue, Wiseman maintains that war is less likely if diplomatic dialogue and communication are conducted, but these options were marginalised by the unilateralist approaches of the Bush Administration. The US also transgressed the fourth norm, namely multilateralism: its 'war on terror' was both unilateral and pre-emptive, and it shunned a collective response under the UN umbrella. Finally, it would appear that the US displayed little regard for, or sensitivity to, the well-established diplomatic norm of civility. The US Administration drew criticism for its 'war diplomacy', 'gunboat diplomacy', and its insensitive way of dealing with both friends and foes. The resultant diplomatic and public fallout damaged the US in terms of both its international standing and image.

The Obama Administration has identified this shortcoming in the application of US foreign policy instruments and has resolved to give greater prominence to diplomacy, *inter alia*, through the use of multilateralism and public diplomacy. There will be times when punishment and war are the only options, but the key is to know what approach to use when and for how long.

2.6 Conclusion

In order to contextualise US prioritisation of diplomacy within the spectrum of available foreign policy instruments, this chapter set out by identifying the main IR paradigms that seek to interpret US foreign policy. These were found to be realism and liberalism and, in particular, the two 'neo' versions of each. Realism has taken historical precedence, perhaps because it is essentially concerned with the structure of global power, and because the US remains the single most powerful state in the international system on account of its combined and uncontested military and

economic power. However, liberal internationalism has also historically been a strong influence on US foreign policy, in the sense that the pro-active spread of democracy, human rights and free trade has been assumed a normative imperative. This has been the rationale behind the inclination or propensity of the US for intervention, a foreign policy choice that has been facilitated by the collapse of the Soviet Union, the triumph of liberal capitalism, and the uncontested position of the US as the only remaining global superpower.

The chapter then proceeded to provide conceptual clarification of the relationship between 'diplomacy' and 'foreign policy', in light of the fact that diplomacy is one of many foreign policy instruments, yet is often confused with foreign policy itself. Diplomacy is widely considered to be a cornerstone of international society, and its universal practice and legitimacy makes it unparalleled as a foreign policy tool. However, diplomacy is not the only peaceful instrument of foreign policy as various other peaceful tools can be applied in a unilateral manner – economic sanctions, for example. When foreign policy becomes militarised, it turns into a distinctly unilateral and coercive strategy, and this is where diplomacy takes a back seat. The presence and potential use of military force has always been an important instrument of pursuing US foreign policy objectives, and during the 'war on terror', specifically, the Bush Administration left little space for diplomacy to be utilised. In so doing, it undermined developing a more global and multilateral campaign against terrorism.

As discussed, diplomacy is versatile enough to be combined with any of the other instruments of foreign policy, and when it communicates or employs a unilateral, coercive tool it became known as 'coercive diplomacy' -- a seeming contradiction in terms, when the normative element in diplomacy's definition is considered. Coercive diplomacy is a strategy that provides political leaders with an alternative to war, or to strictly coercive military strategies, and as such is a more economical and internationally legitimate foreign policy option. In addition to its military intervention during the 'war on terror', the Bush Administration made extensive use of various coercive diplomatic strategies.

The US has long had a superior defence capability and since 9/11 it has demonstrated its use. 'Hard power' relies on coercive force and has its limitations. On the other hand, 'soft power' (as Nye pointed out) is the ability to obtain desirable outcomes. Therefore, the instruments of power

can be used to motivate and reward behaviour through inducement and persuasion. Whilst 'hard' power seeks to defeat an enemy, 'soft' power seeks to influence through understanding and the identification of common ground. Whereas 'hard power' fosters fear and suspicion, 'soft power' arguably triumphs in building confidence, trust and respect, and has the ability to cultivate lasting co-operation. It is on the strength of this that greater use of soft power has appeal within the norms of global diplomatic practice. This complies with Wiseman's list of global diplomatic norms, which he identifies as the use of force as a last resort only, transparency, continuous dialogue, multilateralism, and civility.

Despite the realist assumptions of anarchy and the accompanying 'security dilemma' that faces states, the global impulse towards diplomatic solutions in foreign policy remains paramount and perennial. Calibrated use of foreign policy instruments in the service of national interest is the most effective means of ensuring that a state's vital security and economic concerns are addressed and preserved.

The next chapter will examine the foreign policy of the Bush Administration, specifically during its 'war on terror', in order to determine the (lack of) prominence that was bestowed on diplomacy vis-à-vis other instruments of foreign policy.

CHAPTER 3

DIPLOMATIC RAMIFICATIONS OF THE US 'WAR ON TERROR'

3.1 Introduction

The US, on account of various factors – including its relative geographical isolation during the two world wars and its emergence during the 20th century as a military superpower – had traditionally not projected its foreign policy choices from a platform of geopolitical vulnerability. This changed dramatically on 11 September 2001, when the co-ordinated terrorist attacks on US soil sent shockwaves not only through the country but throughout the world.

In order to contextualise the long-term diplomatic implications of the subsequent US decision to launch a 'war on terror', this chapter will focus on the responses of the US Administration, which at the time was led by Republican President George W. Bush. It will start by explaining the main tenets of Bush's foreign policy before the 9/11 events, and situate these within the broader context of traditional US foreign policy. This will be followed by an examination of the Bush Administration's immediate diplomatic responses to 9/11, which led to the development of the 'Bush Doctrine' and the controversial 'war on terror'. It will be determined which of the various instruments of foreign policy, as discussed in the previous chapter, were selected as part of the response, in light of the fact that various statecraft tools were at Bush's disposal. The range of options offered some latitude to follow a diplomatic route that would have prioritised 'soft power' instead of 'hard power' tactics. The US relationship vis-à-vis the United Nations, and the Bush Administration's ultimate choice of an essentially unilateral, military response will be discussed, as well as the diplomatic ramifications of this course of action, which saw the US alienated from many of its traditional allies.

Throughout the chapter, differing views on the Bush Administration's foreign policy will be discussed as interpreted by various foreign policy commentators, some of whom viewed the response to 9/11 as novel, whilst others interpreted it as continuity in the US foreign policy tradition. This chapter will therefore, *inter alia*, offer insight into the extent to which the Bush Administration's reaction to 9/11 conformed with, or departed from, the historical norm. Importantly,

the chapter will depict the consequences and limitations of unilateralism, and especially military action, in US foreign policy.

3.2 Bush's Foreign Policy before 9/11

Politicians run for office on platforms that include foreign policy objectives they present as good for the country, hoping that their policy objectives will resonate with the popular vote. When George W. Bush was elected US President in 2000, he intimated that he was a conventional realist in foreign affairs, and that he was critical of the open-ended nature of the preceding Clinton Administration's policies and its indiscriminate use of military force in instances not involving US vital interests (Owens 2009: 23). At that stage Bush appeared to have had a preoccupation with domestic political and economic issues, rather than any projected dominant role in international affairs. The cutting of taxes, for example, initially took centre stage in the policy environment of his Administration (Bacevich & Prodromou 2004: 48).

When Bush ascended to the presidency in 2000, he was arguably a foreign policy novice. However foreign policy observers could console themselves with the foreign relations experience of his assembled group of national policy advisers: his deputy, Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice. The collective foreign policy orientation of these advisers – embracing an approach that can be described as neo-conservative – placed emphasis, *inter alia*, on missile defence as a cornerstone of a new national security strategy, and attention to the rise of China (PRC). Terrorism was not (yet) part of this focus. At the same time, the neo-conservatives (or 'neo-cons' as they are popularly referred to) distrusted the role of international institutions, generally, and the UN, specifically (Kristol 2005: 15-16). As Morris and Wheeler (2007: 216) observe, the assumption that the US has a unique hegemonic role within contemporary international society, prompt neo-conservatives to deride the existing collective security regime of the UN for impeding the US 'as it seeks to fulfil the responsibilities that accompany its exalted status'.

The Bush team was also critical of Bill Clinton's international relations approach, which Bush considered a failure. Clinton had believed in broad, pro-active engagement with the rest of the

world, essentially in line with the liberalist IR approach to international relations. On the other hand, according to Rockmore, Margolis and Marsoobian (2003: 3), Bush's policies were reminiscent of those of Ronald Reagan's Administration. The latter had been preoccupied with the maintenance of international stability through the balance of power, and had therefore prioritised American economic growth and military security. However, as Bacevich and Prodromou (2004: 21) point out, neo-cons complained that the Clinton Administration had permitted 'US military supremacy to waste away'. In contrast, Bush's initial foreign policy perspective was informed by the realist contention that international security can be ensured only by possessing sufficient power relative to others -- and using such power, unilaterally if need be. Clinton's preference for soft power (notwithstanding his *ad hoc* military actions) was thus dismissed as lacking in political credibility.

3.3 Intervention, Internationalism and Continuity in the US Foreign Policy Tradition

Even before the 9/11 events, the US had a history of interventionist foreign policy, an inclination which ignored the partisan divide between Administrations. Shihade (2009: 883) puts it that the core of US foreign policy remains the same, regardless of which Administration comes to power; and the Bush Administration's eventual unilateral actions, therefore, reflected this traditional core. Owens (2009: 30 & 40) echoes this opinion when he says that US commercial interest, geopolitics, and political principles have always been inseparable. US foreign policy is therefore likely to outlive any Administration, because it is rooted within the mainstream founding American principles.

In the same vein, Chomsky (as quoted by Stokes 2003: 570) argues that post-Cold War US foreign policy is characterised by overwhelming continuities with its earlier concerns. Bush's post-911 choice to 'go it alone', which was based on the expectation that multilateralism would not support US objectives, was not new: his predecessor carried out three military interventions without the approval of the UN Security Council (Daader & Kagan 2007: 1). Clinton, for instance, intervened in Iraq in 1993 and 1998, as well as in Haiti in 1994. Instead of trying a myriad of peaceful options, Clinton opted for the use of force without the authorisation of international law. American foreign policy has indeed historically included a range of coercive or unilateral instruments. During the Cold War, and also thereafter during the Bush (Senior) and Clinton Administrations, the US

resorted to deterrence and containment through sanctions, embargoes, and military presence in various regions of US vital interests, such as the Middle East and South Korea.

A perennial and bipartisan pillar of US foreign policy – and by extension, justification for intervention – has been the global advancement of democracy. This policy principle originates from the core element of Wilsonian liberal internationalism (Owens 2009: 24-25). Woodrow Wilson justified America's role in the world as emanating from the obligation to spread its principles throughout the world, and derives from the premise that peace depends on the spread of democracy (Kaufman 2007 -- as quoted by Owens 2009: 25). The Clinton and Reagan Administrations also emphasised that, ultimately, the best strategy to ensure global security was to support the advancement of democracy, based on the notion that democracies do not wage war against each other (Nau 2010: 7). From this perspective, the promotion of democracy is seen as a means towards obtaining global safety and security (an assumption that was arguably supported by the collapse of the Soviet Union). By the same token, the Bush Administration viewed democracy promotion as an instrument to end tyranny, combat terrorism and, as a corollary, to promote peace (Epstein, Serafino & Miko 2007: 1 & 2). In his second inaugural speech, for instance, Bush stated that it was the policy of the United States to 'seek and support the promotion of democracy and its institutions everywhere, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world' (Gaddis 2008: 3). This argument is premised on the assumption that tyrannical regimes are prone to act coercively and against agreed protocols (Jervis 2003: 367).

In line with this normative internationalist approach, the US over many decades created empire in the global system in what Norwegian historian Geir Lundestad refers to as 'empire by invitation'. This means that US power has been projected by successive US Administrations as more acceptable and less threatening to other states (Litwak 2002: 79). US soft power could, therefore, be traced to reside in the country's values and cultural appeal, the perception that US hegemony is benign, and that US actions are legitimate (Goh 2003: 80). The end of the Cold War saw the demise of ideological threats to US power, and the so-called triumph of liberal capitalism (Litwak 2002: 79) prompted expectations of a rise in liberal democracy. The ideological 'high ground' of the remaining superpower of the world arguably set the tone for enforcement of democracy worldwide, and for it to be deemed legitimate.

Taliaferro (2007: 184) observes that even liberal international legal scholars and philosophers have begun to redefine and justify the use of force against non-democratic states engaged in human rights violations, arguing that democratic institutions and values are easily exportable. Seen from this perspective, the US and other liberal democracies have a moral obligation to intervene in the affairs of other states, even using force where necessary, to halt genocide and other gross human rights abuses. Where possible, the US tailors its actions to comply with internationally recognised constraints. John Ikenberry (as quoted by Stokes 2003: 573) agrees, and states that US foreign policy has always contained Wilsonian liberalism premised on human rights, the promotion of democracy and free trade, and the development of international institutions to contain conflict. However, Michael Mandelbaum (as quoted by Litwak 2002: 80) offers a realist critique of the US Administration's policy on humanitarian intervention, arguing that it tends to focus on 'peripheral areas not of vital interest to the US'. A case in point is Rwanda, where even an undisputed genocide in 1994 failed to induce US action. This viewpoint reinforces Chomsky's point (quoted by Stokes 2003: 570) that post-Cold War US foreign policy continues to be maligned and anti-democratic when US demands and expectations are opposed.

As concerns the fight against international terrorism specifically, continuity in US foreign policy can also be discerned. When the national interest was considered under threat, measures have included both unilateral and multilateral/bilateral foreign policy instruments. Thus even US Administrations before Bush's presidency had employed coercive measures such as economic sanctions, covert action, protective security measures, and military force, in addition to the diplomatic options of international co-operation and constructive engagement. Generally, US anti-terrorism policy from the 1970s to mid-1990s focused on deterring and punishing state sponsors of terrorism as opposed to terrorist groups. What has distinguished Republican and Democratic Administrations has been the narrative of such policy. Winkler (2005: 75), in a discussion of US foreign policy vis-à-vis global terror, uses the concepts 'crime and war narratives', and argues that Democratic US presidents tend to employ 'crime narratives', whilst their Republican counterparts tend to utilise 'war narratives' in motivating their foreign policy. War narratives enlarge the scope of conflict and create the impression that Democratic Administrations are too weak to deal with

terrorism. This is significant considering the role Bush eventually played in the 'war on terror', which gave rise to 'excesses of nationalism and stubborn unilateralism' (Winkler 2005: 4).

3.4 The 'War on Terror'

The 9/11 attacks prompted a radical rethinking inside the Administration of President George W. Bush on the purposes of American foreign policy and the rules of international engagement. Kristol (2005: 16) argues that 'Bush's latent progressive impulse might have never come to the fore' if it was not for the events of 9/11. Traub (2011: 2) goes even further by stating that realism 'died' on 9/11.

3.4.1 The Move Away from Multilateralism

The US has historically had a complex relationship with international organisations, specifically the UN, despite the fact that as far back as the post-First World War era, President Woodrow Wilson was instrumental in seeking a multilateral approach to collective security through creation of the League of Nations. For reasons that will not be explored in this study, the US abandoned its support for the League during the inter-War period, but after the Second World War it played a crucial role in the formation of the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions. This can be seen as testimony to an enduring liberal conception of international order, cemented by international institutions that function as the 'the keystone of the modern connected world' (Litwak 2002: 76). Why then did the Bush Administration contradict the more than fifty-five years of US diplomatic support for the fundamental role of international institutions?

With the shock of 9/11 still reverberating across the world, the Bush Administration initially sought multilateral endorsement for its foreign policy responses. Having settled its accumulated dues to the UN, it lobbied widely within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and garnered broad support within the UN for resolutions to combat global terrorism (Stewart 2009: 31). This resulted in UN Security Council Resolution 1373 of 28 September 2001, mandating member states to eliminate sources of terrorist financing. It was clear, however, that the UN was not going to endorse wide-ranging military measures by the US. Bush thus announced a

'global war on terrorism' and infamously declared 'either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists' (Stewart 2009: 32). The Bush Administration's preference to 'go it alone' was based on a long-held concern that there is a propensity for paralysis within the UN Security Council in taking decisions on global crises, hence the necessity for states to take matters into their own hands. Morris and Wheeler (2007: 215) point out that 'it is a matter of historical record' that during the years of the Cold War the UNSC was incapable of performing its role as the enforcer of collective security.

However, the Bush Administration did not proceed entirely on its own. Its ultimatum to the international community induced a much more limited multilateralism, by championing temporary 'coalitions of the willing' with the US dictating the terms of engagement (Stewart 2009: 25). The coalition that the US built around its fight against terrorism soon avoided the formalities of multilateral organisations such as the UN and the constraints of their international legal frameworks. Of course, the US could afford the burden and risk of going it alone, given the strength of its economy and its military capacity, but arguably its estrangement from the UN wasted an opportunity for sharing the political burden of the 'war on terror'. As Feinstein and Slaughter (2004: 147) argue, 'keeping force on the table is often a critical ingredient in making diplomacy work'; however, the 'contentious issue is who must decide when and how to use force'. International law dictates that a state may attack another only when under attack, or about to be attacked, or when the UNSC grants permission. In the case of the 2003 Iraq invasion, no armed attack was launched or threatened by Iraq against the US. As Morris and Wheeler (2007: 216) point out, the right to self-defence does not extend to unilateral preventive action. In fact, according to the UN Charter, peaceful remedies must be explored and pursued, and even where force needs to be used as a last resort, Security Council authorisation is required. It is thus the responsibility of the UNSC to determine whether there exists a threat to international peace and security (Article 39) as a prerequisite for the authorisation of collective use of force (Article 2).

According to Stewart (2009: 25) the Bush Administration's foreign policy and global engagement in confronting the threats to US security demonstrated 'scepticism of the capacity of international institutions and alliances to eliminate the threats to national and global security -- thus, terrorism, rogue states, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction'. In this regard Xego and Olivier

(2003: 79) argue that the events brought about sharp questioning of the 'sufficiency of the existing rules of international law, particularly those embodied in the Charter of the UN, designed to maintain peace and security in a changed world'. However, Morris and Wheeler (2007: 216) assert that it was the 'UNSC's inability to constrain the hegemon' -- that is, the US -- which was at the root of the crisis.

Because Bush declared the 9/11 events as an act of war, the use of force henceforth became a defining element of his presidency (Snauwaert 2004: 121; Guzzini 2002: 296; Kellner 2002: 29). Heisbourg (2003: 81) concludes that the Bush Administration had 'failed to construct a lasting and active international alliance against terror'. This was unfortunate, as the international community understood the exceptional circumstances the US faced, but expected it to seek UNSC legitimisation of its military actions. This resulted in US unilateral actions being seen as contrary to international law. Henry Kissinger (quoted by Guzzini 2002: 294) makes the point that 'any unilateral quest for invulnerability and search for absolute security is destined to provoke absolute insecurity for others and hence to undermine the very possibility of a functioning international concert'. The Bush Administration was about to experience this adage in no uncertain terms.

3.4.2 Development of the Bush Doctrine

In response to the security vulnerabilities exposed by the 9/11 attacks, the US government established the National Homeland Security Office in order to refocus the activities of the various entities mandated to secure the US. For instance, the USA Patriot Act, enacted in October 2001, gave law enforcement agencies increased powers to investigate suspected terrorist activities. The 9/11 attacks brought to the fore unique threats to US interests and signalled a defining moment in the evaluation of US foreign policy.

The ideological leanings of Bush's neo-conservative advisers heavily influenced his decision to declare the 9/11 attacks an act of war, a move that spelt a dramatic departure from the peaceful methods of dealing with terrorism to favour unilateralism and coercion (Snauwaert 2004: 121). This new, coercive approach set allies on a collision course, despite the Administration promising this approach on a vision of a 'new world order' based on the principles of collective security, the

rule of law, democratic governance, and expanding trade (Sloan, as quoted in Stewart 2009: 24). Moreover, this determination and steadfastness could be attributed to the notion that a multilateral organisation could not be permitted to limit the use of power by the US when the latter was faced with threats to its national security (Stewart 2009: 29). This was informed by a traditional theme in US foreign policy, namely the realist contention that international security can be ensured only by possessing sufficient power relative to others and use of it, unilaterally, if need be (Daalder & Kagan 2007: 1). This view was elaborated upon in a policy document that became known as the Bush Doctrine, codified through the National Security Strategy of 2002. The policy was intellectually grounded in an historical proclivity in US foreign policy towards unilateralism. Now, the US declared itself not only willing to 'go it alone' but also to act pre-emptively against global threats that could not be contained by deterrence (Jervis 2003: 369 & 374).

Stewart (2009: 26) argues that the traditional US commitment to self-restraint appeared to be in decline as the Bush Administration displayed a 'robust pursuit of US primacy'. The Bush Doctrine was developed in line with this goal. It declared that after 9/11, the traditional foreign policy approaches to threats, *inter alia*, deterrence, containment, and *ex post facto* responses were inadequate when dealing with terrorists and rogue regimes, and instead speed, anticipation and flexibility were required (Owens 2009: 26; Stewart 2009: 29). The doctrine provided a framework for the war in Afghanistan and later in Iraq, and was infused with rhetoric such as the 'axis of evil' (first used in Bush's State of the Union Address on 29 January 2002) when describing Iran, Syria and North Korea. Under this doctrine, unilateralism triumphed over international co-operation.

According to Jervis (2003: 365), the Bush Doctrine had four main elements: a renewed belief in the importance of a state's domestic regime in determining its foreign policy -- and an opportunity to transform international politics; appreciation that new security threats could be defeated only by new and vigorous policies that in the main prioritised preventive war; a political will to act unilaterally; and the primacy of the US in world politics. This was an emphatic signal by the US Administration that it was not going to yield in its approach to combat terrorism, and that it would not compromise its right to pre-emptive strike when attacked by rogue elements.

Owens (2009: 26) argues that the Bush Doctrine was based on the 'intersection of hegemonic stability theory and theory of democratic peace'. According to Gilpin (as quoted in Owens 2009: 26) hegemonic stability theory holds that 'a liberal world order does not arise spontaneously as the result of some global invisible hand'. Furthermore, it postulates that a culture of tyranny 'spawns fanatical, aggressive, secular and religious despotisms'. This assessment emboldened the US to act alone, based on the belief that the world is a dangerous place in which a just peace needs to be maintained, and departing from the assumption that liberal institutions are not able to address these challenges.

The Bush Doctrine of pre-emptive war, militarisation of foreign policy, turning its back on collective multilateralism, and putting an emphasis on the forceful spread of democracy thus represented a radical departure from the American past, which originally prioritised the principle of non-intervention and was based on a default position of isolationism (Snauwaert 2004: 123). Nossel (2004: 134) refers to this new direction in US foreign policy as 'defiant unilateralism'. The strategic foreign policy changes after 9/11 can, moreover, be seen to confirm a long-standing vacuum in coherent policy response on the part of the US on matters related to security and foreign relations challenges.

Tony Smith (quoted by Taliaferro 2007: 182) calls the Bush Doctrine 'a pact with the devil'; firstly, because the US succumbed to the temptation to exploit its overwhelming military superiority, and the ideological primacy of liberal democracy and market capitalism, to dominate the international system. And secondly, because neo-liberals made an implicit pact with neo-conservatives in the Republican Party in order to influence the direction of US foreign policy. Prominent liberal scholars such as Larry Diamond, Douglas Feith, Robert Kagan, Paul Wolfowitz and others were part of the team that developed the Bush Doctrine. Kristol (2005: 17) notes that the Bush Doctrine actually combined and sought to balance elements of idealism and realism.

However, some authors disagree with the notion that US foreign policy, by means of the Bush Doctrine, had taken an unprecedented turn. One such author is Owens (2009: 25) who argues that conventional wisdom regarding the 'virtuous' isolationism of the US is a historical myth. He notes that the Bush Doctrine, in fact, fits well within the mainstream of traditional US foreign policy as

espoused by the founding generation of the early Republic's political leaders. The use of the term 'axis of evil' by the George W. Bush Administration, reminded of the presidency of his father, George H. W. Bush, who defined some countries as dangerous and used different descriptive terminology like 'outlaw states'. Even the Democratic Administration of President Bill Clinton employed the term 'rogue states' (Feinstein & Slaughter 2004: 139). Going further back into history, it can be observed that like the Bush Doctrine, the Monroe and Truman Doctrines were also unilateral; however, they were based on a calculation of power within the international system (Gaddis 2008: 2). Bush, therefore, resorted to a position that was in essence not novel in US foreign policy, even if it was aligned to new US interests and strategies. Daalder and Kagan (2007: 5) argue that what was novel 'lay in the argument that such pre-emptive uses of force could be justified on self-defence grounds', though the threat was not clearly defined.

Under the aegis of the Bush Doctrine, some countries were named and shamed as part of the 'axis of evil', whilst others, such as Pakistan, were coerced into the 'coalition of the willing'. Key allies banded together against terrorism, but their resolve began to fade as it became apparent that the US was waging a war against terrorism that was out of touch with the prevailing norms of international society. Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address articulated clear political and diplomatic pressure, and indicated a shift from the more measured and restrained approach that was characteristic of traditional US foreign policy rhetoric. It heralded a more militant and unilateralist foreign policy approach, justified the use of full-fledged US military might, and directly challenged the existing rules pertaining to the use of force in the world.

Each strategy has its own distinct advantages and disadvantages. Multilateralism, for instance, can mobilise allies in an effective action, which help to ensure collective response and legitimacy. Diplomacy is but one amongst many foreign policy tools that can be used in the furtherance of national interest and the protection of national security. However, under the Bush Doctrine, military action and pre-emptive strike became the key tenets of foreign policy, and diplomatic approaches were shifted to the back-burner as they were deemed ineffective tools to deal with the new threat of global terrorism -- an ironic decision, given the long history of terrorism and the equally long record of hard power's inability to end terrorist activities (see Nye 2004).

3.4.3 Diplomatic Fallout as a Result of the 'War on Terror'

Soon after the alliance on global war was formed, diplomatic cracks began to show concerning how the war against terrorism should be fought. This was most evident within the context of the US's trans-Atlantic relations. As the war unfolded, Europe was divided into pro and anti-US camps. For instance, Russia lined up with France and Germany to resist American hegemony (Grant 2003: 11), while the UK pledged support for US military action. Whether negatively or positively, the 'war on terror' was widely seen as integrated with a global strategy of US hegemony (Snauwaert 2004: 122 & 126). Clearly, the US wanted to provide leadership and assume a place it regarded as rightfully its own in the global structure. However, Goh (2003: 89) argues that the reaction of the US to the 9/11 attacks severely destabilised its soft power capabilities, as it not only lost a significant amount of influence over other actors within the system but also tested many alliances. Apart from political fallout, the downturn in the world economy meant that co-operation in the 'war on terror' was not going to be easy as various countries were faced with a financial meltdown of serious proportions.

Since the end of the Cold War, according to a Rand study cited by Snauwaert (2004: 125), the US operated without a 'new grand strategy' at the international level. Indeed, the end of the Cold War witnessed a rise in global terrorism, but this threat was not prioritised by either Europe or the US. However, the 9/11 events brought a radical change to this situation. Eadie (2007: 1) postulates that there are different views of the way in which Europe and the US perceived the events of 9/11; for instance, the 'EU tended to present terrorism as a crime, whilst the US articulated it as an act of war' -- a distinction that reminds of Winkler's 'crime and war narratives', as applied to US Democratic versus Republican Administrations. The US was even accused of embarking on a campaign of cultural imperialism (Eadie 2007: 1). This charge was seen through the prism of the US foreign policy objective of spreading democracy around the world. Jervis (2003: 374) notes that the US also ignored European criticism of its Middle Eastern policy, adding to the perception of double standards in dealing with equally challenging situations. An alternative conception would have been to understand terrorism as an international crime against humanity, and perhaps it would have been easier to orchestrate a global response to it, possibly to have escalated the

charge to the appropriate UN organ dealing with human rights violations. In doing so, a universal and inclusive approach may have been fostered.

The respective responses could, however, hardly have been more divergent: the bellicose policy pronouncements of the US were in stark contrast to the more guarded European approach, premised on a vigorous defence of multilateralism (Heisbourg 2003: 81). Traditional allies around the world were uneasy with the US approach. The diplomatic tension around issues such as the imprisonment of alleged terrorists in Guantanamo Bay fed into several other long-standing trans-Atlantic differences. For instance, the US lacked European support on a number of key foreign policy issues, including carbon emissions limits and the authority of the International Criminal Court (Lecoutre 2010: 18). The embrace of unilateralism, pre-emptive action, and militarism within US foreign policy was perceived by Europe as a radical policy departure from that of the Bush Administration's predecessors, both Clinton and Bush Senior, who favoured the maintenance of large coalitions. The European position towards the 'war on terror' generally favoured the use of civilian and soft power tools, and emphasised the principle of non-intervention in domestic affairs (Hill 2003: 31). As the war progressed, there was a growing disparity between the instruments of foreign policy employed by the two sides.

Heisbourg (2003: 81) posits that European resistance to US unilateralism was psychologically grounded in the continent's historical relations with the US. These had been characterised by co-operation and established economic linkages, and interdependence that can be traced back to the reconstruction of Europe after the Second World War, notably the US Marshal Plan which firmly linked Europe to the US. The aggressive 'war on terror' rhetoric was therefore not well received by the Europeans. It added fuel and tension to already volatile trans-Atlantic relations. While Bush was demonising the so-called 'axis of evil' countries, Europe was strengthening links with them (Anderson 2004: 47). Many Europeans already believed that the Iraq war had undermined the struggle against terrorism and doubted the Bush Administration's sincerity in trying to combat terrorism. French President Jacques Chirac, for instance, is quoted to have remarked in the wake of the overthrow of Saddam Hussein that 'we are no longer in an era where one or two countries control the fate of another country' (Jervis 2003: 374). Chirac's statement captures France's rejection of US unilateralism and the democracy crusade it had embarked upon as intrinsically

undemocratic, contrary to the principles of international law, and incompatible with French diplomatic norms.

Guzzini (2002: 294) posits that the US approach was a 'take it or leave it diplomacy', which alienated many sectors of the international community. The US prioritisation of 'hard power' over 'soft power' had set it on a collision course with the Europeans. Europe, which once depended on the US for security, had in fact become suspicious of American power. As a result, the Bush Administration's foreign policy was being resisted in many parts of the world and encountered hostility from allies and enemies alike (Kellner 2002: 23; Lecoutre 2010: 18; Daalder & Kagan 2007: 3).

The US's lack of 'soft power' appeal and changes in the European perception of its policies are aptly demonstrated through statistics gathered by the Pew Global Attitudes Project: between 2002 and 2005, the percentage of people with a favourable opinion of the US fell from 63 to 38 percent in France, 75 to 55 percent in the UK, and 61 to 52 percent in Germany. By 2005, during Bush's second term, and in reaction to declining US popularity, his Administration assertively reached out to Europe in an effort to mend relations. Condoleezza Rice, as Secretary of State, undertook 19 trips to 49 countries and nearly 70 percent of her time was spent in Europe to emphasise a new tone in foreign relations, and to seek support for the 'war on terror' (Gordon 2006: 79). In Gordon's (2006) opinion, global realities and resource constraints thus increasingly forced the Administration towards pragmatism, modesty, and co-operation with allies.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter examined the Bush Administration's foreign policy responses to the terror attacks that occurred on 11 September 2001.

As stated, foreign policy *per se* was not prominent on the agenda of George W. Bush when he became US President in 2000. He appeared to be a conventional realist in foreign affairs and displayed a preoccupation with domestic political and economic issues rather than US hegemony in international affairs. However, the events of 9/11 changed how the US perceived the world and

this led to a total reappraisal of the Bush Administration's foreign policy. In contrast to the traditional geopolitical nature of global threats, to which the US enjoyed a measure of immunity, terrorism respected no boundaries and was perpetrated by landless groupings. Bush's assembled group of neo-conservative national policy advisers played a crucial role in crafting his presidency's foreign policy responses in the wake of 9/11 as a more aggressive, unilateralist, and interventionist US foreign policy was pushed to the fore.

Commentators have noted that tendencies towards unilateralism and intervention are not unprecedented in the history of US foreign policy, and that these have cut across the partisan divide between Administrations. Various US Administrations before Bush's term had employed unilateral measures, such as economic sanctions and military intervention, when the national interest was considered to be under threat. At the international level, the role of the US has historically been guided by a combination of the country's commercial interests, the nature of geopolitics, and US political principles. The latter, which are informed by Wilsonian liberal internationalism, pertain to the 'export' of democracy, free trade, and human rights. The pro-active spread of democracy, in particular, has been an enduring theme in US foreign policy, and has been anchored in the contention that liberal democracies do not wage war against each other. By the same token, the Bush Administration viewed democracy promotion as an instrument to end tyranny and combat terrorism, and related methods found their way into policy strategies such as the USA Patriot Act of 2001.

US foreign policy has also historically been guided by the assumption – embedded in Wilsonian liberal internationalism – that the development of international institutions is a prerequisite for the maintenance of global peace. However, as many commentators point out, Bush's post-9/11 option to 'go it alone', which was based on the expectation that multilateralism would not support US objectives, was not unprecedented in US foreign policy: in fact, even Bush's predecessor, Bill Clinton, carried out several military interventions without the approval of the UN Security Council. This reveals a trend in US foreign policy to distrust the role of international institutions, generally, and the UN, specifically, in maintaining international peace and security.

The Cold War era tactics of containment, which were considered adequate in responding to Cold War challenges, were seen to fall far short in responding to the domestic terror threat that emerged on 11 September 2001. An extensive US foreign policy response was articulated in, and guided by, a strategic policy that was codified in the National Security Strategy of 2002 and which became known as the Bush Doctrine. It was guided by a neo-conservative theoretical assessment, which offered a narrow interpretation of the terrorist attacks, national interest, and little trust in international institutions as the final arbiter of international conflict. The new world order induced by the events of 9/11 entailed that traditional foreign policy approaches to threats, *inter alia*, deterrence, containment, and *ex post facto* responses were deemed inadequate in dealing with terrorists and rogue regimes. Instead, speed, anticipation, and flexibility were required (Owens 2009: 26; Stewart 2009: 29). The Bush Doctrine was thus developed with unilateralism and pre-emption as its defining bases. This new direction in US foreign policy, which Nossel (2004: 134) refers to as 'defiant unilateralism', was emboldened by the belief that the world is a dangerous place in which a just peace needs to be maintained with the US playing a hegemonic role.

Notwithstanding the argument that US foreign policy has historically displayed unilateralist tendencies (manifested, *inter alia*, in the Monroe and Truman Doctrines), Daalder and Kagan (2007: 5) argue that the Bush Doctrine was novel in that it justified such pre-emptive use of force on self-defence grounds. Moreover, various countries were named and shamed as part of the 'axis of evil', whilst others were coerced into the 'coalition of the willing'. The declaration of the 9/11 attacks as an act of war, spelt a dramatic departure from the largely peaceful methods of dealing with terrorism that were utilised in the past. The Bush Doctrine envisaged a world order underwritten by specially selected hard power tactics and implemented with the assistance of carefully chosen allies, abandoning the liberal-internationalist premise of collective security.

With different forms of foreign policy tools at the disposal of policy-makers, global diplomatic norms favour 'soft power', which is less abrasive than the brute force of 'hard power', especially when a complex diplomatic challenge presents itself. The collective foreign policy orientation of Bush's neo-conservative advisers was, however, disdainful of 'soft power' and emphasised the maintenance of US military supremacy. This was best illustrated by Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address, which marked a distinct shift from the more measured and restrained approach that

characterised traditional US foreign policy. The Bush Doctrine, with its all-encompassing and morally prescriptive security measures against terrorism, soon alienated US allies and undermined the Bush Administration's credibility.

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, key US allies banded together against terrorism, but their resolve began to fade as it became apparent that the US was waging a war against terrorism that was out of touch with the prevailing norms of international society. Europe, in particular, employed very different strategies to fight terrorism. The European approach was premised on a vigorous defence of multilateralism and respect for international law, and generally favoured the use of civilian and 'soft power' tools. Moreover, Europeans tended to present terrorism as a crime, whilst the US articulated it as an act of war. The aggressive US 'war on terror' rhetoric was thus not well received by the Europeans, and fuelled already strained trans-Atlantic relations. While Bush was demonising the so-called 'axis of evil' countries, Europe was strengthening links with them (Anderson 2004: 47).

As the war progressed, there was growing disparity between the instruments of foreign policy utilised by the two sides. These differing viewpoints had led the Europeans to a belief that the Iraq war had undermined the struggle against terrorism and they doubted the Bush Administration's sincerity in trying to combat terrorism. Traditional allies around the world were thus uneasy with the US approach. As a result, the Bush Administration's foreign policy was being resisted in many parts of the world and encountered hostility from allies and enemies alike. Goh (2003: 89) argues that the US's reaction to the 9/11 attacks severely destabilised its soft power capabilities as it not only lost a significant amount of influence over other actors within the international system but also tested many alliances.

Terrorism is a global problem that requires a global solution, as Kellner (2002: 20) points out. The US Administration might not have read the international mood correctly, and it might not have foreseen the shortcomings of its actions and policy pronouncements. As Nye (2004: xii) puts it, 'winning the peace is harder than winning a war and soft power is essential to winning the peace. Yet the way we went to war in Iraq proved to be as costly for our soft power as it was a stunning victory for our hard power.'

The next chapter will pay particular attention to the successor to the Bush Administration, namely the Obama Administration's choice of foreign policy instruments in the ongoing fight against terrorism. President Barack Obama has signalled a review of foreign policy instruments, thus indicating a new approach to US relations with the rest of the world. This has included a constructive tone, without rigid preconditions, in diplomatic interaction with both allies and enemies of the US. This new approach in US foreign policy will be examined in the light of Nye's contention (quoted in Anderson 2004: 45) that there is no alternative to mobilising international coalitions and building institutions to address shared threats and challenges.

CHAPTER 4

OBAMA RESETS THE DIPLOMATIC BUTTON ON US FOREIGN POLICY

4.1 Introduction

Barack Hussein Obama ran for the US Presidency on a platform of change both in the domestic and foreign policy arenas. As a result, his ascendance to the White House coincided with domestic as well as foreign expectation of substantive transformation in US policy approaches and, at the international level, restoration of the US image. This happened despite the fact that Obama was, for all intents and purposes, a foreign policy novice: Moens and Barbee (2010: 4) recall the new President's 'reluctance in foreign policy, as this domain was not his forte'. Nevertheless, his transformative diplomatic rhetoric earned him a Nobel Peace Prize in 2010, arguably even before he had time to implement his new foreign policy strategy. This prestigious prize symbolised international admiration for the political trajectory he projected during his presidential campaign. To the international community, the various pronouncements Obama made reflected a 'resetting' of US diplomatic relations with the world.

This chapter will begin by discussing Obama's foreign policy rhetoric prior to his presidency in order to determine the extent to which a deliberate change in US foreign policy and, specifically, the prioritisation of diplomacy rather than other instruments of foreign policy was projected as an imperative. The philosophical influences on the Obama Administration's foreign policy approach will then be situated within an IR conceptual framework. This will be followed by an analysis of the implementation of key policy thrusts Obama set on his electoral campaign trail, notably the much anticipated normalisation of diplomatic relations with the rest of the world. The discussion will then proceed to examine the appointment of key personalities in Obama's foreign policy team, and their prioritisation of a so-called 'smart power' approach. The reaction to Obama's diplomatic initiatives – particularly by traditional US allies in Europe – will be discussed, after which there will be a reflection on whether Obama's foreign policy and diplomacy represent change or continuity in the tradition of US foreign policy.

4.2 Obama's Foreign Policy Rhetoric Prior to His Presidency

Obama had, throughout his electoral campaign, proposed a change of course on various aspects of domestic and foreign policy which found resonance with the US electorate. At the international level, he had to contend with the consequences of an inherited set of choices made by the Bush Administration. The most politically challenging issues that faced the Obama Administration were the baggage of the diplomatic fiasco resulting from the war in Iraq, ongoing military involvement in Afghanistan, the impasse in conflict resolution in the Middle East, and the escalating threats posed by the Iranian and North Korean nuclear programmes (Bolton 2010: 1). Proposed openness to negotiations with Iran and North Korea exemplified a decisive shift, because during the Bush Administration these countries were diplomatically isolated as part of the so-called 'axis of evil' and the key engagement approach towards them was a military one.

While Bush relied on unilateral use of state-centric force, Obama expressed his preference for a shift in the focus of US foreign policy towards strengthening the non-military elements of statecraft. He specifically espoused a multilateral diplomatic approach relying on co-operation with traditional allies. Friedman (2008) proffers the view that the main feature of Obama's foreign policy rhetoric included an emphasis on returning to multilateralism, a restrained role on the global stage, and fostering mutual respect with adversaries.

Obama had very different perceptions of the two wars in which the US was engaged: his view was that the war in Iraq was pre-emptive and in violation of the basic principles of international law, whereas the Afghanistan war was started with the approval of the UN Security Council. In both instances, he emphasised elements of liberal internationalism in shaping foreign policy, namely observation of international law, and primacy of the UN as a forum for conflict resolution. As pointed out above, the liberal internationalist ideology that Obama sought to pursue is a perennial theme in US foreign policy. In a 2007 article in *Foreign Affairs* Obama lauded the political vision of American leaders such as Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and John F. Kennedy, and stated that Americans 'stood for and fought for the freedoms sought by billions of people beyond our borders'. The liberal internationalist paradigm espouses the need for states to work together to find co-operative solutions to the various transnational threats every state faces, and emphasises the

promotion of democracy and individual freedom and observation of international law. In the same *Foreign Affairs* article, Obama stated that 'our global engagement cannot be defined by what we are against; it must be guided by a clear sense of what we stand for'. In this regard, he emphasised that the fundamental principles, values and beliefs of the US, as enshrined in its Constitution, should be the guiding force in foreign policy. His projected diplomacy was thus founded on the idea that those who are to lead the world must do so because of values and attitudes that are, in the main, globally shared.

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, the Bush Administration promoted beliefs and values that were markedly different, in the sense that they emphasised militarism and unilateral foreign policy approaches. However, even under the Bush Administration's 'war on terror', the US over time came to realise the inadequacy of militarism in sustaining American power. This explains the decisive shift away from Bush's neo-conservative foreign policy thrust, as Hamre (2007: 4) argues. Obama did not see military action as a solution to fight violent extremism, but rather the utilisation of the criminal justice system. He also did not consider violent fundamentalism as endogenous or exclusive to the Islamic world (Bruton 2009: 30). Obama's promotion of 'smart power' thus contrasted markedly with the 'hard power' politics of his predecessor. Indeed, the narrative of Obama's foreign policy was infused with the prioritisation of a co-operative global stance, implying a distinct preference for diplomacy as opposed to the unilateral and coercive instruments of foreign policy.

Before Obama assumed the Presidency, his detractors had pointed to his limited experience in the foreign policy arena. However, his electoral rhetoric found resonance domestically and abroad, emphasising a foreign policy that would have strong elements of moral leadership and legitimacy in the international community. Brzezinski (2009: 54) states that George W. Bush's successor had to 'regain global legitimacy for America by spearheading a collective effort for a more inclusive system of global management'. In his *New Strategy for a New World*, Obama undertook to 'instead of pushing the entire burden of our foreign policy on to the brave men and women of our military, I want to use all elements of American power to keep us safe, and prosperous, and free I will pursue a tough, smart and principled national security strategy, one that recognises that we have interests not only in Baghdad, but in Kandahar and Karachi, in Tokyo and London, in Beijing and

Berlin' (Obama 2008). In this strategy, he made it clear that he did not underestimate the threat posed by non-state actors, and terrorist groups in particular, but that he also realised the limits of US power in tackling these threats unilaterally.

4.3 Paradigmatic Underpinnings of the Obama Administration's Foreign Policy

Friedman (2008) states that Obama and his advisers 'carry an institutional memory of the Democratic Party's approach to foreign policy'. Indeed, Obama's orientation is influenced by these traditions and, in particular, by Wilsonian idealism. Implicit in the liberal or Wilsonian idea is the suggestion that the security of one state depends on the security of others, and an emphasis on global interdependence amongst states rather than hegemony.

However, Jones (2009: 69) holds a different view and argues that 'if one had to identify a single unifying theme in Obama's foreign policy, it could be termed 'co-operative realism' '. Clearly, co-operative realism refers to the assessment of the threat posed by non-traditional sources, and the limits of US power to tackle those threats single-handedly. It also implies the consequent necessity of co-operation with allies and non-allies alike. Evan and Stuart (2010: 1) concur with Jones and emphasise that Obama is 'a realist and compromiser who seeks the middle way, not a liberal dialogue'. For instance, these authors argue that in the first two years of his Presidency, Obama conducted more than 50 'predatory strikes' against terrorist targets, more than Bush did during his two terms as President. This fact, in itself, could support Jones assertion of 'co-operative realism'. By the same token, McGlinchey (2010: 24) argues that the divergence between neo-realists and neo-liberals is 'over what kind of empire America should have; one disguised through using multilateral institutions and soft power to hide the true reality of American global domination, or a global empire backed by the open use of hard power and unilateralism'.

In line with this mix of the two theoretical and ideological strands in interpreting Obama's theoretical underpinnings, Holmes (2009) also contends that Obama embraces many elements of 'liberal-realist ideology'. He notes that, as a politician, Obama appears to think that it is 'not a good idea to give up on America'. Obama indicated as early as 2008 that 'to see American power in terminal decline is to ignore America's great promise and historic purpose in the world'. This

statement implies a core assumption inherent in traditional US foreign policy, namely that of US primacy and, by extension, a continuation of US hegemony. This view informed Bolton's (2010: 2) interpretation of Obama's foreign policy vision as 'embedded in a carapace of naïve internationalism'.

The foreign and security policy legacy of the Democratic Party is not a single-view construction; several intellectual traditions with significant influence on the Democratic mainstream do exist. Many neo-realist scholars believe that with the US being the remaining hegemonic power in the world, it ought to take its 'rightful place' amongst all other nations and bring international order in a 'chaotic' and 'self-help' international system. The idea of leadership is shared by neo-liberal scholars who see a normative responsibility of the US to spread democracy. As Obama (2009) observed, 'governments that respect these values are more just, peaceful and legitimate'. Similarly, freedom and democracy are also key elements in the neo-liberal tradition. Nau (2010) argues that 'there can be no stability without progress toward[s] democracy' and that 'the scaling down of democracy has costs and creates vacuums that autocrats fill, discourages democratic allies, and ultimately alienates [the] American people'.

Despite the various interpretations of Obama's foreign policy as being a neo-realist and neo-liberal synthesis, most scholars see his Administration's foreign policy approach as leaning towards, and in keeping with, the liberal tradition. Obama's philosophical lineage was clearly revealed in his first speech to the UN General Assembly, where he quoted Franklin D. Roosevelt who declared in 1949 that 'we have learned ... to be citizens of the world, members of the human community' (Obama 2009). The core of the Democratic Party principles to which Obama subscribes, appears to be reluctance towards the use of force as the primary means to solve international disputes. The liberal foreign policy tradition holds that most countries will co-operate if enough goodwill and confidence exist amongst them. With the prioritisation of 'soft power' approaches there is, therefore, an emphasis on international institutions and multilateralism.

Hamre (2007: 3) states that 'we do not have to be loved, but we will never be able to accomplish our goals and keep Americans safe without mutual respect'. He thus emphasises the importance to the US of coalitions and the collective support of allies in dealing with international challenges, and

embraces a view that it is desirable to develop a global collective to deal with global threats and challenges through engagement rather than confrontation. Friedman (2008) argues that the US under Democratic Administrations has not involved itself in war unilaterally; it has always sought coalitions, unlike the neo-conservatists who champion militarism and ignore 'soft power' options.

During October 2009, the Norwegian Nobel Committee recognised Obama's extraordinary efforts in strengthening international diplomacy and co-operation, his vision and work for a world without nuclear weapons, and his constructive role in meeting the great climatic challenges, amongst others (Nobel Peace Prize Committee 2009). In his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, Obama did acknowledge the occasional need for use of force, noting that 'the use of force is necessary and morally justified in some instances'. He thus expressed implicit support for the concept of humanitarian intervention, arguing that in extreme cases, such as in the Balkans, only international force could stop crimes against humanity. Despite this realist element in his approach, namely the retention of a unilateral and military option in foreign policy, what can be deduced from his rhetoric is a measured and cautious approach to the use of force where it is called for, in contrast to the overtly forceful posture of the Bush Administration.

4.4 Obama's Administration reprioritises diplomacy

In a key speech in Cairo in June 2009, his first as US president in a non-Western country, Obama stated that '9/11 led us to act contrary to our traditions and our ideals; we are now taking concrete actions to change the course. I've come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect, and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive and need not be in competition.' In his address, he further stressed the central role of international co-operation and the need to strengthen global partnerships and alliances.

Not only the Muslim world, but Europe in particular responded positively to the diplomatic overtures of the new US President. Obama's Nobel Peace Prize vividly symbolised this. Europe, a traditional ally of the US, was estranged from the US under the Bush Administration, because of disagreement on the strategies and choices the US had opted for in fighting terrorism. Jones

(2009: 63) states that ‘Europeans broadly abhorred the Bush Administration’s approach to multilateralism and were eager for a change which would emphasise diplomacy and multilateralism’. Expectations expressed by the Nobel Peace Prize reflected Europe’s predominant view of how the US should behave internationally. The reaction to changes in US foreign policy was also clearly indicated by results of the Pew Global Attitudes project during July 2009. The results revealed that Europe’s confidence that America would ‘do the right thing’ soared from 20 percent under Bush to 80 percent under Obama in 2009, largely because of trust in the person of the new US President. It also affirmed a key foreign policy objective of Obama’s Presidency, namely to heal the diplomatic rift with Europe that was created during the Bush Administration’s ‘war on terror’.

From the outset of his Presidency, Obama presented ‘a practical side which calls for pragmatism and compromise’, as Moens and Barbee (2010: 1) observe. This pragmatism has arguably assisted him in building broad international support for his foreign policy. Peng (2010: 1) identifies what he calls the Obama Doctrine, which prioritises the improvement of America’s image by steering away from the unilateralism and militarism of the preceding Administration, and aims to ‘reset the diplomatic button’ with the rest of the international community and institutions from which the Bush Administration grew apart (De Vasconcelos 2009: 18). For instance, Obama’s attempts to close Guantanamo Bay prison, set a timetable for withdrawal from Iraq, return to climate talks, reach out to countries like Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela, and Myanmar practically illustrate the considered embrace of diplomacy as a preferred instrument of foreign policy (Bruton 2009: 29). Multilateral diplomacy, in particular, was given more attention by the Obama Administration, with emphasis on the role the UN and other international institutions could play (Peng 2010: 1). Obama’s speeches clearly sought to revamp the US’s international image and the projection of ‘smart power’ was to become the means to achieve this end.

4.5 Obama’s Foreign Policy Team and ‘Smart Power’ Approach

During the Bush Administration, various US foreign policy analysts started to argue the case for a move from ‘hard power’ in US foreign policy to a ‘soft power’ approach – but with due consideration to the realities of power politics. This required that the US should move away from the neo-

conservative impulse to rely on military power as the main tool of statecraft to an embrace of all instruments of US power (Nossel 2004: 1). Nye (2004: xiii) similarly argued for 'smart power' tools that would assist the US in tackling global challenges; hence Obama's campaign trail emphasis on the need for the US to make more effective use of all tools at its disposal, including diplomatic, economic, political, legal, and cultural – in addition to the military option (Obama, 2007). Lecoutre (2010: 15) states that one of Obama's key priorities in 'smart power' strategy was to 'rebuild the diplomatic and development capabilities' of the US.

Obama announced the creation of a new Office of Conflict Prevention and Resolution which would support high-level negotiations and provide the expertise and capacity to seize opportunities or address crises as they arise. Other initiatives included 'America's Voice Corps', a public diplomacy programme geared towards reversing the perception of American arrogance and restoring the global image of the US. The means to this end was foreign development assistance -- and these new measures required, *inter alia*, the structural strengthening of the US Department of State through new senior appointments and, more generally, the expansion and training of diplomatic staff.

The most striking diplomatic changes implemented by the Obama Administration were heralded by key foreign policy team appointments. Kornegay (2008: 9) observes that 'Obama is a non-traditionalist falling outside the establishment consensus. However, his foreign policy team ... nest[s] well within the establishment, albeit perhaps more on its left-liberal to moderate centrist wing'. Many of Obama's foreign policy advisers were drawn from the Clinton Administration, including – as Kornegay puts it – 'the most forward-thinking members of the Democratic foreign policy establishment'. Beginning with the appointment of his Vice-President, the profile of Joseph Biden was critical in view of his background as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The selection of a foreign relations and diplomacy expert signalled that his role as Vice-President would be a close involvement in these policy areas. Biden's active and ongoing interest in NATO, the war in Afghanistan, and US-Russian relations has, subsequently, proven this point. Randall (2008/09: 7) posits that Obama's selection of Biden, who can be described as a liberal interventionist, was further indication of the Administration's resolve to prioritise diplomacy, while at the same time not ignoring the reality of global power politics. Biden advocated a pro-

active foreign policy, assertive but in tune with the multilateral approach the Obama Administration sought to promote. Reflecting on this approach, at the Munich Security Conference in February 2009, Biden acknowledged the two elements of 'smart power', namely 'co-operation and partnership', and stated that 'international alliances and organisations do not diminish America's power ... so we will engage. We will listen. We will consult' (Lecoutre 2010: 13). He thus confirmed the distinct multilateral diplomatic tenet of Obama's foreign policy approach.

Obama's appointment of Hillary Rodham Clinton as his Secretary of State also played a critical part in the resetting of diplomatic relations. The elevation of his former rival in the Democratic presidential primaries, and somebody with vast international experience, to this important position was a bold move. Lecoutre (2010: 13) states that Clinton explicitly endorsed 'smart power' as a new foreign policy strategy. She advocated a foreign policy shift away from rigid ideology to accommodate a marriage of principles and pragmatism 'based on facts and evidence, not emotion and prejudice' (Randall 2008/09: 22). Her 'smart power' approach resonated with that of Obama's and Vice-President Biden's. Indeed, a change in the use of foreign policy instruments seemed imminent (Lecoutre 2010: 13).

Another pivotal appointment, signalling the replacement of neo-conservative drivers of US foreign policy, was Obama's nomination of Susan Rice as US Ambassador to the UN. Rice had served on Clinton's National Security Council and brought a wealth of diplomatic experience from her role as an Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs during the Clinton presidency. Her appointment to the UN marked a renewed commitment to multilateralism and changing the discourse on US foreign policy. Her foreign policy approach was clear from her academic writings, particularly a 2008 co-authored report entitled *Strategic Leadership: Framework for a Twenty-First Century National Security Strategy* in which she argued for a break with 'such traditional concepts as containment, engagement, and enlargement' and rejected 'standard dichotomies of realist power politics versus liberal idealism' (Randall 2008/09: 8). Even before her appointment, elements of this report had found its way into Obama's foreign policy rhetoric on issues such as counter-terrorism, nuclear proliferation, climate change, and the situation in the Middle East (Randall 2008/09: 8). As Randall observes, the report actually referred to 'power diffusion'; and included in Obama's

speeches was the theme of a need for the US to build a new international consensus in order to address global threats to security.

Other key diplomatic appointments were also made and, in particular, to the volatile Middle Eastern region: George Mitchell was appointed as US Special Envoy, whilst Richard Holbrooke was appointed as Obama's point man to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Both of these envoys enjoyed international recognition for their peace-making experience; with Altman (2009), for example, referring to Mitchell as 'a diplomat capable of untangling the world's knottiest disputes'.

Although the abovementioned appointments signalled an earnest attempt to reprioritise diplomacy vis-à-vis other instruments of foreign policy, observers have noted that Obama did not, in fact, surround him with foreign policy 'doves'. A case in point is the selection of Anthony Lake -- himself a 'Vietnam War dove' -- who had also served in Clinton's first administration as a National Security Adviser (Randall 2008/09: 6-7). Randall (2008/09: 22) argues that Lake brought in a 'cautious approach to the use of power', but adds that this approach 'gave way to a stronger commitment to realpolitik'. Obama's selection of his foreign policy team is thus indicative not only of his normative commitments and orientation, but also of the political constraints under which he assumed the presidency. Jeremy Scahill (2008), a critic of Obama's choices, refers to the assembly of Hillary Clinton, Robert Gates, Susan Rice and Joe Biden as a 'kettle of hawks'. He points out that they all have a proven record of support for the war in Iraq, militaristic interventionism, neo-liberal economic policies, and a worldview consistent with the foreign policy arch that has continued from the time of the George H. W. Bush Administration.

Indeed, the US under Obama has not given up on its determination to 'act boldly and collectively on behalf of justice and prosperity at home and abroad' (Obama 2009: 1). In addressing the UN General Assembly on 23 September 2009, Obama emphasised collective responsibility for international peace and security. He said 'those who used to chastise America for acting alone in the world cannot now stand by and wait for America to solve the world's problems alone We have sought in word and deed a new era of engagement with the world. Now is the time for all of us to take our share of responsibility for a global response to global challenge[s]'. De Vasconcelos (2009: 14) states that the vision of an effective or assertive multilateralism supported by a strong

UN is what the Europeans had been yearning for, and under the Obama Administration this idealistic rhetoric appeared to have entered the US political agenda. The consistent theme of consultation with allies, dating back to Obama's presidential campaign, was very well received by Europeans who welcomed his initiatives to change America's counter-terrorist strategy and to cooperate with other major powers (De Vasconcelos 2009: 21; Hamilton & Foster 2009: 39).

The fact that the US was more inclusive in its consultations, however, did not necessarily imply consensus on US foreign policy goals; neither did Obama's popularity persuade key European governments to fully align themselves with US priorities (Hamilton & Foster 2009: 41). Policy towards Russia and the ongoing war in Afghanistan have been two of many disputed areas in trans-Atlantic foreign policy. As a result the European response to Obama has been mixed – the military surge in Afghanistan, for example, was not well received. Obama has treated Afghanistan as a main security threat, so much so that Moens and Barbee (2010: 3) call his Afghan strategy a 'refinement of the policy' that he inherited from the Bush Administration, 'with the exception of a date specific (2011) for troop withdrawal'. Despite their not doubting the legitimacy of the war in Afghanistan during the Bush Administration's 'war on terror', states such as Germany and France had balked at sharing the burden of the war, while the US excluded them from decision-making (Brzezinski 2009: 55). Obama had sought greater support for the Afghanistan war, but the issue remained indicative that Europe and the US are 'structurally rooted in their conflicting visions of world power' (Petras 2009:4). Jones (2009: 63) holds a similar view and argues that 'Obama's conception of multilateralism is not identical to that of Europe; and ... the articulation of his administration's strategy may over time shift the centre of gravity away from the trans-Atlantic relationship'.

Multilateralism and the wielding of soft power are clearly much more embedded in the European international outlook than in the foreign policy of the US. The latter has consistently been associated with a presumption of exceptionalism. Bruton (2009: 32) argues that the self-exclusion of the US from the jurisdiction of the ICC 'gives ammunition to ill-intentioned critics of the United States'.

4.6 Obama's Foreign Policy – Change or Continuity?

McGlinchey (2010: 30 & 31) states that 'it is an often observed trend in international politics that foreign policy rarely dramatically changes; rather, it slowly evolves'. He quotes President Harry Truman who famously declared foreign policy to reside 'above the partisan divide'. Policy changes can thus not be attributed merely to a change in leadership. The militarism of the Bush Administration, however, created a political opening for a visionary alternative. Obama's views on the world order are in direct contrast to those of his predecessor; notably, because he did not divide the world into 'them and us' or 'good and evil' when speaking about the fight against terrorism. Rather, he has approached foreign policy options through the prism of 'shared interest defined by interconnected material leadership' (Nau 2010). In Obama's view, the threats posed by the 21st century demand a new vision of leadership, and an understanding that the world shares a common security and a common humanity. This has been most evident at the rhetorical level: Hamilton and Foster (2009: 54) observe that the Obama Administration 'has maintained the Bush Administration's priority of destroying al-Qaeda and its allies', yet it has dropped Bush's 'global war on terror' and 'his Manichean you're either with us or against us rhetoric' -- and also rejected controversial interrogation tactics such as water-boarding.

Commentators are, however, not in agreement on the extent to which Obama's diplomacy has signified change rather than continuity in US foreign policy. Friedman (2009), for example, retorts that 'we see continuity rather than change'. Obama and his predecessor shared some policy goals, including the global promotion of democracy and appreciation of American leadership. Nevertheless, where they have differed has been in the execution of these broad foreign policy goals. Whilst Bush sought to achieve these goals unilaterally and through US military might, Obama has advocated a co-operative approach and has used diplomacy to this end. Before he became president, Obama (2007) warned that the 'Bush Administration responded to [the] unconventional attacks of 9/11 with conventional thinking of the past'. He further stated his rejection of what he referred as a false notion of choice between US safety and US ideals. This indicates a different attitude towards foreign policy leadership, wherein Obama emphasises 'partnerships to renew American leadership in the world'. Consequently, a renewed reliance on

international organisations and collective decision-making has been noticeable in his foreign policy practice.

There is certainly evidence of continuity with traditional foreign policy priorities. Obama has, throughout his campaign for the White House and his ensuing presidency, not fundamentally changed from these and has trumpeted the securing of geopolitical pluralism. Before he became president, Obama (2007) emphasised that the US 'must lead by deed and by example' and echoed the fundamental insights of Roosevelt, Truman and Kennedy. In this sense, there has been policy alignment and continuity.

The recent, revolutionary upheavals in some parts of the Arab world have arguably seen the US acting in a measured and restrained manner in playing a key supportive role to the yearnings for freedom in that part of the world. This is in keeping with one of Obama's (2009) assertions that the US 'will not impose any system of government on another country'. The US has not played an overt role in the sense of interference in the upheavals, but pronouncement of support for freedom and democracy were noticeable because the popular uprisings resonate with the US fundamental principle of promotion of democracy.

Concerning the other international goals he has set for his Administration, Obama has yet to achieve major breakthroughs. Efforts to draw down US involvement in Iraq and beefing it up in Afghanistan, reaching peace in the Middle East, forcing Iran to forego its nuclear programme, resetting relations with Russia, improving diplomacy with the Muslim world, and reducing the world's supply of nuclear weapons are some of the challenges he has yet to see through. Given his strong message of change when he assumed the presidency, and the fact that he has presented himself as a pragmatist focusing on diplomacy and partnership, some observers have started to question the extent to which rhetoric has been translated into action. At the rhetorical level, one observable constant in Obama's policy pronouncements has been the bold assertion of liberal internationalist principles. These principles notwithstanding, when it comes to implementation Bruton (2009: 32) cautions that foreign policy in the US is 'openly and democratically politicised; changes are therefore not easily made and achieved'.

Nau (2010) states that 'American foreign policy swings like a pendulum' in that it alternates between emphasising democracy, security, force projection, diplomacy, markets and regulation, unilateralism and multilateralism. This concept of pendulum swing neatly depicts US foreign policy foci in various eras. Obama came into office at a time when the global financial crisis was setting in and he was thus faced with circumstances he did not anticipate. However, his success in global politics will be defined, primarily, by his achievements at the level of domestic politics (De Vasconcelos 2009: 13). Key to Obama's tenure in office is the necessity to deal with the financial crisis which fundamentally affects the US economy, its citizens, and his ability to project a foreign policy that resonates with the US public. Not only does this issue have serious domestic implications, but it also has a global impact which will profoundly affect his presidential legacy. In response to the financial crisis, the 2010 Congressional elections already seem to have been a vote against his domestic policies, possibly limiting his ability to pursue his foreign policy goals. Democrats lost their majority in the Senate to the Republicans in a telling turn of events, which arguably has affected his line of policy direction, domestically and internationally, in an effort to appease the Republican majority in the US Congress.

In line with Nau's contention, the Obama Administration has emphasised diplomacy -- a soft power instrument -- whilst, in practice, the national security approach seems to also acknowledge the role of the military. Obama's (2007) own observation in this regard is that 'a strong military is, more than anything, necessary to sustain peace', an idea echoed by Nau (2010), who contends that even containment strategy cannot work without a credible threat to use force. This is evident in what is referred to as the 'war surge' in Afghanistan and the May 2010 sending of a warship to the Korean peninsula to signal US readiness to come to the assistance of South Korea in the event of a North Korean attack. This, again, goes against the grain for a tough critic of Bush's militaristic policies.

The question is where Obama will stop the pendulum between assertive American leadership, which involves some degree of unilateralism (as demonstrated triumphantly with the killing of Osama bin Laden in May 2011 and stretching of the UN Resolution 1973, 2011 on Libya), and accommodating multilateralism. Bruton (2009: 32) argues that one of the constraints on US foreign policy-makers is that foreign policy is much more 'openly and democratically politicised in the United States than it is in most European countries'.

Other observers credit Obama with swinging the foreign policy pendulum away from the Bush Administration's strategies which, amongst others, shunned multilateralism with the resultant loss in international credibility. Obama's foreign policy objective is no longer seen as primarily an attempt to promote democracy: he made it clear in his 2009 Cairo speech that 'no system of government can or should be imposed by one nation on any other'.

Now, rather, the attention has shifted to a prevention of al-Qaeda and other extremist groups from plotting and carrying out violent acts of terrorism against the US. Hence the withdrawal of troops in Iraq and the military surge in Afghanistan, the primary host of al-Qaeda. But Obama's successes in this regard remain to be seen. Nau (2010) argues that limiting the use of force does not minimise risks, but may lead to much bigger risks at a later stage. Both the North Korean and Iranian stand-offs attest to this, as negotiation without the threat of force seems to yield no significant results.

4.7 Conclusion

Bruton (2009: 28) observes that 'Americans see their interests in such idealised global terms [that] they have tended to elevate principles to the level of dogma, including principles such as anti-communism, anti-terrorism, democracy, and free markets'. However, the means employed to achieve such foreign policy goals and, specifically, the instruments of foreign policy that are prioritised, are at the core of this study. In this regard, it has been established that the Obama Administration notably differs from its predecessor, the Bush Administration.

Francis Fukuyama (quoted by McGlinchey 2010: 22) encapsulates the neo-conservative instinct in foreign policy by noting that 'when your only tool is a hammer, all problems look like nails'. It is this sort of approach that Obama sought to avoid when he assumed the presidency. His goals included, *inter alia*, drawing down US involvement in Iraq and beefing it up in Afghanistan, achieving peace in the Middle East, forcing Iran to forego its nuclear programme, resetting relations with Russia, improving diplomacy with the Muslim world, and reducing the world's supply of nuclear weapons. He also specifically tried to repair diplomatic relations with former allies in Europe and elsewhere, which had been damaged by the 'war on terror'. At a global level, his goal

was to restore US prestige and legitimacy as a world power. For this reason, a return to multilateral diplomacy, a restrained role on the global stage, and the fostering of mutual respect amongst countries were emphasised.

Obama's approach to foreign policy reflects a renewed commitment to the principles of liberal Wilsonianism. This includes, *inter alia*, observation of international law, and the primacy of the UN as a forum for conflict resolution. In accordance with these principles, Obama identified diplomacy, 'soft power', and the downplaying of militarism as key foreign policy instruments. This approach has, thus far, earned him the respect and acclaim of the international community, and was symbolised by his winning of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize, as well as the improved image of the US abroad as illustrated by the 2009 Pew survey results. Similarly, on the international stage, his Administration is seen to be more accommodative even to adversaries, having toned down on the war rhetoric of the past, emphasising partnership and mutual respect. His initial diplomatic moves signalled a change of course from that pursued by his predecessor, and resonated well with international audiences -- as reflected in public opinion polls worldwide.

Obama's selection of a strong, neo-liberal and assertive foreign policy team underscored his policy objectives and the determination to elevate the role of US diplomacy. He chose a group of individuals whose foreign policy orientation mirrored his own: Hillary Clinton, Joe Biden, Susan Rice, George Mitchell, and Richard Holbrooke. Similarly, structural changes to the US diplomatic apparatus, such as the refinement and enlargement of public diplomacy programmes and the establishment of an Office of Conflict Prevention and Resolution, signalled an investment in the ability of the US to pursue its national interests through the medium of diplomacy rather than military might.

However, many commentators (especially those in countries like Iran and others in the Middle East) see Obama's presidency as no different to previous Administrations. For these critics, the Obama Administration is not offering anything significantly new from that of the Bush Administration, but is rather continuing US foreign policy traditions. Elements of this viewpoint have been reinforced by the continuing emphasis in US foreign policy on US leadership and the promotion of democracy. According to McGlinchey (2010), the Obama Administration is broadly

continuing the neo-conservative legacy of the Bush Administration in the Middle East, 'despite its more multilateral and diplomatic persona in international politics and its desire to be viewed as clearly different from its predecessor'. As Nau (2010) notes, American foreign policy swings between emphases on democracy, security, force projection, diplomacy, markets and regulation, unilateralism and multilateralism. Obama has definitely developed a different understanding of the role defence policies can play in international relations and in diplomacy but, although his Administration aligns itself with the long-term return on diplomatic investment, US national interests are still the main drivers of foreign policy. In this regard Nossel (2004: 131) points out that 'our diplomacy is designed to employ peaceful means to advance our national interests'. At the same time, the US military is constructed to deter and, as deemed necessary, wage war.

Europe and trans-Atlantic relations remain crucial to the US, based on the historical interdependence of these regions in terms of their political, security, and economic interests. However, Europe's outlook on global affairs seems to be at variance with that of the US. Of course, this viewpoint is taken from the understanding that countries pursue selfish interests, and that lack of convergence on principles and ideas will always be present in the international system. Despite Obama's personal popularity in Europe, Hamilton and Foster (2009: 41) argue that key European governments have nevertheless not been persuaded to fully align themselves with US priorities. From an EU perspective, the best legacy that the Obama Presidency can hope for is genuine advancement in building an international system based on norms and rules. Multilateral regimes must be strengthened, and this calls for universal adherence to commonly agreed principles of multilateral governance.

The next chapter will be a summary of the research findings and a conclusion, and will offer recommendations regarding the continued challenge for the US to prioritise diplomacy vis-à-vis other instruments of foreign policy.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Overview of the Research

This study set out to investigate the extent to which the US, during the ‘war on terror’, marginalised diplomacy vis-à-vis other instruments of American foreign policy and to determine what effect this reduced emphasis on diplomacy had on the global standing of the US. Based on the findings of this initial enquiry, the study subsequently proceeded to investigate the strategic prioritisation of diplomacy as a foreign policy instrument under the Obama Administration.

In Chapter Two, the research was initiated with the contextualisation within the wider framework of IR paradigms that have been utilised to explain US foreign policy behaviour, notably two systemic theories: neo-realism (for the purposes of this study broadly associated with the former Bush Administration) and neo-liberalism (conversely, broadly associated with the present Obama Administration). Analysts have historically employed variations of realism to account for US foreign policy, arguably because this IR paradigm focuses on the structure of global power and because the US, by virtue of its uncontested military and economic preponderance, remains the only superpower in the international system. However, the historical influence of liberal internationalism has undeniably also explained important aspects of US foreign policy, which has displayed an enduring objective of exporting democracy, human rights, and free trade. This motive has informed (or has been used as an excuse for) much of the US propensity for interventionism. It was found that, despite assumptions of anarchy and the accompanying ‘security dilemma’, the neo-realist impulse of states to find diplomatic solutions in foreign policy remains paramount, and that neo-realism therefore shares with neo-liberalism certain normative assumptions about the conduct of interstate relations. US foreign policy has traditionally combined aspects of both paradigms, and this has been the case in both Republican and Democratic administrations.

A conceptual clarification of the term ‘diplomacy’ was provided in order to distinguish the practice and institution of diplomacy from other instruments of foreign policy. The ambiguity presented by

diplomacy's versatility was explained: it can be combined with, or used to communicate, any of the other foreign policy tools, even those that are distinctly coercive and unilateral in nature – something the US has been prone to do throughout history, but notably so during the Bush Administration's 'war on terror'. The effect of the latter was loss of diplomatic currency in the world: for diplomacy to be legitimate, it needs to be prioritised emphatically in the theory as well as practice of a given state's foreign policy. This is because diplomacy is rooted in norms that emphasise the desirability of continuous dialogue through mutual recognition and representation. It is also widely considered a cornerstone of international society, and its universal practice and legitimacy makes it unparalleled as a foreign policy instrument. The US, despite its tangible 'hard power' relative to the rest of the world, is subject to the same norms of global diplomatic culture.

In Chapter Three, the Bush Administration's 'war on terror' was discussed. Its foreign policy responses, *inter alia*, military and economic coercion of states such as Pakistan and the naming and shaming of the 'axis of evil' states (Iran, North Korea, and Syria), marginalised the role of diplomacy. Moreover, the embrace of the simplistic and exclusive mantra of 'you are either with us or against us' and its application to complex situations, alienated traditional allies and complicated a situation that required a measured diplomatic approach. Other states accused the US of endeavouring to be above international law and of promoting double standards. Based on its prioritisation of diplomacy in its approach to the 'war on terror', Europe became arguably more effective and more attractive than the US in the management of terror and relations with other countries. The consequences of these polarising foreign policy choices had a detrimental effect on the US's diplomatic standing as a superpower. The Bush Administration thus became alienated from the rest of the world, with the exception of a few states such as Israel and the 'coalition of the willing'.

However, it was also observed that the unilateralist behaviour and military operations that followed the 9/11 attacks were not unprecedented in the history of US foreign policy strategy. The study pointed out that, for instance, the Monroe and Truman Doctrines were also unilateral. The belligerent tone of the Bush Administration's foreign policy and unilateralist leanings have also been traced to Bush's recent predecessors on both sides of the partisan political divide. Pre-

emptive, coercive action to counter a perceived imminent threat to national security is, therefore, not novel in the US foreign policy toolkit.

What the Bush Administration failed to do, was to manage its foreign policy repertoire more holistically, and to wield reciprocal and internationally legitimate tools – specifically, multilateral diplomacy – to obtain the desired foreign policy outcomes. The embrace of a doctrine of unilateralism as the Bush Administration’s core strategy was exemplified in the National Security Strategy of 2002, and resulted in the controversial implementation of the so-called Bush Doctrine. The US ‘war on terror’, including its advocacy of coercive democratisation, reduced Washington’s reliance on permanent alliances and international institutions and, therefore, effectively marginalised diplomacy. The prioritisation of ‘hard power’, however, proved to have its limitations when utilised without an adequate combination of reciprocal foreign policy instruments, and landed the US in the quagmire of protracted war. Moreover, the narrow neo-conservative interpretation of the 9/11 terror attacks as an ‘act of war’, and the militarisation of national interest, had an adverse effect on US interests and damaged the country’s global image.

Chapter Four built on the diplomatic fallout of the ‘war on terror’, and explained the strategic changes to foreign policy announced and implemented by the Obama Administration. This entailed a regeneration of reciprocal foreign policy instruments, which were neglected by the Bush Administration – notably, diplomacy at the bilateral as well as multilateral level. In fact, Obama identified diplomacy, ‘soft power’ instruments, and the downplaying of militarism as key foreign policy tools. This approach to the international system reflects respect for the primacy of international law and a desire to work closer with international institutions, especially the UN as a structure for conflict resolution. Indeed, even during Obama’s presidential campaign he voiced strong opposition to the Bush Doctrine, which was seen to have eroded civil liberties and human rights. Analysts recognised in Obama’s foreign policy rhetoric the core values of liberal Wilsonian thought. His pronouncements contributed to his initial, massive popularity on the global stage, and the improved standing of the US as indicated by the results of the Pew opinion polls. It afforded the incoming Administration the opportunity to reach out to many foreign governments, including those that had previously been maligned as the ‘axis of evil’. The constructive tone in relations with both allies and enemies of the US, and the willingness to reach out unconditionally to all states via

diplomatic means, was warmly welcomed by the rest of the world, especially Europe, and earned Obama the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize.

Faced with whether the US should be engaged in the world through internationalism or isolationism, the Obama Administration thus set off with a liberal foreign policy agenda that marked a clear break with that of its predecessor. Obama began his term as US President with ideas for reform in foreign policy, embracing a co-operative international perspective, and prioritising development assistance and diplomacy as pillars of US foreign policy. This has meant playing down the ideological antagonism ratcheted up by the Bush Administration, and being willing to work with other countries irrespective of their political and social systems. Obama led the US back into the multilateral fold, and downgraded the use of military force as a foreign policy instrument of first choice.

This new approach was demonstrated by Obama's selection of a very experienced, very senior foreign policy team. Obama's appointment of Hillary Rodham Clinton as Secretary of State played a particularly symbolic role in the resetting of diplomatic relations. She advocated a shift away from rigid ideology to accommodate a combination of principles and pragmatism in foreign policy.

Under the management of this new foreign policy team, a new foreign policy doctrine, based on the concept of 'smart power', was ushered in -- namely, the combined, strategic use of 'soft power' as well as 'hard power' in US foreign policy. This shift has given diplomacy a greater profile within the arsenal of US foreign policy instruments and, as Obama's foreign policy team chooses to express it, has 'reset the diplomatic button' with the rest of the world.

5.2 Summative Critique: US Foreign Policy and the Prioritisation of Diplomacy

During the Bush Administration's 'war on terror', the build-up in US military power escalated the militarisation of foreign policy and fuelled the perception that it acted as a rogue superpower. This, in turn, spawned more enemies and resentment, even among traditional allies -- that the tragedy of the 9/11 events was exploited to advance the US's hegemonic propensity. Moreover, unilateral and militaristic policies hindered a collective and adequately co-ordinated global anti-terrorist strategy.

Anti-American sentiment also made it harder for the US to put together international coalitions and increased the incidence of other countries thwarting US objectives in international fora.

When the US ignores its allies and disregards the authority of the UN Security Council to address threats to peace and security in the international arena, its foreign policy veers away from its legitimate, reciprocal tools. The result of US unilateralism is that the country's 'soft power' – the ability to affect events through persuasion rather than coercion – diminishes. Conversely, when the US seeks to play an active and constructive role in world affairs by showing respect for international law and multilateral entities such as the UN, it boosts its moral authority and international standing. The US may gain legitimacy even for controversial actions when it acts co-operatively with others, as has recently been demonstrated in the Libyan intervention, mandated by UN Security Council Resolution 1973 of 2011. It is this adherence to commonly agreed principles of multilateral governance that is most persuasive in proving that the US prioritises diplomacy. This is nowhere more important than in its trans-Atlantic relations: the US considers its relations with Europe as of vital importance, yet the European outlook on global affairs continues to be at odds with that of the US. European governments are, therefore, not persuaded to fully align themselves with US priorities, unless such priorities are, in turn, fully aligned with international norms and rules.

George Bush left behind protracted 9/11-induced wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and at the time of his leaving office a global recession was looming. The continued threat posed by Iran, and other belligerent, nuclear-armed states such as North Korea, compels the Obama Administration to consider foreign policy options that are coercive in nature, especially when such states are not responsive to diplomatic pressure (American or otherwise). A diplomatic approach to counter the terrorist threat and stand-off with 'rogue states' is proving elusive, and as a superpower with unrivalled military and economic power the constant easier option of resorting to 'hard power' is ever-present. The war against terrorism has, however, provided a wealth of lessons and experience that are impacting the transformation of US foreign policy. If anything, the superpower has learned that 'hard power' on its own is merely a short-term solution, and can even be counterproductive.

When Obama assumed the presidency, he did so with a problematic foreign policy endowment and huge, perhaps unrealistic, global expectations of a dramatic overhaul of US foreign policy. His subsequent rhetoric and actions as President, not surprisingly, have received less than unanimous praise. Not all countries have been persuaded of his commitment to change the conduct of US foreign policy and to prioritise diplomacy. The governments of states such as Iran and others, notably in the Middle East, have perceived Obama's presidency to be a mere continuation of US foreign policy traditions and, indeed, the policies of his immediate predecessor. This perception echoes Nau's (2010) contention that American foreign policy 'swings like a pendulum' between the emphases on democracy, security, force projection, diplomacy, markets and regulation, unilateralism and multilateralism. The recent US involvement in enforcing UN Security Council Resolution 1973 on Libya has strengthened the hand of those who criticise the Obama Administration for continuing to serve US hegemonic interests, and pursuing the latter with military force (regardless of the actual lack of enthusiasm displayed by the US for intervention in this particular instance).

The leadership of a particular US president notwithstanding, any transformation of US foreign policy-making and implementation is heavily constrained by the nature of the country's political system. The very openness of its democracy invites fierce domestic scrutiny of public policy, especially if policy changes imply a diversion from the 'American way'. This sentiment was captured by George Bush when he said: 'Our enemies murder because they despise our freedom and our way of life' (Bush 2001). Americans give primacy to their national interests and principles as enshrined in their Constitution and, as has been shown in the history of the country's foreign policy, are loathe to subject their rights to the authority of any foreign body or laws even if an incumbent president is willing to do so. Bold foreign policy changes are, therefore, not easily achieved in a transparent and tightly contested political arena such as the US, where the Constitution ensures a strict separation of powers. The results of the 2010 mid-term US elections which have boosted the Republican Party, and the protracted budget deficit-reduction debacle, are instructive in this regard. Under these circumstances, what is emerging is a nervous liberal constituency that realises domestic issues need to be prioritised, rather than the implementation of a less pressing (from a domestic US perspective) and hugely expensive (from any perspective) foreign policy agenda.

5.3 A Future Research Agenda

US foreign policy is a vast area of research, fascinating and complex. This study broached in rather cryptic terms the instruments used to execute foreign policy during the Bush Administration's 'war on terror', and the revision of foreign policy during the initial years of the Obama Administration. In the process, a myriad of related research areas has been encountered. For instance, the traditional, bipartisan inclination of the US government to 'export' democracy, and the promotion of free trade and human rights, raises serious questions about the reciprocal, non-coercive credentials of its diplomatic endeavours. This grey area, where diplomacy overlaps and combines with other, less legitimate tools of foreign policy, warrants further study – and, perhaps, there should be a re-categorisation of foreign policy instruments.

An area that was explored only superficially in this research was the utilisation of the US Department of State vis-à-vis other key foreign policy actors by the US Administration. It would be useful to examine the extent to which this Department, since the advent of the Obama Administration, has fortified itself through programmes such as the enhanced training of officials to engage in multilateral and public diplomacy, the strategic recruitment of career diplomats (not just their political executives), and the staffing of US diplomatic missions. The structural aspect of US diplomatic representation also deserves scrutiny, especially the link (if any) between US representation in a particular country or region and the diplomatic standing of the US in that country or region.

Finally, an area that warrants more research, and which transcends case-specific analysis, is the extent to which traditional diplomatic practice is able to address threats and deal with actors that undermine the very global order from which it derives its legitimacy. In the same vein, the question should be asked whether terrorism can be countered at all with the conventional (whether unilateral or reciprocal) instruments of foreign policy.

5.4 Concluding Comment

This study set out to investigate the prioritisation of diplomacy as an instrument of US foreign policy in the aftermath of the 'war on terror'. The research has proven that US foreign policy during this period, as guided by the Bush Doctrine, indeed marginalised diplomacy. The implication of this doctrine became apparent as the US shunned multilateralism in favour of unilateral and coercive instruments of foreign policy. Major US allies, notably European countries, saw US action as in clear breach of accepted norms of diplomacy, human rights, and observance of international law. Not only did the 'war on terror' seem to be in vain, but at a global level the US suffered diplomatic censure. In this first term of his Administration, Barack Obama sought to reverse these negative perceptions by prioritising multilateralism and emphasising the role of diplomacy as the foremost means of conducting international relations. His personal stature and popularity resulted in an immediate improvement in perception ratings of the US. Moreover, appointments to his foreign policy advisory team reflected this change of course in foreign policy, and a return to the multilateral fold.

Obama and his administration have already been confronted with tough choices, and he had to make some unpopular decisions. The conditions that existed during the US 'war on terror' -- such as increased global threats, failed states, and hostile regimes -- are still prevalent. The global character of these challenges commands a global response, correctly read by the Obama Administration. This is where Obama differs most strikingly from his predecessor: he has realised that US foreign policy cannot depend on identifying and pursuing American interests only. US interests are interwoven in a tapestry of competing international interests and, in an emerging multipolar world order, 'smart power' is increasingly called for.

As the only superpower (with economic, technological, and military superiority), US involvement and even leadership in global governance institutions is called for. The influence of the world's most powerful democracy continues to be important even as new global power constellations emerge. It is, however, not the only actor. It would seem that the US under Obama's leadership has realised that despite its superpower status, it will not be able to achieve its long-term foreign policy goals if it acts unilaterally and prioritise 'hard power' politics. Furthermore, if it acts

unilaterally, it will undermine the political alliances and institutions that are vital to its objectives and interests. US foreign policy, therefore, requires the willing co-operation of other foreign policy actors, and the most perennial and tested foreign policy tool to obtain this co-operation remains diplomacy.

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