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Investigating the Democracy Promotion during the Presidency of Barack Obama

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my loving parents and friends who supported me and believed in me, and who have been the guiding force behind my academic accomplishments. Their constant encouragement, understanding, and sacrifices have made this journey possible shaping me into the person I am today.

Mohammed Sami AOUADI

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents and my friends who have always been there for me and who have supported me along the way. Without their encouragement, understanding, and patience, this achievement would not be possible.

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Abstract

President Barack Obama's tenure in office was characterized by a wounded democracy promotion strategy. The Bush administration involvement in forced regime change, the erosion of America's standing as a beacon of democracy and human rights, and the economic crisis in the United States left Obama with a limited scope to pursue a coherent foreign policy agenda. The present research paper argues that most aspects of President Obama's democracy policy represent a significant continuation of the overall direction of US democracy policy. The main distinction is that the United States has now abandoned its overarching foreign policy narrative based on the notion of reshaping the world in its own image. In line with this, U.S. debatable response to the Arab spring was a turning point in democracy promotion. It concludes that U.S. democracy promotion approach during the presidency of Obama was contradictory as the government balanced relations with certain countries and backed democracy promotion with others.

المخلص

لقد تميزت فترة الحكم للرئيس باراك أوباما باستراتيجية لتعزيز الديمقراطية المتأثرة بسبب الضرر التي خلفته إدارة بوش السابقة في تغيير النظام القسري، ومنه ادى الى تراجع مكانة أميركا باعتبارها منارة للديمقراطية وحقوق الإنسان، وايضا الأزمة الاقتصادية في الولايات المتحدة تركت أوباما في نطاق محدود لمتابعة وممارسة أجندة متماسكة للسياسة الخارجية. يسلط البحث الضوء على معظم جوانب سياسة الرئيس أوباما لتعزيز الديمقراطية التي تمثل استمراراً هاماً للتوجه العام لسياسة الديمقراطية في الولايات المتحدة. والتميز الرئيسي هو أن الولايات المتحدة قد تخلت الآن عن سردتها الشامل لسياستها الخارجية استنادا إلى فكرة إعادة تشكيل العالم في صورتها الخاصة. وتماشياً مع ذلك، كانت استجابة الولايات المتحدة على نحو قابل للنقاش للربيع العربي والذي يعتبر نقطة تحول في تعزيز الديمقراطية. يستخلص البحث أن طريقة تعزيز الديمقراطية في الولايات المتحدة أثناء رئاسة أوباما كان متناقضاً من حيث توازن العلاقات الحكومية مع بعض البلدان ودعم تعزيز الديمقراطية مع بلدان أخرى.

List of Abbreviation

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
GJD	Governing Justly and Democratically
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.
JVBT	Junior Varsity Basketball Team
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
TPP	Trans Pacific Partnership
WMD	Weapon of Mass Destruction

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Introduction

Democracy promotion has a complex history shaped by varying interpretations and political perspectives. This dissertation explores its evolution from a contentious subject to a vital aspect of international relations. Since the end of World War II, democracy promotion has played a pivotal role, especially for Western nations like the United States, which endorsed it as a countermeasure against communism. However, the 2003 invasion of Iraq tarnished the U.S. reputation. Despite challenges, democracy promotion remains important in U.S. foreign policy as a reflection of national values and commitment to advancing democratic principles globally.

Former President Barack Obama's efforts to address democracy promotion initiatives are analyzed in this dissertation. Obama faced challenges due to domestic polarization and skepticism toward U.S. democracy promotion. Nevertheless, he persisted in engaging with foreign leaders, fostering coalitions, and propagating democratic governance globally. Skepticism and cynicism toward the U.S. prompted Obama to rebuild trust in its foreign policy through multilateralism and collaboration with other nations and international organizations. The Obama administration also implemented changes and strategic agendas to enhance the credibility and efficacy of U.S. democracy promotion, establishing specialized offices and utilizing new tools and technologies for citizen empowerment.

Through unwavering dedication, the Obama administration reinstated the U.S. standing as a leader in advocating for democratic values worldwide serving as an inspiration for future generations. The subsequent research paper examines Obama's legacy, assessing his contributions to democracy promotion and human rights domestically and internationally. While his administration achieved significant milestones such as the Affordable Care Act, the elimination of Osama Bin Laden, and efforts to combat climate change, criticisms emerged regarding foreign policy decisions and domestic challenges. To comprehend Obama's impact,

it is crucial to consider the positive and negative aspects of his legacy evaluating his influence on American politics and society.

Examining Obama's legacy in the context of the Trump era raises important questions about the future of American democracy and the role of presidential leadership in promoting democratic values. The election of Trump and his actions challenged assumptions and accomplishments of Obama's presidency, including his commitment to multiculturalism. Evaluating Obama's record on democracy promotion requires a comprehensive assessment of both positive and negative aspects while contemplating the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for American democracy. Therefore, this research aims to answer the following questions; how has the complex history and varying interpretations of democracy promotion shaped its evolution from a contentious subject to a vital aspect of international relations? What were the key factors contributing to the decline of democracy promotion during the Obama presidency, and how did the Obama administration's strategies and policies impact democracy promotion efforts? What were the perceptions and attitudes towards U.S. democracy promotion during this period, and what were the consequences and implications of the decline of democracy promotion during the Obama presidency? This research investigates the decline of democracy promotion during the presidency of Barack Obama; a historical analysis based on chronological order provides a useful framework for understanding the key events and policy decisions that shaped this period.

The democracy promotion by the United States has undergone significant transformations over time, shaped by historical events, political perspectives, and changing global dynamics. While democracy promotion has been a core aspect of U.S. foreign policy, the perception of corruption and self-interest has tainted the country's efforts in this regard. This raises the question of how U.S. presidents, particularly Barack Obama, have addressed these challenges and worked to restore trust and credibility in U.S. democracy promotion initiatives.

The current research paper aims at comprehensively explore the subject of democracy promotion, tracing its evolution from a contentious subject to a vital aspect of international relations. In addition, it attempts to analyze the endeavors undertaken by President Barack Obama in promoting democratic values and ideals globally, despite domestic and international challenges. Another pivotal objective is to assess the strategies employed by the Obama administration to overcome skepticism and rebuild trust in U.S. democracy promotion efforts. Equally, evaluating the impact and legacy of President Obama's contributions to democracy promotion and human rights both domestically and internationally lies at the heart of the dissertation.

The Obama administration's prioritization of multilateralism and collaboration with other nations and international organizations had a positive impact on rebuilding trust and confidence in U.S. democracy promotion efforts. President Obama's persistent commitment to promoting democratic governance globally and addressing corruption and self-interest, despite criticisms and challenges faced, played a crucial role in reinstating the United States' leadership in advocating for democratic values and ideals. The examination of President Obama's legacy in the context of the Trump era reveals significant implications for American democracy and raises questions about the future of presidential leadership in promoting democratic values both domestically and internationally.

Several papers have investigated and reported the decline of democracy promotion during the presidency of Barack Obama. The interest of academics, journalists, and political scholars from a variety of professions has been captured by this complicated and varied topic. Many different viewpoints on the topic have been offered in a wide body of literature that has developed over the years. These works, which range from critical evaluations to personal accounts, examine the difficulties encountered, the lessons discovered

"The Obama Doctrine: American Grand Strategy Today" by Colin Dueck this book provided us with a comprehensive analysis of the foreign policy approach and grand strategy of the Obama administration. It helped us to understand the complexities of Obama's approach to global affairs, including his emphasis on diplomacy, multilateralism, and a more restrained military presence. By assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the administration's grand strategy, this book likely offered us a nuanced perspective on Obama's foreign policy, which could have contributed to a more balanced analysis in your research.

"American Foreign Policy: Past, Present, and Future" by Glenn P. Hastedt By exploring the history, evolution, and future directions of American foreign policy, this book provided us with a solid foundation for understanding the factors shaping American foreign policy decisions. It helped to analyze contemporary challenges such as globalization, terrorism, and human rights within the context of historical developments. The critical analysis and thought-provoking questions in the book might have stimulated our thinking and encouraged us to consider different perspectives in this research.

"Democracy Promotion: A Critical Introduction" by Jeff Bridoux: This book likely offered a comprehensive examination of democracy promotion in international relations. It explores the historical context, theoretical basis, and practical implications of democracy promotion, including its motivations, effectiveness, and ethical dimensions. The balanced and nuanced analysis provided by Bridoux, along with the engagement with diverse perspectives and case studies, would have contributed significantly to understanding of the complexities and debates surrounding democracy promotion as a foreign policy tool.

"The Spirit of Democracy" by Larry Diamond Diamond's book provided us with a comprehensive study of the pursuit of democracy on a global scale. By examining countries that have struggled with democratic transitions, exploring the role of various factors such as monarchy, populism, and religion, and sharing personal experiences, this book expanded the

understanding of the challenges and potential paths towards democracy. The meticulous research and the argument that democracy is driven by individual passion rather than external events might have offered you unique insights and a more nuanced perspective on democratization processes.

This dissertation comprises three comprehensive chapters, which shed light on distinct aspects of the background, development, and decline of democracy promotion especially during the presidency of Obama. The first chapter entitled “The Historical Background of US Democracy Promotion” delves into the historical context of democracy promotion in the United States, providing a comprehensive overview of its significance within US foreign policy. Additionally, it examines the impact of the Bush administration on the perception of US democracy promotion, laying the foundation for understanding the subsequent challenges faced by Obama's administration. “Democracy Promotion in the Administration of Obama” analyzes Obama’s approach to democracy promotion amidst various challenges. It critically assesses how Obama responded to the tarnished image of US democracy promotion caused by his predecessor and explores the strategies he implemented to promote democracy effectively during his tenure. The final chapter entitled “Democracy Promotions: Achievements, Implications and Challenges.” investigates the overall legacy of Barack Obama in the realm of democracy promotion. It evaluates his notable achievements and successes while acknowledging the potential shortcomings and negative outcomes that emerged.

Chapter One

The Historical Background of the US Democracy Promotion

This chapter explores the history of democracy promotion by providing a variety of definitions and interpretations depending on historical events and politicians' perspectives. Some define democracy promotion as an effort to promote democratic principles and practices around the world, while others view it as a tool for advancing national interests.

Since the end of World War II, democracy promotion has emerged as an important aspect of international relations particularly for Western countries such as the United States. The post-war period saw the rise of democracy as a dominant political ideology with the United States promoting democracy as a means to counter the spread of communism.

Over the years, different U.S administrations applied democracy promotion in various ways; with some administrations considering it as a core foreign policy objective and others viewing it as secondary. However, the 2003 invasion of Iraq by the Bush administration marked a turning point in U.S democracy promotion efforts as it sparked widespread criticism that damaged the country's image as a promoter of democracy.

Despite these challenges, democracy promotion remains an important aspect of U.S foreign policy as it reflects the country's values and commitment to promoting democratic principles around the world. As such, it is crucial for U.S policymakers to carefully consider their approach to democracy promotion and ensure that it aligns with the country's broader foreign policy goals.

1.1. Defining Democracy Promotion

The concept of democracy emerged in Greece and Italy around 500 BCE, with *demos* meaning the people and *crats* meaning to govern forming the roots of the word. However, nowadays, democracy has become an abstract term that can be challenging to define and can carry various interpretations, depending on who is using it and the situation. Generally,

democracy refers to a political system that meets some basic criteria such as allowing citizens to participate effectively, either directly or through representation. It also requires political equality for both the majority and minorities under the law (Kurki 2).

Democracy is not only about elections, rather it is a distribution of power in which no person or group is denied complete participation in political life. Democracy necessitates checks and balances between the various levels of government national, state, and local, as well as between the government and the general public. Government control over society is checked by factors like independent media, unions, political parties, educational institutions, and democratic rights for women. Individual liberties like the right to free expression and religion must be protected. A democratic government must also be held to account by an electable opposition, and leaders must peacefully transfer control (Epstein 4).

While the term democracy promotion is open to many interpretations, it typically refers to foreign measures that support the establishment or advancement of democracy in other nations. U.S. foreign assistance to promote democracy may concentrate on electoral democracy with a particular emphasis on free and fair elections, or it may represent a more liberal definition of democracy, which includes support for basic rights and principles (1).

Democracy promotion assistance refers to U.S. program and funding levels for democracy promotion activities funded through the international affairs budget, as reported under the Governing Justly and Democratically (GJD) objective in the annual International Affairs Congressional Budget Justification submitted by the Administration to Congress. The GJD objective is described as including actions that promote democracy, human rights, and governance (Lawson1).

Promoting democracy in countries where it does not yet exist or is in danger of declining is done by supporting political and institutional changes. This definition emphasizes the

importance of supporting political and institutional reforms rather than simply promoting democratic values and institutions in general (Diamond 3).

Defining democracy promotion is a complex and multifaceted task that involves creating the conditions and capacities for the emergence and consolidation of democratic governments, societies, and economies, strengthening democratic institutions and practices, and supporting political and institutional reforms that advance the cause of democracy. More research is needed to assess the effectiveness of different strategies for democracy promotion and to identify the most effective ways to foster democratic values and institutions in countries that lack them (Bridoux 22).

Democracy promotion involves advocating for the principles and values associated with democratic governance, such as political participation, civil liberties, rule of law, transparency, accountability, and respect for human rights. And facilitating the establishment and consolidation of democratic systems. It should be differentiated from concepts like democratization, democracy assistance, and democracy support, which encompass various approaches and activities in promoting and supporting democratic processes and institutions. Democratization is the process by which nations experience governmental transformations toward democracy .As seen by theorists of Western democracy, democracy is comprised of two elements: liberal democracy, which includes liberal constitutionalism and fundamental rights as essential elements of effective democratization, and electoral democracy which places emphasis on free and fair elections. In essence, the concept of liberal democracy is frequently used to describe democracy. It has been broadly described as attempts to establish or assist in the establishment of democratic governance throughout nations beyond its borders (23).

There are three strategies or categories for promoting democracy; the use of force, conditionalities, and assistance for democracy. The 2003 Iraq War turned the practice of using

force to promote democracy largely discredited, though not completely, as the intervention in Libya demonstrated. Today, proponents of democracy prefer to employ the other two methods like conditionalities, in contrast, involve the act of linking specific conditions or prerequisites to the provision of aid, trade, or other forms of assistance with the intention of motivating democratic reforms. These conditions encompass aspects such as the promotion of free and fair elections, the protection of human rights, and the establishment of transparent and accountable systems of governance. By utilizing conditionalities, governments can be encouraged to embrace democratic transformations and align their policies and practices with the fundamental values of democracy (24).

On the other hand, democracy assistance is typically understood as the set of technical, financial, material, and symbolic tools offered by organizations dedicated to promoting democracy in authoritarian, semi-authoritarian countries, and nations that are in the process towards becoming democratic. Therefore, democracy support, which is also sometimes referred to as democracy assistance, focuses on assisting their democracy (Lennon 35). Promoting democracy is a complicated, diverse task that has caused a lot of discussion and disagreement. Although there is no single explanation for what democracy promotion is, it typically refers to efforts made by Western nations, especially the United States, to promote democratic institutions and norms in non-democratic nations, all of these definitions share the same common point from different sources that democracy promotion is complex concept to define and it is regarded as part of the political system therefore it has three types such as democratization , democracy assistance and democracy support.

1.1.1 How Did Democracy Promotion Emerge?

The history of US democracy promotion is complex and multi-faceted with many different factors shaping the evolution of this foreign policy tool over time. The spread of various democratic concepts in Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century can be traced back to

1848. World War I and World War II both had at least one side fighting for democracy. In the years following World War II, US policymakers became increasingly concerned about the spread of communism around the world. To counter this threat, the US government began to promote democracy as a means of containing Soviet influence and building a more stable international order (Carothers 123).

During the 1990s, democracy promotion experienced significant progress due to multiple factors. The rapid rise of democracy, the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the swift transition to democracy in Africa, and the continued democratization of Latin America and Asia were among the key events that ignited the third wave of democratic transitions in the 1980s and early 1990s. This wave marked a major surge in democratization, characterized by the fall of communist regimes in Eastern Europe, the end of military dictatorships in Latin America, and the widespread spread of democracy across regions such as Africa, Asia and others, democracy promotion was the response as the expansion of democracy became an important global topic. Thus, this served as one of the motivates for change that was for the better. The ending of the Cold War was the second factor. In Western policy circles, the conflict with the Soviet Union subsided without being replaced by a single overarching security issue. This had a very positive and motivating impact on advancing democracy. All of a sudden, it was no longer true that when the United States or another Western nation crossed international boundaries, they were attempting to influence the politics of another nation (124).

Third reason behind the promotion of democracy in the 1990s was the Western donor community's new practice of tying democracy promotion to the development goal. The development community had a strong belief that nations could grow without having a democratic government in the 1960s, 1970s, and for much of the 1980s. In reality, it was believed that strong-arm governments were actually the greatest for economic growth. For a

generation or two, developing or emerging nations often have to endure periods of authoritarian rule before they can successfully transition to a democratic system (124).

By the end of the Cold War, US democracy promotion efforts expanded significantly as the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe and elsewhere created new opportunities for promoting democratic governance. During this period, the US government provided significant funding and support to civil society groups, election monitors, and other democracy-promoting organizations around the world. In those years, democracy promotion received a major boost because of these three factors; the spread of democracy, the detachment of democracy promotion from the Cold War framework, and the convergence of the donor agenda. The quantity and variety of organizations working on various aspects of democracy building increased (Purdy).

The pro-democracy movement showed two remarkable and praiseworthy characteristics. First, its credibility increased over time. Despite ongoing Cold War speculations, the movement was seen as legitimate and representing its own set of values rather than serving another agenda. Endorsing democracy or at least some of its aspects became more widely accepted. For instance, election observation became a standard practice and new norms were established. A country's refusal to allow international election observers was considered a major concern by the end of the decade. The rise of civil society was also acknowledged and providing external support to it became customary. Another significant development was the convergence of efforts in the United States and Europe. American and European players both believed they had distinct and superior approaches. Nonetheless, there was ongoing collaboration during those years, as evidenced by their joint efforts to support pro-democracy initiatives in Serbia in the late 1990s (Carothers 127). The emergence of US democracy promotion was a complex and multifaceted phenomenon shaped by a variety of geopolitical, ideological, and strategic factors. While the US promoted democracy in many parts of the

world, its efforts were not always successful and often faced criticism for being driven by self-interest rather than a genuine commitment to democracy and human rights.

1.1.2. The Importance of the US Foreign Policy in Global Affairs

The foreign policy of the United States plays a crucial role in shaping global events and maintaining its position as a superpower. The US enormous economy and powerful military give it a significant influence on the world stage. The consequences of its foreign policy decisions are far-reaching and impact other countries and the global system as a whole. Therefore, having a thorough understanding of US foreign policy is essential to comprehending world politics in general. Moreover defending and pursuing the national interest is the basic goals and objectives of a the country's foreign policy, is the answer for those who ask the question of choosing goals in terms of the demands of foreign policy rather than the desires of the American people. This expression is unparalleled in its emotional effect and capacity to influence a discussion of foreign policy. It conveys a feeling of necessity, a threat that is close at hand, and a higher goal. The national interest aims are far more important than any other foreign policy goals. It is presented with great assurance and discussed as if there could never be any ambiguity regarding its meaning (Carpenter).

The primary objectives of US foreign policy is to protect and promote American interests around the world. This includes ensuring access to resources, protecting American citizens and businesses abroad, and maintaining a favorable international environment for American economic and political power. In addition, the US often seeks to promote democratic values and human rights, as well as combatting global threats such as terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Hastedlt 6).

The Reformed America approach advocates for active American involvement in global affairs. They believe that the recent decline in American power is not significant enough to prevent the country from maintaining a dominant global influence. Furthermore, due to its

considerable power and wealth, the United States has a moral obligation to lead on both a political and moral level. The danger to avoid is inaction motivated by a fear of failure. The United States must not retreat into isolationism or adopt a European-style mindset that accepts the limits of its strength and the world as it is. Instead, the US must prioritize its commitment to justice to create a new global order that aligns with traditional American democratic values of freedom and opportunity. Overall, the greatest threat to U.S. national security is an unwavering emphasis on military matters and adherence to power-politics thinking. The United States has a significant responsibility towards truly democratic nations and must strive to encourage non-democratic countries to move towards democracy. Furthermore, the United States has a substantial obligation to the global community to establish an international order that promotes traditional American values (258).

Numerous variables, such as domestic politics, economic interests, and concerns about global security, influence US foreign policy. The president and other powerful figures heavily influence foreign policy choices, but Congress, interest groups, and the media also have a significant impact on how decisions are made, domestic politics have a significant impact on Trump's foreign policy decisions in several ways. Firstly, Trump often presents his foreign policy statements as if he were still campaigning for office, using language to criticize other nations for their policies towards the US and to promote his own political position. Secondly, Trump often focuses on foreign policy issues that are important to his supporters, such as immigration and fair trade. Thirdly, like many other politicians, domestic politics often plays a role in crucial foreign policy decisions. In June 2019, for example, Fox News anchor Tucker Carlson warned Trump against using force in the Iran crisis because it could cost him the election (Tucker 23) .

The United States must be cautious of its associations with unstable regimes, as it may limit its options. It is important for the US to adapt to unpredictability and understand that

complete security is unattainable and striving for it can result in overextension. The America the Balancer viewpoint suggests that the US faces dangers to its national security that are mostly self-inflicted, due to an abundance of security promises made to protect American economic interests. The US has limited obligations to other states, as each state is responsible for protecting its own interests. Similarly, the US has a small obligation to the global community. However, maintaining international order and protecting American national interests are not mutually exclusive goals (Root 43).

The most recent additions to the foreign affairs bureaucracy are organizations that have traditionally been classified as domestic in their concerns and areas of operation. Their participation in foreign policy is analogous with a change that occurred after World War II, when the Defense Department rather than the State Department played a major role in establishing international security frameworks and global arms development programs (Hastedlt 211).

The global context of American foreign policy encompasses more than just a number of present-day challenges and underlying structural characteristics, as constructivists tell us. Additionally, it comprises of worldviews and attitudes. It is becoming more and more evident from responses to international public opinion surveys conducted in the United States and other nations that Americans and non-Americans do not always view the world in the same manner (47).

In response to its America First perspective, the Trump administration has not adopted executive agreements as much as its predecessors have. Instead, it has chosen to leave in place agreements that had already been made, such as the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement and the Paris Climate Agreement. The effect of US foreign policy on international relations is a key indicator of its importance. The US's choices on foreign policy frequently set the example for other countries to follow, and its actions can have far-reaching effects on other nations. For

instance, the US's 2017 choice to leave the Paris Climate Agreement had a big impact on the world's efforts to fight climate change (Nathan 115). US foreign policy is essential in determining world affairs and preserving America's status as a superpower. Its decisions have significant repercussions on other nations and the entire international order. As a result, knowing US foreign policy is essential to comprehending the dynamics of international politics, to sum up what mentioned above, the US foreign policy is a critical component of the country's national security, economic prosperity, and global influence. It plays a key role in shaping the international landscape and promoting America's interests around the world.

1.2. How U.S. Administrations Approached Democracy Promotion

The promotion of democracy by the United States has been approached differently by various administrations in the past. While some administrations have employed military intervention to depose authoritarian governments, others have relied on diplomatic and economic means to push for democratic change. Nonetheless, it is evident that democracy promotion has long been a significant aspect of US foreign policy.

1.2.1. Truman Administration

The Marshall Plan to reconstruct Western Europe and the Point Four Program to offer financial aid to developing nations were just two of the projects the Truman administration launched as part of its effort to promote democracy as a key component of international relations. In an address to a special joint session of Congress, President Harry S. Truman asked for \$400 million in economic aid for Greece and Turkey to help them fend off Soviet-inspired aggression, he stated that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempts at subjugation by armed minorities or outside threats (Hastedlt 14).

1.2.2. Kennedy Administration

In terms of foreign affairs, John Kennedy's first 100 days in office were among the greatest in his career. Kennedy took office on January 21st, 1961. Three days later, he declared that the Peace Corps would be launched as a pilot project through an executive order with George McGovern serving as its head. It would be permanent and Congress would be requested to establish it (164).

Kennedy invited Nikita Khrushchev, the leader of the Soviet Communist Party, to private discussions on international affairs that would be essential to both nations. In a letter, he sent to Khrushchev on February 22, following the victory, Khrushchev had earlier written to Kennedy to express his congratulations. Kennedy's advisers pleaded with him to postpone the meeting; they worried he would misjudge Khrushchev's character and motivations. After the 100 day period, the meeting was set up in Vienna in June, with the main topics of conversation being Laos and Berlin. The meeting was initially regarded as a diplomatic success, but that opinion quickly shifted. Khrushchev appears to have left the summit believing that Kennedy was an inexperienced leader who could be outmaneuvered because Kennedy did not perform well in the private discussions (164).

In April 1961, when he gave his approval for the Bay of Pigs mission, Kennedy made one of his most important foreign policy decisions during his first 100 days in office. It demanded that Cuban refugees be secretly trained to become a paramilitary force. The force would be covertly returned to Cuba, where it would aid in the instigation of a popular revolt intended to topple Castro. The CIA created the strategy during the final year of the Eisenhower presidency (165).

1.2.3. Reagan Administration

Reagan, unlike Nixon and Carter, perceived the Soviet Union for the majority of his administration as a state to be challenged rather than as a potential partner. He described the Soviet Union as an evil empire early in his presidency, asserting that they only acknowledge

morality when it serves their interests, which means they reserve the right to conduct any crime, to lie, and to cheat, also Reagan stated during his 1985 State of the Union speech that We must not break faith with those who are risking their lives on every continent from Afghanistan to Nicaragua to defy Soviet aggression and support rights which have been ours from birth. A part of self-defense is supporting liberation fighters. By adopting this particular tone of voice, Reagan marked a major departure from the international policies of his predecessors, the US would now go beyond just trying to slow the spread of communism by actively working to eliminate communists and their allies from spreading (Reagan Refers to U.S.S.R. as 'Evil Empire' Again).

Reagan's government had a significant presence in Afghanistan by 1985. The Mujahedin, the main Afghan organization that opposed the Soviet Union's invasion, proved to be a powerful fighting force that constrained Soviet troops. The government had given the Mujahedin \$630 million by 1987. Long-term expenses were not free with this assistance, after the Soviet Union departed, Afghan groups joined forces with the Taliban led government, receiving large amounts of U.S. weapons that they later turned against U.S. backed interests. He also promoted democracy as a key component of his foreign policy, backing democratic movements in Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Africa as well as offering support to pro-democracy organizations all over the world (Hastedlt 17).

1.2.4. Clinton Administration

Bill Clinton had a limited background in international politics when he first took office. A number of foreign policy disasters that were brought on by the fall of the Soviet Union and the unpredictability of the post-Cold War world tested Clinton's leadership skills, however President George H.W. Bush deployed American troops to Somalia before Clinton took office. However, a humanitarian mission turned into a violent conflict in October 1993. As support waned, Clinton decided to fully withdraw American forces in March 1994, while UN

peacekeeping forces remained until 1995. The intervention did not result in significant progress, leaving warlords in control and no functioning government restored. The administration also tackled economic challenges in Mexico and Asian markets, and facilitated peace talks in Northern Ireland and the Middle East, which eventually broke down into renewed violence (Riley).

Although President Clinton hoped to become a repairer of the breach, urging Congress to put aside extreme partisanship and instead concentrate on America's mission in his second inaugural address, the ongoing investigations and scandals that dogged his second term and ultimately led to his impeachment would prevent him from accomplishing that goal. Some will unavoidably continue to consider what else might have been achieved during his administration. Nevertheless, Clinton's administration is regarded as one of the most successful of the 20th century because it not only produced important domestic and foreign policy triumphs but also strengthened the country at the start of the new century (Riley).

1.2.5. George W. Bush Administration

The Bush Doctrine's central ideas were already apparent at that point, despite the fact that its unifying statement first emerged in the United States of America's National Security Strategy in September 2002. Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, President George W. Bush told a joint session of Congress that the United States would not distinguish between terrorists who carried out the attacks and those who harbored them, and that we would pursue nations that support or harbor terrorism. Every country and area must now make a choice. You choose to support the attackers, not both of us. In addition, Bush said, Our security will require all Americans to be forward-looking and resolute, to be ready for preemptive action when necessary to defend our liberty and to defend our lives, in an excerpt from an address he gave to the West Point graduating class in June 2002. He further claimed that the meeting point of extremism and technology poses the greatest threat to freedom. The United States

will use its influence to promote free and open societies, it will never allow its military superiority to be questioned, and we cannot let our enemies attack first, according to the National Security Strategy (National Security Strategy of the United States).

The Bush administration served as the foundational argument for the beginning of the Global War on Terror, the attack of Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban, and the invasion of Iraq. Getting those goals accomplished presented challenges. An essential part of the administration's justification for the invasion of Iraq was its alleged possession of WMDs, a claim that was subsequently disproved. Saddam Hussein of Iraq and the Taliban were overthrown with relative ease, but finding Osama bin Laden and bringing freedom to Iraq proved to be far more difficult tasks. The area didn't feel more stable until the Bush administration was almost finished, when its focus shifted away from promoting democracy. As part of its foreign policy, the George W. Bush administration prioritized the promotion of democracy, establishing programs like the Millennium Challenge Corporation to foster economic development and the Iraq War to promote a democratic government in Iraq (National Security Strategy of the United States). To conclude previous US administrations have taken different approaches to promoting democracy around the world. Some administrations have emphasized the use of military force to overthrow authoritarian regimes, while others have focused on diplomatic and economic pressure to encourage democratic reforms, however it is clear that the promotion of democracy has been an important part of US foreign policy for many years, but the effectiveness of this approach is still a subject of debate.

1.3. The Effects of Bush's Administration on the Image of the U.S

Democracy Promotion

During the Bush administration, a mix of diplomatic pressure, financial incentives, and military force were used to advance democracy. This strategy faced particular challenges in

the Middle East and other Muslim-majority regions, where the US was viewed as attempting to impose its values and political system on other countries. However, in Afghanistan, the US was successful in removing an authoritarian leader and establishing an elected government; the new democracy in Afghanistan, while established through the removal of an authoritarian ruler, is currently facing immense challenges and is extremely vulnerable due to the resurgence of the Taliban and the persistent influence of local leaders. Similarly, although Iraq has been liberated from dictatorship, it continues to be plagued by a devastating civil war characterized by widespread violence, resulting in tens of thousands of casualties and a large number of refugees seeking shelter in neighboring countries (Carothers 13).

The outcomes of the Bush administration's pro-democracy campaign in the Middle East were mixed at best. While there were some encouraging developments, such as the largely peaceful elections in Iraq and progress toward elections in Palestine, the overall impact on the region was limited. The Cedar Revolution in Lebanon and President Mubarak's decision to hold direct presidential elections in Egypt were also seen as positive developments, but the region has not experienced a sustained democratic spring as some had hoped. Despite these limitations, the administration's outspoken remarks about the region's need for democracy did have some positive effects. They sparked serious debates on the subject, gave activists more confidence to press for change, and inspired some Arab leaders to implement minor liberalizing reforms. However, the hopes of that earlier time have since faded, and the region continues to face challenges to democratization, including authoritarian regimes and political instability (14).

Moreover, the Bush administration's efforts to promote democracy in the Middle East, the region still largely suffers from authoritarian or partially centralized power. The increased talk of democracy has not led to widespread movements or citizen groups in favor of such change. In addition, recent political reforms proposed by Arab governments tend to follow a defensive

liberalization strategy rather than a strategy of democratization, which involves reducing internal and external pressure for change through small reforms that do not threaten the fundamental systems and structures of autocratic rule, Furthermore the Iraq conflict has seriously harmed any chance of advancing a regional democratic agenda, Arab leaders can use the conflict to reiterate their persistent message to their people about the dangers of swift political change. Tens or even hundreds of Arabs die every day as a result of a democratic experiment in their area, as seen on television by Arab citizens. Other Arab governments feel less freedom to attempt political openings than they would otherwise due to the war's spillover issues, including refugees, new terrorist organizations, and growing Shia-Sunni tensions. More broadly, the fact that the United States, whose actions in the region are generally turned down by Arabs, consistently promotes the democratic agenda damages the idea in the eyes of many Arabs (14).

President Bush managed the passing of the Patriot Act, which gave the government sweeping new powers in the fight against future acts of terrorism, as well as the remaking of the American national security system in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. Throughout the Bush administration, both initiatives, particularly the Patriot Act, caused significant divides among Americans. Bush argued for a preemptive war against Saddam Hussein's Iraq in 2002 and into 2003 on the grounds that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction out of fear of additional terrorist strikes. Although the initial assault and invasion were wildly effective and well received, no weapon mass destruction were ultimately discovered anywhere in the nation, and a vicious insurgency developed that lost the lives of more than 4,000 Americans over the course of the following eight years. Democrats used the war as a major wedge issue in the elections of 2006 and 2008, when they first gained control of Congress and then the White House two years later. The war grew more and more unpopular (Gregg).

The Middle East is deeply mired in nondemocratic politics, divided by violent conflicts in Iraq, Lebanon between Hizbollah and Israel, Palestine, and between Palestine and Israel, as well as gripped by rising Shia-Sunni tensions, President Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's continued claims that the Middle East is still in the process of becoming democratic ring hollow in light of this harsh reality. It is challenging to locate proof of any significant U.S. influence on democracy outside of the Middle East. The search for positive effects is limited because the Bush administration has not made any significant efforts to engage on issues of democracy or political reform in many of the main regions where these issues are at stake, including Central Asia, China, Russia, South America, and South Asia. Due to a fundamental lack of leverage, U.S. pressure on long-standing dictatorships like those in Belarus, Burma, Cuba, and Zimbabwe has had little visible impact, as has been the case for many years (Carothers 14).

After winning his second term in 2004, President Bush made an effort to bring about major changes to Social Security, proposing a plan for partial privatization to ensure its sustainability. However, despite his strong commitment to this cause, his efforts were ultimately unsuccessful in Congress. The president also advocated for significant immigration reform, but his proposals did not come to fruition. The government's budget deficit was exacerbated by the 2001 tax cuts, which reduced government revenue, as well as the costly wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The financial crisis of 2008 further exacerbated the deficit and contributed to the emergence of the right-wing Tea Party movement. The final months of the Bush administration were marked by a major stock market crash, a contentious bailout of financial and auto industries, and a recession that had long-term effects on the U.S. economy and caused millions of job losses (Gregg).

the negative effects must also be considered when evaluating how Bush's policies have affected the status of democracy globally, The Bush administration's strategy to the war on

terror and foreign policy in general has seriously hurt the cause of democracy and the promotion of democracy ,additionally President Bush has closely linked the promotion of democracy over the past four years with a military intervention in Iraq that is generally regarded as illegal, illegitimate, and the source of excruciating human suffering ,The credibility of the very concept of promoting democracy has suffered greatly as a result of this ongoing association (Carothers 15) .

By changing with the notion of establishing a new system through pressure against governments it considers to be security threats, such as those of North Korea, Iran, and Syria, and disguising this approach in terms of promoting democracy, the Bush administration has only made matters worse, as it did by supporting Fatah in the Palestinian elections of January 2006 and the political forces opposed to Daniel Ortega in the Nicaraguan elections of 2006, the administration's tendency to pick sides in certain foreign elections in an effort to produce results favorable to U.S. interests continued the unfavorable perception of democracy promotion as a negative form of power politics (15). As explained in the paragraphs it is evident that the negative effects of the Bush administration's approach to democracy promotion on the US's image as a promoter of democracy were significant, and contributed to a growing skepticism and criticism of US foreign policy around the world, although Bush's administration have some positive outcomes but we focused only in the negative ones.

This chapter has shed light on the challenges and controversies surrounding democracy promotion, particularly with regards to its perceived alignment with national interests. By examining the evolution of democracy promotion over time, we have seen how it has been used as a tool for advancing national interests, but also as a means of promoting democratic principles and practices around the world.

Moreover, this chapter has emphasized the importance of U.S foreign policy in promoting democracy, both in terms of its impact on global governance and the country's reputation as a

leader in promoting democratic values. The chapter has shown how previous administrations' approaches to democracy promotion have differed, with some prioritizing it as a core foreign policy objective and others viewing it as secondary.

In light of the challenges facing democracy promotion in the current global context, this chapter has underscored the need for policymakers to carefully consider their approach to democracy promotion and ensure that it aligns with the broader goals of U.S foreign policy. Ultimately, this chapter has provided valuable insights into the complex and multifaceted nature of democracy promotion, and its significance in shaping the global political landscape.

Chapter Two

Democracy Promotion in the Administration of Obama

This chapter is an insightful and detailed analysis of former US President Barack Obama's efforts to address the widespread perception that the country's democracy promotion initiatives were marred by corruption and self-interest. Despite the many challenges he faced, President Obama remained steadfast in his commitment to promoting democratic values and ideals around the world.

One of the most significant obstacles that President Obama encountered was the deeply polarized and divisive nature of domestic politics in the United States. With the country still reeling from the aftermath of the financial crisis and the divisive 2008 presidential election, President Obama found it difficult to rally bipartisan support for his foreign policy agenda. Nevertheless, he persisted in his efforts to engage with foreign leaders, build coalitions, and promote democratic governance in countries around the world.

Another challenge that President Obama faced was the increasing skepticism and cynicism that many people around the world had towards the United States and its democracy promotion efforts. In the wake of the Iraq War and other controversial military interventions, many people viewed the US as a self-interested and hypocritical actor on the global stage. To overcome this perception, President Obama and his team worked tirelessly to rebuild trust and confidence in US foreign policy.

One of the key strategies that President Obama employed was a focus on multilateralism and collaboration with other countries and international organizations. The Obama administration sought to work with allies and partners to promote democratic governance and human rights around the world. This approach helped to rebuild the US reputation as a responsible and reliable actor in the international community.

In addition to these diplomatic efforts, the Obama administration also implemented a range of governmental changes and strategic agendas to improve the effectiveness and credibility of US democracy promotion initiatives. For example, the administration created new offices and departments within the State Department and other agencies to focus specifically on promoting democratic governance and human rights. They also developed new tools and technologies to help citizens in other countries hold their governments accountable and participate more fully in the democratic process.

Through these and other efforts, President Obama and his team were able to overcome the obstacles that had previously hindered US democracy promotion initiatives and regain the country's reputation as a leader in promoting democratic values and ideals around the world. Despite the many challenges that they faced, the Obama administration's persistence and dedication to democratic governance serve as an inspiration and model for future generations.

2.1. How Obama Reacted to Bush's Democracy Promotion Legacy

Bush's decision on 9/11 to advance democracy was not what set him apart from leaders ; rather, he used it to dramatically increase American military power. That growth was largely accomplished through closer ties with undemocratic friends like Pervez Musharraf in Pakistan and Meles Zenawi in Ethiopia rather than through American invasions. Fighting terrorism under Bush much like fighting communism had during the majority of the Cold War. Prior to Bush's presidency, the United States also collaborated with friendly tyrants, according to Carothers, but despite President Bush's grand freedom agenda, the number of such cases has increased during his term in office (Beinart).

The Obama administration faced significant pressure to reverse the US support for democracy overseas because of the negative impact of the Bush administration's efforts to promote democracy and the prevailing pessimism about the global state of democracy. President Obama and his administration faced a challenging task of developing a new

American foreign policy style that involves restructuring the country's approach to promoting democracy. George W. Bush initially increased the importance of American support for democracy, but his actions later caused significant harm. He created the perception around the world that democracy support was a hypocritical excuse for aggressive intervention and the pursuit of U.S. security goals particularly in regards to the Iraq war and regime change, which led to accusations of double standards. Furthermore, his support of American violations of human rights and the rule of law against individuals caught in anti-terrorism efforts severely damaged America's reputation as a global symbol of freedom (Carothers).

President Obama's early actions marked the beginning of a process aimed at separating the United States from the negative legacy of his predecessor. His election alone sent a strong message about the renewal of American democracy and the power of democratic ideals. One of his first major decisions was to order the closure of the controversial detention facility at Guantánamo Bay within a year, and he later took steps to address other questionable aspects of the war on terrorism. These actions helped restore America's reputation as a democratic nation on the global stage (Bacevich).

Instead of portraying Iraq as a model of American democracy, President Obama's pragmatic approach acknowledges the complex obstacles involved. He demonstrates a willingness to engage in diplomatic relations with adversaries, highlighting a practical stance, he has also discredited the argument for regime change, even though the actions taken by President Obama and his administration helped to begin the process of recovering American democracy's reputation abroad, but they are only a starting point and not the core of a new strategy to advance democracy. The Obama administration will face pressure to do more than just distance itself from the Bush legacy and to reduce the promotion of democracy in general. This pressure comes from various sources, including those who believe that Bush's democracy promotion efforts in the Middle East were unsuccessful, and that Obama should

continue to support friendly Arab autocrats without criticism. Others argue that the United States has been too focused on promoting elections in politically unstable developing countries and should shift its attention to fundamental components like establishing the rule of law and an effective state (Bacevich).

Many people think that Bush's focus on promoting democracy has led the US to overlook its core interests, and there is a need for a more comprehensive realist approach not just in the Middle East and regarding elections but in general. Furthermore, there is a widespread belief that democracy is facing challenges globally for various reasons, which reinforces the need for a more pragmatic approach. A democracy specialist has also expressed concern about a global democratic recession, adding to the overall sense of pessimism, also it is important to exercise caution and moderation in democracy policy, and a careful process of repair and recovery is necessary after the Bush administration. However, it is not recommended for President Obama and his foreign policy team to adopt a comprehensive realist corrective, as some may suggest. While there may be factors that seem to support this change, they are actually a combination of misconceptions and misunderstandings (Carothers).

Despite the challenges faced by the United States in recent years, it remains both possible and advisable for the country to continue playing an active role in promoting democracy abroad. Additionally, Obama's political ideology provides a strong basis for developing a new framework for democracy support. Given these factors, Obama possesses the necessary attributes to lead a successful era of pro-democracy policies and initiatives (Carothers).

Following 9/11 attacks, George W. Bush prioritized democratization in the Middle East. However, several factors contributed to the failure of this well-intentioned goal. These included the association of democracy promotion with the military intervention in Iraq, which did not lead to democracy as easily as hoped, the use of severe counterterrorism measures that contradicted the message of freedom, the tendency to withdraw support when election results

were unfavorable, as seen in the Palestinian territories, and the failure to back up calls for democracy with practical measures in countries such as Egypt and Pakistan (Lagon).

The protests in the Middle East that began in 2011 and resulted in the resignation of Tunisia's President and the unrest in Egypt have presented President Obama with a familiar challenge. Specifically, how to respond to the potential ousting of an autocratic leader in a strategically important partner, Egypt. There are two conflicting pressures on Obama: the pro-democracy protesters and their demand of an immediate shift in power, the alliance with Mubarak who has been a friend of the US for thirty years and that a democratic government led by the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood may not necessarily defend American interests (Lagon).

President Obama has a difficult time balancing these demands because he started his presidency by separating himself from Washington's complicated legacy of promoting democracy. The Obama administration's realistic turn was evident in his refusal to support Iran's inspiring Green Movement in the summer of 2009, presumably to leave the door open for discussion on Iran's nuclear program. The bipartisan democratic consensus of the Reagan, Clinton, and George W. Bush presidencies is now showing signs of increased comfort, these include the speech given by President Obama at the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in 2009, the announcement of a new U.S. fund to support persecuted human rights advocates by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, and the president's 2010 address to the UN General Assembly in which he said there is no right more fundamental than the ability to choose your leaders and determine your destiny. These public declarations now require a record of execution, whether in Egypt or any other nation where democracy is lacking or in danger and where long-term U.S. interests are seriously at risk (Lagon).

However, Obama's greatest act of democratization was his demand that the US stops acting as though it is permanently at war. Bush significantly weakened American democracy

at home by announcing a war on terror that had no time or space bounds and thus justified the use of torture and a significant increase in covert and illegal surveillance. Obama has not gone nearly far enough in putting American counterterrorism strategy under the law. But by merely declaring the war on terror over, he has opened the door for a partial restoration of democratic authority (Beinart).

Obama had many obstacles to overcome as the successor to Bush, including the ongoing threat of terrorism, the economic crisis, and the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Obama suggested historic federal spending during his inauguration speech in front of an estimated 1.8 million people in an effort to revive the economy and restore American image abroad. Three of his signature laws were passed during his first term; an economic stimulus package, legislation expanding access to and lowering the cost of health care, and financial institution reform. Obama also pushed for legislation on financial reform, consumer protection, and an equitable pay act for women. Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009, making him the fourth president of the United States to be awarded. In general, the Obama administration adopted an ambitious agenda of legislative proposals meant to handle a variety of domestic and international policy issues. The administration's policies and achievements have had a major effect on policy and society in the United States and around the globe, even though some of these initiatives were more successful than others. The administration's struggles and failures serve as a reflection of the difficulties of leading in a world that is changing quickly and is increasingly interconnected (Beinart). Overall, Obama's approach sought to repair the damage done to the US reputation as a promoter of democracy and human rights, while also acknowledging and addressing past mistakes and challenges.

2.1.1. How Obama Faced the Different Challenges That Restricted his Ability to Promote Democracy Appropriately

During his presidency, Barack Obama faced challenges in promoting democracy. The rise of authoritarianism globally and pushback against democratic values constrained his efforts. Limited resources and competing priorities like counterterrorism and economic development also posed obstacles. Furthermore, resistance from certain countries made it challenging to promote democracy without undermining local legitimacy. However, Obama encountered criticism from both the left and the right regarding his democracy promotion policies. Some felt he did not do enough, while others believed he was overly interventionist, jeopardizing American interests.

2.1.2. Obama's Foreign Challenges

Obama's Foreign Challenges in promoting democracy refer to the specific difficulties and obstacles that President Obama encountered while trying to advance democratic values and principles in foreign nations during his presidency. Despite his commitment to promoting democracy and human rights as essential components of U.S. foreign policy, he faced several challenges in this pursuit.

2.1.3. Iraq and Afghanistan

The President Obama came into office with two wars, one in Afghanistan and one in Iraq, in addition to an economy that was in disaster. Obama, who opposed President George W. Bush's decision to attack Iraq in 2003, pledged to withdraw American forces as soon as possible during the 2008 election campaign. He outlined a plan in February 2009 to reduce troop levels from 160,000 to 50,000 by August 2010, which included the elimination of all combat troops. He further stated that the remaining troops would depart by the end of 2011. For a number of years, the withdrawal went without any difficulties, in part because Obama was able to build on the successes of Bush's 20,000 additional military surge in 2007 which

had aided the Iraqi government in reestablishing some level of stability in the nation. By 2012, there were only 150 American troops in Iraq, and this number stayed constant for roughly three years, in order to prevent the extremist Taliban regime from regaining power and permitting al Qaeda to once again use Afghanistan as a base for terrorist operations against the United States and its allies. Obama's other war-related campaign pledge was to increase the US military commitment in Afghanistan. Soon after taking office, Obama approved the military's request to send an additional 21,000 soldiers to Afghanistan, bringing the number of American troops stationed there to about 60,000. This decision was originally made at the end of the Bush administration (Nelson).

However, as his first year as president went on, Obama grew convinced that a change in military tactics was necessary so that the Afghan government would ultimately be able to defeat the Taliban on its own. General Stanley McChrystal; a new military leader whom he appointed in June, was tasked with coming up with a new plan of action. McChrystal asked for 40,000 more soldiers and pledged to use them to train Afghan forces to combat the Taliban rather than depending just on American power. Obama declared in a speech on December 1, 2009, at West Point that he had authorized a short-term surge of 33,000 troops after a protracted series of meetings that started in September with the condition that American forces must start withdrawing from Afghanistan in July 2011. Soon after criticizing officials in the administration, the president fired McChrystal and replaced him with General David Petraeus, who had created and carried out the successful operation in Iraq that served as an inspiration for McChrystal's new plan for Afghanistan. After the 2010 midterm elections, congressional Republicans were much more focused on domestic issues than international affairs which enabled President Obama to achieve a complete withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan by 2014 at least in terms of active combat. The number of American troops in Afghanistan, which reached a peak of 97,000 in 2011, steadily decreased to around

12,000 in 2015 before leveling off at that level as the president reluctantly admitted that the war to exterminate the Taliban was still ongoing. The killing of Osama bin Laden by a group of Navy SEALs on May 2, 2011, strengthened Obama's credibility on military issues.

According to intelligence agencies, Bin Laden was most likely concealed in a neighborhood close to Abbottabad, Pakistan. Obama nevertheless authorized the attack despite the fact that he lacked certainty in the situation and was aware of the dangers involved in a military strike. Americans praised the president's decision-making and judgment in celebrating the killing of Bin Laden (Nelson).

Even after American troops killed Bin Laden in May 2011 and started to withdraw from Afghanistan and Iraq, the president increased the strategic use of drones and special forces in a secret war against alleged militants. Drones are remotely controlled, unpiloted aircraft that conduct surveillance and drop precision-targeted bombs (Nelson).

2.1.4. The White House's Approach in Libya Challenges and Regrettable Consequences

The White House additionally collaborated with NATO to support Libyan revolutionaries in their effort to topple Dictator Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi. The administration claimed that because hostilities were not in progress, the War Powers Resolution, which calls for the president to inform Congress before deploying American troops, did not apply. Moreover, Obama and his national security team argued that they were employing an innovative approach for fighting that relied on surgical air and Special Forces attacks rather than widespread troop deployments, multinational rather than unilateral action, and international cooperation rather than armed conflict. However, the administration was left without any tools to control the chaos that followed Qaddafi's assassination because of its dependence on bombing in Libya as opposed to ground forces. The radical mob assault on the US diplomatic

compound in Benghazi, Libya, which resulted in the deaths of four American officials, was one regrettable outcome (Reynolds).

2.1.5. Syria and ISIS

President Obama seemed resolved to get the United States off during the first year of his second term. Even though the brutal dictator had crossed Obama's declared red line by using chemical weapons against civilians, the president chose not to launch missile strikes in Syria in support of rebels fighting the autocratic regime of Bashar al-Assad after sensing the nation's war fatigue and noting opposition from both Democrats and Republicans to additional commitments in the Middle East (Nelson).

Obama chose to refer the situation to Congress instead of launching an air strike on Syria at the last moment. But as a radical group identifying as the Islamic State rose dramatically in the autumn of 2014, the presidential patience gave way to a more forceful new course in the Middle East. The president somewhat eccentrically refers to the Islamic State, also known as ISIS, as ISIL. The Islamic State was a former al Qaeda affiliate that exploited the civil war in Syria and the incompetence of the Iraqi government to acquire territory on both sides of the Iraq-Syria border (Nelson).

As the president admitted, his administration minimized the threat posed by ISIS incursions into Syria and Iraq. In fact, Obama at first labeled these combatants as a JV team. But the President was propelled to act by the Caliphate's steady expansion and the strong public response to ISIS release of videos depicting the graphic execution of two American journalists. Obama announced a strategy to degrade, and ultimately destroy, ISIL through a comprehensive and continuous counterterrorism strategy, in a speech to the country on September 10, 2014. Two weeks later, shortly after directing airstrikes on numerous ISIS targets in Syria, the president gave a speech to the UN General Assembly in which he made an even more fervent call to arms against the self-described Islamic State. By 2016, there

were more than 5,000 American troops in Iraq fighting ISIS, and his government had launched more than 10,000 airstrikes against the radical group (Sinha).

The president went to great lengths to guarantee that the conflict with ISIS would differ from the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq by avoiding the use of muscular power. In addition to a systematic campaign of airstrikes, more soldiers were also sent into the field to support Iraqi and Kurdish forces with training, intelligence, and equipment. Despite the widespread support for taking action against ISIS crimes, the failure of Congress to set restrictions on a new Middle East mission raised questions about the executive branch's authority. Despite legal and constitutional concerns, the actual state of affairs in Syria and Iraq stayed chaotic at the end of Obama's presidency. As a result of Syria's nightmare instability, hundreds of thousands of Syrians escaped to Europe in search of safety from the difficult circumstances in their home country. Along with the military occupation of the neighboring Ukraine ordered by Putin in 2014, growing Russian ambitions in the Middle East under Putin were a cause of frustration. The United States and other European countries in reaction to the Russian occupation imposed economic sanctions on Russia, but they had no effect on the Russian forces withdrawal (Shear).

2.1.6. The Iran Nuclear Deal

Obama's foreign policy objectives went beyond the conflicts that occurred during his time as president. In 2013, at the beginning of his second term, he and the heads of five other countries started talks with Iran that led to a 2015 deal intended to stop Iran from developing nuclear weapons for at least ten years in exchange for the lifting of UN-imposed economic sanctions. According to the deal, Iran gave up 97% of its enriched uranium (Walt).

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the official name of the landmark agreement between Iran and several superpowers, including the United States was made in July 2015. In order to receive billions of dollars in economic relief, Iran promised to shut down a large

portion of its nuclear program and make its facilities more accessible to international inspectors. The deal's advocates claimed that it would reduce the risk of conflict between Iran and its regional rivals such as Israel and Saudi Arabia by preventing a revival of Iran's nuclear weapons program (Robinson).

Based on the interview with Robert Kagan an American scholar, critic of U.S. foreign policy, and a leading advocate of liberal interventionism when he was asked how urgent is the Iran's nuclear issue, Kagan replied "It's very urgent. I think the administration understands that they need to find some answer either diplomatically or otherwise. Secretary [of State John] Kerry said the clock is ticking, and I think that means it's ticking this year"(U.S.News & World Report).

The interviewer asked again about the possibility of a direct contact with the Iranian government, Kagan replied "They should make clear that Iranians need to take seriously that the United States is willing to have a diplomatic settlement of this problem. If not, Iran ought to take very seriously the statements that the president and secretary of state have made about preventing them from having a nuclear weapon" (U.S.News & World Report). In this interview Kagan highlighted the urgency of addressing the Iranian nuclear issue and the need to use diplomatic channels to resolve it. He recommended that the United States should convey its seriousness to Iran while being ready to implement necessary measures to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons if diplomatic efforts are unsuccessful.

2.2. Setting Agreements and Trade Policies

Obama also visited Cuba in March 2016 and reestablished a diplomatic relationship with the nation in December 2014. China and the United States agreed to significantly decrease their carbon emissions in a bilateral climate agreement in 2014. This accord served as the basis for the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris where nearly all countries committed to tracking their emissions and creating reduction strategies. Equally,

Obama negotiated the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) with 12 trading partners in an attempt to bind Pacific countries more closely to the United States than to China. However, TPP was stopped in election-year politics in 2016 when the main candidates in both major parties rejected it, unfortunately, it was never brought before Congress. By the end of Obama's second term, free trade was so divisive that even Hillary Clinton who had previously referred to the TPP as the gold standard in trade agreements was against it (Nelson).

Obama's approach to foreign policy was practical with the exception of his passionate long-term concern about climate change. He did not announce a broad Obama Doctrine like the Monroe Doctrine or the Bush Doctrine; instead, he chose to handle each situation as it emerged around the world on a case-by-case basis (Nelson). Finally, Barack Obama faced a number of challenges that restricted his ability to promote democracy in various parts of the world. This situation was to great extent related to the fact that many countries around the world were experiencing political instability and conflict during Obama's presidency.

2.3. Obama's Democracy Promotion Strategies

President Obama's approach to handling various conflicts reflects a fundamental strategy that should be embraced. By employing a measured yet persistent approach, he can effectively establish the legitimacy of U.S. views on democracy. This strategy involves consistent and clear communication from both President Obama and his top advisers, emphasizing the importance of democracy and human rights within the broader context of international relations. Additionally, President Obama's notable ability to collaborate across party lines is crucial in revitalizing the status of democracy in American foreign policy. The breakdown of the longstanding bipartisan consensus on this issue during the Bush administration was highly detrimental, making Obama's commitment to bridging political divides even more significant. By the end of Bush's presidency, there was a clear divide between Democratic and Republican voters and political elites regarding the significance of promoting democracy

abroad. Reformulating democracy policy requires eliciting thoughts and viewpoints from people on opposing political sides and approaching it as a naturally bipartisan enterprise rather than a one-man mission (Carothers 6).

Third, President Obama's ability to cooperate and form partnerships among multiple actors made him well-suited for democracy support efforts. It is important to shift from a approach that advises other societies, as seen in the Bush administration, on who to elect or what political ideas to embrace. Instead, democracy support should be seen as a genuine partnership between internal and external actors. By fostering increased collaboration with European and international partners dedicated to democracy, American democracy policies and programs can be more effective. President Obama's emphasis on the potential role of government in addressing social issues aligns with the emerging responsibility of new democracies. These democracies face the challenge of proving to their citizens that democracy can successfully address fundamental socioeconomic problems. The previous Washington style of thought, which held that government is more of a problem than a solution, prevented efforts by American democracy aid donors to assist nations in going beyond the establishment of democratic institutions and assisting those institutions in actually providing for their people. Thus, the shift in Washington about the possible benefits of government can help promote democracy in the United States. Furthermore, Obama's democracy policy would also benefit from placing more emphasis on making certain departments of the U.S. government, particularly the United States Department for International Development, which is a government agency responsible for providing foreign assistance and promoting global development and it, is considered as the biggest provider of U.S. democracy assistance (Carothers 7).

Fourth President Obama's unique ability to balance creativity and restraint is crucial when conveying the importance of promoting democracy in U.S. foreign policy. While past

presidents often presented lofty ideals of American democracy, some artistic liberty can be used to benefit the message. However, a certain level of sobriety is necessary, considering the sensitivity of the topic for foreign viewers. President Obama's central message is that everyone, regardless of their level of empowerment, can regain control of their lives. This message is reinforced by the president's personality, political ideology, and life experience (7).

President Obama has followed a strategy of engagement with America's longtime allies. Some close US allies have become worried because of these conflicting signals. Additionally, Obama's tendency to seek diplomatic peace with Tehran, Beijing, and Moscow has regularly alarmed American friends in Central and Eastern Europe, East Asia, and the Middle East (Baker).

Obama was very clear when he stepped into office that he wanted to make strategic moves; normalize ties with Russia, reassure China, and engage Iran diplomatically. This focus on American retrenchment and the accommodation of geopolitical opponents was unsettling to traditional US allies in a number of significant cases, which were not always recognized inside the US. For instance, Obama administration's decision to scale back missile defense plans for Poland and the Czech Republic in the fall of 2009 which was a decision that was announced without extensive consultation was perceived in both of those nations as the result of a US desire to appease Russian objections. Other areas showed the same tendency; traditional US friends in the Middle East, like Israel, Saudi Arabia, and many Persian Gulf nations, were appalled by Obama's management of Egypt, Syria, and Iran. The United States' Middle East allies began to openly question whether the country would continue to support its allies in that region after a series of presidential decisions, including calling for Mubarak to be overthrown, pursuing nuclear detente with Tehran, and basically backing away from Syria's rebels (Dueck 92).

Obama's offshore tendency is clearly noticeable. The president hasn't exactly followed the proponents of offshore balancing in full, though. Obama's administration is still committed to a broad range of military, global, and strategic commitments that go far beyond an offshore role. As suggested by overseas balancers, the Obama administration has not officially dissolved long-standing US alliance obligations in Europe and East Asia (100).

Barack Obama commenced his presidency with very different views on nuclear weapons, nuclear security, and nuclear policy. Obama proposed reviving the global movement for nuclear disarmament, reducing the significance of nuclear weapons for US security, prioritizing a new nuclear arms control agreement with Russia, addressing the risks of nuclear terrorism and security, and changing US nuclear thinking from primacy to sufficiency as part of his broader vision of change. After a time of instability and disruption brought on by 9/11 attacks, it was widely believed that under Obama's leadership, the US nuclear structure would experience something of a sea-change and that nuclear policy would be rationalized and stabilized (Futter 224).

Barack Obama also made it very clear in public that he intended to leave behind Cold War ideologies, an emphasis on Russia, and the remnants of serious nuclear arsenals, but he had very different views about how this could and should be accomplished. Obama specifically attempted to reverse the Bush Administration's policies toward the development of new and more practical nuclear counterforce capabilities and to reduce the significance of nuclear weapons in US security considerations (227).

The determination to achieve a new agreement with Russia to reduce both sides operational nuclear weapons would be an essential component of the Obama Administration's nuclear strategy. Obama intended to replace the 1991 signed first Treaty, which was set to expire in 2009, with a more comprehensive deal with inspections and verification procedures. While a new agreement was designed as the core of a US-Russian reset of relations and an

initial stage for a closer working relationship, Obama also saw it as the first step toward deeper nuclear reduces and towards disarmament in stark contrast to the Bush Administration. The New START Treaty, which was signed in April 2010, committed the US and Russia to reducing their respective numbers of deployed strategic nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles to 1,550 and 700, respectively. Given the difficulties the president had faced at home when it came to approval, the agreement was viewed as a major accomplishment for the Obama Administration (232).

Under President Obama, the United States adopted a hybrid grand strategy that incorporated various elements such as containment and bargaining, however the most consistent and defining aspect of this strategy was a focus on US retrenchment and international accommodation, allowing the administration to prioritize progressive policy initiatives domestically. When evaluating this approach impartially, it is important to consider the successes achieved by the Obama administration in its foreign endeavors. One notable achievement was the successful operation targeting Osama bin Laden's covert base in 2011. (Dueck 100).

The government handled the global financial crisis of 2008–2009 successfully with the help of the US Treasury and Federal Reserve. However, things could have been much worse if Obama continued to wage an aggressive campaign against al-Qaeda using drone attacks, special operations, and surveillance. Although, the administration's strategy of strategic patience toward North Korea is generally acceptable and welcomed. The same could be said about Obama's idea for the US to turn more toward Asia. The avoidance of additional, extensive ground combat entanglements outside of Afghanistan undoubtedly rates as a success in and of itself from the perspective of the American public. However, few concerns emerged; first, the administration has adopted more crucial deterrence, containment, or even in the case of al-Qaeda back up strategies in instances where it has had some success, such as

when it took out Bin Laden, contained North Korea, or resisted Chinese maritime assertion. Second, despite some genuine foreign policy victories, they have been much more modest, uneven, and sporadic than the president has implied. For instance, when seeking re-election in 2012, Obama asserted that he had brought an end to the two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, put al-Qaeda securely on the road to defeat, maintained more than adequate national defenses, launched a brand-new democracy in Libya, and successfully engaged a number of US adversaries through diplomacy (102).

Particularly in the wake of the Arab Spring, Al-Qaeda and similar jihadists have increased their activities throughout North Africa, including in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Nigeria, Egypt, and Libya. Following the removal of American troops from Afghanistan, Al-Qaeda and the Taliban are attempting to reorganize and progress. President Obama permitted the breakdown of allied status negotiations in Iraq, which resulted in the full withdrawal of US forces from the country, leaving Iraq as yet another platform for both Iranian influence and terrorism. The majority of Iraq's Sunni Arab provinces, as well as sizable portions of Syria, are now under the authority of the al-Qaeda splinter organization known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Right now, ISIS is seen as a direct danger to the homeland of the United States and its European allies (Gilpin 194).

President Obama assisted in the overthrow of an American ally in Egypt by supporting the election of Islamists who publicly oppose US foreign policy objectives. As a result, the US is now despised by all Egyptian political parties. President Obama advocated for the overthrow of Syrian President Assad, support of rebels who are more moderate, and the suppression of the spread of Islamist extremism in an effort to uphold humanitarian principles while avoiding US military involvement. None of these objectives were actually carried out or accomplished because the civil war in Syria turned into a disaster for the entire area and a haven for violent jihadists. In Libya, President Obama supported the assassination of Muammar Gaddafi but

gave the new government little in the way of technical, political, or material assistance. Now a failed state, Libya serves as a heaven for warlords, organized crime, and Islamist militants (194).

Obama's overall plan for global retrenchment and accommodation has already largely accomplished what he set out to do, which was to redirect American national resources and focus away from national security concerns and toward the expansion of domestic progressive reforms. He genuinely think that these liberal domestic policies in sectors like finance and healthcare will increase American economic strength and competitiveness (Dueck 107). These are just a few examples of the strategies and approaches that characterized Obama's presidency also there are other achievements in different fields among them on the national agenda. Furthermore, he made a point of promoting a progressive agenda emphasizing social fairness, economic opportunity, and environmental sustainability.

In summary, former President Barack Obama's approach to foreign policy was marked by a strong commitment to repairing the damage done to the United States' reputation as a promoter of democracy and human rights. Through a variety of strategies such as increased support for civil society organizations, diplomatic efforts to resolve conflicts, and the provision of aid to countries affected by humanitarian crises, Obama sought to promote democratic values and human rights on the global stage.

At the same time, Obama was willing to acknowledge and address past mistakes and challenges Additionally, Obama's presidency was characterized by a commitment to promoting a progressive agenda focused on social fairness, economic opportunity, and environmental sustainability.

While Obama faced a number of challenges that restricted his ability to promote democracy in various parts of the world, his legacy as a champion of democratic values and human rights will continue to inspire future generations. Overall, Obama's approach to

foreign policy serves as a model for leaders seeking to promote democratic values and human rights in the face of complex global challenges.

Chapter Three

Democracy Promotions: Achievements, Implications and Challenges.

This chapter delves into the legacy of President Obama, exploring the positive side of his administration and evaluating his contributions towards democracy promotion and human rights both at home and abroad. Obama's tenure as the 44th president of the United States was marked by significant accomplishments, including the passage of the Affordable Care Act, and the successful elimination of Osama Bin Laden. Moreover, Obama's foreign policy initiatives aimed at strengthening US relationships with countries such as Cuba and Iran, and his efforts to address climate change through the Paris Agreement, were praised by many.

However, to fully understand Obama's impact on American politics and society, we must also consider the negative side of his legacy. His administration's foreign policy record, including its handling of the war in Afghanistan and the use of drones in counterterrorism operations, has been criticized by both the left and the right. Domestically, Obama's legacy has been complicated by the issue of domestic terrorism, the ongoing immigration policies debate, and the Syrian Refugee Crisis. As we explore both the positive and negative sides of Obama's legacy, we will gain a deeper understanding of his place in American history and his impact on the country's political and social landscape.

Obama's Legacy in the Age of Trump raises important questions about the future of American democracy and the role of presidential leadership in promoting democratic values at home and abroad. Trump's election and subsequent actions have challenged many of the

assumptions and achievements of Obama's presidency, including his commitment to multiculturalism and inclusivity. As we evaluate Obama's legacy in the age of Trump, it is important to consider both the positive and negative aspects of his record on democracy promotion, and to reflect on the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for American democracy.

3.1. Analyzing Obama's Legacy on Democracy Promotion

The legacy of former President Barack Obama on democracy promotion has been a topic of analysis and evaluation. During his presidency, Obama emphasized the importance of promoting democracy and human rights around the world. He implemented policies and initiatives to support democratic movements and institutions, such as increasing aid to civil society organizations and promoting free and fair elections. However, his approach also faced criticism for being inconsistent and not doing enough to address authoritarian regimes. Overall, the impact of Obama's legacy on democracy promotion is still being debated and evaluated by scholars and policymakers.

3.1.1. Obama's Actions and Achievements

When President Barack Obama's term ended on 20 January 2017, his foreign policy accomplishments were still developing. On 10 February 2007, Obama declared his intention to run for president and spoke about the need for change in both politics and policy-making in Washington. In terms of foreign affairs, he highlighted the importance of using a multi-faceted approach to combat terrorism, including military, economic, and intelligence resources. He also gave a speech when he announced his candidacy suggesting that in order to defeat their enemies, they must focus on rebuilding relationships with the allies and promoting values that bring hope and opportunity to people around the world. By doing so, it will create a stronger global community that is better equipped to face challenges and overcome obstacles. Obama received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009 largely due to the hope

his presidency brought for diplomatic and joint efforts on crucial global issues such as counterterrorism and climate change. However, after eight years, this hope seemed to be more present in his public speeches than in his actual policy decisions (Wilbur 93-95).

Barack Obama made history as the 44th President of the United States on January 20, 2009. He was the first African American to hold the highest office in the country, and he believed in making America a more inclusive nation. He was determined to provide affordable healthcare to all citizens, tackle climate change, and bridge the political divide. Obama first caught the nation's attention when he delivered a powerful speech at the 2004 Democratic Party National Convention as an Illinois state senator. Despite facing staunch opposition from the Republican Party throughout his presidency, Obama was proud of his achievements in office after two terms. He successfully pushed through several landmark policies, despite partisan opposition. However, with the election of Donald Trump on January 20, 2017, much of Obama's foreign and domestic achievements were threatened. Trump campaigned on the promise of undoing much of what Obama had accomplished, leaving Obama's legacy uncertain (Wallenfeldt).

During his second term, Obama's approval rating among the American populace improved, reaching its peak at approximately 60 percent in the final months of his presidency. Compared to recent presidents, the public also ranked him favorably. According to a Quinnipiac University poll released in January 2017, 29 percent considered him the best president since World War II, narrowly trailing Ronald Reagan, who was selected by 30 percent and significantly ahead of all other postwar presidents (Nelson).

When Obama became president, the country was in the midst of an economic crisis that could have led to a second Great Depression. However, he and the Democratic-controlled Congress implemented a significant stimulus and public works initiative that ultimately helped to revive the economy. By the end of his tenure, the unemployment rate, which had

spiked to 10 percent from 7.8 percent in January 2009, had dropped to 5 percent. Despite facing strong opposition, Obama persevered and achieved his goal. Obama held a firm stance against the U.S. involvement in the Iraq War even before he assumed office as a Senator in January 2005. Later, as President, he was resolute in his decision to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq, despite the opposing views of some of his generals who advocated for a continued military presence in Iraq beyond 2011. Obama's influence on American society could be most significant in preventing crises from occurring. In 2009, despite facing an economic disaster, the country did not fall into another Great Depression. Similarly, instead of escalating military actions, the nation reduced its troop involvement in conflicts. The endurance and shape of Obama's policy changes are uncertain, especially those that relied on executive action alone, which are the most vulnerable to reversal by future presidents (Wallenfeldt).

Due to congressional obstacles, President Obama took executive action to advance his policy goals. In June 2012, he granted a two-year reprieve from deportation and work permits to certain young immigrants. In February 2014, he signed an executive order to raise the minimum wage for federal contract workers to \$10.10 per hour. In August 2015, he introduced new climate regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the power industry. The U.S. also played a leading role in negotiating and implementing the Paris Climate Agreement under Obama's leadership (Wallenfeldt).

3.1.2. Barack Obama's Strategies for Democracy Promotion

Barack Obama pursued several strategies to promote democracy around the world. These strategies included supporting civil society organizations, promoting human rights, and providing foreign aid to democratic governments. Therefore, the positive outcomes of Obama's democracy promotion strategies include the successful transitions to democracy in Tunisia and Burma, increased political participation in countries such as Nigeria and Kenya, and the strengthening of democratic institutions in countries like Ghana. However, there were

also negative outcomes associated with Obama's democracy promotion efforts. For example, in countries such as Egypt and Libya, U.S. interventions contributed to political instability and conflict. In addition, some critics argue that Obama's democracy promotion policies did not go far enough, as they were often tempered by geopolitical considerations and a reluctance to confront authoritarian regime (Carothers 6).

President Obama visited Naypyidaw, Myanmar, where he urged President Thein Sein to maintain the country's progress in transitioning from a reclusive military dictatorship to a budding democracy. During their meeting, Obama encouraged Thein Sein to pursue political and constitutional reforms and emphasized the need to end the systematic persecution of Muslims in western Myanmar, which has sparked global outrage. Acknowledging that change is difficult and not always straightforward, Obama expressed concern about the ongoing violence against Muslims and the lack of progress in constitutional reforms (Landler and Fuller).

Thein Sein, a retired general known for his reformist agenda, assured Obama that they were addressing these concerns and recognized the need for action. Obama also planned to meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the opposition leader, and young Burmese citizens to inspire hope and support in their country's struggle to overcome decades of military dictatorship and resolve ethnic conflicts (Landler and Fuller).

During Barack Obama's presidency, the United States provided substantial financial assistance to Ukraine while withholding lethal support to prevent escalating tensions with Russia. Since 2014, over \$306 million in life-saving assistance has been granted by the United States, addressing urgent needs like food, shelter, clean water, and protection for vulnerable groups, including the elderly. An additional \$45 million in humanitarian aid is planned for Ukraine. The relationship between the United States and Ukraine is crucial for ensuring security, democracy, and human rights. The Obama administration maintained support for

Ukraine's deep and comprehensive reforms, necessary for achieving its European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations. Despite continued Russian aggression, efforts were made to protect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity (Gollom).

Miller also advised the Obama administration to follow the precedent of the Bush and Clinton administrations by expressing support for Ukraine's eventual membership in NATO. However, he emphasized that the United States is explicitly and formally obligated, through the Tri-Partite Agreement signed on January 14, 1994, to support Ukraine in the face of any military, economic, or political threats to its sovereignty, territorial integrity, or independence. In exchange for relinquishing its position as the third largest nuclear arsenal, Ukraine received a solemn commitment from the U.S. to protect it from external threats through political, military, or economic force. This commitment was reaffirmed by the United States-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership signed on December 19, 2008. Miller advised the Obama administration to consider this commitment as a solid framework for security policy and recommended the establishment of a platform similar to the Gore-Kuchma Commission, where regular meetings can be held to discuss shared issues and resolve outstanding challenges, thereby strengthening the formal government-to-government relationship and building upon previous agreements (Klump).

In 2009, Obama received the Nobel Peace Prize. Even though some people in America thought this was controversial, the Nobel Committee gave him the prize because his administration worked to improve relationships between different countries and people. Under Obama's leadership, the US reduced its nuclear weapons by 10% and tried to reduce the number of conflicts involving the American military (Regoli).

It highlights how Barack Obama promoted democracy globally, with mixed results. Positive outcomes include transitions in Tunisia and Burma, increased political participation in Nigeria and Kenya, and stronger democratic institutions in Ghana. Negative outcomes

involved instability in Egypt and Libya. Obama's visit to Myanmar aimed at reforms and addressing persecution. The US provided aid to Ukraine while protecting sovereignty.

Obama's efforts earned him the Nobel Peace Prize.

3.1.3. Negotiations during Obama's Presidency

Collaboration and negotiations shaped Obama's foreign policy during his presidency. He addressed major issues like Afghanistan, Iraq, Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Iran, and North Korea's nuclear programs. Obama pursued diplomacy and multilateralism, building coalitions and seeking solutions. Unexpected challenges arose in Libya and Syria, testing his use of military force. Despite criticism, his approach was pragmatic, prioritizing long-term stability and peace.

3.1.4. Obama's Emphasis on International Collaboration

The Obama administration consistently emphasized multilateral engagement and cooperation in its foreign and national security policy. This approach was presented in presidential speeches, strategy reports, and executive appointments. It was a sharp contrast to the perceived unilateralism of the previous administration, particularly in its pursuit of the war on terror and the Iraq War. The Obama administration believed that working with other nations was essential for achieving international security and stability and promoting democratic values around the globe (Wilbur 96).

The idea describes the foreign and national security policy principles of the Obama administration, the approach was in contrast to the perceived unilateralism of the previous administration, particularly in its pursuit of the war on terror and the Iraq War.

President Obama's foreign policy approach was distinct from that of George W. Bush. While the Bush administration emphasized promoting democracy, using force, supporting free markets, and taking unilateral action, the Obama administration took a different approach. Obama prioritized multilateral engagement and cooperation to further US interests

abroad, in contrast to the perceived unilateralism of the Bush administration, especially in its handling of the war on terror and the Iraq War (Nau).

Here is some one of Obama's administration approach to foreign policy emphasized on multilateral engagement and cooperation. Some specific examples of his multilateral engagement include:

The Obama administration placed a significant emphasis on fostering closer ties and collaboration with the United Nations and other multilateral organizations as part of its foreign policy approach to advance the interests of the United States on the global stage. This approach involved actively engaging in diplomatic negotiations, participating in international forums, and working collectively with other nations to address pressing global challenges such as climate change, nuclear non-proliferation, and human rights (Brimmer).

During the Obama administration, the United States government played a crucial role as a major donor to various multilateral health organizations, demonstrating a commitment to global health initiatives. Notably, substantial financial support was provided to initiatives like Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, which aimed to improve access to life-saving vaccines for children in developing countries, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, which focused on combating these major infectious diseases worldwide. This funding bolstered international efforts to combat these health crises and save lives (Moss et al).

President Obama emphasized the importance of safeguarding America's security interests in the Asian region, particularly in light of potential cutbacks in overall U.S. military spending. Recognizing the significance of the Asian continent in terms of geopolitical dynamics, economic growth, and regional stability, he underscored the need to protect and sustain the investments made by the United States in Asian security. This commitment aimed

to maintain strong alliances, strategic partnerships, and military presence to ensure stability, peace, and the protection of American interests in this vital region (Lieberthal).

In the first six months of his presidency, President Obama demonstrated his commitment to engagement by traveling abroad extensively. He visited large and small countries, including Russia, Ghana, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. In Egypt, he delivered a speech at Cairo University calling for a new beginning between the US and Muslims worldwide. He also attended three European summits and signed agreements to regulate the global financial system, address climate change, and promote security in Afghanistan. According to Brendan J. Doherty's research on presidential travel, Obama spent 25 days or 14% of his first six months in office on international trips (*Historic Commitment to Protecting the Environment and Addressing*).

This brief overview of the Obama administration's foreign policy choices and debates shows that the issues involved in defining American interests in the world are complex, and cannot be reduced to a simple choice between unilateralism and multilateralism. While the Obama administration made significant changes, such as withdrawing US troops from Iraq, the difficulties of shifting the US role in the world were evident in the return of troops and the postponement of a full troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. The US was the primary force behind military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, despite other countries' participation. Obama pursued multilateral policy making in areas such as the environment and trade, but faced domestic political obstacles. His reluctance to engage in conflicts such as the Syrian civil war or remain engaged in chaotic states like Libya may have allowed terrorist networks like ISIS to expand. While it is too early to establish Obama's foreign policy legacy definitively, this appraisal finds mixed success with his goals and reactions to unexpected events in the world (Wilbur 107).

3.1.5. Obama's Pivot to Asia Balancing Diplomacy, Military, and Economic Interests

The recent unexpected death of North Korea's leader Kim Jong Il highlights the importance of the United States' ability to collaborate not only with its allies but also with China in managing the major threats in Asia. Consequently, it is crucial to strike the right balance in America's overall strategy toward Asia. The Obama administration's approach to Asia has undergone significant changes in recent years. President Obama emphasized this approach during a recent trip to Hawaii, Australia, and Indonesia, outlining an integrated strategy that spans from the Indian subcontinent to Northeast Asia. The strategy covers diplomatic, military, and economic aspects and has the potential to significantly influence the U.S.-China relationship. The underlying message is that the United States intends to lead in Asia for many years to come. Obama assumed the presidency as the first Pacific president, convinced that his predecessor's administration did not pay enough attention to regional issues in Asia and that the United States should restore and strengthen its traditional engagement there. This effort gained momentum as China's Asia policy became more assertive in 2010, and as the United States' military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan declined significantly in 2011 (Lieberthal).

The Obama administration's shift towards Asia seeks to establish a more balanced approach that encompasses economic, diplomatic, and security aspects. The recent ratification of the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement and efforts to establish the TPP are crucial steps towards achieving this objective. However, this new integrated Asia strategy runs the risk of overreaching by creating unrealistic expectations and feeding suspicion in China, potentially resulting in a more contentious U.S.-China relationship. This could also lead to other Asian countries misinterpreting American intentions and strategies in the region. Therefore, it is essential for American officials to exercise caution in their language and avoid unnecessarily

increasing distrust and tension. Communication and cooperation between the United States and China will be particularly important during the upcoming period with North Korea, which China regards as a significant security concern. If American rhetoric fuels strategic distrust in Beijing, cooperation on this issue will be much harder to achieve. Although significant progress in U.S.-China relations is unlikely during the upcoming year due to the elections in both countries, the United States must not overlook the importance of improving its relationship with Beijing as part of any successful regional or global strategy. The success of other Asian countries alone will not achieve the desired regional outcomes that Obama is seeking. Both the United States and China must recognize that they are better served by adopting positions that cultivate mutual respect concerning their capabilities and goals, leading to more cautious behavior and a greater willingness to cooperate where possible. At this point, it is too early to determine if Obama's November trip has laid the foundation for a genuinely balanced and sustainable strategy in Asia (Lieberthal).

3.1.6. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) the Agreement to Limit Iran's Nuclear Program

In 2015, the Obama administration successfully negotiated a historic agreement between seven nations to limit Iran's nuclear weapons development in exchange for lifting some economic sanctions. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was reached between Iran, the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, Germany, and the European Union. As part of the agreement, Iran agreed to remove materials that could be used to make a nuclear weapon and to allow international inspections. Although the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) had widespread international support, it was met with opposition from Republicans and some concerns from Democrats in the United States Congress. Critics were skeptical about the effectiveness of inspections in ensuring compliance with the agreement and were worried about the potential danger to Israel from an empowered

Iran. The Obama administration agreed to let Congress vote on a resolution to disapprove the agreement, but it failed to pass due to the president's ability to veto and enough support to uphold the veto. However, since the agreement was not a treaty, it could be altered by future administrations. In May 2018, President Trump decided to withdraw the United States from the agreement. And it has resulted in several consequences. It has reduced confidence and trust in important global organizations and agreements that are essential for maintaining worldwide security. In particular, it has impeded global attempts to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons by weakening a significant and successful agreement designed for that purpose. Additionally, Iran has resumed some of its nuclear activities as a response to the US exit from the agreement (Collinson).

3.1.7. The Obama Administration's Diplomatic Efforts to Improve Relations with Cuba and North Korea

The Obama administration worked to improve relations with Cuba and North Korea. During the early Cold War, the US supported the Batista regime in Cuba because it was anti-communist. However, after Fidel Castro came to power in 1959, the US cut off diplomatic ties and imposed a trade embargo. Over 50 years later, the Obama administration re-established diplomatic relations, allowed some travel and trade, and removed Cuba from the list of state sponsors of terrorism. Negotiations with North Korea were more difficult due to their nuclear tests during Obama's presidency, which prevented a non-proliferation agreement. Despite this, Obama kept his promise to pursue diplomacy with US adversaries and achieved some successes (Wilbur 103). In conclusion, the titles discusses how Obama administration prioritized international collaboration, promoted global security, and pursued diplomatic engagement, but faced challenges and mixed success in achieving its goals.

3.2. Obama's Military Foreign Challenges

One of the primary obstacles encountered by the Obama administration concerning foreign policy was determining the appropriate employment of military force. Given the existing presence of American troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, Obama was tasked with fulfilling his campaign pledges to restore stability in both countries. Furthermore, he had to weigh the pros and cons of dispatching troops to Libya and Syria to address security and humanitarian concerns stemming from their respective civil wars. The emergence of ISIS in the Middle East further complicated matters, prompting a reassessment of the necessity for US military intervention in the region. The Obama administration also spearheaded global initiatives aimed at halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons in Iran and North Korea, culminating in a diplomatic agreement with Iran but facing obstacles with North Korea. Throughout these challenges, Obama upheld his commitment to multilateralism, but his perceived lack of decisive action and timeliness on critical security issues drew criticism (99).

After taking office in 2009, President Obama initiated a review of US strategy in Afghanistan. He initially increased the number of US troops in the country by about 17,000, bringing the total to nearly 70,000. In the fall, the Obama administration determined that a broader counter-insurgency operation was needed to establish functioning infrastructure and institutions. In December, Obama announced that an additional 30,000 troops would be sent to Afghanistan for 18 months to establish security and stability. The American forces achieved some success in defeating the Taliban and was further strengthened in 2011 when US Special Forces killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan. In 2012, Obama traveled to Afghanistan to sign a strategic partnership agreement stating that the US would withdraw combat forces and turn over security to Afghan forces by the end of 2014 (Waldman). This paragraph describes the actions taken by the US in Afghanistan, including increasing the number of troops, launching a wider counter-insurgency operation, sending a surge of troops

to defeat the Taliban, and signing an agreement to withdraw combat forces and transfer security responsibilities to Afghan forces.

Besides continuing military operations, Obama was confronted with unforeseen foreign affairs dilemmas that challenged the US's willingness to employ military force. These issues were posed by the civil wars in Libya and Syria. During the Libyan conflict, the Obama administration opted to get involved for a short duration, while in Syria, it ultimately failed to fulfill its vow to intervene in the event that the Syrian government employed chemical weapons. In either instance, Obama affirmed that the US would act together with other countries, but the final decision to act or not hinged on the US's interests and the backing from political leaders and the general public. In 2014, Libya was floded in another civil war, which created an environment for terrorist organizations to thrive. In 2016, Obama confessed that his biggest mistake during his presidency was not having a plan for the aftermath of the Libyan intervention, despite still justifying the intervention itself. He admitted that the country was in turmoil and that the mission had failed. The US military action in Libya shared similarities with that of Afghanistan and Iraq in that US officials prioritized the removal of undesirable individuals while neglecting post-war stabilization. This critique of the Bush administration was now relevant to the Obama administration as well, as noted by an analyst (Kuperman).

Russia eventually brokered a deal that mandated Syria to destroy its stockpile of chemical weapons, but the civil war continued, and the Assad government faced no consequences from the international community for its actions. The ISIS terrorist group took advantage of the conflict and established a base in the war-torn nation. As Obama's term in office was coming to an end, his administration was widely criticized for not acting on its warning to use military force in Syria in case of a chemical weapons attack. One academic commented that in seeking to avoid the overly aggressive foreign policy of the Bush administration, Obama went too far

in avoiding confrontations, and failed to bolster US influence and power in attaining its aim of a more secure and peaceful world (Lucas) .

In 1945, for every American receiving Social Security benefits, there were 41 people working to support them. However, by 2030, this number is expected to drop to just two workers for every American receiving Social Security and Medicare benefits. This is a huge challenge that needs a president to take bold action. Unfortunately, Obama, like Bush and Clinton before him, gave up on entitlement reform after realizing the political difficulties involved and stopped talking about this huge problem. On the foreign policy front, Obama inherited a difficult situation and began to withdraw our nation from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, following the wishes of most Americans. He also made the wise decision to end the U.S. isolation of Cuba. However, his initial failure to recognize the threat posed by the Islamic State is puzzling and suggests a lack of understanding about the appeal of jihadism. In Syria, America's hands-off approach to the civil war disappointed many U.S. allies and helped trigger a massive refugee crisis that is reshaping European politics. Obama's insistence that his only options were either a full-on ground war against the Assad regime or occasional airstrikes is not just self-serving; it is wrong. Meanwhile, China has continued to expand its presence in the South China Sea and improve its relations with neighboring countries without any meaningful response from the U.S. It was once unthinkable that traditional U.S. allies like South Korea might choose to partner with China, but now it is a real possibility. Given all this and Russia's growing cyber threat, it is hard to look at where America stood in the world when Obama took office in 2009 and where it stands now and conclude that our nation is safer (The San Diego Union-Tribune Editorial Board).

3.3. The Negative Side of Obama's Legacy

The Negative Side of Obama's Legacy refers to the criticism and controversies surrounding the presidency of Barack Obama, particularly regarding his policies and actions

that some see as harmful to the country. This includes issues such as increased national debt, the Affordable Care Act Obama care, foreign policy decisions, immigration, and terrorism. Despite Obama's achievements in areas such as healthcare reform, economic recovery, and social justice, his legacy is viewed negatively by some due to these controversial issues.

The Obama administration was not very open and was often hostile towards the media, more so than any administration since Nixon's. The report showed many examples of whistleblowers being punished and public documents being hidden from the public. This goes against Obama's promise to have the most transparent administration in history (The San Diego Union-Tribune Editorial Board).

During his presidency, Obama was skilled at controlling the news cycle and steering conversations to his advantage, which helped him to avoid criticism and negative attention. He and his team went to great lengths to downplay any signs that his policies were not effective. While most presidents engage in some level of media management, Obama and his close associates pushed the boundaries further. Here are a few examples of how they did it (Margolis and Noonan 157).

The Obama administration used taxpayers' money to fund bloggers who would intentionally disrupt and bully individuals or groups with opposing political views online. It is shocking to think that the Justice Department, whose role is to ensure justice without any political agenda, actually hired bloggers to post anonymous comments on news websites to counter any negative stories about Obama, Holder, and the Justice Department. This is a complete waste of taxpayer's money and a clear violation of the agency's responsibility (Torossian).

As the 2012 election was approaching, Obama needed to convince people that the economy was improving. However, the government reports kept showing a disappointing reality of a slow and struggling economy, which frustrated him. One such example was the

release of food stamp data, which typically comes out at the end of each month. In October 2012, the numbers were particularly grim, with a record high of 47.1 million people using food stamps. The last report on food stamp usage before the election was supposed to be released about a week before the election, but it was delayed until November 10, four days after the election. This delay was unexpected and inconvenient (Margolis and Noonan 157).

The ATF started a project called Project Gunrunner to stop American guns from going to Mexican drug cartels. This project began under President Bush and continued under President Obama. The largest operation under this project was called Operation Fast and Furious. It delivered about 2000 guns across the border. However, things didn't go as planned. The ATF lost track of many guns and some were used in crimes. The Mexican government says at least 150 Mexicans were killed or wounded with these guns and no cartel leader has been caught using one (Ellingwood et al).

The Obama administration tried to hide the truth about Operation Fast and Furious. They even tried to blame President Bush for it. Attorney General Eric Holder said he did not know about the operation. When Congress investigated, Obama refused to give them any documents and claimed executive privilege. Congress voted to hold the Attorney General in contempt with support from both parties. Over 100 people, including Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry, were killed with guns provided by the US government. Obama and Holder lied about the operation and tried to stop the investigation (Silverleib).

President Obama believed that if he were nice to people who did not like America, they would change their minds. Therefore, he changed immigration laws without Congress's approval to make it easier for refugees and asylum seekers who had helped terrorists a little bit to come to the US. Obama's team said this was just common sense. They said some people might have helped terrorists because they were forced to. Obama thought it was more important to give these people a chance than to keep Americans safe. In 2015, when millions

of Syrian and Iraqi refugees came to Europe, world leaders asked the US to help. Obama was happy to do this and planned to let 10,000 Syrians come to the US in 2016. He said they would be checked carefully before they were allowed in (Ross).

There were three problems with Obama's plan to let Syrian refugees come to the US. First, refugees in Europe were causing a lot of trouble. There were more rapes, robberies, and attacks. This made people in Eastern Europe angry. Second, Obama's own security experts said they could not check the refugees well enough to make sure no terrorists got in. Third, most Americans did not want the refugees to come. State governors said they would not let them in. But Obama did not seem to care what people wanted (Vespa).

The killing of Osama bin Laden in May 2011 marked a significant moment in the war against terrorism, but it was also a missed opportunity. Had Obama prioritized defeating al-Qaeda over taking credit for bin Laden's death, it could have dealt a severe blow to the organization. When Bin Laden killed, the Marines found valuable information, but Obama rushed to announce the news of his death instead of waiting for the information to be translated and analyzed. This impatience prevented the capture or elimination of most al-Qaeda leaders. Allegedly, Obama used the news of bin Laden's death to bolster his chances of reelection, despite the fact that the information found indicated that al-Qaeda was still strong and growing. Additionally, Obama limited access to the information and obstructed efforts to study it, which could have hindered the fight against al-Qaeda. If Obama had been more truthful and less self-centered, al-Qaeda could have been defeated before the 2012 elections (Miniter).

During Obama's presidency, there were at least six successful terrorist attacks on U.S. soil, including the Fort Hood shootings, the bombing of the Social Security building in Arizona, the Boston Marathon bombing, the Chattanooga attack, the San Bernardino shootings, and the Orlando mass shooting. There were also other potentially terror-related incidents, such as the beheading in Oklahoma City and the shooting at a military base in Little Rock. Two other

attacks were attempted but failed due to the incompetence of the perpetrators. One of these was a plot to blow up a plane over Detroit, while the other was an attempted car bombing in Times Square (Esposito and Ross).

Despite all this violence, Obama refused to acknowledge that the source of the attacks is from terrorists. The Fort Hood and Social Security incidents were not classified as terrorism, even though there was evidence to suggest that they were. The shooting at Fort Hood, carried out by Nidal Malik Hasan, was classified as workplace violence, and the bombing of the Social Security building was charged as maliciously damaging federal property. Despite being denied U.S. citizenship for terror-related activity, the perpetrator of the Social Security bombing was not charged with terrorism. Obama's refusal to call these attacks what they were suggests that he was more concerned with his political legacy than with the safety and security of the American people (Esposito and Ross).

In August 2009, the White House blog asked Obama's supporters to send in rumors and other information to a White House email address. This was seen as an attempt to silence debate and divide Americans. Obama's reelection campaign later created an Attack Watch page where supporters could report people who spoke against Obama. This page was not meant to provide talking points to refute attacks against Obama, but rather to report on fellow citizens who spoke ill of the president. The page was filled with negative depictions of conservatives and Republicans and was moderated by White House staffers. After conservative media reported on the story, Obama's campaign apologized and removed the site (Times).

3.4. Obama's Legacy in the Age of Trump

This title suggests an exploration of the lasting impact of former President Barack Obama's policies and initiatives in the context of the Trump presidency. It examines how Obama's legacy has been impacted by the actions and policies of his successor, and whether

his accomplishments have endured despite efforts to dismantle them. The title delve into Obama's domestic and foreign policies, as well as his approach to issues such as healthcare, immigration, and climate change, among others.

3.4.1. The Future of U.S. Democracy Promotion under President Trump

It is uncertain what approach President Donald Trump will take in supporting democracy and human rights abroad. He has only given scattered hints that suggest a reluctance to engage in democracy promotion, but these have not yet been developed into concrete policy plans. Trump's leadership style and the current state of U.S. democracy may negatively affect U.S. efforts to advance democracy globally. However, it is possible that as Trump and his team move towards actual policymaking, their actions may not be as consistently negative as their initial signals suggest (Carothers).

3.4.2. Trump's Transactional Approach to Foreign Policy

During his campaign, Trump promised to prioritize American economic and security interests over soft issues like democracy and human rights. He plans to use military tactics and tough measures against suspected terrorists to counter terrorism. Trump has also shown support for foreign leaders who are not strategically important to the US, and he does not plan to criticize their democratic shortcomings, which is unusual for the US. Trump also questions the value of US alliances with NATO and other allies, which could harm US democracy promotion abroad. Additionally, Trump's actions during the election and since, such as his attacks on journalists and conflicts of interest, have damaged America's reputation as a model of democracy. Observing Trump's behavior, strongmen leaders around the world may be encouraged to undermine democracy in their own countries (Carothers).

The US has a history of prioritizing national security and economic interests over human rights and democracy when pursuing foreign policy. This approach, known as transactional diplomacy, involves making tradeoffs and compromises to achieve specific goals. For

example, Henry Kissinger reduced relations with Taiwan in exchange for formal relations with China, and President Obama traded sanctions relief for Iran's cooperation in preventing nuclear weapon development. President Trump also emphasized transactional diplomacy during his campaign and appointment of Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State. Critics argue that this approach neglects American values and can undermine global stability (LaFranchi).

3.4.3. The Importance of Supporting Democracy for Economic and Security Interests

Despite a bleak outlook for effective U.S. engagement in democracy and human rights abroad under Trump, incoming presidents tend to change their views when they move from campaigning to governing. Supporting democracy is often useful in advancing hard economic and security interests in countries transitioning to democracy. This can be seen in examples such as Burma, where support for democracy limits China's influence, Ukraine where support reduces Russian political interference, and Tunisia, where it helps undercut the threat of radicalization. Such efforts align with critical hard interests like limiting the strategic reach of autocratic rivals, fighting terrorism, and reducing international drug trafficking. Even in countries where few significant economic or security interests are at stake, supporting democracy can contribute to positive contagion effects in politically shaky regions. Despite Trump's talk of values-free deal making, he has already expressed support for democratic principles in some nondemocratic countries. The connection between values and interests makes a purely transactional approach complicated (Packer).

3.4.4. Trump's Environmental Agenda Repeal and Replace of Obama-era Policies

Obama's legacy on climate change was complex and challenging. The Obama administration faced opposition, fake news, and political baggage while trying to combat the climate crisis. While some reforms were successful, such as the Clean Power Plan, others

faced opposition and legal action, such as the Paris Climate Agreement. Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement and his implementation of the Affordable Clean Energy plan rolled back Obama's legacy on climate change and prioritized US energy independence through fossil fuels. However, Biden has vowed to re-engage with the Paris Agreement and move the US towards 100% green energy use by 2050, demonstrating a commitment to international obligations and environmental responsibility. The polarized options on offer reflect the state of the nation (Harrington and Waddan).

3.4.5. Reconsidering Obama's Accomplishments in Light of Trump's Presidency

When Obama left office four years ago, many believed that his legacy would be erased by Donald Trump's election. However, with Trump's defeat and the election of Joe Biden, who campaigned on a similar platform as Obama, it is clear that perhaps there was something enduring about Obama's presidency after all. Despite instant criticism that Trump would wipe away Obama's accomplishments, including Charles Krauthammer's statement that Obama's legacy is toast, Trump's attempts to undo Obama's policies mostly failed. While Trump weakened some of Obama's achievements, such as the Affordable Care Act and the Clean Power Plan, many of Obama's policies remain intact. It is worth reconsidering what Obama did and what he left behind as Trump leaves the White House for the last time (Chait). To summarize, the chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the Obama presidency, highlighting its strengths and weaknesses. It acknowledges Obama's positive impact on various issues such as the economy, environment, healthcare, and education, as well as his approach to foreign policy, which emphasized multilateral engagement and cooperation. However, the chapter also discusses criticisms of the administration, including transparency issues, immigration policies, and failure to address domestic terrorism. Overall, the chapter offers a nuanced understanding of Obama's presidency from various perspectives,

emphasizing the importance of supporting democracy for economic and security interests.

The chapter also discusses how the impact of Obama's presidency continues to be felt in the era of Donald Trump, who has taken a transactional approach to foreign policy and sought to repeal many of Obama's environmental policies. Despite initial fears that Trump would erase Obama's accomplishments, many of his policies remain intact, and the chapter suggests considering what Obama achieved and left behind as Trump leaves office.

Conclusion

This research paper delves into the challenges and controversies surrounding democracy promotion, focusing on its perceived alignment with national interests. It explores the evolution of democracy promotion and reveals its dual nature as a tool for advancing national interests and as a means of fostering democratic principles globally. Moreover, the research emphasizes the significance of U.S. foreign policy in promoting democracy, highlighting its impact on both global governance and the country's reputation as a leader in democratic values. It examines how previous administrations have approached democracy promotion, with some prioritizing it as a core foreign policy objective and others considering it secondary.

In the current global context, the dissertation emphasizes the need for policymakers to carefully consider their approach to democracy promotion, ensuring that it aligns with the broader goals of U.S. foreign policy. Recognizing the complexities involved the topic, it provides valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of democracy promotion and its profound influence on shaping the global political landscape.

A prominent example of a leader committed to promoting democracy and human rights is the President Barack Obama. Obama's foreign policy approach aimed to restore the United States reputation as a champion of democracy. Through various strategies such as increased support for civil society organizations, diplomatic efforts to resolve conflicts, and aid provision in humanitarian crises, Obama sought to advance democratic values worldwide. Additionally, Obama acknowledged and confronted past mistakes. Obama's presidency was characterized by a dedication to a progressive agenda encompassing social fairness, economic opportunity, and environmental sustainability.

While Obama faced challenges that limited his ability to promote democracy in certain regions, his legacy as a proponent of democratic values and human rights continues to inspire

future generations. Overall, his approach to foreign policy serves as a model for leaders grappling with complicated global challenges in their pursuit of democracy and human rights.

By summarizing the analysis of the Obama presidency, it recognizes the strengths and weaknesses of his administration. It is acknowledged that Obama has made positive effects on the economy, the environment, healthcare, and education. In addition, the president foreign policy approach, which emphasized on multilateral engagement and cooperation, was notable. However, the research paper also addresses criticisms of the administration, such as transparency issues, immigration policies, and the failure to address domestic terrorism comprehensively. Through multiple perspectives, the chapters offer a nuanced understanding of Obama's presidency, pointing out the value of promoting democracy for the advancement of economic and security interests.

The decline of Obama's democracy promotion efforts can be attributed to several factors. Obama's administration prioritized engagement over intervention, which weakened the United States' ability to actively promote democracy in countries with authoritarian regimes. Additionally, democracy promotion was not a central objective of U.S. foreign policy under Obama, as other concerns such as national security and economic interests took precedence. There was also a lack of consistency in supporting pro-democracy movements, particularly evident during the Arab Spring, which led to missed opportunities. Furthermore, Obama's efforts to promote democracy in countries like Libya and Syria faced significant challenges and did not achieve the desired democratic outcomes.

The study also discusses how Obama's presidency continues to have an impact on the Trump administration, which is known for its transactional foreign policy and efforts to cancel out Obama's environmental policies. Despite initial worries that Trump could erase Obama's achievements, many of his policies are still in place. Obama's accomplishments and the legacy he left behind should be reflected upon as Trump's presidency comes to an end.

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