

## **United States of America's foreign policy about Syria (from the crisis of AD 2011 so far)**

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### **Abstract**

*The United States of America that has been a world power after the Cold War considers itself the incompatible dominator and carries out a lot of planning to develop its hegemonic power and stability in various regions, including the Middle East. The main question is that along the Syrian crisis, regarding to the location of Syria how was the policies of the United States and how they will be due to the future opportunities and challenges. The hypothesis of the present study has also pointed out that the Obamas government expressed the Syria's file in a manner that it creates an international prestige for covering several weaknesses and compensates the low activity of them so that now they are amazed and confused because of choosing multiple scenarios. Also the role of actors such as Islamic republic of Iran and some problems such as fighting terrorists together lead them to face with serious problems. This paper utilizes the theories of hegemony, behavioral model of the United States of America has been introduced as hegemonic stability, in recent decades and the applied policies about Syrian crisis was assessed and also readings of US from these events was dealt. Opportunities and challenges of America were studied and discussed in various aspects related to the Islamic Republic of Iran, the current situation of Syria and its transitional period, the Zionist regime and other neighbors of Syria.*

**Keywords:** *foreign policy, United States of America, Barack Obama, the Syrian crisis.*

### **1. Introduction**

Syria had seen the political challenges and various revolutions of power in recent centuries. However, since 1970 that General Hafez al-Assad, established the first celestial regime in this country, it was governed by the Iraqi Baath Party and Assad family. During the government of Hafez al-Assad, his opponent powers such as the military wing of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood that didn't tolerate governing of an Alavi, revolted against the government, but each time, the Assad government could overcome objections. The protests took place in the three stages so that was lasted from 1976 to 1983. During the governing of Hafez Assad in Syria, he tried to prove his power by policies including credit Alavian reliability, reconciliation with the Sunnis as well as the struggle with Israel that caused by his Arabic nationalism (Dokmejiyan, 2004: 202-214).

After the death of Hafez Assad and his son, Basil al-Assad, Bashar came to power in 2000. Syrian President Bashar Assad, tried to prepare the groundwork for peaceful and legal activities of the various groups by reformation of society due to understanding the needs and aspirations of the Baath Party. He freed political prisoners, permitted for activities of the other political parties and tried to reform and prepare the field for the competition groups in Syria with non-violent. 2000, the first year of President Bashar Assad became known as the Damascus Spring because of reforms (Alert, H. 2002)).

However, due to the centralization of power in the Baath Party, as well as earlier trail races, in 2011, the crisis and conflict was began in Syria, Assad stood in front of several groups including extremist Sunnis, Muslim brotherhood, the believers in reformation and countries such as America, which were considered as opposition supporters.

Addressing the incentives and policies of each opponents require to more time however in this paper is America's policies in Syria was studied. US entered into the Syria plays when the wave of Islamic awakening in the countries of region dealt its stooges and in this regard, tried to eliminate Assad 's government in Syria which was defined as the opposite of America 's policies.

For analyzing these condition is was tried to discuss America 's policy towards Syria due to the hegemonic stability framework and analysis of America's foreign policy leaders, speeches and appearances of their decisions and also, using the available analyzes.

### ***Theoretical Framework***

After the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the bipolar system in the international system, which coincided with the collapse of the Soviet Union, US saw the available space to be the world's hegemonic power and to stabilize, reinforce and strengthen this power. It is assumed that the theories based on the hegemony that was designed by various scholars of International Relations such as Gilpin could be the explanation for America's foreign policy after the Cold War. Because now decision makers of America think that after the Soviet collapse, Americas responsibility did not only reduce, but it has increased. Today, US knows itself as the only country which it has military capability, economical capacity, and cultural settings and can play a leadership role in the world. (Hoshyar , 2002:142 )

In this model, the discipline of world is created by the hegemonic country and is maintained, because this country utilizes its ability to organize the relationships between governments. ( Eikenberry, 2003 : 25 ) America 's hegemony can be divided into four periods of historical development: 1 ) the absolute hegemony; 2 ) the decline/circuit of hegemony 3) after the hegemony times; 4 ) The revised hegemonic ( imperial hegemony ). ( Pourahmadi, 2008: 59 )

Absolute hegemony era of America can be seen during the 1945 to 1969 years that is the era of creation, consolidation and development of America's sovereignty is absolute hegemony government and there is consensus about hegemon relationships with other states. Vast wealth and power of US help the government to achieve this aim. But the decline of the hegemony can be noted between 1970 and 1979. Also the after hegemony era includes the end of hegemony, dating back to the after the 1980s era. During the formation of the bipolar world, USs hegemony has declined and eventually ends and there isn't consensus based on the hegemony of US and definition of relationship between this country and other countries.

But the fourth period, which is called the hegemony renewal period, is the years after the occurring the September 11, 2001. In this period, when the neoconservatives raised to power in USA, the isolation policies of Clinton (who was the cause of the September 11 events according to some views) were censured strongly. They believed US's strategic role in the world that should be regarded as the guardian and protector of the free world. These policies not only pertain to Republicans, but Democrats in US are looking for it. Obama expressly stated in his speech at the UN General Assembly in 2013 that we are not seeking empire, but only want to compensate the vacuum of leadership in the current world<sup>1</sup>.

The war in Syria has occurred in the quarter of US's hegemony era due to the mentioned division, i.e. when US want to restore its hegemony in the world, and therefore seeks to assert, protect its interests and friends, and also eliminate the competitors.

### ***USA's policy about Syria***

Of course, there are different differences between the aims of US in Syria and the concepts which are manifested in the remarks of USs statesmen. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish between declared policy and actions and assess the USs foreign policy about the crisis of Syria.

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<sup>1</sup> Barack Obama's speech at the UN General Assembly / 2013, published in (www.parsine.com), 2013.

### ***Declared policy of the United States in Syria***

Assessing the allegations American officials specifically President United States of America, demonstrate that America's declared policy are applied on to divisions of aims and strategies towards the aims:

#### **Aims**

##### ***Trying to calm the sectarian war in Syria***

Putting an end to the sectarian conflict in the Syria is one of the boards of US to intervene in this country. In fact, Americans are struggling to feign that the story of Syria, is a sectarian war between Sunni and Alawi groups that Obama cited in the UN General Assembly.

While this is an effort to cover up the role of USA and other countries, in the Syrian crisis, it should be questioned that if this war, is a sectarian war, why the whole crowd of Sunni and some are not involved in it and some of them are pro-government and why other countries must be involved in this sectarian war?

##### ***International efforts to avoid the using of chemical weapons***

Attempt to destroy alleged chemical weapons in Syria is another official policy of the USA. Although, these claims were made after the start of the crisis of Syria, and there was a lot of arguments followed. On one side of the story, opponents of Syrian government believed that Bashar al-Assad's military forces, applied the weapons against the opposition and on the other hand, the government of Syria identified these claims as an attempt to destroy his prestige and represented reasons and evidences. USA, offered a limited attack to Syria to solve the problem that as Obama admitted this suggestion wasn't welcomed by others and Obamas administration chose the diplomatic solution inevitably (Dokmejiyan, Harayer 2004).<sup>2</sup>

##### ***Establish democracy in Syria***

America's government, introduces one of its challenges for intervening in Afghanistan, Iraq and more recently in Syria, to establish a stable democracy, freedom and eliminate tyranny and emphasis on the right of the Syrian people to determine their own destiny. They do not allow for any country to intervene in Syria by focusing on these issues.

However, it is interesting that Obama, doesn't stand on his announced official policy with phrases such as "Of course, Assad shouldn't remain", "Iran and Russia have to pay attention to these issues," as well as "in order to obtain this aim, US supports the moderate opponents" and violate his positions<sup>3</sup>.

##### ***Fight against terrorism***

Fighting against the terrorism is always at the forefront of US's claims for invasion to different regions which samples was observed in the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq. Americans still claims it. The dreams of US in Syria are summarize in followed phrases:

"US have no interests, except for the Syrian people's prosperity, stability of its neighboring countries, the eradication of chemical weapons and ensure that the country does not become a safe shelter for terrorists, in Syria"<sup>4</sup>.

However today it is interesting that after sending a lot of manpower to assist the Syrian government opponents and return to their home countries, one of the biggest problems in this country is disturbing the security and discipline by these individuals.

#### **Strategies**

##### ***economic assistance to Syrian opposition***

According to explicit referrals of Obama, United States of America, have helped to opponents of Syrian government 1 million dollars so far, and has plans to add 340 million dollars to this figure

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<sup>2</sup> Speech of Barack Obama at the UN General Assembly / 2013, published in ([www.parsine.com](http://www.parsine.com)), 2013.

<sup>3</sup> The same

<sup>4</sup> The same

Regarding to the unfavorable economic situation of USA, and even being closed with shutting down of its state at the end of 2013, the mentioned financial supports represents that Syria is a huge potential and strategic capacity of to the United States in the region<sup>5</sup>.

### ***Isolation of Assad***

Isolation includes economic-commercial pressures and boycott, making bad view of international community over the Syrian government and attracting Assad's supporters<sup>6</sup>.

The policy of attracting supporters of Assad's government and the international community performed by destruction of Assad popularity. For example, the Turkish government that increased to the hopes of resistance flow until few months before than crisis, not only became an opponent of Syria's government, but also tried to fall of the Assad.

### ***Probability of the rough treatment***

In the literature of American officials, militarys open doors are clearly seen<sup>7</sup>. This claim is evident in Obama's speech:

"United States of America is ready for applying all of its power, including military force to ensure the security of our main interests in the region<sup>8</sup>."

### ***US's performed policies on Syria crisis***

USs government, consider the foreign affairs areas based on their interests. However, it is important to know that complete entering of it into the Syria crisis, are according to which the objectives and policies. The goals in total are considered, in three levels including interior of USA, the Middle East and the international community.

### ***The level of public opinion in America***

Today, US's government passes a crucial situation. What the American elite represent about the various factions of America's foreign policy in media, formal and informal assemblies show the negative assessment of the negative outcome of Obama's foreign policy"

The negative assessment of mentioned reviewers about the wrong policies are based on different problems such as: wrong policies for lack of support for Mubarak in Egypt, passive and limited action in Libya, the lack of security in Iraq and Afghanistan, tolerance and uncertainty in relationships to Iran and Russia and don't solve the problem of North Korea....<sup>9</sup>

When Obama 's failure to control the economic crisis is added to these matters the feeling of failure of Obama 's succession are not far-fetched for reviewers.

Indeed it is possible to say that the goal of US government for intervention in Syria and efforts to restore its military field is to return the prestige and dignity of the president's character<sup>10</sup>.

### ***The level of public opinion in the Middle East***

Obamas administration doesn't manage closely the revolutions in the region and the Islamic awakening because of its internal and external problems, and only support of the states and allies to pursue its

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<sup>5</sup> Elliott abrams, American Options in Syria, published in (<http://www.cfr.org>)

<sup>6</sup> The same

<sup>7</sup> The same

<sup>8</sup> Barack Obama's speech at the UN General Assembly / 2013, published in ([www.parsine.com](http://www.parsine.com)), 2013.

<sup>9</sup> Prior gem, Aboozar, Obama militarization of the Syrian publication ([www.abuzargohari.ir](http://www.abuzargohari.ir)), 2013.

<sup>10</sup> The same

interests. In this regard, the administration tries to use the crisis of Syria (which made by itself) to divert Islamic Awakening movement and convert it to a great opportunity to secure its interests in the region<sup>11</sup>.

Acquisition of material and spiritual resources of the Middle East, is the other motivation of US for interfering in Syria.

US also wants to harm the resistance axis that is centered in the region around the Islamic Republic. Naturally, removing Syria as a base of resistance can make a wider area for US.

Safeguard the security of Syrias neighbors, particularly Israil is the motivation for the US in the region. Maintain Israel as US's most important advocates and support stooge governments and other followers such as Jordan, are good reasons to oppose the US completely against Syria.

### ***The level of world public opinion***

Internationally, America wants to show its management in the world or making together the governments based on the US hegemonic power. There are apparent evidences for this, including the Obama's speech in the United Nations, mentioned that want to compensate the leadership vacuum in the current world<sup>12</sup>.

### ***The consensus of America 's policy in Syria***

With regard to American declared policy and practices, it is necessary to look at the mirror perspective and these policies should be evaluated:

### ***The effects of American's policy of global***

Due to the mistakes which US did in Afghanistan and Iraq and the security dilemma of these two countries are involved within it, since US has not been able to attract world public opinion. This lack of consensus was clear in the proposal limits attacks on Obama to Syria and rejection of the other countries. According to US global objectives in the Syrian crisis, is seems that USs failure lead to the failure of the hegemonic status and its validity. Thus, US's government is trying to do their best to spend this way to the end, and achieve its desired output in this case.

### ***America 's policy in the Middle East***

Fear of recognition the other axis of resistance in the region such as Iran and also fear of jeopardizing the interests of USs by intervention in case of resistance members, caused to US has entered none of resistance- directed states into the problem solving process. But it seems that according to the resistance axis Syria's role in the defense of this country, not entering these countries lead to be the problem of Syria aborted.

As mentioned, one of the main motivations for US is maintaining security of sponsors in the region, especially Israel. It seems the failure of US, it will start a unlimited wave of unbridled social and would be the opportunity for Palestinian and Lebanese fighters and liberals. However, the tool, cannot extinguisher resist fire. Resistance is a high connected network in the region that not only US haven't power to off it, but it is hard to suppress any of the axes. Because it is several months that US after the fire crisis in Syria achieve its desired.

### ***America 's policy on the internal situation of the country***

Perhaps America's concern for the Syrian problem and gets the accomplish during power of Obama is the most significant factor in USs role in Syrian. As mentioned earlier, due to the poor performance of the Obama administration, the winning in such a case can return part of the credibility and prestige back home. However, due to the prolongation of the Syrian problem and the failure of government opponents,

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<sup>11</sup> Prior gem, Aboozar, the Syrian crisis, the key to the future interests of the West, published in News Tasnim ([www.tasnimnews.com](http://www.tasnimnews.com)), 2013.

<sup>12</sup> Speech of Barack Obama at the UN General Assembly / 2013, published in ([www.parsine.com](http://www.parsine.com)), 2013.

lack of opponents for reaching their predetermined objectives, can destroy the credibility of the United States.

## 2. Conclusions

What towards United States of America to war in Syria, is achieving hegemonic stability, is ambiguous after long months of crisis in Syria. While walking to the Middle East the US 's interests in the region, are in the danger. The risks and consequences are raised from three levels of local, regional and international variables. However, it seems the fear of failure in this case, the Obama administration is more determined to achieve victory, but due to the different aspects of this issue , America battles In this issue, convenience , the desired there will be a great possibility also exists that US's defeat .

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