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Assessing the United States Humanitarian Intervention Policy in the Post-Cold War Period

The Case of Syria (2011-2019)

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language and Culture

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work first and foremost to all my family, especially my mother

and father for their continuous support and patience in addition to their endless love.

I also dedicate this work to my only sister Meriem, who encouraged me more than anyone

did.

Finally, I dedicate this work to all my teachers, friends, and colleagues.

Zeyneb CHELGHOUM.

Dedication

This work is sincerely dictated to my beloved father and mother, my source of inspiration and my guide. They have never let my side throughout the process and gave me strength and hope when I thought of giving this up. Your presence is the light that illuminates my path. Words can't describe how amazing you are.

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To the most beautiful people in my life.

Lastly, I hope my efforts and contributions bring me closer to the pursuit of knowledge, understanding and progress.

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Abstract

With the end of the Cold War, many conflicts occurred within the borders of a single country. This situation gave the opportunity to external forces to intervene in the name of 'Humanitarian Intervention' in order to protect people whose rights were violated. In recent years, humanitarian intervention has made a significant advance with the doctrine of the 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P). The US as the world' superpower has shown support to this notion. It seeks different forms of interventions that are characterized by military actions. Those actions have always been proclaimed to be guided and justified by the United Nation (UN). In practice, it is difficult to obtain success for humanitarian intervention, which is the motive for studying this topic. This work focuses primarily on the Syrian conflict. More precisely, it examines whether the US responds effectively to the Syrian crisis through humanitarian intervention policy or not. In that respect, military intervention did not save lives as commonly believed, it extends to strategic interests in the Syrian conflict that is overthrowing the Assad Regime. Regardless of humanitarian motives, this research investigates the achievement of the political interests of the US.

ملخص

مع نهاية الحرب الباردة، حدثت أبرز الصراعات داخل حدود دولة واحدة، الامر الذي أتاح الفرصة للقوى الخارجية للتدخل باسم "التدخل الإنساني" بهدف حماية حقوق الناس المنتهكة. في السنوات الأخيرة، شهد التدخل الإنساني تقدما كبيرا تحت مفهوم "مسؤولية الحماية"، حيث أبدت الولايات المتحدة دعمها للفكرة باعتبارها القوة العظمى في العالم، كما انها سعت الى التدخل بأشكال مختلفة، وغالبا ما كانت هذه التدخلات تتضمن عمليات عسكرية، وكانت مبررة ومسندة الى قرارات من الأمم المتحدة. من الناحية العملية، يعد الوصول الى نجاح التدخل الإنساني امرا صعبا، وهذا ما يدفعنا لدراسة هذا الموضوع. يركز هذا البحث بشكل أساسي على الصراع السوري وبشكل أكثر تحديدا، يدرس فعالية تدخل الولايات المتحدة في الأزمة السورية من خلال سياسة التدخل الإنساني. وفي هذا الصدد، نجد ان التدخل العسكري لم ينقذ الأرواح كما يُعتقد عموماً، بل تجاوز إلى المصالح الاستراتيجية في الصراع السوري الذي يهدف للإطاحة بنظام الأسد. بغض النظر عن الدوافع الإنسانية، يبحث هذا البحث في فهم تحقيق الولايات المتحدة لمصالحها السياسية.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
EC	European Community
FFP	US Office of Food for Peace
FSA	Free Syrian Army
ICISS	International Commission of Intervention and State Sovereignty
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IHOs	International Humanitarian Organizations
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISIS	Islamic States in Iraq and Syria
IS	Islamic State
JNA	Yogoslovenska Narodna Armija (Yugoslav People's Army)
KVM	Kosovo Verification Mission
MSF	Médecins sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
OAF	Operation Allied Force
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OFDA	US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
R2P	Right to Protect
SARC	Syrian Arab Red Crescent
SIF	Syrian Islamic Front
SLF	Syrian Liberation Front

UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
UNITAF	Unified Task Force
UNOSOM I	United Nations Operation in Somalia I
UNOSOM II	United Nations Operation in Somalia II
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USC	United Somali Congress
USSR	United Soviet Socialist Republics
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization
WMDs	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WW II	World War II

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Introduction

The last decade of the twentieth century witnessed the rise of the United States of America as an economic, military, and political superpower. With the collapse of the United Soviet Socialist Republics, the world has entered a new phase characterized by a new unipolar world order. Spreading democratic values and protecting human rights throughout the whole world were the main objectives emphasized by President George. W Bush when discussing the new world order. Since the United States assumed to act as the 'world policeman,' its policies have been heavily shaped by this responsibility.

The period following the Cold War witnessed a number of humanitarian crises, resulting from civil wars that grabbed the attention of international community multiple times. Those humanitarian crises brought about many violations to democratic values and human rights that the American governments strove to maintain in the world. As a way to put humanitarian crisis into an end, the United States intervened as a third part in those conflicts either militarily or non-militarily. It is also important to highlight that this action was carried out many times by the US in different regions around the world mainly after the 1990s. This marked a precedent in interstates interactions that is known as 'humanitarian intervention'. In order to understand more this notion of humanitarian intervention, this research deals with many examples of US interventions in different states in Europe (Yugoslavia), Africa (Somalia), and Asia (Syria). The Syrian case is a good example to examine this policy in the period between 2011 and 2019.

The topic of humanitarian intervention attracts the attention of many researchers and political analysts. They all examine the term from different angles. In the encyclopedia of *Public Administration and Public Policy*, Michelle Maiese defines the notion of humanitarian intervention as being the act of intervening in another state's issue that should primarily have the goal of removing or stopping potential harm that is threatening the people of that state. In other

words, the intervening state(s) should never show up for the reason of taking advantage of the situation in order to gain any kind of benefit. But rather, its only goal should be for humanitarian purposes. Brendan Simms and David J. B Trim speak in a detailed manner about the concept of humanitarian intervention in their book *Humanitarian Intervention: A History*. They try to give a definition by saying that it is mainly carried out by a government or group of governments for the sake of deterring or stopping a foreign government(s), or fractions, from committing human rights violations. According to Simms and Trim, the intervening forces do not always belong to a single government; two or more governments can unify with each other. Or, it can be performed by an organization like the United Nations (UN), the World Health Organization (WHO), or any other international organization. According to their definition, the issue that is taking place and needs intervention can be caused either by the violations of governments, or by subgroups within countries like terrorist groups.

The concept of intervention has always been associated with the term 'military' as a debatable subject. Military humanitarian intervention was defined by Choi Seung- Wan in his article "What Determines US Humanitarian Intervention?" as being a type of foreign military intervention carried out as a reaction to a situation where a particular government is proved to be repressing the human rights of its people. The reason that makes the military humanitarian intervention controversial is because it is not seen as a morally accepted action. The people who hold this position claim that using force to achieve humanitarian goals cannot go in line together by any means. By contrast, other political experts approve that this action of military humanitarian intervention is moral, mainly on the basis that despite of the losses in resources and human lives that the use force may cause, it is accepted to achieve greater good.

The action of humanitarian intervention becomes a common policy to be pursued in the Post-Cold War period. Alexis Heraclides and Ada Dialla mention this idea in their book *Humanitarian*

Intervention in the Long nineteenth Century: Setting The precedent saying that the period following the Cold War experienced enormous humanitarian interventions. They back up their claim by examples such as: the intervention in Somalia (1992), north Iraq (1991), and Kosovo (1999) by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Another point that is highly important in relation to the topic of humanitarian intervention is 'state sovereignty'. According to Albert Legault in his article "NATO Intervention in Kosovo: The Legal Context", it is clearly mentioned in the UN charter that intervening in other states' domestic affairs is illegal in international law. From this point of view, any action of intervention carried by a state or a group of states is considered against international law. However, Legault carries on mentioning that there are exceptions that the UN Security Council can authorize interventions when international peace is threatened. Consequently, these two confronting UN statements have put all Post-Cold War interventions into question concerning their legality in international law.

This research aims at investigating this action of humanitarian intervention in terms of how different intellectuals and scholars conceptualize it. It explores the action of humanitarian intervention in the American context and examines the extent to which the US practiced humanitarian interventions after the Cold War and whether it was successful or not mainly in Syria. The work gives better understanding of humanitarian intervention as a foreign policy and explores the term as part of the United States' system. It investigates the way the US intervenes in problems taking place in foreign territories, and the reasons that derive the US to act at the first place. Additionally, the effectiveness of those interventions is evaluated by revealing the real and the hidden aims behind the US making itself a third part in conflicts happening around the world in general and in Syria in particular.

To tackle the topic from all angles, it is crucial to find accurate and sufficient answers to the following questions: What do we mean by the term "Humanitarian Intervention"? What is military humanitarian intervention? Are there different ways of humanitarian intervention? What is the international law's perspective on humanitarian intervention? Is humanitarian intervention legal with regards to state sovereignty? Throughout history, has the US been intervening in other countries for humanitarian purposes? Was the US successful in its humanitarian intervention actions? What characterized the crisis in Syria? And was the US successful when intervening in Syria?

This research is conducted through the historical and qualitative methods in order to go deeper into the subject under investigation since it is important to achieve the aims of the study, as well as to answer the research questions. The historical method is used also to explore the US humanitarian intervention policy after the Cold War, more specifically during the Presidency of Barak Obama and Donald Trump taking the case of Syria as an example. In order to conduct this research, combinations of primary as well as secondary sources used including books, journals, journal articles, encyclopedias, and websites, all necessary in the process of dealing with this subject.

The dissertation includes a general introduction, three chapters, and a general conclusion. The first chapter is entitled "Understanding The Humanitarian Intervention Policy". It clarifies the meaning of the term humanitarian intervention stating different scholars' views. Different types of humanitarian intervention are also mentioned, mainly military humanitarian intervention and its relation to state sovereignty. Moreover, the different criteria of a reasonable humanitarian intervention are mentioned in this chapter. Since US interventionism is the main focus of this dissertation, multiple reasons of the American interventionism policy are discussed.

"The US Humanitarian Intervention in the Post- Cold War Era", is the title of second chapter. It sheds light on the process through which the new world order has emerged following the collapse of the USSR. Moreover, a number of US interventions in Africa (Somalia) and Europe (Bosnia and Kosovo) are analyzed discussing the hidden motives behind those interventions in addition to stating the conflicting opinions concerning the legality and success of the interventions. Finally, the chapter shows how 9/11 attacks were a turning point in US interactions with foreign states, mainly the Middle Easter ones. The US interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq are taken as examples of US war on terror in post-9/11 period. The chapter presents the reasons leading to US humanitarian -military interventions in those countries, their legality, and the situation in both Afghanistan and Iraq after American intervention.

The last chapter is entitled "Assessing the United States Humanitarian Intervention in Syria (2011-2019)". It tackles the Civil war in Syria as a part of the Arab Spring movements. It presents how peaceful protests attempting at a regime change due to rising dissatisfaction with Al-Assad's government has turned into a massive Civil war between different sects. The consequences of the crisis were disastrous on human and economic levels. Moreover, the chapter examines the US humanitarian, as well as military intervention in Syria with regards to humanitarian aids distribution, its limitations and restrictions, and American military attempts to preserve geopolitical interests as a reaction to ISIS, Iranian, and Russian presence in the region.

Chapter One

Understanding the Humanitarian Intervention Policy

Humanitarian intervention, the action of interference in another state's internal affairs for the sake of protecting civilians from widespread human rights abuses, is one of the most controversial contexts in international law particularly in the post-cold war era. The concept has a long history but the decade of 1990's saw the emergence of the concept with the rise of intrastate conflicts to be known as the golden age for humanitarian intervention. The concept has a complex interpretation that makes it difficult for scholars to define it appropriately as it relates to humanitarian concerns since the interventions take many forms especially the implementation of armed forces within these interventions. That often may lead to an extra than humanitarian goal.

Also, the legal status of humanitarian intervention challenges the principle of state sovereignty, in which interventions were prohibited before the Second World War. However, with the creation of the United Nation in 1945, the notion of humanitarian intervention gained legitimacy as a new norm in specific circumstances. It is now the most legitimate institution for addressing cases of human rights violations. Moreover, many states have embraced the idea of universal responsibility to protect populations. Accordingly, the history shows that the US policy supported the concept of 'right to intervention'.

1. Definition of Humanitarian intervention

Humanitarian intervention has been the most discussed issue during the 1990's, which was referred to as "the decade of humanitarian intervention". This notion is acknowledged by the traditional international law as a primary principle to allow a state or group of states to intervene in another state where there are severe human rights abuses. The interventions occur when a state mistreated its own citizens (Lillich 559), or in situation of genocide, ethnic cleansing (Robert Hoag, "Armed Humanitarian Intervention"), or in severe humanitarian emergencies within a

sovereign state. Such terms like "Intervention on the grounds of humanity" and "the droitd'ingérence" (right to intervene) were previously used to define actions including support and intervention in a country's internal affairs (Ryniker 528).

The origin of the term humanitarian intervention traces back to the theological appeal of Christians solidarity in the seventeenth century, when the authorization given by the concert of Europe to protect Christian communities in the Balkans from Ottoman persecution (Sunga "Is Humanitarian Intervention Legal?"). Also found in the writings of several scholars as far back as Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) that he laid to the emergence of the doctrine of humanitarian intervention. Grotius argues for the right of the state to intervene on behalf of oppressed subjects of another state if it violates natural rights (Chesterman 18). Later on, his ideas are supported by many other eminent legal scholars.

The idea of humanitarian intervention has emerged as a response to the need to protect innocent civilians and defend against abuses. One possible definition runs as follows: "the theory of intervention on the ground of humanity (...) recognizes the right of one State to exercise international control over the acts of another in regard to its internal sovereignty when contrary to the laws of humanity" (Abiew 31). In other words, a state has a right to intervene in the internal affairs of another state when there is a violation of the principles of humanity, and when civilians are treated in a manner that falls well below international minimum standards, because human rights are so fundamental and universal and any threat to those rights cannot be agreed by other states and the intervention becomes a necessity.

The concept has been viewed and developed throughout history. Many scholars have tried to define it but most of the definitions are quite similar. R. John Vincent, a scholar of the English school of international relations theory, provides a classical definition of the term. He says that humanitarian intervention is "the activity undertaken by a state, a group within a state, a group of

states or an international organization, which interferes coercively in the domestic affairs of another state…It is not necessarily lawful or unlawful, but it does break a conventional pattern of international relations" (13). The intervention can occur through various entities; it may be a single state, or more than one unifying with each other, or it can be an organization like the United Nation (UN), the World Health Organization (WHO), International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) and other organizations.

Bhikhu Parekh, a British political theorist and Labor Party member of the House of Lords, states that humanitarian intervention is "an act of intervention in the internal affairs of another country with a view to ending the Physical suffering caused by the disintegrations or gross misuse of authority of the state, and helping create conditions in which a viable structure of civil authority can emerge" (147). Parekh emphasizes the morality to address gross violations caused by a government against its own population or other actors within a country. As well as, he stresses that the broader objective is to create conditions for long-term stability, rather than just stopping the immediate suffering. Accordingly, humanitarian intervention is not intended to institute a new political framework as Tylor B. Seybolt describes: "humanitarian intervention is a short-term activity with limited political objectives" (6).

Although a strict definition of humanitarian intervention is extremely difficult. Many analysts in international relations and international law agreed on the use of force in conducting humanitarian intervention. Consequently, scholars like Adam Robert, Wil D. Verwey, and others, argue for the inclusion of dictatorial, coercive actions and the use of force into the definition of humanitarian intervention. J. L. Holzgrefe, for instance, points that humanitarian intervention is "the threat or use of force across state borders by a state (group of states) aimed at preventing or ending widespread and grave violations of the fundamental human rights of individuals other

than its own citizens without the permission of the state within those territory force is applied"

(18).

To clarify, those involving threat and use of force for upholding certain basic rights are

justified under the name of humanitarian intervention, those acts raise a discussion about the

legitimacy and legality of such intervention. Besides, humanitarian intervention is considered as a

forcible interference in another state's affairs, more precisely, under certain circumstances a state

may have the right to intervene in the affairs of another state without its consent. However, this

principle stands in opposition to the principle of peacekeeping, which is implemented only when

the two conflicting parties agreed for the intervention.

The juxtaposition of the two words 'humanitarian' and 'intervention' are a focus of debate.

The concept 'humanitarian' is related to those actions aimed at enhancing welfare and condition

of individuals by providing assistance to victims of disasters to safeguard fundamental rights

through employing force. Likewise, 'intervention' as a noun encompasses a wide range of

activities, varying from diplomatic criticism to economic sanction (Kardas 25). The complexity

surrounding the terms poses a challenge in establishing a cohesive definition for "humanitarian

intervention". In addition, humanitarian intervention often refers to armed intervention that is

motivated by political reasons; Parekh argues that an intervention cannot be considered

humanitarian unless there is a genuine intention to prioritize the well-being of another state and

the willingness to make sacrifices for the greater good (53-54).

States often use humanitarian language to conceal their self-interested motives. Saban Kardas

classifies the four typical characteristics in defining humanitarian intervention that are: use of

military force, the absence of the target state's permission, and the aim to help non-nationals as

well as agency of intervention (2). According to him, the use of force is typically included due to

its need in situations of gross violation. Also, he states what distinguishes it from peacekeeping.

Kardas explains the shift from traditional humanitarian intervention, which was seen as self-help actions by states. Now, there is a change. Interventions are conducted more often by the United Nations (UN) that aims at maintaining international peace and security.

2. Types of Humanitarian Intervention

The scope of humanitarian intervention has been used much broader regarding its meaning. It takes a variety of forms that differ from one goal to another. Michael J. Mazarr distinguishes two types of humanitarian intervention. The first is about the delivering of essential supplies (food, medicine and shelter) and organizing transportation such as in response to natural disasters. In such a case, the primary role is to organize transportation, maintain order in volatile situations by facilitating the delivery of aid and prevent further harm, and deploy medical supplies, as in the aftermath of the typhoon in Bangladesh. Those humanitarian interventions are limited to logistical support with minimal use of force.

The second type involves humanitarian crises related to political and social issues. In this case, humanitarian action may entail hostilities or threat of such actions, like what happened in Somalia, Bosnia, Angola and also in Cambodia (Mazarr 152-153). These types are also confirmed by Seybolt in his work on humanitarian intervention, in which he describes four forms of humanitarian intervention that are: assisting in the delivery of food, providing protection to aid operations, protecting the injured party and the military defeating the aggressor. Within these types he argues for two different considerations which are: humanitarian and political considerations (40). The former focuses on addressing urgent needs and saving lives, while the latter focuses on the victims and perpetrator, whereby for each type of intervention the two considerations work altogether.

2.1. Military Intervention

Humanitarian military intervention is the use of military forces in another state with the purpose of "saving strangers" (Wheeler). According to Seung-Whan Choi, an associate professor of political science, humanitarian military intervention is referred to as "a type of foreign military intervention that responds to a situation in which a government severely represses the human rights of its own people" (123). Pickering Jeffrey and Kisangani Emizet F., professors of political science, clarify that the main goal of interventions is "to save lives, relieve suffering, distribute foodstuffs to prevent starvation" (593). Despite the use of armed forces in interventions, usually the primarily objective is human relief.

Choijudges Pickering J. and Kisangani E. F. definition emphasizing that the goal may be seen just as rhetoric employed to legitimize the act of intervention, and consequently, may not represent the true motivations behind intervening in a country's actions (123). Thus, several scholars reject the notion altogether while others consider it as a unique kind of intervention distinct from both military intervention for other objective and non-military intervention (Choi 2). So, the notion of humanitarian military intervention makes a division among scholars due to its deferring perspectives on the legitimacy of the concept.

Military intervention ranges from peacekeeping operations to a complete military invasion, depending on the severity of the situation and the intended objectives of the intervention. Many critics of humanitarian intervention as Roth, P., Michael Walzer, Francis Kofi Abiew and Murphy, P. argue for the use of force only in extreme and exceptional cases of genocide and mass slaughter (Heinze 24). According to them, the action of using military force is seen harsher, in the words of Grant Stegner "the idea evokes an image of the need to kill in order to save lives" (12).

2.2. Humanitarian Assistance

Humanitarian assistance is intended to save lives, alleviate suffering and preserve human dignity for those people in situations of humanitarian crisis, such as natural disaster, conflicts and other emergencies. The support is represented in delivering essential needs including food, shelter, medical care, and other forms of psychological support. This kind of humanitarian intervention is provided by governments and international organizations. These organizations can be dictated specifically to humanitarian efforts, such as the ICRC, or they may have other primary purposes but still carry out humanitarian tasks, like the UN (Jakovljevic 471). The intervention in such a situation must be immediate to alleviate the impact of the crises.

2.3. Protection of Civilians

Humanitarian intervention includes considerable efforts to safeguard innocent populations from the threat of violence, displacement, or any kind of human rights abuses. It involves establishing safe zones like the "safe havens" that were established in north Iraq by American, British and French forces and conducting peacekeeping operations (Roberts 436). The different types of humanitarian intervention may be provided all together at the same time, as well as they can be implemented separately depending on the circumstances and the needs of the situation.

3. Humanitarian Intervention and State Sovereignty

Humanitarian intervention with its meaning as intervening in other state's internal affairs to protect human rights is the most debatable topic since it breaches the norm of state's sovereignty. This principle is fundamental in international law; it has been attributed to the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 (Bergh 11). It marked the end of a thirty years' war (1618 -1648) concerning the institution of the Holy Roman Empire, religion, and the state system of Europe. According to Trainer, the notion of sovereignty grants the ruler the independence to govern his state and citizens since his actions do not cause any threat to other nations (qtd. in Pratt 3). Also known as

"territorial integrity and political independence", the term sovereignty means giving the state

supreme authority over its territory without any interference of external actors. This right offered

to states is not for its own benefit but rather to maintain fundamental freedom of citizens

(Okoronye and Okeke 140).

The important question in the field of humanitarian intervention, according to Michael W.

Pratt, Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army, is about which concept, sovereignty or

human rights, has primacy (3)?. He emphasized that the UN Charter provides support for both

sides; humanitarian intervention and sovereignty. Legally, UN Charter empowers the principle of

state sovereignty in:

- Article 2 Section 1: "The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign

  equality of all its Members."

- Article 2 Section 4: "All members shall refrain in their international relations from the

  threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any

  state."

- Article 2 Section 7: "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the

  United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic

  jurisdiction of any state or shall require the members to submit such matters to

  settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the

  application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII." (UN Charter).

The articles clearly express the contradiction between humanitarian intervention and the

longstanding notion of sovereignty and UN position that oppose intervention. Thus, the UN

Charter articulates the notion of "non- intervention" in matters that are primarily the concern of

individual states. However, Article 2 Section 7 also clarifies under Chapter VII that provides for

"Action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and act of aggression" of the

Charter that this principle does not prevent the UN from taking enforcement actions when there is a threat to international peace and security. Consequently, humanitarian intervention is ethically justified when there are gross violations of human rights.

Humanitarian intervention is also proved in a proper legal sense according to Stanley Hoffman who claims that:

> refusing to intervene because such interventions violate the sovereignty of states is morally indefensible, for the rights are not holy and depend in the final analysis upon the state's ability and will to uphold the rights of its people. The moral case for sovereignty, which is often strong--that sovereignty protects the people from alien domination and intrusion-breaks down in the instances in which humanitarian tragedies and abominations occur. (62)

The quote highlights the moral dilemma surrounding the concept of sovereignty, particularly in case if a state fails to fulfill its responsibilities towards its citizens, it should not be immune from intervention because of its sovereignty. Moreover, General Bernard E. Trainer emphasizes that "The international community has a moral and ethical obligation to intervene under certain circumstances. The United Nations represents the legal authority for intervention. So, the violation of human rights is one limit on absolute sovereignty" (qtd. in Pratt 8). Now it is clear to say that human rights override the principle of state sovereignty, so that humanitarian intervention is ethically and legally right.

Another important point that should be mentioned is the change or the development of the concept of humanitarian intervention through time. To elaborate more on that, Trim and Simms see that the recent definitions of humanitarian intervention are applicable only in post WWII contexts. Moreover, if those definitions are applied in the contexts before WWII, they will be

misused (3). This is mainly because the meaning of the word humanitarian was more related to theology before, unlike now.

The humanitarian intervention is considered to be an act of "great kindness" mainly for the reason that a particular country is putting its own people in a potential danger in order to save other non-citizens civilians (Wheeler 5). In other words, when a particular country intervenes in another state's affairs or issues, it may get the intervening country involved in those issues. Also, it can eventually threaten the intervening county's safety and sovereignty. For that reason, many political analysts describe the act of humanitarian intervention as courageous" and sometimes sacrificial. In fact, a lot of interventions that many countries initiated in the past could not be described as courageous or sacrificial because they were not for humanitarian purposes, but getting some benefit or exploiting the country in trouble was the hidden reason behind those interventions.

4. Criteria for Humanitarian Intervention

When it comes into practice, many questions are raised about the implementation of humanitarian intervention. Back to Rwanda genocides in the 1990s and Kosovo incident, International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) in 2001 reports several criteria that seek to establish a framework of regulations. These regulations address the gap between state sovereignty and human rights. Major criteria are outlined as below:

4.1. Just Cause

This criterion is related to the level of human suffering, and is considered to be one of the most motivated situations that led humanitarian intervention to occur as a legitimate reason, as well as an approval for the use of force during the intervention. This measure takes place when there is a serious and irreparable harm that affected human life, according to International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) the suffering encompasses various

forms of harm including: "'large scale loss of life', actual or apprehended, with genocidal intent or not, which is the product either of deliberate state action, or state neglect or inability to act, or a failed state situation" (ICSS 32). It also may include "large scale 'ethnic cleansing', actual or apprehended, whether carried out by killing, forced expulsion, acts of terror or rape" (ICISS 32). ICISS report discusses in detail the different situations where human rights can be marginalized or need intervention efforts.

Eric A. Heinze has spoken convincingly on this subject and concludes that the intervention in Iraq would not be considered as a humanitarian intervention since the extent of the Iraqi government's killings up to march 2003 was not significant enough because it did not reach the level of human suffering (25).

4.2. Right Intention

Right intention is a fundamental criterion that is related to various ethical and moral frameworks. The report of ICISS asserts that the primary purpose of the intervention must be to halt human suffering (ICISS 35). The idea is that the motives behind interventions play a crucial role in determining the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention.

4.3. Last Resort

Humanitarian intervention, particularly, humanitarian military intervention (the use of military force) must be as a last resort, which means that all non-military actions should be explored at first for prevention and peaceful resolution before engaging military actions. As it is stressed by Just War tradition which emphasizes that military force should be considered a final recourse and this notion is applicable not only in humanitarian interventions but also in other military actions. Aside from that, the report of ICISS illustrates that last resort "does not necessarily mean that every [non-military] option must literally have been tried and failed…. But it does mean that there must be reasonable grounds for believing that … if the measure had been attempted it

would not have succeeded (Sec 4. 37). This means that, intervening according to this criterion involves assessing different non-coercive means without necessarily practicing all the approaches or they must be failed.

4.4. Proportional Means

According to ICISS, proportional means are about "the scale, duration, and intensity of the planned military intervention should be the minimum necessary to secure humanitarian objective" (ICISS 37). It involves making sure the response matches the level of danger and reducing harm as much as possible while dealing with the situation effectively, Richard B. Lillich affirms that: "The intervention must be strictly limited in scope to actions necessary and proportionate to bring about the cessation of such human rights violations" (572). Besides that, it focuses more on the targeted and measured actions that help in achieving humanitarian objectives with no harm.

4.5. Reasonable Prospects

The report of ICISS; Responsibility to Protect, asserts that the intervention should have a high probability of success in stopping the suffering, and ensures that the consequences of such action does not lead to worse results compared to not taking action (ICISS 37). That is to say, before engaging in any intervention there must be a reasonable prospect of achieving the desired outcome, then the intervention should be undertaken in case the interveners lack this capability to succeed and safeguard endangered populations.

4.6. Right Authority

According to ICISS, after considering the five legitimacy criteria, the appropriate body to authorize humanitarian intervention is the UN Security Council (UNSC) empowered by the UN Charter. Also, it recommends that before initiating any intervention, states should officially request authorization from the Security Council. But actually, several interventions occurred

without any approval of the UN Security Council such as the Iraqi invasion, Uganda, Lebanon, Kosovo and others. However, in cases where the authorization is not obtained, the notion of right authority extends to other entities such as the General Assembly or regional/ sub regional organizations. Another main point, the Security Council takes into consideration that "in conscience-shocking situations caring for action, concerned states will rule out other means and forms of action to meet the gravity and urgency of these situations" (ICISS 55). It acknowledges that in certain situations where a crisis is really serious, states may feel morally obliged to intervene even if the traditional ways of getting permission to help do not work. In short, the Right Authority ensures that intervention is conducted with legitimacy and international consensus.

5. Reasons for Humanitarian Intervention: When Do US Presidents Deploy the Military for Humanitarian Reasons

It is obvious that any action the American government has implemented concerning internal as well as external affairs had to be guided by certain motives or, in other words, reasons, and the actions of intervention or non-intervention are not different. As its name indicates, the humanitarian intervention has to be for humanitarian, or noble, purposes regardless of the intervening state(s) or organization(s). As Terry Nardin states in his article under the title "The Moral basis of Humanitarian Intervention", humanitarian intervention is acceptable when it has the objective of enforcing standards of civilized conduct when they are being violated by rulers. Nardin summarizes this idea of the moral goal of humanitarian intervention by saying that it should have the intention of enforcing respect for human rights in general (2). In other words, the action of humanitarian intervention has to be primarily for a good cause like saving innocent lives from severe human rights violations, mistreatments…ets.

In fact, the decision for American Foreign Policy-makers to choose intervention over non-intervention is not always driven by moral reasons. There are extra reasons stated by them in addition to the previously mentioned ones. Luck Edward in his book *Beyond Traditional Peacekeeping,* mentions other reasons that encourage the American government to intervene in another state's internal issues. Edward highlights nine main reasons, which are listed as follows: Firstly, humanitarian intervention takes place to ensure and sustain American dominance. Edward mentions the idea that the US, after being the only dominant power in the world, had to do its best to stay in that position, because if the US gives up being on top, other states will try to take this privilege, which may bring about unpleasant consequences for the United States. For that reason, the US would intervene in other states' issues if the American dominance is seen to be threatened (76).

The second reason is to moderate weapon spread. One of the most important points is that the US wants to assure national security. And, for the sake of doing that, the US in some cases would intervene in unstable regions where advanced weapons like Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD's) are highly spread, because this may lead to the disperse of terrorism among unstable states which is the number one threat to the American national security (76).

The third reason is to control conflicts between countries and refugee problems. According to Edward, conflicts taking place between neighboring countries may escalate beyond their borders and threaten the US's stability. Therefore, the US would try, if necessary, to 'contain' the conflict through military intervention to actualize stability (76).

Spreading peace and security standards internationally is the fourth reason presented by Edward. The US, as being a super power, has always to motivate the spread of noble norms that are mentioned in the UN charter like human rights, stopping genocide, non-aggression, territorial integrity, environmental protection, and trade across national borders…ets (77). If one of these

norms is being violated in another state, the US may intervene for human respect and general good.

Deterring tyrant regimes and leaders is considered as the fifth reason. It is mainly about avoiding potential new conflicts. According to Edward, when a tyrant leader is being punished for his/her actions, this would deter other leaders from doing the same tyrant actions. Saddam Hussein's ousting might have stopped many intrastate conflicts in the Middle East and the Gulf region (77). To encourage collaborations between states is the next argument presented by Edward who claims that it is more beneficial for the US to draw its competitors into a web of multilateral activities and regimes (78). The US is more interested in making its competitors, each with its own contribution in maintaining stability in key regions, act and operate collaboratively rather than individually in major peace operations and decision making, since these collective operations will actualize more peace among countries which will increase stability in the world.

Spreading democratic values and pluralistic principles is another reason that may result in US intervention. One of the primary goals of the American government is to contribute in the creation and promoting democracies around the world (78), since conflicts are less likely to occur between countries that pursue democratic values. Even though democratic values cannot be enforced upon others, the US can intervene by suggesting models for non-democratic states to help them progress in the right direction.

The next argument is related to international trade and jobs. Foreign investments, capital flows, and interstate commerce can only grow and prosper in stable/ peaceful environments, and conflicts and regional arms races discourage prosperous and successful interstate trade in a stable world order (78). Consequently, the US would always thrive to maintain a stable world order, mainly in developing countries, even though intervention (military or non-military) for the sake

of protecting its economic interests and creating new trade lines with stable developing countries. Lastly, the US intervenes to avoid the long-term costs of conflicts. It is clearly understood that the US government constantly goes for any option that assures or brings about more interests to the nation, and as it is expressed by Edward in his last argument, conflicts and wars are very costly and tiring economically. Hence, the American government would weigh the short-term costs of intervention over the long-term costs of doing nothing (79). In other words, the American foreign policy makers claim that it would be better for the American government to pay a short amount of money by intervening and containing the conflict rather than doing nothing, which can lead to a long-term cost of war because the conflict was not dealt with at the beginning.

All the arguments presented by the American foreign policy makers to intervene humanitarianly are making the US more powerful politically and economically by deterring any potential external threat from other states. This kind of intervention helps spread American values that will, from their point of view, maximize peace and minimize conflict which is the best condition that permits the absolute respect of human rights.

In fact, more reasons may encourage the US intervention. In his book *American Humanitarian Intervention: How National Interests, Domestic and International Factors, and Historical* Milieu Shape US Intervention Policy, Grant Stegner divides the reasons into three main categories: domestic factors, external factors, and historical milieu under one main purpose of national interests. Stegner states that before discussing any of the three reasons, preserving US's national interests is "the initial impetus for decision making and policy formulation" for policy elite (49).

The domestic factors are represented in a form of a trichotomy of 'policy makers' and 'media' and 'public opinion'. The American public opinion can have an impact on the US decisions concerning humanitarian interventions in some cases. And at the same time, it is not regarded as an effective element in others (Stegner 65). In other words, the extent to which the American

public opinion is effective is debatable among scholars since it changes from one situation to another.

The public demand for intervention by the United States government in certain humanitarian crises and not in others is related to the amount of 'media coverage' available to the public about the crisis taking place. In other words, the media can shape public approval of, and support for, humanitarian intervention (Stegner 69) through what is called the 'CNN effect'. The 'CNN effect' is simply a theory that addresses the concept of media-driven foreign policy (67). Thus, the images of human suffering passed to American people through the media can make them more tolerant and call for intervention. The US intervention in Somalia, for instance, was the result of enormous media coverage, and the non-intervention in Rwanda at the beginning was due to the short media coverage (69).

The 'CNN effect' and public opinion are more influential in scenarios where the US is in a state of uncertainty concerning intervention. In some cases, the media does not impact public opinion since the policy elite decide media materials (Stegner 69). To summarize, the media can shape public opinion in order to impact policy formation, while policy makers can impact media content to control public opinion.

The second factor is related to external motives and pressures. One of those external factors mentioned by Stegner are other state(s), either ally or enemy, or organization(s) like the UN, more specifically the UNSC (United Nations Security Council) …ets. This external pressure is highly noticed in the UNSC during voting for intervention or non-intervention between the P-5 (permanent five: the US, UK, Russia, China, and France), due to conflicting interests among them. To elaborate more, one of the P-5 can vote against intervention by using the 'right to Veto' since the act of intervention goes against its political or economic interests. Or, the opposite can happen, each one of the P-5 can vote for the suitable intervention for the other for the sake of

gaining support for its own favorite operation. As Neil McFarlane and Thomas Weiss state, conflicting interests among the P-5 resulted in 'different UNSC decisions to permit France intervene in Rwanda, Americas in Haiti, and Russia in Georgia' (qtd. in Stegner 78). However, Stegner claims that the US has not been affected by the UNSC to a great extent since it is capable of acting unilaterally without its permission (78).

The last factor presented by Stegner is the historical milieu. It can be simply defined as 'a process where previous experiences and policies impact and inform policy elites' present perceptions of intervention scenarios' (Stegner 79). In other words, it is not only the national interests, domestic / international factors that can hasten or obstruct humanitarian interventions policies, but also past experiences that the US has passed by can be taken into account by foreign policy makers when considering new interventions. To explain more, if the US faces many difficulties when intervening in a certain region like losing a big amount of money, or receiving international criticism and bad reputation, this would make the US more hesitant about intervening again if another humanitarian crisis happens in the same region for a second time, even if the situation is much more severe. This can be highly noticed in the case of the US non-intervention in Rwanda at the beginning due to the hard experience it had when it intervened in Somalia and Bosnia (qtd. in Stegner 80).

Humanitarian intervention, despite its noble intentions, is a focus of debate in finding a balance between respecting state sovereignty and preventing human suffering. Here the UN Charter emerged as a system of collective security and took the responsibility to authorize interventions. The US military interventions are frequently justified for humanitarian concerns but in reality, it has other reasons behind. The next chapter discusses the US humanitarian intervention policy after the cold war period in detailed manner with different cases of interventions.

Chapter Two

The US Humanitarian Intervention Policy in the Post-Cold War Era

In the aftermath of WWII, the world entered a new phase characterized by an unarmed and an indirect conflict between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR); the two dominating powers in the world at that time. The reason behind that conflict was that each superpower wanted the whole world to follow and go by its ideologies that would lead to the downfall of the other power. In other words, the US strove to make the world more capitalist while the USSR believed that communism was a better ideology to spread throughout the world. This conflict is called the 'Cold War'.

Before the end of the Cold War, the principle of non-intervention in other states' internal affairs was the main element of interstate relations. However, as the Cold War came to an end, sovereignty status in a unipolar world was put into question. Hence, the UN became able to authorize humanitarian interventions under the leadership of the United States, where human rights violations happened. This chapter discusses the US humanitarian intervention in Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo and sheds light on the motives and consequences of US intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan as a reaction to 9/11 Attacks

1. An Overview of the American Policy during the Cold War

After a huge back and forth between the two superpowers that lasted for decades, the Cold War reached a phase where the conflict could have an end only if one side surrendered or collapsed. In other words, the conflict was so sharp that victory can be only one-sided (Brzezinski 1). The outcomes of any war or conflict play a major role in deciding which side of the conflict is victorious. Hence, in order to know who won in the Cold War, an analysis of its outcomes had to be carried out. The results of the Cold War were in favor of the United States. For instance, the reunification of Germany, the dissolution of the USSR in 1991and the withdrawal of its forces

from central Europe like Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. Moreover, the Warsaw Pact has collapsed and USSR regimes were abandoned in many former communist states, and a lot of them even joined the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and the EC (European Community) like Germany, Poland, and Hungary (Brzezinski 2).

As a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world became unipolar, which means the presence of only one superpower that was the US. Moreover, a new concept was introduced by George. W. Bush to the public discourse which was a 'new world order' where democracy would dominate and tyranny would be resisted even by force under the protection of the US. Hence, the US started to act as a policeman, and any state around the world that did or promoted dangerous behavior, like terrorism or human right's violations, would be stopped and called as 'Rogue State' by the US government or the United Nations. So, those states were dealt with by the US/UN through Containment policy. The United States' attempts to contain those states were primarily to make a change in either their regimes or behavior (Litwak 5). In other words, because those states were believed to have abusive or tyrant regimes that went against international law, the US took it as a responsibility to deter those states even militarily to save their civilians' human rights.

The American military presence in regions like the Middle East was mainly to assure stability and prevent any military coalitions in the region (Yilmaz 46). This means that the US had the role of an organizer for peace to maintain peace and control terrorism by preventing the proliferation of WMD's especially after the Gulf war, which justifies the increase of UN Peacekeeping operations with the US participation in the Post-Cold War era (46). Therefore, the US interventions in foreign states for the sake of fighting, what it called, tyrant regimes to save human rights have increased after the 1990's, and those operations were called 'military humanitarian interventions'. During the 1990's, the US has engaged in many military

interventions in multiple states for humanitarian purposes, and those interventions are discussed further in this chapter.

2. United States Interventionism in the Post-Cold War Period

The engagement in humanitarian interventions did not begin in the twentieth century, but has a long history before this date. The luck of sufficient knowledge about the history of humanitarian intervention before the 1990s has led many analysts to provide inaccurate information (Simms and Trim 8). The United States had an experience with humanitarian intervention before the Cold War period. The Greek War of independence marked the earliest examples of US intervention in a foreign state's affairs for humanitarian motives.

Influenced by the French revolution, the Greeks initiated their war for independence in 1821 in order to overthrow the Ottoman role from Greece (Heraclides and Dialla 106). Consequently, the Greek war brought about many difficulties to Greek civilians like poverty and lack of shelter. As a result, a huge wave of support for Greek people called 'philhellenism' spread all over Europe and the US, leading to the establishment of many committees in European countries and America to raise funds to help people in need (110). Committees in the US were highly engaged in funds rising activities since the beginning of the war. The Greek committee in New York and Philadelphia committee sent funds many time to Greece in 1823-24 (Repousis 351). In addition, many ships full of humanitarian aids from America have sailed to Greece in 1827.

Tontine and Levant were the two biggest cargo ships sent by Philadelphia committee to distribute aids in Greece with the supervision of Joseph Worrell Jr. and the second by James Lieb who were appointed as agent by the Philadelphia committee (360-361). The reason those ships were e sent with American agents in charge of aids distributions was to protect them from being looted by Greek military. Previous American volunteers claimed that humanitarian aids were to be given to civilians since Greek officers saw that soldiers deserved them more (Diogos11).

Hence, America started to send aids with naval officers, being the earliest example of aid distribution with military protection. This American operation in Greece is considered as the first US humanitarian intervention in history, disproving humanitarian interventions being a creation of the 1990s. However, it is important to mention that American interventions in foreign states rose in number only in the Post-Cold War period.

The period following the end of the Cold War marked the beginning of a new phase in the American interactions with foreign states. The US foreign policy in that period was mainly defined by uncertainty when it came to foreign policy matters despite of the absence of any external threat (Haas 3). In other words, the US did not have a clear idea on how to act at the international scene despite being the only dominant power after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Richard Hass states that this "Post-Cold War" period was described as what he called a step back and a step forward (4). In other words, the US at that period, achieved positive as well as negative outcomes at the political and economic level because of the uncertainty that it experienced. This 'step back and step forward' description also affected the US humanitarian interventions during that period since it achieved good and bad results.

2.1. United States Intervention in Somalia (1992-95)

This intervention is considered one of the turning points in the American foreign policy making, and for the UN as well. Typically, the UN and the US initiate a humanitarian intervention in a particular state after one side of the conflict is highly subject to human rights' violations and demand international help. However, intervention in Somalia was the only case in history where the US/UN decided to intervene in a conflict without the consent of either party of the conflict (Lofland53). The situation in Somalia was very critical that it had to be dealt with as quickly as possible in order to stop Somali blood shedding.

The conflict in Somalia began in 1992 when clan leaders started to fight to gain power in Somalia following the rebellious actions against the former Somali President M. Barre. The Somali people experienced hardship under Mohammad Barre's regime for many years, which presented the main reason that led to the conflict. Because Mohammad Barre refused to leave the capital Mogadishu despite losing control, a Somali militia group called the United Somali Congress (USC)overthrew Barre by force and started a bloody clan cleansing operation throughout Somalia (Kapteijins 5). As a result, those who survived after this clan cleansing decided to revenge and formed their own militia and a civil war broke out.

The US intervention in Somalia was a result of many incentives including the impact of the media especially of what was called the "CNN' effect". The media did immensely affect the American audience after showing the images of Somali children experiencing hunger, illnesses, and even death. After being shaken by those images aired on television, the American people started urging the Bush government to react to the situation in Somalia (Kapteijins7). Consequently, the US/ UN intervened many times to solve the conflict. From June 1991 to February 1992, the UN launched the first United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I). Additionally, from May 1993 to February 1995, the UN launched another operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) as a second attempt to solve the problem. However, the US intervened only once from December 1992 to May 1993, and it was called Operation Restore Hope.

This Civil war had terrible results from the beginning. Many civilians, especially children died and famine spread all across the country (200.000 people suffered from famine). For that reason, something had to be done to save civilians. As the Civil war began, Somalia received little international attention. Thanks to the UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's efforts, the UN started its first mission in Somalia (UNOSOMI). The UN succeeded in making a ceasefire treaty between the two warlords General Aidded and Ali Mahdi, but the treaty was not respected

from both sides. This prohibited humanitarian aids from entering easily into Mogadishu due to the lack of stability (Bush 64).

Consequently, another operation called the Unified Task Force (UNITAF) was held in Somalia with bigger budget and under the American leadership. However, the UNITAF was not meant to stay for long, and another UN led military operation called the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II) took place, involving 33.000 troops and costing approximately $ 1.5 billion annually (Bush 66). The second 'United Nations Operation in Somalia was much bigger than the UNITAF both in cost and objectives, since it aimed at ending the conflict through disarming all parts of the conflict in order to actualize stability in the country.

There were other reasons as to why the US decided to intervene in Somalia. Known as the horn of Africa, Somalia holds significant economic importance. It is approximate to the Red Sea and has strategic position connecting the Persian Gulf with Europe particularly through the bab-el-Mandeb straits (Gibbs 43). In other words, that region is considered as the economic beating heart of the western world, and the US decision to intervene militarily would keep stability in the region to assure its interests.

The UNITAF did not have any long-term goals. It claimed to pursue humanitarian objectives like creating safe areas and using diplomacy to deliver humanitarian aids since President Bush insisted on avoiding the use of force. However, UNOSOM II had goals more dedicated to nation building by military force. For that reason, the Clinton's policy towards Somalia got influenced by UN goals and performed military missions under UNOSOM II. According to Michal Beech, the UNITAF witnessed diplomatic negotiations with warlords, unlike UNOSOM II that had direct clash with them. In fact, UNOSOM II, despite having political goals, did not succeed in coordinating political and military efforts, which was the prominent factor behind this failure

(Beech 40). In short, the US and UN initiated the UNOSOM II with undoable goals, like forcing Somalia to form a new government using the wrong means.

Even though Operation Restore Hope claimed to have humanitarian motives, the US strove to further its national interests in the country even when the operation was taking place. This is due to the economic significance that Somalia has for the American economy. Before the Civil war broke out in Somalia, four American oil companies had agreements with Barre's regime, which shows to what extent investment in Somalia was important for the US (Gibbs 47). Because three American oil companies were closed in Somalia due to civil war, it was rationally acceptable that the US intervened to bring back stability and sustain its economic investments.

The US attempts to build relations with clan leaders through the only remaining company, Conoco, proved the previous assumption even further. Not only the US tried to build relations with war leaders, but it also cut off relations with the leader they were no more needed and started to build ties with another one more beneficial for its interests in Somalia. For instance, the US established alliance with Aideed in the beginning of the operation, and then moved to Ali Mahdi because he was considered as a better ally than Aideed (Gibbs 49). In other words, America cooperated with the leader it believed can further or at least protect its national interests in Somalia during and after the civil war.

2.2. United States Intervention in Bosnia (1992-95)

The war in Bosnia was probably one of the bloodiest wars that ever happened in the Balkan region in the period between 1991 and1999. Before the creation of Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Serbia, the Balkan region was all one territory under the name of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It was an Empire with multi-ethnic population composed of Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims, also called Bosniaks (Herland5). After WWII, Yugoslavia became ruled by Josip Broz Tito who was always trying to keep his people united and stand against any

nationalist movement of any ethnic group within the country. After Tito's death in 1980,

Yugoslavia started to split into parts when each region asked for its own independence due to the

rise of nationalism among the Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims.

The conflict in Bosnia started when Slovenia and Croatia declared independence from

Yugoslavia in 1992. This division led to huge disagreement between nationalist people and non-

nationalists. However, division seemed impossible to be avoided. Moreover, Bosnia and

Herzegovina became the successor to Federal Yugoslavia after the multi-party elections in 1990,

with Mr. Izetbegovic becoming the first President of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bjarnason 26).

The state of Bosnia and Herzegovina was officially acknowledged by European communities and

the US in 1992.

Bosnian Serbs, with the help of Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) leader Mr. Slobodan

Milosevic who was also the president of Serbia, started an attack on Bosnia and split the capital

Sarajevo into two, Sarajevo the capital of Bosnia and Serbian Sarajevo the capital of the new

established Serbian Republic or as they call it Republika Serpska (Bjarnason 28). The reason why

Serbia, Bosnian Serbs, and European countries did not welcome the independence of Bosnia and

Herzegovina was that Serbs and Bosnian Serbs always had the aspiration of a 'Greater Serbia'

and also European countries had the fear of the creation of an Islamic state in Europe (Cox 6).

Consequently, a brutal ethnic cleansing /genocide against Bosniaks took place in all Bosnia from

1992 to 1995.

At the beginning of the conflict, European countries and the US did not rush to intervene since

they saw no threat to their national security interests (Burg 3). Initiating a military intervention in

Bosnia was not the first option, and solving the issue peacefully seemed the right thing to do.

However, this did not mean that no actions were carried out in Bosnia. Economic sanctions were

imposed on Serbia and Montenegro by the Security Council (SC). In addition, the UN

peacekeeping forces took over Sarajevo airport in order to get humanitarian relief into Bosnia,

being the first European steps in the attempt of solving the conflict diplomatically with the

absence of any US efforts (Burg 6). The UN commenced on February, 1992 the United Nations

Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Croatia which expanded later on to Bosnia as a limited

military intervention.

Since the conflict seemed not to be easily resolved, the former US Secretary of State Cyrus

Vance and the former UK Foreign Secretary Lord Own presented the 'Vance and Own Peace

Plan' in 1993. Also, the US intervened again by suggesting the 'Own-Stoltenberg Plan' in the

same year. Moreover, the 'Joint Action Plan' was carried out in1993, which basically called for

the creation of 'safe areas' like Srebrenica, Zepa, and Tusla under UN protection. However,

maintaining Peace in those areas was not easily achieved by UN peacekeepers. This marked the

first NATO troops' involvement in the conflict that lasted till the end of it. NATO played a

double role in protecting Bosnian Muslims and deterring Bosnian Serbs by implementing

airstrikes on Serb targets when ceasefire agreements were violated. After many confrontations

between NATO/UN troops, Bosnian Serbs forces and Bosniac-Croat forces, the civil war came

into an end with the establishment of the Dayton Agreement in 1995 and the beginning of its

implementation in 1996 (Herland 24; Burg 20).

The extent to which the Dayton Agreement was successful has been debatable among

analysts. In other words, it was hard to decide whether the US's intervention was efficient. The

first years following the establishment of the agreement had very positive outcomes on the

Bosnian state in general. For instance, the tensions between ethnic groups decreased in the

Balkans, which enabled 900.000 refugees to get back to Bosnia, and the economy progressed

after receiving 5 billion dollars support from international community (Benkova2). As a result,

Bosnia progressed at the social and economic level. However, the long-term consequences of the

agreement were highly negative since they had a key role in the escalation of ethnic tensions in Kosovo. The Dayton Agreement clearly had success in Bosnia, but it led to rising dissatisfaction of Albanians who felt marginalized because the Accords neglected the ethnic tensions in Kosovo (Carson 74). Hence, the US succeeded in the first years by saving human lives and building the nation, but it ignored the situation in Kosovo which led to the collapse of the Kosovar government and the outbreak of the civil war in1999. Some critiques claim the Dayton Accords resulted in another civil war in the Balkan region.

The failure of European efforts to bring peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina threatened the stability of Eastern Europe and the continent in general. This presented a good reason for the US to intervene in order to establish order in the region due to its geopolitical position. The reason why Bosnia was geopolitically significant was its location at the front door of Eastern Europe which America always wanted to control (O'Laughlin 3). Moreover, the instability in Bosnia was a real challenge to the American aspirations of a new world order, which necessitated a quick reaction from Presidents of the US. Also, European and American efforts to make Bosnia more inclined to Western Europe continued even after the war ended. For instance, the attempts to integrate Bosnia in the European Union (EU) and NATO that was undertaken by Britain and Germany prove the Long-term American goal to dominate Eastern Europe.

2.3. United States Intervention in Kosovo (1999)

After the Dayton Agreement being signed, the US and international community did not expect any other conflict to occur in the Balkans. However, four years later civil war happened again, but this time in the province of Kosovo. Kosovo was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire before it became an autonomous province of Serbia in the 20th century (Grading 8). The situation in Kosovo was stable until the 1980's when Yugoslavia started to break into parts especially after the Bosnian war. As Bosnia won its independence due to Dayton Agreement, Kosovo Albanians

also hoped for their independence due to rising tensions with the Serb minority in Kosovo and the Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic (Codey 8).

Disagreements between the Serbian government and Albanians took place after Kosovo's autonomy started to be taken gradually by Milosevic, since Kosovo was believed to be a Serbian land. For instance, Milosevic started to marginalize the Albanians by preventing them from having any authority in government (Grading 8; Codey 7). This led to the creation of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) that started attacking police forces in Kosovo. Those attacks resulted in harsh response from Serbian forces.

As the war in Kosovo started to get worse with the mass killing and displacement of 1.5 million Bosnian Muslims by Serbian forces, the war started to get an international attention. The NATO was put on alert and gave General Wesley Clark the right to airstrike Serb targets if necessary. As a result, the famous October Agreements were established between Milosevic and NATO. Also the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) was initiated (Russell 29). However, the agreement was broken by the horrific massacre in Racak in 1999. Other negotiations in Rambouillet and Paris were held as a last attempt not to use force. Due to the continuous Serbian aggression against Albanian Muslims, the KVM were driven out of Kosovo and the Operation Allied Force (OAF), consisting of US troops, was launched by NATO on the 24 March till 10 June 1999 (Russell 30).It is important to mention that the (OAF) by NATO was autonomous without the approval of the UN security Council.

A lot of critics have seen the intervention in Kosovo as a war fought for human values and principles while others did not. Noam Chomsky, for instance, calls it 'the New Military Humanism', and Edward Luttwak perceives it as the first post-heroic war (qtd. in Gromes1). In other words, there has been conflicting opinions concerning the intervention depending on the perspective that Operation Allied Forces is seen from. Moreover, Operation Allied Forces is not

seen as fully successful when it comes to the number of causalities. The $ 3 billion operation did neither deter Serbian forces from killing more Albanian Muslims, nor eliminated human suffering (Gromes 8).

The US launching a military intervention in the Balkan region with the leadership of the NATO was not only for humanitarian motives, but rather for the significance that the region has in Europe. The US ambition in Europe in 1990s, after dominating the western part, was to dominate the eastern part to limit Russia's influence (O'Loughlin 42). The NATO operation in Kosovo during the civil war could have been used as a means to actualize those ambitions. The American intervention through spreading NATO troops in Eastern Europe mainly targeted imposing more control on the European continent and being as militarily close as possible to the Russian borders.

The US intervention in Kosovo under the leadership of NATO brought huge dilemma concerning its legality. It is clearly stated in the UN Charter that intervening in foreign states is illegal, only in cases where international peace is at risk. Also, the NATO is given the right to intervene by UN Charter, but only after the consent of the Security Council. Because the NATO airstrikes on Serbia were launched without the SC's permission, the intervention was considered illegitimate according to international law. In fact, Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General, described the NATO operation in Kosovo as illegal (qtd. in Legualt 64). The US President Clinton stated in his speech that saving human rights violations was the main reason to put US soldiers at risk to save innocent Albanians (qtd. in Gromes 5). Giving the fact that both sides had valid arguments, the debate stays open till today and what can be said was that the US intervention was not undoubtedly legal, but rather 'comprehensible'.

The 1990s period was marked by a new renovation in the interstates relations due to the remarkable number of humanitarian crises that grabbed the attention of international institutions.

Hence, that period witnessed a number of humanitarian interventions by the US and the UN in order to rescue innocent civilians from great danger. However, the humanitarian motive was not the main driver of US operations in states suffering from civil wars and genocides. America was always ambitious to further its control in strategic places like the Red Sea regions and Europe as a way to ameliorate national interests. With the beginning of the twenty first century, the American interventions in foreign states have taken another path. The 9/11 Attacks made America obliged to deal with another enemy, which was terrorism. The US started to reconsider its foreign policy specially with states that were believed to be promotersof terrorism.

3. United States Interventionism after 9/11 Attacks

The 9/11 attacks on the United States of America were one of the disastrous events in the modern history. They have affected not only the US, but the entire world as well. One of the 9/11 attacks' results was changing the United States forever. In the period following those attacks, the US reconsidered its sovereignty and protection. As a result, a remarkable change happened in the American foreign policy and interaction with other nations, especially Arab/ Muslim states. Moreover, the 9/11 attacks made the US and the western world acknowledge that terrorism was number one enemy of the world's stability and order. Hence, the US declared a 'War on Terror' giving itself the right to intervene in any state where terrorism was suspected to be present. The US interventions in the last two decades were for the sake of demolishing terrorism in all parts of the world to maintain a safe world order.

3.1. The United States' War on Terror

On the morning of September 11, 2001, the United States was subject to a horrific terrorist attack in three different places in the country. The attack started with two planes crashing into the two Towers of the World Trade Center, also called the Twin Towers. A few minutes later, another plane slammed into the southern face of the Pentagon. The third target was meant to be

the capital or the White House, but the plane was forced down by one of its passengers. The attacks resulted in the death of 256 people at the four planes, 2600 people at the World Trade Center, and 125 people at the Pentagon (Kean and Hamilton 2).

Those attacks were a complete shock to the US and the whole world since they made the Bush government question the reason behind those attacks, who was responsible for them, and most importantly, what would be the suitable response so that they would never happen again. In fact, it was not the first time that the US experienced a terrorist attack by a terrorist organization. During the period between 1998 and 2001, Al Qaeda organization with Bin Laden as its leader executed many operations, and killed many Americans (Kean and Hamilton 2). However, the 9/11 attacks targeted very strategic and important places. In other words, Al Qaeda's attacks on 11 September caused more damage and casualties than the previous ones it planned against the US. After knowing that Al Qaeda organization was responsible of 9/11 attacks, the Bush government declared a war against Afghanistan in 2001 and against Iraq in 2003.

3.1.1. United States Intervention in Afghanistan in 1990's and 2011

On October 7, 2001, President Bush announced the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan. The operation aimed at destroying Al Qaeda organization and arresting its leaders, most specifically Osama Bin Laden, to bring them to justice. However, it is important to mention that the US-Afghan relations have not always been characterized by aggression or military confrontation. Instead, the US was the number one helper of Afghanistan in its civil war when it comes to humanitarian aids. Nicholas Wheeler in his article under the title Humanitarian Intervention After 9/11 shows how the US policy in Afghanistan gradually changed before and after OEF.

For almost 20 years, the Afghan people experienced severe human life conditions because of the civil war. This attracted the attention of international institutions, like the UN, to express their

worry about a humanitarian catastrophe in Afghanistan (Wheeler 13). The US, driven by humanitarian motives, tried to help civilian Afghans through humanitarian aids in order to improve their conditions. In other words, the US did not have any intentions in changing the Afghan government, the Taliban, but rather it dedicated its mission with non-military objectives. The 9/11 attacks showed that Al Qaeda was capable of threatening the American national security. So, the Bush government reconsidered its behavior towards Afghanistan and Al Qaeda. The US directly shifted its mission in Afghanistan into a military one for two reasons. The first reason was to destroy Al Qaeda, capture its leaders, and destroy Taliban's military installations, and the second reason was to deter other terrorist organizations from the other hand (Wheeler 14).

There have been multiple reactions to the Bush administration announcing Operation Enduring Freedom. Fatima Ayub and Sari Kouvo, for instance, state that the United States received positive feedback and encouragement for the OEF. The United Nations made the OEF legitimate as a practice of 'self-defense' according to UN Charter. Also, the NATO approved it according to the Washington Treaty considering it as an 'attack against all' (647). From this point of view, Operation Enduring Freedom was perceived by two important international institutions as a legal act which was not against international law. Moreover, one of the arguments that were used to legitimize Operation Enduring Freedom was the principle of the 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P), which basically gave any state the ability to protect itself against terror or severe human rights violations using military means if necessary.

The United States was criticized by some non-governmental humanitarian organizations for the way OEF was executed. Jean-HerveBradol, the President of Medicine Sans Frontières (Doctors without Border) organization (MSF), wondered how humanitarian reliefs and airstrikes happen at the same time (qtd. in Wheeler17). The shooting and airstrikes created an unsafe

environment for the Afghan civilians, which prevented humanitarian aids to be transmitted to the ones who really deserved it.

Despite Bush justifying OEF from a humanitarian perspective, many analysts refuse to call it a humanitarian intervention operation. It has been claimed by George Bush that one of the objectives of OEF was to eliminate Al Qaeda and make Afghanistan a state of law, since the Taliban was believed to be an Islamist extremist regime. Consequently, it was not consistent with international law to impose changes in states' regimes during a humanitarian intervention (Simon 106). But rather, saving civilians from severe human rights violations through humanitarian aids was the core purpose of humanitarian interventions. The fall of the Taliban government after the OEF was initiated proved its lack of the most important characteristic of a humanitarian intervention.

3.1.2. United States Intervention in Iraq in 1991 and 2003

The US relations with the Middle East increased highly during and after the Cold war. Those interactions were a part of an American foreign policy. In fact, America always strove to prevent Middle Eastern states from embracing Communism in the Cold War period. Even after the Cold War, The US presence in the Middle East aimed at stopping any potential comeback of Communism in the Middle East. The US interactions with the state of Iraq started as the Cold War came to an end. However, only two interactions were in form of military interventions, with the second being harsher than the first one.

The US-Iraq relations started to be more apparent after Saddam Hussein took power in 1979. Losing alliance with Iran after the Islamic Revolution in 1970s made the US look for another ally in the region to ensure economic interests in the Middle East (Saleh4). The US sold weapons and military equipment to Iraq as a way to contain the new Iranian regime (5). Hence, the US relation

with Iraq was mainly based on national interests like maintaining its presence in the Middle East and Gulf regions.

The stable relations between Iraq and the US took another path as Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990. On 2 August 1990, 120.000 Iraqi troops entered Kuwait within a matter of hours. As a result, the UNSC issued many Resolutions imposing many sanctions on Iraq in order to solve the problem peacefully, but Hussein kept ignoring them. On 29 November, the UNSC authorized the Use of force if Iraqi troops did not go out of Kuwait by 15 January 1991(Sabec75). With the continuous refusal of Hussein to adhere to the law, the US legitimized the use of force to stop Iraqi aggression. On January, 16 1991, The US and its allies started a US-led coalition against Iraq that lasted for forty-two days. After Iraqi troops were defeated, they left the Kuwaiti territory on February, 28.

The US-led airstrikes on Iraq made the US-Iraq relations go towards aggression. After the 9/11attacks, the US aggression towards Iraq went to the extreme to result in a total invasion on 2003. Since the US war on terror was intended to attack any state that permitted terrorism, Iraq was the next target after Afghanistan. The reason why Iraq was accused of terrorism was arm proliferation. Hussein was accused of using chemical weapon against his people (Grammas 12). As a result, rumors about Hussein possessing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and having ties with Al Qaeda spread really quickly in the international scene. In addition to that, suspicious acts against Kurd and Shi'i minorities gave Hussein the reputation as a human rights' abuser by the US. Iraq having WMD's and being in relation with Al Qaeda, was believed to be a spot haven for terrorism.

The invasion of Iraq was criticized by many analysts and politicians. Kenneth Roth, the director of Human Rights Watch, stated that the invasion of Iraq was not a humanitarian intervention and it was wrong to be called as such (qtd.in Heinze1). This skeptical view was not

only concerning the legitimacy of the operation, but also its nature which showed to what extent the issue was controversial. Kofi Annan, United Nations' General Secretary, described it as illegal (qtd.in Achraya 276). Moreover, the US invasion of Iraq was also criticized for attempting political goals like establishing a new government in Iraq, and at the same time claiming it to be for humanitarian purposes. This idea was mentioned by Alex J. Bellamy. The later stated that the war which targeted political and economic outcomes was justified by humanitarian means (qtd. in Heinze1). In other words, even though the invasion of Iraq was legitimized from a humanistic perspective, the reality showed the opposite.

3.2. Afghanistan and Iraq after the War

The war on Afghanistan and Iraq had terrible outcomes that are still noticed till today. The consequences of the war in both countries were observed on the political, economic, and human level. Both countries experienced great human life loss during the war. The war on Iraq, for instance and Afghanistan resulted in the death of 100.000 civilians only in the first years of the war, in addition to the destruction of infrastructure, lack of security, public health, and the collapse of the Taliban in Afghanistan (Hinnebusch18; Gogers 3). The war brought about a very hard economic situation that both countries are trying to recover from even with the United States nation- building strategies in Iraq and Afghanistan. Even though the American attempt to rebuild both countries was helpful, but it did not bring about a final solution to the economic hardship. Politically, both countries now experience more political stability, especially with the Taliban coming back to control in Afghanistan and the establishment of democratic elections. Evaluating the US invasion of Iraq, Anthony Cordesman, the previous American expert on Gulf security, described it as a Strategic mistake (qtd. in Hinnebusch 17). From this point of view, the outcomes of the war made some members of the American government accept the failure of both OEF and Iraq's invasion.

America had strategic objectives behind perusing the humanitarian intervention policy in both Afghanistan and Iraq. The geopolitical significance of both states led America to intervene in any way mainly for economic motives. Iraq before the war was on the top list of countries with immense oil resources that could satisfy US oil imports for years. The daily oil production in Iraq reached 2.5 million barrels (Nordhaus3). For that reason, the US always strove to further its presence in Iraq, and the Middle East in general, for two main reasons. The first reason was to allocate the region's energy resources for domestic use and for allies like Japan and Germany, and the second was to prevent competitors like Russia and China from benefiting from the region's resources (Mercille 331). The oil factor could have been one of the main reasons of the war in Iraq due to the quick spread of competition over energy resources in the Middle Eastern regions.

As for Afghanistan, it also holds significance to US economy due to its strategic position in eastern Asia and proximity to the Persian Gulf. The US has used Afghanistan as a bridge to shift oil from eastern Asia to other parts of the world like the Middle East and Pakistan. American presence in the region is mainly to assure control over central Asian resources, prevent Russia, China, and Iran from benefiting from gas and oil resources, and to actualize economic prosperity by building companies in the region (Noorzai 105). Even though the economic reason was not the first motive of the American war on Afghanistan, protecting the American economic interests in central Asia is one of the US' priorities.

The previously mentioned US interventions were not the only ones carried out by the American government in the Middle Eastern region. The Syrian civil war during the Arab Spring was one of the main events in the twenty first century leading to an American intervention from 2011 to 2019. Consequently, the third chapter of this dissertation is dedicated to discuss the US military intervention in Syria in a detailed manner.

Chapter Three

Assessing the United States Humanitarian Intervention in Syria (2011-2019)

In the last decade of the twentieth century, some new renovations had to be introduced to the norms of humanitarian intervention due to enormous humanitarian crises that took place. The International Commission of Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) introduced some solutions to solve the dilemma of state sovereignty when human rights violations happened. Many interventions in the 1990's such as in Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo, were executed as an attempt to save civilians.

With the beginning of the twenty first century, the US intervened in the name of establishing a world order and saving civilians from severe violations continued. The Arab Spring, started in 2011, was the main factor behind instability and human suffering in the Arab world. In Syria, the uprising by civilians demanding Bashar Al-Assad to abandon the rule, in order to establish a democratic regime, resulted in a cruel civil war between the Syrian opposition and Al-Assad's government. Because Al-Assad was believed to have committed violations against his people during the revolution, international community did many attempts to bring back peace that eventually ended up with a humanitarian intervention in Syria.

1. Origins of the Conflict

The civil war in Syria did not emerge suddenly. Rather, its origins can be traced back many years before the civil war broke out between the government and civilians. The Syrian society had a long history of division among different sects. Those disagreements sometimes ended up with a direct confrontation between them. In order to have a clear idea on the circumstances that led to the conflict, a historical background of the war is important.

The Syrian society was, and is still, a multi-sect society with a mixed population of Sunni Muslims, Shii Muslims, Alawites, Christians, Druze, and Kurds. It is important to mention that

Sunni Muslims always represented the majority of the Syrian population. During the 1900's, the majority Sunni Muslim population were in charge of power with Al Baath party, which is a logical scenario to happen (Sharp and Blanchard 7). Moreover, the Ottoman Empire's support helped Sunni leaders to remain dominant. Till this point, the situation in Syria remained stable, and different sects coexisted with each other for a long time.

The instability in Syria started to be apparent when other minorities, mainly Alawites, started to have ambitions about getting rid of the Sunni dominance and making a new government controlled by Alawite leaders. In 1966, the Alawite sect overthrew the Sunni leader and became the first minority in the history of Syria to be on the top of the government (Sharp and Blanchard 7). Tensions between the Alawite government and other sects started to widen after the family of Al-Assad seized the power in 1970.Al-Assad's family started to be harsh in dealing with other minorities, especially Sunni Muslims in order to remain in power (Sharp and Blanchard 7). Hafiz Al-Assad was the leader of the Baath party and ruled Syria till 2000. After his death, Hafiz Al-Assad's son, Bashar Al-Assad became the president.

2. The Arab Spring in Syria

The period after 2011 witnessed a numerous protest by Arab civilians in different Arab states calling for a regime change in their states' governments. Those uprisings were a part of the Arab Spring movement. The Arab Spring first started in Tunisia in 2010 after a Tunisian citizen, Mohammad Bouazizi, killed himself because of the Tunisian government's injustice (Igwe 2). This led to huge protests in all of Tunisia calling for the change of Ben Ali's government, which eventually happened. Because the people of Tunisia were successful, other Arab populations got influenced by the Arab Spring. Following the steps of Tunisia, protests against Arab governments spread to Egypt, Libya, and Yemen (Igwe 6). As for Syria, it was until March, 2011 that protests against Bashar Al-Assad's regime began.

Similar to the previous Arabic states, the Arab Spring in Syria started with protests that led to a quick reaction from Al-Assad's government. A group of Syrian boys were arrested in Daraa after writing on the wall 'the people want the downfall of the regime'. This led to the spread of protests and the emergence of armed opposition groups calling for the release of the arrested boys and a regime change (Humud et al. 1). As in previous scenarios, the Arab Spring in any Arab state began with a reaction from the government, perceived as unjust, after a rebellious act of a citizen(s).

The protests against Al-Assad's regime were expected to follow the path of the former Arab Spring movements in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya. The Syrian opposition groups preplanned that their uprising would lead Al-Assad either to give up the rule like what happened in Tunisia and Egypt, or to die like Al Kaddafi in the Libyan case. In other words, they expected a regime change to happen in any way possible (Catlett 1). However, this did not happen in the case of Syria since Al-Assad's government fought opposition groups with an iron fist, showing no intentions to negotiate.

The first years of the civil war in Syria witnessed a huge increase of opposition groups. The main ones were the Free Syrian Army (FSA), the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Syrian Liberation Front (SLF), Syrian Islamic Front(SIF), and Al-Nusra Front (Outzen 6). Moreover, those opposition groups were provided with arms by nearby countries. Hence, the civil war prolonged and Syrian people's suffering continued to escalate.

2.1. Humanitarian Situation

The civil war resulted in bad life conditions for Syrian citizens. Many people died, the majority of them were civilians, in addition to the displacement of half of the population inside and outside of Syria (Yacoubian 1). This unstable situation led to the increase of human suffering

and lack of stability due to sustained fighting between Al-Assad's regime supporters (the Syrian Army) and opposition groups.

2.1.1. Casualties

The war in Syria is considered as one of the cruelest crisis that ever happened in the Middle East's modern history. As Charles Dunne, Director of Middle East and North Africa programs, describes it saying that the Syrian' crisis was similar to the previous Arab-Israeli wars in its atrocity (1). Many innocent lives have died mainly women and children only in the first two years of the civil war. It was estimated that up to 2013, the number of casualties as a collateral damage reached 70.000 (Dunne 1). The number of casualties became even bigger in the following years. The UN after 2013 stopped updating death rates, since it faced hardship in verifying the number (Margesson and Chesser 2). However, based on the rising tensions and insecurity, it was logically expected that the number would keep rising. Even though statistics revealed on the total number of casualties were not identical, they all estimated very high numbers. Reports showed that nearly half a million people died in this civil war (Yacoubian 1). In addition to this, those who did not die faced the problem of insecurity, which obliged to leave their homes looking for safer places.

2.1.2. Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Due to the lack of security in regions dominated by opposition groups, many Syrian civilians had to leave their homes and go to safer places within the Syrian borders. Those people are called Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Others had to leave the entire country and become refugees in neighboring countries. It was estimated that in 2013, approximately two million Syrian civilians moved to neighboring countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey as refugees (Ferris et el. 20). Also, the number of Internally Displaced Persons was even higher since the beginning of the war. By the end of 2013, the war led to the internal displacement of almost five million people in Syria (Ferris et el. 1). Those huge flows of displacement, affecting half of the Syrian

population, made innocent civilians in need of basic human necessities like food, water, and shelter.

2.1.3. Hard life Conditions

The crisis in Syria imposed unbearable daily life conditions especially after the spread of poverty due to the economic collapse in Syria. The $200 billion economic loss in Syria led to the decrease of private consumption by forty percent in 2014 (Slim et el. 20). Moreover, public health infrastructure was partially or completely destroyed, which made IDPs inside the country in need of essential health service. For instance, sixty percent of hospitals in Syria were deliberately destroyed in different cities like Damascus and Aleppo, either by the Syrian government or opposition groups, causing almost all health personal to flee the country and IDPs to suffer from different infectious diseases (Akbarzada and Mackey 5). In addition to that, many Syrian pregnant women were not advantageous in getting enough health care during and after giving birth. As a result, many number of newborns death rates remarkably increased during the war (Akbarzada and Mackey 7). IDPs, mainly children, also suffered from food shortage and lack of clean water. This led to the spread of water borne illnesses like diarrhea and diseases resulting from malnutrition like anemia.

2.1.4. Trauma and Psychological Problems

In addition to the physical outcomes, the psychological aspect of the Syrian people, especially IDPs, was even more affected by the civil war. The World Health Organization (WHO) stated that two million Syrians suffered from mental disorder, one fourth of them were in critical conditions (qtd. in Akbarzada and Mackey 8). Children were the main victim of psychological problems due to the cruel images of killing and violence they had to experience. The feelings of fear and anxiety continued to live within Syrian children, especially those who were subject to traumatizing situations like discontinuing their studies or losing members of the family.

The previously mentioned hard conditions made the international community really concerned about the future of IDPs in Syria and even the refugees living in nearby countries. Also, the level of suffering that Syrians had to experience was a clear alert to human rights institutions to intervene in order to stop human rights violations against civilians. Consequently, many efforts were put by organizations and states, mainly the United States, to deliver humanitarian assistance to disadvantaged IDPs.

3. United States Humanitarian Intervention in the Syrian Crisis

Images of thousands of Syrians being killed, in a matter of days, or being obliged to leave their homes were a sufficient reason for the US government to step in with humanitarian aids. The United States was number one contributor in the Syrian crisis with millions of dollars being donated each year and a total of $6 billion humanitarian aids (Cordesman 6). A lot of humanitarian assistance such as food, clean water, clothes, and medicine were delivered to Syrian IDPs through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The USAID is basically a US agency dedicated to delivering assistance to countries suffering from the outcomes of humanitarian crisis such as natural disasters and civil wars.

The USAID was the main contributor in the Syria crisis when it came to humanitarian assistance. The humanitarian funding of the USAID in 2012-13 has reached approximately $385 million (USAID 1). The USAID had many offices working in Syria, through which humanitarian aids were distributed to people in need. For example, the USAID's Office of US, Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA), and the USAID's Office of Food for Peace(USAID/FFP). In 2013, the USAID announced that the Syrian crisis has affected a large number of people. For instance, four million people were in need of humanitarian assistance only in the beginning of the year, resulting in $19 million additional donations by the US government (USAID 1). Those donations were dedicated to provide food, clean water, and medical equipment.

The US government, in addition to funding the USAID, has funded other partners that were providing humanitarian aids to Syrians in need. The international Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was provided $11 million only to sustain sanitation systems and medical care in all Syrian governorates (USAID 2). The US government's main goal of funding other partners in Syria was mainly to make humanitarian assistance reach as many people as possible in remote or sieged areas.

In the year 2013, the US government provided the UN and World Food Program (WFP) with $56 million to help the Syrians inside Syria and in neighboring countries who suffer from food shortage (USAID 2). Those donations were mainly spent on the process of delivering food to people in war areas. When it comes to health care and hygiene, the US government has funded both UN organizations and even Non-Governmental Organization (NCOs) since the beginning of the crisis. The UN International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was given $2.2 million for medical equipment and health care in Syria (3).

The US government has also contributed in helping Syrian refugees in Syria and neighboring countries like Jordan, Egypt, and Iraq. Many internally displaced Syrians were in hard conditions especially after losing their homes and being subject to a great danger. The UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), a US government's partner, facilitated in housing 8600 IDPs in Syria (4). Those UNRWA contributions managed to help 83.000 families in the period between 2012/ 13. Also, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a US funded partner, assisted in receiving Syrian refugees in Jordan and distributing them in different camps (4). The US government helped also in providing food for refugees in Jordan through its partners. The WFP for instance was provided $5 million, which were used to feed nearly 50.000 people (5). Even though the humanitarian intervention in Syria was helpful, facing some restrictions was an inevitable challenge.

3.1. Limitations and Restrictions

The US funded partners, and International Humanitarian Organizations (IHOs) in general faced a number of difficulties while delivering humanitarian aids inside certain regions in Syria. The main limitation that humanitarian organizations encountered was the inaccessibility to particular places due to the lack of security. More than half a million civilians used to live in besieged areas, which are places controlled by opposition groups, denied from all basic human needs like food, water, and shelter (Cordesman 7). Because entry to those besieged areas was not granted easily to humanitarian organizations, humanitarian aids did not reach people in need living in those places, which resulted in the increase of death rates among civilians in those locations.

The United States tried to decrease the level of insecurity in those places mainly that were not under the Syrian government's control. According to Christopher M. Blanchard, a specialist in Middle Eastern affairs, The US spent nearly 1.3$ billion since the beginning of the civil war only for stabilization purposes (2). However, entering those places continued to be challenging for IHOs. Other restrictions that hindered the work of (IHOs) were imposed by the Syrian government itself. For instance, the Syrian government restricted the humanitarian actors' entry in areas not under its control, which prevented those IHOs from having a clear image about civilians' humanitarian needs (Haid 5). This limitation may be perceived as not of a dangerous impact, but actually it made all the operations' achievements unclear since the number of people in need and those provided for was unverified.

Another restriction that was imposed on IHOs was that they were not able to deliver humanitarian aids only through an organization that had ties with the Syrian government. Only the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) and the Syria Trust for Development had ties with the government (Haid 7). Those IHOs that did not have an approval from the previous two

organizations were unable to operate in territories controlled by the Syrian government. For instance, more than half of UN aids to Syria went through the SARC while the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) spent $7 million through the Syria Trust (Haid 7). This proved that the Al-Assad's government was highly in control of the aids that were delivered to the Syrian people, making a lot of IHOs had doubts that it may have manipulated humanitarian aids.

The Syrian government also had control over who was able to enter the country and who was not. In other words, the Syrian government selected individuals of IHOs indirectly by giving visa to those it had no problem with them being in Syria, and the others were neglected (Haid 7). This was a deliberate tactic that the government used in order to increase its influence over all IHOs' processes in Syria. Moreover, the Syrian government was proven to have changed some UN plans of humanitarian aids dedicated to besieged areas. In 2016, a UN plan which included donations to besieged areas was modified by keeping only aids dedicated to government-led territories (Haid 8). This was mainly to prevent aids from getting inside opposition groups-led areas, since the government believed that those groups might loot the food, water, and clothes for themselves. Despite those restrictions, the USAID and its partners were able to lead some successful operations in Syria that decreased, to a certain extent, the level of misery and hardship in particular regions where IDPs existed.

3.2. Assessing the United States Humanitarian Intervention Policy in Syria

After the number of humanitarian crises kept rising in the period following the end of the Cold war, the international community made key changes in the principles of interstates interactions. This marked the first step leading to the emergence of the Right to Protect principle (R2P), which was later on adopted by the UN. The principle gives the international community the

responsibility to protect civilians from severe human rights violations even by using force if necessary.

The human rights' violations that took place during the Syrian crisis were very harsh, making it one of the worst civil wars that ever happened in the Middle East. Al-Assad's regime has been documented by sources to have committed multiple human rights' violations against civilians, (Erameh 8). However, the Syria scenario was completely different due to the little effort that was devoted by different states to end the conflict. One of the attempts to find a peaceful agreement between the two parts of the conflict was the UN-Arab League envoy led by the former UN Secretary Kofi Annan (8). Unfortunately, an immediate ceasefire was not actualized due to the deep disagreements between Al-Assad's regime and opposition groups.

The UNSC, unlike the case of Libya, did not have mutual sense of responsibility to solve the issue. This was due to the conflicting interests of members of the UNSC concerning the Syrian crisis. For instance, many resolutions in the UNSC were not signed because Russia and China vetoed them since they were allies of Al-Assad's regime (Erameh 10). In other words, Russia and China were protecting Al-Assad's regime from any punishments or threats, while the US and its allies wanted the opposite. Hence, the perspective that the US, Russia, and China had about the human rights' violations and suffering was deeply affected by geopolitical and economic interests (11). Those geopolitical interests of different external actors have motivated certain military interventions by many states; the United States was among them.

4.United States Military Intervention in Syria Crisis

In addition to humanitarian aids distribution activities, the US government has also engaged in military operations in Syria mainly after 2014. In the first stages of the conflict, Obama's administration did not intervene militarily in Syria immediately after the war broke out. The first

American reaction to the conflict was President Obama calling Bashar Al-Assad to step aside in 2011, but Obama did not initiate heavy military operations in order to force Al-Assad to resign. In the first two years of the conflict, the United States intervention in the civil war was mainly characterized by providing opposition groups with weapons through the Central Intelligence Agency (CAI), training members of some opposition groups, and imposing sanctions on the Syrian government (Ogunnowo and Chidozie 7). Hence, a direct military intervention by the US government was not a priority for Obama administration before 2014.

The only military activity that the US government initiated in the first two years of the war was airstrikes on chemical units in Syria after Al-Assad was suspected to have used them against his people (Ogunnowo and Chidozie 7). Moreover, the American perception of the Syrian civil war mainly changed in the middle of 2014. The reason behind that change was after ISIS started to gain more power by enlarging its activities in Eastern Syria. Consequently, the US government launched airstrikes on ISIS and placed ground troops in Syria to organize and help opposition groups (7).

The US confrontations with ISIS have lasted till 2019 after many military operations. It started with ISIS declaring the establishment of its caliphate in Iraq and Syria in June 2014 (Ford 2). This marked a huge warning for the Obama administration with regards to the Middle East stability because, from the American perspective, the expansion of the ISIS caliphate meant the spread of terrorism in the whole region. As a result, the US intervention in Syria has shifted from trying to make a regime change through negotiations to attempting to destroy ISIS in Eastern Syria (9). It was until Donald Trump's presidency that US ground troops were driven out of Syria after ISIS caliphate was destroyed.

In December 2018, the US government declared the withdrawal of its military troops from Syria. However, hundreds did not leave to Syrian territory in addition to no-fly zones imposed on

Eastern Syria (Ford 9). The Syrian crisis reached a very complicated situation after many external actors like the Unites States, Russia, and Iran started backing different parties in the civil war. In other words, the Syrian humanitarian crisis was prolonged after Syria became a proxy war area between super powers, each seeking its own interests in the region.

5. Conflicting Interests in Syrian Crisis

The Middle Eastern regions in general and Syria in particular, have always grabbed the attention of the world's economic powers like the United States and Russia. The civil war in Syria made each economic power deal with the conflict for the sake of sustaining its economic and political interests in the region. It is important to mention that both Russia and the US had conflicting geopolitical interests in Syria that were not neglected even during the humanitarian crisis.

5.1. Geopolitical Interests in Syria

The American government's interests in Syria were mainly economic and political. Since Syria is a rich source of oil and gas, the US always strove to multiply oil imports from Syria and eliminate the influence of any economic competitors. In other words, the US was really dependent on petroleum products imported from Syria, which makes energy dependency a very prominent economic national interest for the United States (Engle 135). Consequently, the US would not accept any prolonged crisis that might bring about instability or chaos to the region, eventually leading to major economic losses.

In addition to economic interests, the US had other political objectives in Syria. For instance, the Syrian regime being controlled by Alawites would obviously be an ally with Iran and Hizbollah in Lebanon; the United States' biggest enemies in the Middle East. Hence, one of the US objectives in the civil war was to put down Al-Assad's regime, through negotiations, and replace it with another one that maintains its interests in the country. Moreover, Al-Assad's

regime was suspected by the Human Rights Watch to have used chemical weapons against the civilians in 2013, which was completely denied by Bashar Al-Assad himself (Abratt 27). Those accusations made the US even more committed toward getting rid of Al-Assad's regime. As a reaction to Al-Assad potential use of chemical weapons, President Barack Obama decided to destroy all chemical weapons units in Syria through airstrikes (Abratt 29). This was the first direct military intervention done by the US government to stop the human rights violations attributed to the Al-Assad's regime.

In order to outset Bashar Al-Assad, the US government followed specific tactics. Unifying opposition groups, providing them with military equipment, and excluding groups that were believed to be terroristic like ISIS were the main US objectives during the Syria crisis (Khan and Munawar 856). In other words, the intervention in Syria, from the American perspective, aimed at ousting Al-Assad's regime due to its pro-Iranian orientations which might lead to the spread of weapons of mass destruction and instability in the entire Middle Easter region. The US government was concerned that arm proliferation in Syria would spread to nearby states that were US allies like Turkey and Saudi Arabia (Khan and Munawar 856; Anderson 20). As a result, the United States tried to stop arm proliferation by airstrikes that targeted chemical weapons units in Syria.

Syria was considered by the American government to be a terrorism hosting state that should be dealt with in a suitable way. During Obama's presidency, the U.S. Intelligence Chief James Clapper described Syria as a 'magnet' for terrorism and extremism (qtd. in Anderson 21). The United States believed that ISIS was backed up by Al-Qaeda organization, which meant that ISIS would also be perceived as a terrorism promoting organization by the US government. Instability and unrest in Syria were considered as the two main factors that might grant terrorist groups the power to widen their activities in Syria and the whole region in general. Hence, the US was

concerned that the civil war could make those terrorist groups able to downfall Al-Assad's regime and become the ultimate ruler of Syria, which meant a huge threat for America and its allies in the Middle Eastern region (Anderson 22).

Based on the previously mentioned interests, it was obvious that the humanitarian reasons were not the only motives behind the US intervention in Syria. But rather, the US geopolitical interests have influenced the humanitarian intervention in Syria. In other words, the focus on geopolitical interests hindered the enhancement of the humanitarian situation. Moreover, the United States was not the only state that sees Syria as an important state, but also Russia and Iran. However, their interests were different from those of the US, and some of them were completely contradictory.

5.2. Russia and Iran's Interests in Syria

Russia and Iran both had interests in the state of Syria since the Cold War period. Those interests, being opposite to the western interests, have created a state of balance in the Middle Easter region. This situation is known as 'the zero-sum game' (Khan and Munawar 857). During the Syrian civil war, Russia always vetoed any UN resolutions that legitimized military intervention in Syria. The reason was that Russia knew that any intervention in Syria would lead to a regime change that might threaten Russian interests in the region (857). As a result, Russia acted as a protector of Al-Assad's government from any the UN Security Council and the United States.

Syria was a very prominent ally to Russia before and even during the civil war period. Both states had mutual strong economic dependency on each other. For instance, Syria used always to be a permanent buyer of Russian arms (Buckley 89). Hence, any intervention in Syria, leading to a regime change, might bring about a new government that would not continue to be an importer of Russia's arms, which would mean an enormous economic loss for the Russian government.

Moreover, Russia relied on Syria in order to assure presence in the Middle Eastern area. The Russian naval base in Syria is what made Syria's stability a very important objective for Russia (Buckley 89). Any military intervention in Syria could lead to the overthrowing of the Russian naval base in the city of Tartus if the new Syria government turned out to be an ally to the United States. In this respect, Russia has always opposed human suffering in Syria and called for a ceasefire, but never approved a radical regime change.

As for the state of Iran, the latter has always been a barrier to the US ambitions to have more allies in the Middle East. The reason behind the US consideration of Iran's reactions before doing any actions in the Middle East was Iran's possession of the nuclear program (Buckley 91). In addition to that, since Iran is a majority Shiite states and Al-Assad's government is Alawite, each state considered the other as a closer ally than other Sunni regimes in the region. Consequently, Iran's response if any military intervention in Syria was carried could have been unpleasing to the United States.

Despite the fact that Russia's interests in Syria are more than those of Iran, The Iranian government was also against a regime change in Syria that might threaten its geopolitical objectives in the region. Through the help of the Syrian government, Iran could maintain its influence in Lebanon by Hezbollah and Gaza by Hamas (Buckley 92). In other words, Syria was like the bridge sustaining Iranian influence in the region by keeping Tehran, Hezbollah, and Hamas in contact with each other.

It would be very logical for the Iranian government to support Al-Assad in his war against opposition groups and refuse any attempts to overthrow him through military intervention. Iran was supported by Syria to reach Hezbollah and Hamas mainly because Syrian government was pro-Shiite. For that reason, a regime change that would bring about a new Sunni Syrian

government, that could not be willing to cooperate with Iran, clearly meant the cut off of Iranian impact in the Middle East.

To sum up, the Syria crisis was one of the Middle East's most tragic experiences resulting in high death, refugee, and IDPs rates. The crisis was complicated to be solved due to external actors becoming part of the conflict by backing the civil war's different parties. The three main external actors were the United States, Russia, and Iran. Each state intervened in Syria crisis as a means to protect its interests in the Middle Eastern region. The US was ambitious to overthrow Al-Assad's regime to sustain oil and gas resources and decrease Iranian and Russian influence. On the contrary, Moscow put effort to keep its ally Al-Assad in power to remain militarily present in Syria while Iran also supported the Alawite government that was regarded as a bridge connecting Tehran with Hezbollah and Hamas.

The United States intervention in Syria crisis has gone through different stages in the period between 2011 and 2019. At first, it aimed at a peaceful regime change by calling both parties of the conflict to the negotiation table. Moreover, the US intervention in 2014 started to take the characteristics of a war on terror after the US carried out many airstrikes on ISIS aiming at destructing its bases in Syria. Eventually, The Syria crisis became more of a proxy war between the United States and Russia after the Russian intervention in Syria in 2015. Each superpower started prioritizing its own interests regardless of human suffering.

The United States' policy in Syria during both Obama and Trump Presidency followed similar steps and sought similar goals. The two Administrations wanted to destroy ISIS, bring about political stability in Syria, and demolish Iranian influence in the region (Humud 13). In other words, it had both political as well as humanitarian motives. However, the extent to which the intervention was successful is debatable. Robert S. Ford, who was senior fellow at the Middle East Institution in Washington and a former US Ambassador to Syria, stated that Al-Assad was

more likely to remain in power and the downfall of ISIS did not bring the conflict to an end (Ford 1). In other words, even though the first goal was achieved, it did not help ending the conflict.

Training opposition groups and providing them with military assistance did not help to overthrow the current regime, which meant sustain Iranian influence. Moreover, the economic hardship that Syria experienced has been the main factor behind civilians' continuing suffering in refugee camps. It is estimated that 5 million Syrian refugees were still living in camps in Lebanon and Jordan in 2019 (Ford19). Consequently, the Unites States intervention in Syria did neither fulfill its main aim, which was to end humanitarian crisis, nor its political ambitious of removing Al-Assad and ending Russian and Iranian influence.

Conclusion

The Westphalia Treaty of 1648 gave rulers the freedom to govern their states and people autonomously with the condition of not harming other states. Consequently, the principle of non-intervention was the main norm guiding interstates interactions before 1945, with all states being prohibited from intervening in the internal affairs of other states in any way or form. The situation started to change after WWII that marked huge human rights violations. This led to the establishment of the UN as an international body to prevent states from committing violations against each other. Moreover, the UN made a remarkable change in the perception and practice of humanitarian intervention. For instance, authorizing humanitarian intervention in extreme cases where human rights were believed to be violated. However, this did not mean that states' sovereignty became disregarded as an important principal in international law.

The United States, being the only superpower in the post-Cold War period, began to be more associated with humanitarian intervention as a foreign policy due to the rising of interstate tensions in the 1990s that led to severe human rights violations. The US in that period played the role of a protector of civilians' rights in the whole world since it was the only government capable of intervening to protect civilians. As a result, the United States has initiated many humanitarian and military interventions either individually or in corporation with other international organizations like the UN and NATO.

The civil wars in Europe, Africa, and Asia in the 1990s resulted in both US humanitarian and military interventions to stop human suffering in the civil wars regions. Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, the UNPROFOR in Bosnia, and Operation Allied Force in Kosovo are good examples. Even though the openly proclaimed motives of US interventions in the previously mentioned states were humanitarian reasons, some critics believed that other objectives existed

like controlling Somalia's oil resources and maintaining dominance over Europe by intervening in Bosnia and Kosovo.

The twenty first century marked a new phase in the doctrine of humanitarian intervention in general and US interventionism in particular. Humanitarian crises that happened in the 1990s raised a lot of questions concerning states sovereignty and the responsibility to intervene. This led the ICISS, in 2001, to approve saving civilians in humanitarian crises by any means possible under the principle of the responsibility to Protect (R2P). This presented a turning point in interstates interactions with humanitarian intervention becoming a responsibility of the international community in order to save civilians.

The United States interventionism policy in the twenty first century was pursued as a tool in the American War on Terror after 9/11 attacks. The US military intervention in Afghanistan through Operation Enduring Freedom and the invasion of Iraq in 2003 were considered as harsh reaction to restore US dignity. Both operations aimed at destroying Al-Qaeda and making a regime change in both countries. The United States interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq were criticized for causing high number of casualties without achieving the intended goals, in addition to leaving Afghanistan and Iraq exhausted both economically and politically till today. This pushed the US to initiate reconstruction operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, but both had limited positive outcomes. The United States interventions in the Middle East continued and aimed at eliminating terrorism, especially after the spreading of unrest in the region because of the Arab Spring after 2011.

The Arab Spring in Syria started as peaceful protests aiming at ousting Al-Assad's regime. The conflict escalated to a massive civil war between different sects after Al-Assad refused to step aside. The humanitarian crisis in Syria was characterized by many casualties in addition to many IDPs and refugees in neighboring states. This hard humanitarian situation made the

international community react through humanitarian assistance. The United States was the main provider of humanitarian aids in Syria through the USAID and other partners, with more than 2 billion assistances in the first years.

Along with humanitarian assistance, the US government also initiated military intervention in Syria from 2011 to 2019. The humanitarian conditions in Syria were not enhanced quickly since the humanitarian motives were not the priority of the intervening actors. In other words, America, Russia, and Iran had geopolitical objectives in the region in general and in Syria in particular. America and Russia, for instance, wanted to control the Middle Eastern oil resources and maintain military presences while Iran strove to sustain Shiite political influence in the region through the current Syrian government.

The United States humanitarian and military interventions in the twentieth and twenty first century were mainly driven by humanitarian crises taking place in different parts of the world. In fact, the majority of American interventions were not successful due to the unpleasing results they achieved such as the devastating economic and political outcomes in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria in addition to hard life conditions they caused. However, it is unfair to say that all outcomes were negative. The intervention in the Balkan region for example helped to bring about some rest to the region. Although the US interventions were thought to be driven by geopolitical interests sometimes, the humanitarian motive was not completely ignored by the American government.

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