

United States foreign policy and nuclear non-proliferation: a preliminary comparison of the Bush and Obama administrations' approaches

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Declaration

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Abstract

The United States of America (USA) has a new president in the White House - a president whose rhetoric appears to distance himself from the policies of the previous administration. This also appears to hold true for his approach with regard to nuclear non-proliferation.

The overarching research aim of this study is to explore whether the Obama administration's policy with regard to nuclear non-proliferation will differ significantly from that of the Bush administration. The broader subject of nuclear non-proliferation will be subdivided into three themes, namely: disarmament, proliferation by non-nuclear states and nuclear terrorism. In order to sketch the international context within which the USA's policy must be viewed, an overview of the nuclear non-proliferation regime is provided. This will be followed by an exploration of disarmament, proliferation by non-nuclear states (with Iran and North Korea as case studies) and nuclear terrorism. In each case, a comparison between the Bush administration and the Obama administration's policies will be done. Finally, an analysis will be done of the main similarities and differences between the two administrations' approaches, with a focus on the use of hard, soft and smart power.

The study concludes that the primary difference between the Bush and Obama administration's approaches is that Bush pursued only one policy option (hard power) at a time, while Obama intends to use many different policy options (smart power) at the same time, with a focus on increasing the use of soft power. This sort of pragmatism may just be what the USA needs right now in order to address the problem of nuclear proliferation.

Opsomming

Die Verenigde State van Amerika (VSA) het 'n nuwe president in die Withuis – 'n president wie se uitsprake hom van die beleide van die vorige administrasie blyk te distansieer. Dit wil ook voorkom asof dit van toepassing is op sy benadering tot kernwapen versperring.

Die oorhoofse navorsingsdoelwit van hierdie studie is om te ondersoek of die Obama administrasie se beleid ten opsigte van kernwapen versperring aansienlik van die van die Bush administrasie gaan verskil. Die breër onderwerp van kernwapen versperring kan in drie temas opgedeel word, naamlik: ontwapening, proliferasie deur nie-kernwapenstate, en kernwapen terrorisme. Ten einde die internasionale konteks te skets waarin die VSA se beleid moet geskied, begin die studie met 'n oorsig van die kernwapen versperring regime. Dit word gevolg deur 'n ondersoek van onderskeidelik ontwapening, proliferasie deur nie-kernwapenstate (met Iran en Noord-Korea as gevallestudies) en kernwapen terrorisme. By elkeen van die drie temas word 'n vergelyking tussen die Bush administrasie en die Obama administrasie se beleide getref. Laastens word 'n analise van die hoof verskille en ooreenkomste tussen die twee administrasies se benaderings onderneem, met die klem op die gebruik van harde, sagte en slim mag.

Die bevinding van die studie is dat die hoof verskille tussen die Bush en Obama administrasies se benaderings behels dat Bush slegs een beleidsopsie (harde mag) op 'n slag nagevolg het, terwyl Obama beoog om terselfdertyd van verskillende beleidsopsies (slim mag) gebruik te maak, met veral 'n fokus op 'n toename in die gebruik van sagte mag. Die soort pragmatisme mag dalk net wees wat die VSA tans nodig het om die probleem van kernwapen proliferasie aan te spreek.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In 2008 Barack Hussein Obama won the American presidential election comfortably, replacing the Republican-led United States (US) government with a Democratic-led one (placing the executive and the legislature in the hands of the Democrats). Obama inspired many throughout the world with his speeches during this election campaign, which included a call for change in the way the US conducts politics both domestically and internationally. With this change in leadership, a new age in global affairs has been widely expected.

Many authors assert that the US is losing its hold on the hegemonic position in the world. Whether it is economically or militarily, the US has shown that it is not the powerhouse it used to be. The last real military success that the US had was with the Gulf War when the Americans pushed the Iraqis out of Kuwait. Since then, the US has had to withdraw its troops from Somalia; failed to protect its embassies in Africa; was unable to prevent terrorists from attacking the World Trade Centre (WTC) and the Pentagon; continues to fight the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan (a war that is spreading further and further into Pakistan) and keeps on suffering casualties in its occupation of Iraq (Meyer, 2007: 45-50).

Economically the US has run up a budget deficit that numbers in the trillions of dollars. The nature of the banking system in the US liberal market economy also contributed to the recession the world faced from the latter quarter of 2008 till the end of 2009. Due to this recession, the US has been required to bail out several American banks, motor vehicle companies like General Motors, and insurance companies like AIG (Taylor, 2008). But more importantly than all this, up until the current recession other rising economies like China and India have been growing very quickly, with China likely to be

hailed as the second biggest economy in the world by 2025 (National Intelligence Council, 2008: 29-30).

From a moral and ethical standpoint the US has also been losing ground. The formulation of the Patriot Act; the abuse of suspected terrorist detainees in prisons like Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay (and the disrespect shown towards said detainees and international law regarding prisoners); the disregard for the decision made by the United Nations not to invade Iraq (as well as the disregard for people from around the world protesting against this course of action); the refusal to ratify the Kyoto Protocol; the refusal to ratify the International Criminal Court; the tension with Iran; and the constant backing of Israel in the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict despite allegations of criminal activity by Israel and an inability to properly deal with North Korea have all led to the belief that the US is the shining beacon of hope for the world being more or less shattered.

The vision of the Obama administration is to rectify this situation. President Barack Obama made powerful statements in his inaugural address in January 2009, amongst others more proclaiming that the US will meet the challenges that it faces, that the US “rejects as false the choice between our safety and our ideals” (Obama, 2008; 295) referring of course to the Patriot Act and the abusing of detainees and reasserting the US’ belief in the ideal of human rights. Along with this Obama also proclaimed that the US is “ready to lead once more”¹ with regards to the securing of peace and dignity, as well as being a friend to all who seek these ideals. He also had a message for those who seek to destroy this, a message that for all intents and purposes meant that the US would continue along its current course of action. But there were more words of hope for the people that the US had primarily alienated, namely the people from the Middle East, who are primarily Muslim. For these people he had said that he would seek ways to change the relationship between the US (as well as the west) and the Middle East (Obama, 2008: 295-298).

¹ The phrase also refers to the Obama administration’s intention regarding multilateral and collective leadership with an emphasis on creating stronger institutions.

In general though the American President has predominantly ascertained that the US intends to keep its hegemonic position in the world, meaning that the US intends to rectify the mistakes of the past, reaffirm its relations with other states and build new bridges to those who had in the past been unfriendly to the US (as is the case with Iran) and re-assert itself as the frontrunner in global affairs (Obama, 2008: 291-299).

Strengthening its hegemonic position will require that it reinforces its hard power (its economy and military) and rebuild its soft power (its influence in the world) (Nye, 2008: 4-5; Meyer, 2007: 55-58). In order to do this the US will have to succeed in a number of foreign policy problem areas, the two most important ones arguably being the current global recession and the threat to global security the world over. Of the two it would appear that the US regards global security (referring to the issues that would cause conflict with global repercussions) as the more important. In Obama's inaugural address, for example, he devoted more time to discussing and outlining some of the issues relating to global security, such as the terrorist threat and the outreach to the Muslim world than to other matters (Obama, 2008: 295-298).

1.2 Research Aim and Rationale

From the US concern regarding global security one can derive that the US is going to have to address certain critical global security issues in a very particular manner. One can also argue that the critical issues will be those that the US government focuses on as opposed to the issues deemed important by other international actors. In the case of a newly elected President, this means the delivery on campaign promises will be the point of departure, and as such the critical issues will be derived from these campaign promises.

Obama (2008: 111-148) focused on a number of specific issues in his campaign, these being: the war in Iraq, the US's fight against terrorism in general, the restoration of the US's alliances, the construction of an army that is capable of fighting on the battle-fields

of the twenty-first century and stopping the spread of nuclear weapons. Of these, the two most important issues would undoubtedly be the fight against terrorism and nuclear weapons in general, since these are the topics specifically covered in Obama's presidential campaign's foreign policy outline, and these two topics cover a wide spectrum of related issues². Similarly, the two issues are linked in a way that will become clear when properly operationalised.

Of these two, stopping the spread of nuclear weapons will be the focus of this thesis. Due to national interest and global security considerations, the US cannot allow more states to acquire the devastating power of nuclear weapons, much less to share that power with those willing to use such weapons, to go unchallenged. Because of the sheer lethality of the issue at hand it is prudent to know what exactly the US is going to do about the problem. Another reason why it is important to focus on the nuclear non-proliferation regime is the link to terrorism. Terrorists have, over the past decade, become one of the primary priorities of US foreign policy, and the threat of nuclear terrorism has become a very real one. This study also has broader implications: through exploring the ways in which the Obama administration intends to address the issue of nuclear non-proliferation, one will come to understand the manner in which the US intends to change its role in the world.

In light of the above, the *overarching research aim of this study is to explore whether the Obama administration's policy with regard to nuclear non-proliferation will differ significantly from that of the Bush administration*. The broader subject of nuclear non-proliferation will be subdivided into three themes, namely: disarmament, proliferation by non-nuclear states and nuclear terrorism. In order to sketch the international context within which the US's policy must be viewed, an overview of the nuclear non-proliferation regime is provided. This will be followed by an exploration of disarmament, proliferation by non-nuclear states and nuclear terrorism. In each case, a comparison between the Bush administration and the Obama administration's policies

² Such as reengaging the US' allies and returning to better relations with the Muslim world to name two examples.

will be done. Finally, an analysis will be done of the main similarities and differences between the two administrations' approaches, with a focus on the use of hard, soft and smart power.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The forms of power employed in approaching the issue of non-proliferation will be an important part of comparing the Obama administration's approach to that of the Bush administration. The theory which best highlights the importance of power is Realism. Realism also focuses on other factors that are important in exploring the topic of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The most important interest of any state should be the preservation of the state. This preservation comes in the form of preventing others from destroying the state or incapacitating it. In the interest of survival, states thus need to acquire power.

Realism can be divided into two broad categories: Classical realism and Neo-Realism. While there are differences between the two categories, they also share a number of basic assumptions. The founding father of Classical Realism, Hans Morgenthau, advocated that the struggle for power is a central principle of international relations. So what is power? According to Spykman (quoted in Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff, 1971: 67), "Power is the ability to move men in some desired fashion, through "persuasion, purchase, barter, and coercion." Wolfers (quoted in Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff, 1971: 67) provides an even broader definition, suggesting that power is "the ability to move others or to get them to do what one wants them to do and not to do what one does not want them to do". Although they acknowledge different forms of power, Realists focus on one form in particular, namely military power. The acquisition of military strength (including nuclear weapons) thus also serves the premise that one must constantly acquire more power (because others will do the same).

An important assumption of Neo-Realism refers to the structure of the international system. This system, it is argued, is in a state of anarchy, which means that there is no dominant authority that can restrict and punish other states for violating rules. The only deterrent for states to flex their muscles is thus the power of other states. In terms of achieving stability in the system, the best that the system can aspire to is a balance between the powers (Hutchings, 1999: 19).

This does not mean however, that states will not try to become more powerful than other states. One specific reason for this stands in direct contradiction to a balance of power. According to this argument, the most secure condition for a state to be in is that of hegemony. Mearsheimer (in Elman, 2004; 564), contends that such a condition is more favourable because states want as much power as is possible. From this one can derive that a state will never be satisfied until it has all the power. While few states strive for global hegemony, many states strive for regional hegemony. That is, states seek virtual control over the geographical region they find themselves in.

From these premises a deduction is reached regarding the use of morality in international relations: namely that there is no need for it. Because what is perceived as national interests differs from state to state³ one cannot necessarily cooperate with other states. This is because the different interests may conflict with one another in some way or another. An example would be North Korea's acquisition of nuclear weapons, in direct opposition to the US' attempt to protect its interests in Japan, South Korea and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to others.

Even if states share the same national interests, one still cannot trust other states to cooperate with one's own because of the following reasons: there is no guarantee that other states will not betray one's own interests. This does not necessarily mean that states will act maliciously, it simply means that they have the capacity to do so. The other reason is the principle of the zero-sum game, which states that in the pursuit of

³ Indeed, even the one interest that all states must have in common, that of the preservation of the self, have different means through which they try to achieve this interest.

cooperation, any one state always aims to achieve more than another. This means that cooperation will cause distrust if one state believes that another might be gaining more (Donnelly, 1996: 37-38).

1.4 Research Methodology

The research undertaken for this study is mainly of a qualitative nature, and will rely on secondary literature sources (including books, journal articles and – given the contemporary nature of the topic – websites. The Bush and Obama administrations' policies will be compared with regard to three sub themes of nuclear non-proliferation, namely: 1) the disarming of nuclear weapon states, 2) the proliferation by non-nuclear weapons states (Iran and North Korea will be used as case studies) and 3) nuclear terrorism.

The type of research will also be explorative, meaning that while the policies are the unit of analysis, the circumstances that led to the need for policies for the issues will also have to be analysed.

The time dimension will be longitudinal, meaning that the development of the nuclear non-proliferation regime will also be looked at. This is important in determining what exactly the problem is, and how the policies directed at these problems take the form they do. In terms of the background to the non-proliferation regime, the timeframe involved thus spans from the 1950s up until the present, while the core of the thesis will focus on the Bush administration (2000-2008) and the Obama administration (2008 until present, incorporating the period of presidential campaigning).

1.5 Limitations of the Study

A significant limitation of this research is that the Obama administration is still in its infancy and its policies are largely still being developed. As a result, there are as of yet

few sources, such as books and journal articles, that relate directly to the topic in question. A related limitation is that this study involves a speculated analysis of what president Obama is going to do. The reason for this is that, although the President has made public the ideas and plans he would want to set in motion, he may in reality have to forego those ideas due to various domestic and international constraints.

A further limitation of this research would be that, due to the theoretical framework to be used (that of Realism) certain flaws in the perception of world events may have filtered through into the research itself. While these flaws may not be considered as such by Realists, advocates of other theories would certainly see it as so.

1.6 Chapter Outline

This study will be presenting the exploration of Obama's new policies with regards to nuclear weapons in four chapters. Chapter Two will focus on the nuclear non-proliferation regime, starting off with an explanation of the reasons for proliferation, followed by a conceptualisation of related concepts such as 'mutually assured destruction' (MAD), the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Chapter Three will look into the matter of nuclear disarmament, the effort taken towards this notion in the past, what Obama's policies will be with regards to this problem, and some of the challenges associated with this issue.

Chapter Four will examine the problem of proliferation by non-nuclear weapon states. The case studies of Iran and North Korea will be used. The history of proliferation by these countries will be analysed, including what the Bush administration tried to do about it. These will be compared to the policies that the Obama administration has made with regards to proliferation and the actions already undertaken.

Chapter Five will focus on nuclear terrorism. Specifically, the chapter will focus on the problems associated with nuclear terrorism and the policies that both the Bush administration implemented, and the policies that Obama is implementing and intends to implement.

Chapter Six will summarise the similarities and differences between the Bush and Obama administrations' approaches to the issue of nuclear non-proliferation. In particular, their respective reliance on different forms of power (hard, soft and smart) will be compared. The chapter will end with a discussion of implications for future research.

1.7 Conclusion

The purpose of the thesis is thus straightforward: The intent is to compare the Bush and Obama administrations' policies regarding the Nuclear Non-proliferation Regime and to find similarities and differences. This comparison is to be explorative only. The comparison will be made in reference to three key sub themes in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation regime, these fields being Nuclear Disarmament in general, the nuclear arming of Non-Nuclear Weapon States (using Iran and North Korea as case studies) and Nuclear Terrorism. The circumstances regarding these three key sun themes will also be investigated.

But in order to understand the importance of these three sub themes one must first understand why it is that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime is such an important matter for United States foreign policy. In order to understand this, one must understand the threat of a nuclear war. It is to this matter that thesis now turns its attention to.

Chapter Two: The Nuclear Non-proliferation Regime

2.1 Introduction

There is no question that the world has changed dramatically since the construction of the first atom bomb. For more than half a century, the foreign policies of the world's major powers revolved almost singly around this weapon for more than half a century. As the rest of this thesis outlines, the world still considers the proliferation of this weapon a major issue of contention. The reason for the importance accorded to this weapon of course lies in its sheer destructive power.

This chapter attempts to conceptualize the epitome of this destructive nature and the non-proliferation regime. This will be done by exploring two issues: Firstly, why states acquire or seek to acquire the bomb. The reason this is explored is simply because if states never sought to acquire the bomb, there would be no need for a non-proliferation regime. Additionally, this section of the chapter serves as a bridging point in attempting to explain why the states of Iran and North Korea are trying to develop nuclear weapons after the initiation of the non-proliferation regime.

Secondly, the chapter will move on to explain the non-proliferation regime. Specifically, it will focus on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the quest for non-proliferation.

2.2 Reasons for acquiring nuclear weapons

What would prompt states to build the bomb in the first place? Cirincione (2007: 47) ascertains that there are five drivers that make states decide on whether or not to try and

acquire the bomb for themselves. These five drivers are: Security, Prestige, Domestic Politics, Technology, and Economics.

The Security driver is essentially based on Realist considerations. As had been discussed, the essential interest of any state is its own survival. As such, nuclear weapons are instruments that can secure this interest. What state would dare to attack a state that has nuclear weapons? To do so would be to invite disaster. But on the same grounds: What state can guard against a state that has nuclear weapons, if other states do not? This is at the centre of the Security driver: the ultimate protection is a nuclear weapon, and once one state has nuclear weapons, it is in other states' best interests to acquire nuclear weapons for themselves. An example of this would be the acquisition of nuclear weapons by the US after the Second World War. The Soviet Union and China, feeling threatened by the US, felt they seriously needed the bomb as well. Once China had the bomb, India felt the need to acquire one as well. And once India had the bomb, Pakistan followed suit (Cirincione, 2007: 51-52).

The Prestige driver is about creating impressions, to wow and influence other states with the level of grandeur of a state's culture and development. One of the surest ways to acquire status is to acquire nuclear weapons. In short, acquiring nuclear weapons is tantamount to saying: 'We have arrived, so take us seriously.' Another phrase that can be used in the quest for prestige would be the quest for respect and to be admired by others. Two examples of states acquired nuclear weapons in this fashion would be France and Great Britain (Cirincione, 2007: 58-61).

The Domestic Politics driver is concerned with the actors that are involved in making the decision to acquire nuclear weapons. Put differently, this driver involves people who want their state to acquire nuclear weapons, and try to convince the decision-makers to do just that. This is regardless of whether or not it is actually in the state's national interest to acquire nuclear weapons. According to Cirincione there are three primary types of actors that are involved in this process: scientists, soldiers and state leaders. Scientists are interested because an active nuclear programme is guaranteed funding for

research. Soldiers have an interest because soldiers will always want to acquire the latest tactical advantage (and none can deny the tactical advantage of nuclear weapons, which are capable of destroying whole battalions at once) as well as giving their respective departments more importance in the military structure. Finally, state leaders have an interest, since these are the people who finally decide on what to do (Cirincione, 2007: 63-66).

The Technology driver's premise is very simple: If a state has the technological capacity to develop nuclear weapons, then it will do so. But the Non-Proliferation Treaty⁴ and examples of states stopping their nuclear weapons programmes and even completely destroying their nuclear arsenals (South Africa is a case in point) seem to stand in direct contradiction to this statement. Despite that, this driver remains important because once the nuclear weapon building capacity is in place; it becomes harder to resist the production, improvement, application and refinement of these weapons. A prime example of this would be the US' own nuclear weapons programme. Despite having the capacity to build an already devastating atom bomb (specifically the one dropped on Hiroshima) the US continued to develop nuclear weapon technology to the point where the bombs can be delivered either via intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), cruise missiles, and aircraft. (Cirincione, 2007: 70-73).

Finally, the Economic driver states that it is cheaper to build and maintain a nuclear arsenal than it is to build and maintain a standing army. At least, that is what advocates of the acquisition of nuclear weapons would maintain. When acquiring nuclear weapons, however, states usually do not just rely on one of the drivers as their motivation. Often several of the drivers are what finally forces states to acquire the bomb (Cirincione, 2007: 76-82).

⁴ Discussed later.

2.3 The principle behind the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime

As proven by the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear weapons have the capacity to lay waste to entire cities. Needless to say then, a couple of nuclear weapons, detonated in key cities of a country, are more than capable of crippling any country. Therefore, whoever has nuclear weapons effectively holds other states at ransom. Moreover, if a state's nuclear weapons are in the form of ICBMs, they can send these weapons to the other side of the world.

However, if more than one state possess nuclear weapons and has the capacity of sending these weapons to another state, and if these the relationship between these states is one of enmity, then the unleashing of one state's nuclear weapons on another, will inevitably result on the other state unleashing their arsenal as well. The inevitable result is that both states are crippled: mutually assured destruction (MAD), in short.

This premise can be further expanded: should these states have allies that are also arrayed against one another, or have strategic bases in other countries, then the principle of launching one's nuclear weapons also apply to these states, if nuclear weapons are launched upon them. This time, MAD not only applies to the two states with nuclear weapons, but also to these other states. The Cold War is a perfect example of this: If the Soviet Union were to use nuclear weapons against West Germany, the US would have to retaliate, and because the US is a part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the United Kingdom and France would also have to retaliate with their nuclear weapons, which means that the Soviet Union would have to use nuclear weapons upon these states as well. At the same time, the crippling of states by nuclear weapons would leave them open to conventional warfare; meaning that military bases would also have to be targeted, especially in allied states. So, all NATO members would be targets, as would all those that formed part of the Warsaw Pact, as would China, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, Cuba and the Middle East, as well as the few installations in Africa and Australia (Edwards, 1986: 7-8; Myers, 1987: 238). In addition, this would have meant that not even

members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) would have been any better off. Even if a country is not targeted by nuclear weapons in such an exchange, the sheer amount of nuclear fallout released by the nuclear weapons exploding would devastate the entire world. The devastating effects of a nuclear war are well-known, and will not be elaborated on here⁵.

This then is what MAD is all about: it is not just about countries with nuclear weapons exchanging these weapons and thereby destroying each other and their allies, it also involves nuclear fallout that could spread thousands kilometres further than the initial blast. It is for all these reasons that the United Nations tried, almost from the onset of nuclear acquisition, to limit the amount of nuclear weapons in the world, and to preferably dispose of all nuclear weapons. From these efforts the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime emerged. This regime consists of various treaties and organisations that regulate, limit and prohibit the use, testing and proliferation of nuclear weapons and associated weapon systems, such as anti-ballistic missiles. For the aim of this study the most important treaty and organisation are the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), respectively.

2.4 The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

There have been many conferences and talks trying to reduce the impact, acquisition and testing of nuclear weapons throughout the twentieth century. Some of these conferences led to the formation of treaties such as the Limited Test Ban, the Outer Space Treaty, the Latin America Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZ), the South Pacific NWFZ, the African NWFZ, the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I and II), the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) and the Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty (INF). There have been others as well that ban nuclear testing in the atmosphere, outer space and under water, and ban the emplacement of nuclear weapons on the sea bed, ocean floor and

⁵ For further detail, see Myers (1987).

subsoil. Finally there is also the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) that aims to ban “all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time” (United Nations, 1995: 21-28).

The treaty that is the most important for the purposes of this study however, is the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which was signed in 1968, came into force in 1970 and was renewed indefinitely in 1995 (United Nations, 2005). The treaty has three main pillars (non-proliferation, disarmament, and peaceful use) and consists of eleven articles, four of which are of an administrative nature⁶, three which focus on the actual prevention of the acquisition of nuclear weapons (Articles I, II and III), two which focus on the exchange of nuclear technology and material for peaceful purposes (Articles IV and V), and one which centres on the call for more conferences focusing on the disarmament of current nuclear arsenals (Article VI) (United Nations, 2005). The most important of these articles in relation to the issue under study are Articles I-V and Article X.

Article I states the following:

“Each nuclear-weapon state party to the Treaty undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any non-nuclear-weapon state to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices, or control over such weapons or explosive devices” (United Nations, 2005).

Article I clearly therefore states that the nuclear weapon states may not provide any aid whatsoever to non-nuclear-weapon states in their acquisition of nuclear weapons.

Article II focuses on non-nuclear-weapon states and is set out as follows:

“Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to receive the transfer from any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or

⁶ Article XI for example only proclaims that the treaty shall be made available in all official United Nations languages, all the versions being authentic, and that copies will be made available to all governments.

indirectly; not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; and not to seek or receive any assistance in the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices” (United Nations, 2005).

In other words, non-nuclear-weapon states may not, under any circumstances, try to acquire nuclear weapons. From Article I and II then, it is evident that the Treaty seeks to stop the spreading of nuclear weapons to other states.

The monitoring of the abidance of Articles I and II by all signatories to this treaty is laid out in Article III. It furthermore states that parties to this treaty agree to “accept safeguards, as set forth in an agreement to be negotiated and concluded with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)...” (United Nations, 2005). The treaty also seeks to prevent nuclear material intended for peaceful purposes to be reallocated to the manufacturing of nuclear weapons. Article III also proclaims that no nuclear material or nuclear processing material shall be provided to non-nuclear weapon states unless said safeguards are in place. The last two paragraphs of Article III proclaim that the safeguards finally to be decided upon “shall be implemented in a manner designed to comply with Article IV of this Treaty...” (United Nations, 2005) and will not hamper the development of peaceful nuclear energy projects. It also states that the non-nuclear weapon states shall negotiate with the IAEA as to agreements that meet conditions required in Article III either collectively or individually, as well as when said negotiations shall commence.

Article IV of the treaty is set out in two paragraphs and relates directly to the exchange of nuclear material for peaceful purposes. Paragraph I states the following:

“Nothing in this Treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all the Parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of this treaty” (United Nations, 2005)

Paragraph two quite simply states that all parties to the treaty have the right to “the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy” (United Nations, 2005). Furthermore, those with the capacity to do so shall assist in the developing and advancing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in non-nuclear weapon states, especially those in the developing world (United Nations, 2005).

Article V (United Nations, 2005) of the treaty states that this exchange of nuclear material for peaceful purposes shall be non-discriminatory, provided that the non-nuclear weapon state does not have a charge for the research and development of nuclear weapons and that the acquisition of such devices is at minimum and that non-nuclear weapon states shall acquire these material from an international body that shall have an adequate representation of non-nuclear weapon states.

This, in essence is the Non-Proliferation Treaty. But the Treaty as it stands has a few drawbacks. The first and most immediate of these drawbacks is Article X, which states the following:

“1. Each Party shall in exercising its national sovereignty have the right to withdraw from the Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country. It shall give notice of such withdrawal to all other Parties to the Treaty and to the United Nations Security Council three months in advance. Such notice shall include a statement of the extraordinary events in regards as having jeopardized its supreme interests (United Nations, 2005).

In short, the treaty provides parties a way to get out of the treaty. All that is required is an “extraordinary event” provided as a reason, which in itself is a vague term. It does not state, however, that the reason must first be accepted by the other parties before implementation, just a prior notice. In short, any party to the treaty with nuclear ambitions can simply bow out of the treaty and then begin its acquisition of nuclear weapons.

The second problem with this treaty is that it does not include definitions as to what a nuclear-weapon state and non-nuclear weapon state are, or which states fall within which category. Nor does it make reference to any other treaty or agreement that might define these two concepts. It is therefore generally assumed that those states that had nuclear weapons at the time of the inception of the NPT are classified as nuclear weapon states while all other states are non-nuclear weapon states. From this assumption then the nuclear weapon states are the permanent members of the Security Council: the USA, the United Kingdom, France, Russia and the People's Republic of China.

The Treaty is of course also limited to those who have signed and ratified it. No requirements are set for states that agree to the treaty after it entered into force and after these states had acquired nuclear weapons. Also, from this point of view the argument can be made that there exists a loophole in which outsiders to the Treaty can receive or provide nuclear weapons, or the development capacity thereof, from and to others. This argument is made from the reading of Article IX which states, among other things, that the treaty shall be made available for signature to all states, and that states that the signing of the Treaty after its entry into force (which was defined as March 5, 1970) will have the Treaty enter into force for them upon the day that the sources of ratification or accession to the treaty is deposited with the governments of the US, United Kingdom and Russia.

Thirdly, and finally: it does not set out any penalties for states who are a party to the Treaty but violate the treaty in any form or fashion. All it does is to refer the topic to the IAEA, which is supposed to set up the safeguards and monitoring systems of the treaty. For this reason, we now turn to the IAEA.

2.5 The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The IAEA was formed in 1957 as part of the implementation of the “Atoms for Peace” initiative developed by US President Eisenhower. Its purpose then, as it is with the NPT, was to establish safeguards that were supposed to ensure that nuclear material and processing technology was exchanged for peaceful purposes only. Essentially, however, at its inception, the IAEA more or less only focused on agreements made by the US with other states with regards to the exchange of nuclear know-how. Only after the Soviet Union agreed to an international standard of safeguards did all bilateral agreements made by nuclear states and non-nuclear states get transferred to the jurisdiction and responsibility of the IAEA in 1963 (Woodliffe, 1987: 86).

These safeguards are imposed upon all nuclear activities used for peaceful purposes. Whether these are nuclear research or nuclear energy applications, the IAEA has the right and duty to impose safeguards upon any and all non-nuclear weapon parties to the Treaty, where the claim is that these activities are of a peaceful nature. These safeguards are to be negotiated with each non-nuclear weapon signatory to the NPT, but on a more general level the IAEA has developed a model of safeguards that are to be used in the inspection of nuclear activities in accordance to Article III of the NPT (Woodliffe, 1987: 86-97).

The safeguards used by the IAEA include: on-site measurements and observations that are checked against reported and recorded documentation provided to the IAEA under obligation. In other words, it is a monitoring system that checks whether all fission material reported to the IAEA is present where it should be. Furthermore, the IAEA has the obligation to review the following: the design of existing and planned nuclear facilities of a state, and special reports related to unusual or unexpected circumstances (Woodliffe, 1987: 92-93; United Nations, 1995: 14-15).

However, sovereignty is also taken into account in these safeguards agreements. This means that each state that signs an agreement with the IAEA for safeguard purposes must

establish national systems that account and control the nuclear material. In other words, the entire process must be under constant observation and records of all materials and the flow thereof have to be maintained so as to ensure that the IAEA has reliable resources on which to base its inspections. These control mechanisms must still, however, submit to IAEA protocols. All nuclear material and nuclear plants must also be available for IAEA inspection (Woodliffe, 1987: 92-93; United Nations, 1995: 14-18).

The IAEA is not, however, without limitations. The purpose of the agency is to monitor the transfer and use of nuclear material as well as the nuclear plants and facilities that make use of nuclear material. It has no mandate to apprehend those who are in breach of the safeguard agreements (meaning those who cannot prove to the satisfaction of the inspectors that nuclear material and facilities are used for peaceful purposes only). The reports made by the IAEA also only account for the present, meaning that even if a state can prove that it is only using its nuclear capacity for peaceful purposes, it cannot advocate that that state will continue to do so indefinitely (Woodliffe, 1987: 93-95).

The best it can do with regards to these limitations is to make constant reports to the IAEA board. Should these reports find that there might be a diversion of nuclear materials from the Article III stipulations, or that it was unable to ascertain this due to a breach in protocol, or any other activity that might lead to suspicion as to the adherence of Article III by a state, all the board can do is to alert the Security Council and General Assembly of the UN. It is therefore the responsibility of the Security Council to ascertain what actions need to be taken against the state in question, which can be a drawn-out exercise that might even lead to no action whatsoever (given the veto powers of the permanent members of the Security Council) (Woodliffe, 1987: 95)⁷.

⁷ The IAEA has other responsibilities as well, specifically with regards to the formation and inspection of nuclear weapon free zones, but these responsibilities are not relevant to the present study.

2.6 Summary

States seek nuclear weapons for a variety of reasons. The five most prominent reasons, or drivers, if one will, for this proliferation of nuclear weapons include: *security*, for better protection against neighbours and other enemies of the state; *prestige*, for the supposed glory and influence that comes along with having nuclear weapons; *domestic motivations*, those that managed to convince the majority that such weapons are necessary due their own ideals; *technology*, because having the capacity to develop and test such devices are too good to pass by; and *economics*, because the perception is there that the building and maintenance of a nuclear arsenal is cheaper in the long run than building up a conventional army.

Whatever the reason may be, these weapons are so destructive that in the event of a nuclear war great environmental damage would be caused, not to mention that entire states may cease to exist to function. Additionally, in the aftermath of the unleashing of such weapons incalculable harm would be caused not only to the targets of such an exchange but also to their neighbours.

In order to prevent such cataclysmic events, many treaties have been signed in an effort to curb the proliferation of these weapons. One of the most important of these is the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which prohibits any parties to the treaty from acquiring nuclear weapons (for those who do not have the weapon) while at the same time encouraging those that do have the weapon to reduce their stockpiles. At the same time the treaty also allows for the using of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. To ensure that such programmes remain peaceful, the IAEA has been charged negotiating safeguards to proliferation with any state that wishes to acquire nuclear technology for non-military purposes.

However, the right of every state to pursue peaceful nuclear programmes is sometimes ignored by other states. In contrast, there are other states that still do everything in their

power to run circles around the IAEA. And despite these treaties, and despite the risk of a major nuclear war having subsided, the risk of nuclear weapons and the threat they pose to global security remains. As such, efforts at disarmament continue. It is to these efforts that we now turn.

Chapter Three: The United States and Nuclear Disarmament

3.1 Introduction

The threat of weapons of mass destruction⁸ remains an ever present threat to global security. In an effort to reduce the threat, major states have tried to negotiate a reduction, and in some cases even a banning, of such weapons. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, there had been several such treaties throughout the decades.

This chapter seeks to explore the efforts made towards nuclear disarmament, and in particular, the role of the USA, further. It will do so in three stages: first, the treaties that were negotiated and signed before the beginning of the Obama Administration's term will be explored. Then, the chapter will focus on the policies that Obama intends to undertake during his term in office in an effort to reduce the world's nuclear weapons. Finally, some challenges that Obama might face in realising his policies will be highlighted.

3.2 Nuclear disarmament before the Bush administration

The most prominent of the treaties negotiated and signed (but not always ratified) in the last six decades include the following: SALT, INF and START. These treaties, along with the NPT have forced states to focus specifically on particular aspects of nuclear armaments.

⁸ Weapons that cause massive damage and misery to people are grouped into three categories: chemical, biological and nuclear.

Whereas the NPT deals with the acquisition of nuclear weapons, the other treaties have focused on the limiting and reducing nuclear capacity. As such, the primary negotiating parties to these treaties were the two main nuclear powers, the US and the Soviet Union.

The SALT agreements were designed to limit what type and what quantity of nuclear weapons would be allowed by each state. In the case of SALT I, two treaties had come into effect, namely the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty and the official SALT I agreement. The ABM treaty specified that anti-ballistic missiles⁹, could only be placed at two (later reduced to one) sites in each state, had to be 1300 kilometres apart, and each site was only allowed 100 interceptor missiles and 100 launchers. The SALT I agreement had a limited timespan of about four years (1969 to 1972) and limited the states with regard to how many ICBMs, submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and strategic nuclear-powered submarines (SSBNs) each state could have. Under the agreement of SALT I, the Soviet Union was allowed more weapons than the US (George, 1990: 80-83).

Following SALT I negotiations, SALT II commenced. This agreement had the intent of limiting all central strategic weapons systems with an equal amount of delivery systems. SALT II focused, in addition, on what to do with multiple independently-targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRVs)¹⁰, cruise missiles and equal numbers on both sides. The agreement finally decided on the following: limits on ICBM, SLBM, 2250 bombers, a 1320 MIRV and cruise missile limit, and 820 MIRVed ICBMs. In addition, the agreement also included a ban on constructing more ICBMs and their launchers, a ban on increasing the number of warheads for the ICBMs, and ceilings on launch-weight and throw weight. (George, 1990: 87-90). SALT II, however, gathered a lot of criticism, especially from the US Senate, and was never ratified. Even so, the US and the Soviet Union have more or less abided by the conditions (George, 1990: 87).

⁹ There are missiles designed with the intent of intercepting tactical ballistic missiles (the missiles that would be carrying nuclear warheads).

¹⁰ As deployed by the Soviet Union.

Following the SALT talks, the US and the Soviet Union engaged in the START talks. START sought to reduce the number of nuclear weapons available to each state even further (Reagan referred to these reductions as deep cuts), and was taking place at the same time as the INF talks. These were no easy talks, as the Soviet Union walked out on the INF talks at one point (following the deployment of INFs in Europe) which led to the suspension of the START talks as well. The INF treaty was eventually signed, which bans the procurement of Intermediate Ranged Nuclear Forces. In 1993 Russia and the US finally signed the START II treaty, which sought for both sides to reduce their warheads with two-thirds (George, 1990: 93-103; United Nations, 1995: 27-28).

In the meantime, during the 1980s, President Reagan also began with the so-called “Star Wars” programme. This was a programme with the intention of developing the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI). This programme was, by all accounts, a violation of the ABM treaty, should it have been put into place. The SDI was only conducted on a research basis until it could no longer be substantiated as such (Cirincione, 2007: 38-42; Cameron, 1987: 126-129).

The Clinton Administration, on the other hand, continued to enforce the treaties that had already been agreed upon, such as securing the ratification of the START II treaty, securing the permanent extension of the NPT, and signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (Cirincione, 2007: 41-42). The long and tedious negotiation efforts were having an effect on the type and quantity of nuclear weapons possessed by the most powerful states. The general belief was that such efforts would continue after the Clinton Administration. The new president – George W. Bush – however had other plans.

3.3 Disarmament under the Bush administration

The Bush administration saw no need to further seek the reduction of nuclear weapons. This is primarily because they viewed such reductions as being a show of weakness, something the Bush administration accused the Clinton administration of with regard to

a number of foreign policy issues (including North Korea) during the 1990s (Mazarr, 2003: 517). The signing of the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty in 2002¹¹ was the first and only such treaty signed by the Bush administration. Instead, the administration focused their attention on getting rid of regimes they perceived as not being trustworthy of having nuclear weapons (or any weapon of mass destruction) - notably the so-called 'axis of evil' states (Cirincione, 2007: 112-116).

Similarly, the Bush Administration was not so much interested in nuclear non-proliferation as in nuclear proliferation by actors hostile to the US. In this regard, the Bush doctrine focused on three policies: traditional non-proliferation, counter-proliferation and consequence management. The policy which they focused on the most was the counter-proliferation policy. This policy centred on such aspects as preventing other states from proliferating in the first place and expanding their own anti-ballistic capacity. Versions of this included placing interceptor missiles in Eastern Europe, supposedly to prepare for the possible intervention of Iranian missiles. The placing of ABM systems in other countries was a violation of the ABM Treaty, which was one of the reasons why the Bush Administration withdrew from the treaty (Cirincione, 2007: 112-115; Cameron, 1987: 113-117; Sanger, 2009c: 411).

This, plus the sudden ending of talks between the US and Russia on arms reduction in 2002, led to a reduced pace in the reduction of arms as agreed upon before. Relatedly, the US had also begun research into new tactical applications of nuclear weapons. These applications, according to the Nuclear Posture Review (Koshy, 2002; 1319-1320) made the principles of first strike and first use of nuclear weapons clear priorities. These new tactical applications largely involved creating smaller nuclear weapons to be used in conventional weapons. This moved the US policy on the use of nuclear weapons away from deterrence, which prompted other states to do the same (Cirincione, 2007: 119). All in all, the Bush Administration caused serious setbacks to the non-proliferation regime.

¹¹ This aimed to reduce the operation nuclear force to between 1700 to 2200 weapons.

3.4 The Obama Administration's Policies

In a speech to the people of Prague, President Barack Obama (2009b) announced his intentions with regards to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Unlike the Bush Administration, whose policies sought to only limit certain states' acquisition or use of the nuclear weapons, Obama is intent on removing nuclear weapons completely from all states' arsenals (Obama, 2009b). What he wants, in other words, is a nuclear weapon free world. The President intends to accomplish this goal of zero nuclear weapons via two steps.

The first step is to focus on the US itself, thereby leading by example. This involves reducing the importance of nuclear weapons, which it intends to do by starting up a new round of START talks. These talks have already been initiated in London and are expected to be concluded at the end of this year. Furthermore, this agreement appears to be not only between the US and Russia, but also includes other states. Obama will, in addition, seek the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which President Clinton signed but which the US senate never ratified. Finally, as part of this first step, Obama intends for a new treaty, with the purpose of stopping the production of fissile material¹², to be drafted among the states of the world (Obama, 2009b).

The second step, as Obama calls it, is to strengthen the NPT. What this means is that Obama is seeking for the NPT to be a more effective tool. This, according to him, will require the following: allocating more resources and authority to international inspections (the IAEA in other words, which conducts these inspections); and prompt action against violators of the treaty and those that leave the treaty without an "extraordinary" reason (Obama; 2009b).

As a part of this step, nuclear fuel (HEU and plutonium) needs to be secured as well. What this means is that there should be a central agency that allocates the fuel required to

¹² Such as highly enriched uranium and plutonium.

run nuclear reactors to countries that require the nuclear fuel, to prevent countries from producing their own nuclear fuel. Obama calls this an international fuel bank (Obama, 2009b). This is not a new idea. When the scientists that designed the original bomb were asked how one could most effectively restrain the construction and proliferation of nuclear weapons, their response was to secure the fissile material.

These plans are more or less the same as what Obama laid out during his election campaign. In his election manifesto Obama (2009a: 134-138) proclaimed that he would do the following with regard to nuclear disarmament: “Phase out highly enriched uranium¹³ in the civil sector... strengthen policing and interdiction efforts... set the goal of a world without nuclear weapons... strengthen the non-proliferation regime.”

But Obama has, in the meantime, also embraced a new policy, and that is to increase efforts in the creation of a missile defence shield. However, these defensive weapons are to be deployed in the sea, with the intention of shooting down short and medium range ballistic missiles. This missile defence system, while mobile, is not a violation of the ABM treaty because it is aimed only at short and intermediate range missiles, and defence against these missiles is permitted. This is also symbolic in the sense that even though the US may no longer be bound to the ABM treaty, the Obama Administration will still try to abide by it (Nagorski, 2009).

Following Obama’s Prague speech, more details have been added to the policy as negotiations with the UN and Russia began. These negotiations can be divided into three sections: the securing of the fissile material; the new START negotiations, and the Missile Defence System.

In relation to the issue of securing fissile material, Obama discussed the matter with the UN Security Council during September. Amongst the points he wants the treaty to include are the following: halting the production of weapons grade uranium and

¹³ The reasons for the phasing out and strengthening the policing and interdiction efforts will be explored in chapters four and five.

plutonium, strengthening of the NPT, and encouraging countries to reinforce the restrictions on the transfer of nuclear material and technology. But the discussion of and agreement on the above matter was not without setbacks: The transfer restriction is only an encouragement, without the necessary punishment added to dissuade others from breaking this resolution (Sheridan and Lynch, 2009; Sanger, 2009a).

START, after initial calls of a willingness to engage in talks regarding the reduction of the US and Russian nuclear arsenals, now appears to be unable to meet the deadline of December 2009¹⁴. Initially, things were going well, after the US and Russia agreed to a reduction of nuclear forces by a quarter of the current allowed operational size. The major obstacles of the current negotiations are the following: First is the ever present problem of MIRVs. Russia has developed a new type of missile that for all intents and purposes appears to be a MIRV but which it claims is not. Second is the refitting of ballistic missiles with conventional (non-nuclear) warheads. Russia claims that when such a missile is launched, it could easily be mistaken for a nuclear warhead, thus heightening the risk of nuclear war. Third is the discussion of severe reductions in bombers capable of delivering nuclear weapons. Finally, there is the discussion of the number of actual warheads in each arsenal (Levy and Baker, 2009; Shanker and Landler, 2009; Gutterman, 2009).

There was also another initial problem, that problem being the Eastern Europe missile defence shield that the Bush Administration intended to put into place. This particular problem has, however, been resolved. During September this year the Obama administration announced that this missile defence shield plan would be scrapped, in a clear attempt to placate the Russians (Sheridan and Pan, 2009; Gorbachev, 2009).

3.5 Challenges related to nuclear disarmament policies

Essentially the constraints that Obama faces can be categorised into two groups: The US Senate and other states. In the case of the Senate, one has to make a clear distinction

¹⁴ This is also incidentally the time when the original START agreement expires.

between law-making capacity and good intentions. President Barack Obama may talk all he wants about reducing nuclear weapons and enforcing a stronger non-proliferation regime. But Obama's word is not law. It is the US Senate that ratifies treaties. Only once a treaty has been ratified does it become law, and only then is the US fully committed to the treaty. In his capacity as president, Obama only has the ability to veto such ratifications.

The Senate has blocked treaties before. As had already been mentioned, SALT II was never ratified. Similarly, while President Bill Clinton signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, its ratification was defeated in the Senate in 1999. However, at the time the Senate was comprised of a majority of Republicans. Currently the Senate's majority is Democrats, which is Obama's party. There is thus a possibility that the treaty may be ratified this time. With regard to the reduction of nuclear weapons, Obama may just find his treaty defeated if the US negotiates too much away.

And it is not just individuals in the US that may have a problem with reducing the US's nuclear arsenal. With regards to other states, the premise is simple: almost nobody believes that a nuclear-free world is possible. The danger of such a world is simply too great. Take the recent motion by the US to make the Middle-East a nuclear weapon free zone (NWFZ)¹⁵. This was done in an attempt to force Iran to accept stricter nuclear restrictions. But it would also mean that Israel would have to remove its (undeclared) nuclear arsenal. As such the motion was more or less defeated (Sanger, 2009a).

Likewise, other states uphold the economic driver to be of increased importance. Russia is one of these. One of Russia's assertions is that it will require a nuclear arsenal to keep China out of Siberia in the coming years. Also, those who put much importance in these weapons (such as Britain, France, India, Pakistan and China) will be difficult to persuade to get rid of them (Hoagland, 2009).

¹⁵ Another type of treaty that proclaims certain regions of the world to not have nuclear weapons, there are currently five such places: the Latin America NWFZ, the African NWFZ, the Oceania NWFZ, the Antarctic NWFZ and the Outer Space NWFZ (United Nations, 1995: 21-23).

Similarly, one of the biggest challenges the US may face is a result of its track record under the Bush Administration. Due to the fact that the Bush Administration regarded itself as above previous treaties signed, the world lost trust in the US. But the Bush Administration's actions were only the last straw. The problems had begun well before then, with the US's refusal to ratify SALT II, Reagan's SDI programme, and the failure to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty the first time. As such, the Obama administration has a lot of trust to rebuild if it wants to persuade other states to cooperate.

The quest for a nuclear free world may be the biggest problem of them all. While people like the UN Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon, President Barack Obama, and scholars like Cirincione, Drell and Goodby (Evans, 2009; Cirincione, 2009: 43; 2008: 23-32) ascertain that nuclear weapons have made the world more dangerous, the principle of MAD holds. And MAD only holds if the states that possess nuclear weapons believe that MAD will occur in the event of a nuclear attack. It was the principle reason behind the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, meaning that if a state believed it could intercept incoming nuclear weapons and in this manner survive a first strike, then that state would actually stand a chance of winning a nuclear war (hence the limitations on ABMs).

Even more importantly than MAD perhaps is the Realist principle that in order to achieve one's own interests (interpreted in this case as, first and foremost, securing a state's survival and sovereignty) one requires power (in this case an army to fend off would be invaders). In the absence of such power, a state would be unable to resist any aggression. And a state without nuclear weapons would be at a very serious disadvantage if attacked by even a single, well placed nuclear weapon. Considering the animosity and distrust between the states that do possess nuclear weapons¹⁶, the chances of any of these states giving up their nuclear weapons are unlikely. As conventional wisdom currently stands, the ultimate deterrent against a nuclear weapon is another nuclear weapon (Sokolski, 2009: 26-27; Schneider, 2008: 345-360).

¹⁶ China and Russia versus each other as well as Britain, France and yes the US; North Korea's continued propaganda against the US; the hostile neighbours of Israel; and Pakistan versus India.

3.6 Concluding Remarks

Many attempts have been made in the past to reduce nuclear weapons, as well as preventing the development and testing of such weapons. But as other states have recently begun to seek such weapons again (this will be discussed in the next chapter) not to mention the threat from non-state actors (discussed in Chapter Five), more action is required.

To that end the Obama Administration is trying to secure all poorly guarded nuclear fissile material in the world. And because of the dire threat that conventional nuclear weapons present¹⁷, Obama has made it his quest to get the world to think about and strive for a world without nuclear weapons.

When comparing Bush's policies with that of Obama's, one thing becomes clear: deterrence was no longer regarded as good enough by either president. But what deterrence is replaced with differs significantly between the two presidents. For Bush, this replacement was to have come in the form of smaller, more tactical nuclear weapons used in conventional battles. For Obama, this replacement is in the form of complete nuclear disarmament.

From these two standpoints it is clear what the differences between Presidents Bush and Obama are. Where Bush stopped disarmament talks, Obama reopened the talks. Overall, President Bush's policies were threatening the non-proliferation regime as a whole. Obama's policies appear determined to reinforce this regime.

There are, however similarities between the two as well: Obama has continued with the efforts started by Bush to secure loose fissile material. In the same manner, Obama has also decided that the US does require an ABM system. It would appear that Obama has

¹⁷ There had been many close calls where the world was almost plunged into nuclear war, the Cuban Missile Crisis being perhaps the most infamous (Caldicott, 2009: 151).

taken the policies that Bush made that were the most positive and expanded on these, while trying to do away with the policies that aggravated the rest of the world.

Chapter Four: Iran and North Korea's Nuclear Ambitions

4.1 Introduction

President Obama's administration is confronted by many challenges, not least of which is how to handle states that are suspected (or confirmed) of actively seeking nuclear weapons. Two states that immediately come to mind (and as such will be used as case studies) are Iran and North Korea. These two states have been a major problem for the Bush presidency for the majority of his two terms.

To understand why Obama must make and implement policies regarding these two states, several things are required. First, one must understand why these states are the centre of focus in the first place. This will be done by providing a brief overview of the history of nuclear research and proliferation by these two states from the 1950s until the present. An exploration into the reasons as to why their nuclear intentions may not be benign is also of importance. Finally, understanding what the implications are in the event that these states develop nuclear weapons will also briefly be explored, as this will give some insight into their strategic importance to the US.

Second, one must understand what exactly it was that President Bush's administration did regarding these states that requires immediate attention from the Obama administration. This involves exploring the policies that Bush implemented, as well as their consequences. Finally, an exploration of the policies that Obama will put into place towards these two states, as well as the actions that have been taken towards the implementation of these policies to date, will also be done. Reactions from others regarding these policies will form part of the analysis, as these actions will determine what direction these policies might take.

4.2 The History and Implications of Iran's Nuclear Programme

Iran's nuclear programme began under the rule of the Shah of Iran and the administration of President Eisenhower. The programme was introduced under the policy of atoms for peace, which for all intents and purposes provided a state with the materials and means to create and operate nuclear power plants. Under the NPT the same stipulations are still in place for any signatory non-nuclear state that wishes to acquire nuclear power for "peaceful" purposes. This included supplying Iran with uranium (Melman & Javandanfar, 2007: 74-78; Sanger, 2009c: 32).

But as is widely known, the process between refining uranium up to weapons-grade from the stock supplied for peaceful purposes are not that far differentiated. Indeed, all it takes is the right equipment and expertise. Iran began acquiring both in the latter part of the Shah's rule (Melman & Javandanfar, 2007: 83-87).

The reason for the Shah to be pursuing nuclear weapons at this point in time had to do with Iran's independence from foreign powers, including reliance on nuclear fuel. Dr Akbar Etemad, who was the head of the Shah's nuclear energy programme, goes further and states that the Shah wanted the bomb for at least three reasons: "glory, pride, power regional hegemony" (Melman & Javandanfar, 2007: 73), which points to the Prestige driver discussed in Chapter Two.

During this time, the Iranians made great progress with regards to civilian applications. The turn to military purposes only came in 1974. Ironically, this was the same year that Iran signed the IAEA's safeguards agreement (American Journal of International Law, 2005: 270). Since this turn of events had to be kept secret, the Shah also reached out to another state: Israel. What must be understood here is that the Shah was more interested in his own power standing among the other nations of the Middle East. He was not concerned about the outrage over the formation of the Israeli state in what the rest of the Arab world considered their rightful territory. While the people of Iran may also have loathed Israel, the Shah was Israel's best friend in a geopolitical area surrounded by

enemies (Melman & Javandanfar, 2007: 78-82). In addition, while there had been many military covert agreements between Iran and Israel, none of them involved the exchange of nuclear information. What was agreed upon, however, was a delivery system: the so-called Jericho missile. The importation of this missile system was cancelled during the revolution, however, and thus never arrived.

In the meantime, the Shah had made agreements with other states as well: France¹⁸, India (with whom Iran signed a nuclear cooperation treaty) Eurodif¹⁹, Germany, as well South Africa and Argentina, who were to provide the sources for highly enriched uranium, and technical expertise in the case of Argentina (Melman & Javandanfar, 2007: 85-87). Domestically the Shah was also searching for Iran's own sources of uranium and ways to acquire plutonium (most often acquired from the waste material created by a nuclear reactor), another potential source for nuclear weapons grade material. All these activities were halted after the Iranian Revolution. When the religious fundamentalists took over, all activities and agreements with the US and Israel were quickly scrapped, with all direct communication between Iran and America having ended after the US embassy hostage crisis.

The reason why the other nuclear activities were halted was because of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's, the then supreme leader of Iran, conviction that not only were nuclear power and weapons evil, but that it was also a Western idea being enforced upon the Islamic Republic of Iran. Thus the Iranians also cancelled the agreements with Eurodif, cut the nuclear programme. France and Germany also refused to continue providing resources for the construction of nuclear reactors and subsequently pulled out of Iran (Melman & Javandanfar, 2007: 89-95). So what changed the attitude of the new Iranian leadership to again pursue a nuclear programme at the start of the nineties? The answer is twofold: The Iran-Iraq war and the death of Khomeini in 1989.

¹⁸ France was supposed to build two nuclear reactors outside the city Ahvaz, but before the plans could be implemented the Revolution occurred.

¹⁹ A European company owned collectively by France, Spain, Sweden and Belgium.

During the Iran-Iraq war Saddam Hussein had bombed the Bushehr reactors six times between 1984 and 1987 (Sanger, 2009c: 33), thereby destroying whatever grounds the Iranians had covered in the advancement of nuclear technology. But it was not this action that forced the leaders of Iran to re-examine their decision about nuclear technology. The reasons that the war brought came in two forms: the dropping of chemical bombs on Zardeh in 1988 (which killed 275 people and increased the miscarriage rate by thirty per cent among the women of Zardeh) as well as the fact that with the current resources that Iran had, it could not win the war (Melman & Javandanfar, 2007: 97-99). On the basis of these considerations, it can be argued that Iran's reassertion of nuclear capacity is rooted in the Security and Economics drivers as set out by Cirincione in Chapter Two. The motivating factors are to defend the people of Iran from further ambitious attempts made by hostile neighbours to take possession of Iran, and to be able to win a war as Betts (1979; 1063-1066) already advocated in 1979.

But although the war may have made Khomeini rethink his policy towards nuclear weapons, no one knows if he would actually have begun the process of reacquiring Iran's nuclear capacity, in light of the fact that he died shortly after. With his death the Ayatollahs who had disagreed with Khomeini were capable of swinging the rest of the government to pursue nuclear capacity once again. Chief among these ayatollahs was Rafsanjani, who began recruiting Iranian scientists who had fled the country during and after the revolution, to work once more on Iran's nuclear programme (Melman & Javandanfar, 2007: 98-100).

During the 1990s Iran approached everyone it could think of to try and get its nuclear programme running again. This included a number of countries in Europe, as well as the US. But the US was not interested in reopening talks with Iran on anything, and applied significant pressure on other countries that were also approached (including Germany, which was asked to complete the work it had begun, as well as Spanish and Argentinian companies), which it succeeded in doing (Melman & Javandanfar, 2007: 100).

As such, Iran looked to two other sources: China and Pakistan. The Chinese had already been providing Iran with the knowledge, but not the materials needed, during the 1980s. During the next decade, however, China's secret assistance increased with the provision of engineering designs and the construction of a fully functional uranium conversion facility. In 1997 the Chinese pulled out after severe pressure from President Bill Clinton (Melman & Javandanfar, 2007:100-101). Regardless, the knowledge was already provided to Iran, and the facility was later completed with Iranian resources.

But it was the connections with Pakistan that would put Iran well on its way to achieving its objectives. The reasons for Pakistan to assist Iran with its nuclear ambitions were mainly due to a lack of funds. However, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan was suspicious of Iran's motivation for such technology and had his people stall the process. The end result of this was that Pakistani-born nuclear scientist and black market operator A.Q. Khan²⁰ came into contact with the Iranians (Melman & Javandanfar, 2007: 103; Sanger, 2009c: 34-37). Khan subsequently supplied Iran with equipment, materials and technical nuclear knowledge as well as plans. Iran also received assistance from Russia, in the form of the missiles required to carry the nuclear payloads (Sanger, 2009c: 36-39).

All of this was done in the utmost secrecy. All material shipments were cleverly hidden as materials required for other projects, and some resources and materials were not even recorded or reported to the IAEA. Only in late September 2009 did the Iranian government feel the need to report to the IAEA an as of yet unreported nuclear related site that they had been building. This centrifuge is deep in the mountains near the city of Qom, and the Iranians were also planning on building a second centrifuge at the site (Melman & Javandanfar, 2007: 107-130; Washington Post, 2009; Karimi, 2009).

Considering the above, one has to ask the following question: Why do the Iranians not have a bomb yet? According to a National Intelligence Estimate, the Iranians abandoned their nuclear weapons programme in 2003 (Sanger, 2009c: 3-13). This, however, was

²⁰ Due to a quest for profit, Khan began a black market based on nuclear technology, materials and resources. He was a buyer and supplier, with connections across Europe, all the way to North Korea as well as the northern parts of Africa, specifically Libya.

during a time when a more moderate president was in office in Iran. Considering that the Iranians already have the nuclear delivery capacity, the plans to make an actual bomb assembly is by far the easiest step. The step that Iranians are having problems with is the uranium enrichment (Cordesman, 2008: 21-26). This step is closely related to the process of the construction and running of nuclear reactors and centrifuges (hence Article III of the NPT). Even so, the Iranians had, throughout the first decade of the twenty-first century, been maintaining that their nuclear ambitions are for peaceful and civilian purposes only (Shen, 2008: 95).

There are several reasons as to why the US does not believe them. First, the safeguards and inspections that the IAEA conducts on the facilities are blocked and some materials and facilities go undeclared. This less than honest and open manner approach of the Iranians continues to raise eyebrows everywhere in the upper echelons of the US administration, as it did with the more neoconservative elements of the previous administration. Second, all calls to be more transparent to the world community by the US and other Western states are met by aggressive talk and accusations of American and Western imperialism. This sort of defensive technique only serves to convince the West that Iran is actually secretly continuing its nuclear weapons programme. Third, and perhaps the reason that ties it all together, is one man: Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of Iran and elected for a second term in office. Early on in his first term, President Ahmadinejad had not only proclaimed that the holocaust of World War II was Israeli propaganda, he had also called for the State of Israel to be destroyed. Considering Israel's military competence and power, there is more or less only one way of doing that: by means of a weapon of mass destruction. When considering this statement along with known records of Iran assisting terrorist groups aimed at the annihilation of Israel such as Hamas and Hezbollah (via the provision of weapons and training), it is clear that Iran wants to get rid of Israel in one way or another (Sanger, 2009c: 56-63).

Finally, there is also the fact that Iran is a Shia state. The Muslim world has several different interpretations of Islam, the two most prominent amongst these being Sunni and

Shia²¹. The majority of the rest of the Middle East is Sunni (this includes Saudi Arabia). Thus in order to exert their interpretation (as all fundamentalists try to do) they would have to establish themselves as the regional hegemon. One of the best ways to do this is to be the only country in the region with nuclear weapons. Thus, the prestige driver once again becomes the motivation (Abraham, 2009: 190; Knepper, 2008: 452-455).

So what would be the implications of an Iran armed with nuclear weapons? There are two views that need to be considered: the regional and the international. In the regional view the implications can be found in how Iran's neighbours (the four most notable being Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia and Turkey) would respond. The most important of these neighbours would be Israel. In this regard, one has to take two things into account: what Iran thinks about Israel and how Israel handles threats to its existence. The first has already been discussed, with Iran advocating the destruction of Israel. As to the second, considering that Israel has withstood, repelled and even invaded its neighbours whenever it felt threatened by them (The Six Day War, the ever reoccurring occupation of Palestine, the war in Lebanon to fight Hizbollah and so on), there are clear indications of what Israel might do to Iran. In addition, one also has to take into account how Israel responded when Saddam Hussein was developing nuclear weapons: Israel bombed the nuclear programme sites. It did the same to a Syrian site a few years ago (Sanger, 2009c: 269-270). Despite this record, however, Israel does not have the long range bombing capacity to effectively target all known Iranian sites.

With regards to the other states, none would appreciate a nuclear Iran. If Iran acquires nuclear weapons, these states will follow suit. This will put an effective end to the NPT, leaving decades of hard work in the dust (Cirincione, 2007: 107; National Committee on American Foreign Policy, 2008b: 177-180). Turkey, however, due to a change of perception by the Turkish people about the Iranians (to a positive one), will probably not go nuclear. Even so, Turkey is still wary about having a nuclear Iran for a neighbour.

²¹ The Shia's believe that their interpretation of Islam is the correct interpretation since their Caliphate was the heir of Mohammed himself before he was assassinated and replaced in 680 AD.

This is why Turkey's official policy is to lobby for a Middle East nuclear weapon free zone (Kibaralglu & Caglar, 2008: 59-76).

On the international level, one only has to really take into account what the US will do. This is because the US is actively trying to negotiate with the rest of the world to act against Iran. One of the tools used by the negotiators is the threat a nuclear Iran would pose to the international community, notably Russia and China. It is to the policies of the US that this chapter turns its attention to later on.

4.3 The History of the North Korean Issue and the Implications

North Korea's nuclear ambitions began shortly after the creation of the demilitarized zone that separates North and South Korea to this day. According to Chang (2007: 4-9), the reasons for this are directly related to the Korean War, and the Americans' supposed mismanagement of that war. The war started on June 25, 1950, when Kim Sung Il (then leader of North Korea) invaded the South. Thanks to an absence by the Soviet Union in the Security Council²², the UN decided to send troops into Korea. This UN force (led by the Americans) had pushed the North Koreans all the way to the border with China, which resulted in China entering the war. Finally, after much fighting, the demilitarized zone was agreed upon as a temporary solution.

This display of force by the Americans is what convinced Kim Sung Il that he would require nuclear weapons, if he was to stand on equal footing with the Americans. In contrast, Kim Jong Il's reason for acquiring nuclear weapons, apart from having a deterrent against US invasion, is believed to be to sell them, in light of the poor state of North Korea's economy (Sanger, 2009c: 287, 312). Hymans (2008: 271) contends that it is also a matter of pride (the prestige driver), seeing as how the North Koreans are fully convinced that they are the greatest nation on earth. Considering the titles and tales the North Korean government is spinning about their leaders (such as Kim Sung Il being a

²² And the fact that Mao Zedong's People's Republic of China was not represented in the United Nations Security Council at the time.

god), proclaiming that the North Koreans are seeking the bomb out of pride is not too far-fetched an assertion (Chang, 2007: 9-11, 15-16).

The North Koreans have used underhanded methods from the beginning to secure their nuclear capacity. North Korea secured two agreements from the Kremlin for the transfer of nuclear technology to North Korea. It also had its scientists trained by both the Soviet Union and China, both of whom assisted North Korea in this manner with the intent of assisting in the acquisition of nuclear technology by North Korea for peaceful purposes. Neither the Soviet Union nor China wanted another nuclear neighbour, especially not in the hands of Kim Sung Il (Chang, 2007: 23-24).

Nevertheless, nuclear assistance continued: a small reactor was built near Pyongyang during the 1960s and uranium mining assistance was sent via the IAEA in return for inspections of the reactor in 1977. During this time the tensions between China and the Soviet Union²³ assisted North Korea by allowing the Great Leader (as Kim Sung Il was known to his people) to play these two powers off against one another. In so doing his nuclear programme was given another notch (Chang, 2007: 24).

Even so, it was slow going for North Korea. Due to pressure by the US, the Soviet Union managed to persuade North Korea to join the NPT in 1985, in return for four light water reactors²⁴. This deal, however, was never concluded, due to disagreements. As to the safeguard arrangement to be concluded with the IAEA, North Korea simply refused to sign anything else until the Americans had pulled their nuclear weapons out of South Korea. After this, and due to the fall of the Soviet Union, Kim Sung Il appeared more willing to cooperate with the rest of the world. An agreement was made with the IAEA shortly after the removal of the nuclear weapons from South Korea and an agreement for a nuclear free Korean peninsula with South Korea signed (Chang, 2007: 24-25; Chan and Kang, 2003: 22).

²³ The tensions centred on a dispute about who was to lead the communist revolution, which continued until the fall of the Soviet Union.

²⁴ The type of reactor that Chernobyl was.

The IAEA, however, had found numerous inconsistencies with North Korea's stated claims regarding its nuclear programme. One such example is the Yongbyon reactor (which began construction in 1986). This reactor, according to US intelligence, was designed with military purposes in mind. Another example was the finding that the North Koreans had undeclared plutonium resources (Chang, 2007: 25-26; Cha and Kang, 2003: 22).

The reporting of these findings prompted North Korea to withdraw from the NPT in 1993. This sent alarm bells ringing almost everywhere in the world. These bells were calmed for a while when North Korea agreed to suspend its withdrawal from the NPT in return for aid and recognition from the US (Chang, 2007: 26). But in 1994 North Korea denied all access to its reactors by the IAEA and resumed reprocessing of nuclear rods. As sanctions were being discussed by the rest of the world (an action that North Korea would regard as an act of war), the US was preparing to strike at North Korea. It was Jimmy Carter who broke the tension by securing an agreement (although the specific wording was carefully selected so as to prevent Senate ratification). This Agreed Framework stated that the North Koreans would suspend reprocessing its fissile material, eventually shut down Yongbyon and cooperate with the IAEA in return for Light Water Reactors, an agreement of no-nuclear attacks, the lifting of some sanctions and shipments of heavy oil fuel (Chang, 2007: 26-28; Perkovich, 1998: 15)

Despite the impression that North Korea was working alongside the rest of the world now, the reality was that North Koreans continued to develop their nuclear programme. Indeed, they admitted to the allegations that in fact had a uranium-based nuclear weapons programme (which began in the 1980s under the guidance of A.Q. Khan) in 2002 to the American envoy James Kelly (Chang, 2007: 29; Harrison, 2005: 101).

This provocation is what damaged North Korean-American relations so much. When the US took action in accordance with the breach of the agreement, as will be elaborated on in the next section, the North Koreans evicted the IAEA out of North Korea, finally withdrew from the NPT, reactivated Yongbyon, and continued their nuclear weapons

programme in all earnest (Chang, 2007: 29-31). Following the inspection of North Korean site by a Polish physicist in 2004, there is general agreement that North Korea now has the material required to make a bomb, and in fact is capable of producing more fuel (Sanger, 2009c: 316-319).

On June 4, 2006, North Korea tested its Taepodong-2 missile, which is its version of an intercontinental missile. Although the missile broke apart, it is certain that the North Koreans are making strides in that area: before the Taepodong missile, which is a three-stage missile (meaning that it separates three times, much like the Saturn V rocket) the North Koreans had only tested one-stage missiles. This means that the North Koreans are doing everything in their capacity to quickly reach the level of the US.

As to the building of the bomb, there is little doubt now that the Koreans had indeed detonated one on 6 October 2006. Even though the detonation was much smaller than the bomb that dropped on Hiroshima, about a tenth of its capacity, two things were made clear by this detonation. The first is that the North Koreans now know what it takes to make a bomb and the second is that even a small bomb such as this one is capable of doing harm²⁵ (Chang, 2007: 34-36; Sanger, 2009c: 322-327).

But what are the implications of a nuclear North Korea? For one thing, a nuclear North Korea means that its immediate neighbours (being China, Russia, South Korea and Japan) are all threatened. South Korea and Japan are particularly threatened for two reasons: the first is that both states are staunch allies of the US. The second is that both states have a strong US military presence in their territories. Considering North Korea's motivations, this could mean that North Korea might just attack these states with their nuclear arsenal if pushed too far.

A nuclear North Korea also unnerves China and Russia. Since the beginning, neither state wanted to aid North Korea too much in its nuclear ambitions. Indeed in the past, China

²⁵ To be discussed in the next chapter.

has even threatened North Korea that it would allow the UN Security Council to impose further sanctions on North Korea.

But there are other implications as well. North Korea's economy is almost entirely dependent upon foreign aid (Chang, 2007: 155-167). One of the primary reasons for this is that North Korea has spent a significant part of its budget on its nuclear weapons programme instead of on the citizens of the state. Similarly, the aid provisions are first demarcated to the military and then to the citizens. And while the citizens are living in abject poverty, Kim Jung Il lives in the epitome of luxury. It is also because of these limited resources being funnelled almost completely into the nuclear programme that North Korea has branched its services out in other directions - directions that inevitably lead to the selling of nuclear know-how to others states such as Syria (Bechtol, 2009: 100-102)

But if North Korea continues as it has, then the limited aid it is receiving will stop, and sanctions will increase. North Korea however will consider an increase in sanctions as an act of war. In any event, these actions could all very likely lead to war. It will all depend on how threatened the North Koreans feel. In the meantime, six-party talks, China, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, Russia and the US, all states with a vested interest in the situation, are being conducted. But North Korea is making these talks difficult.

4.4 Policy under Bush

The Bush Administration's policies with regard to both Iran and North Korea can be divided into two sections: the policies during Bush's first term and the policies during Bush's second term. One would describe the first term's policies as 'Regime Change' and the second term's policies as 'Grudging Cooperation'.

The Regime Change policies were aimed at facilitating a change of regime in states hostile to American interests (Cirincione, 2007: 112-115; Sanger, 2009c: 41, 302). The

phrases used of course were securing freedom and democracy around the world. While this may sound noble, the reality is that the US is partners with several undemocratic regimes (including Saudi Arabia and Pakistan). Instead the Regime Change policy was focused specifically on states hostile to American interests, including the 'axis of evil' states Iraq, Iran and North Korea. In addition, during the first term the US maintained a strictly no engagement policy with Iran and North Korea. The reasoning behind this was that there was no point in engaging a government that would soon be changing anyway - a change the US was hoping to facilitate.

In the case of Iran, the obsession with regime change resulted in lost opportunities. This is especially the case when one considers that, during the attack on the World Trade Centre, the Iranians were expressing their condolences to the loss of lives. It is even more disappointing when one considers that during the initial invasion of Afghanistan, the Iranians were supporting the US in its endeavour. The reason for this is that Iran and the US had a mutual enemy in the Taliban. This could have been grounds for engagement with one another. But fearing the prolonging of the Iranian regime should talks get underway, the US, as it had done largely since 1979, ignored Iran (Sanger, 2009c: 39-40).

When the US then went and declared Iran as part of the 'axis of evil', the action reinforced the religious fundamentalists in Iran, thereby putting an end to engagement between Iran and the US for the immediate future. The invasion of Iraq also drew attention away from Iran's activities, but the Bush administration did consider it as a tool to potentially convince the Iranians to support them in this endeavour. After all, Iraq was an enemy of Iran as well. Unfortunately, the fundamentalists were firmly in control again by this time (Sanger, 2009c: 42-44).

The initial successes of the Iraq war were also squandered. Once more an opportunity presented itself for an alliance of convenience. Sensing that isolationism and the dire warning the Iraq invasion held for anybody who dared meddle in WMDs were about to force a regime change in Iran, the US rejected any such opportunity. This rejection was reinforced after the bomb attacks on US citizens in Saudi Arabia (the US suspected

Iranian involvement with the Al-Qaeda attack). Instead, the US decided to let the European Union handle Iran and its nuclear programme (Sanger, 2009c: 45-51).

In the case of North Korea, years of isolation have brought about severe economic impoverishment: one could go so far as to say that nothing has changed since the end of the Korean War (except for the nuclear programme). The general belief in the administration was that with a little more of a shove, Kim Jong Il would finally be forced to capitulate. In essence the isolation meant stopping everything that the US had begun with the Agreed Framework negotiated in 1994. This isolation was finally imposed upon the revelation of North Korea's uranium enrichment programme. The North Koreans' response has already been explored in the previous section. Other than that though, the Bush Administration appeared to have no actual plan towards North Korea: its focus was centred on Iraq (Sanger, 2009c: 285-297, 302-308; Delury, 2008: 76).

The Bush Administration believed that Iraq was a far bigger threat to the US than North Korea was. North Korea was surrounded by allies and other states that were not on too good terms with North Korea. Iraq on the other hand was close to other states that meant the US and its allies harm. This perception prevailed even when it became clear that Iraq was not harbouring weapons of mass destruction (Sanger, 2009c: 310-311). Even when North Korea dropped the Agreed Framework, no clear stance was taken by the US.

The invasion of Iraq did have one positive aspect, albeit for a very limited time: it convinced the North Koreans that the same could happen to their state. However, instead of capitalising on this, the US got too involved in Iraq, thereby allowing North Korea enough breathing space to jump-start its nuclear programme (Sanger, 2009c: 312-314).

What the Bush administration did try to do, however, was to convince China to get North Korea to back down on its nuclear weapons programme. The reason the administration did this is because China is the closest thing that North Korea has to a friend, and because the implications of a nuclear North Korea could result in both Japan and South Korea

going nuclear as well would impede on China's interests. Thus, the US made North Korea China's problem (Sanger, 2009c: 309; Glaser & Liang, 2008: 167-173).

The only results of the US's policy in the first term of Bush's administration, however, was the continuance of the Iranian nuclear programme, the election of Ahmadinejad as President of Iran and the testing of North Korea's first plutonium bomb.

The second term, however, saw a drastic reversal of decisions. Very late into the first term (so late that they would only start doing something about it in the second term), the US obtained a laptop that held the evidence of Iran pursuing, and encountering difficulties, in the process of making a nuclear bomb. It is this evidence that the national report downplayed with the statement that Iran had suspended its nuclear weapon building programme (but not the enrichment procedure). The policy of the US now turned to the UN Security Council and a bid to secure heavy sanctions against Iran, using this evidence. At the same time, the US was still not talking to Iran. Iran, on the other hand was cutting deals with Russia and China for oil incentives. The result was that the lobbying between the US and the states sitting in the Security Council over sanctions resulted in three very watered down resolutions. This process which had taken nearly three years also bought the Iranians more time (Sanger, 2009c: 64-73, 80-81; Jacobson, 2008: 69-78).

In 2006, the US considered a different approach: talking with the Iranians together with Europe, Russia and China. The deal for this compromise was that the Iranians would suspend its production in uranium in return for the suspension of sanctions. The Iranians never agreed to this compromise, however, choosing instead to buy time (Sanger, 2009c: 73- 76).

The US did have one policy continuing throughout both terms, however: sabotage. According to David Sanger (2009c: 76-80), the CIA had managed to infiltrate Khan's network and other routes that supplied the centrifuges and other materials required to build a nuclear reactor and enrich uranium. It is this equipment that the US sabotaged.

However, after frequent incidents where the equipment would fail and explode, the Iranians turned elsewhere and thoroughly inspected the merchandise.

All in all, the policies of the Bush administration did not accomplish its desired goals: Iran kept pushing ahead with its nuclear programme, increasing the size of the operation extensively as they went along, while the US tried at first to ignore the Iranians, later tried to secure sanctions, and even later tried to talk based on conditions. None of these efforts dissuaded the Iranians.

In the case of North Korea, the detonating of the nuclear device forced the US to try and talk with North Korea. Before then, however, the action by the North Koreans provided the US with enough reason to impose the toughest sanctions (prohibiting the movement of nuclear materials in and out of North Korea) the North Koreans had seen since the Korean War. The sanctions did not go so far as to say that continued defiance would result in a use of force, however (Sanger, 2009c: 325-328). But the US also focused on targeting the banks that dealt with North Korea's finances throughout the world, getting these banks to stop delivering their services to the country, thereby hitting the economy even harder (Sanger, 2009c: 334).

At the time the US's attitude towards the weapons was also that the North Koreans had to abandon them before negotiations could start²⁶ (National Committee on American Foreign Policy, 2008a: 238); a policy stance that was clearly not working. Christopher R. Hill, first a diplomat to Poland and then diplomat to South Korea, changed that by slowly but surely breaking the rule restrictions put upon Americans when in the same room with the North Koreans (not joining in toasts, no handshakes and definitely no talking), as was the case with the six-nation talks. Initially there were to be no one-on-one talks with the North Koreans. Hill, however, was pushing for just that. Finally, he got the chance to negotiate with the North Koreans in 2007. These negotiations bore fruit: the North Koreans agreed to shut down Yongbyon under foreign supervision, in return for plenty of

²⁶ In the meanwhile the US would also rely on South Korea to secure its interests.

oil. Additionally, the North Koreans were supposed to declare all nuclear-related material that they had produced (Sanger, 2009c: 335-339).

However, the North Koreans were not yet ready to negotiate fully. For instance, they refused to reveal where the uranium enrichment equipment was. There was also some other evidence of undeclared enrichment processes. Manuals used at Yongbyon had traces of highly enriched uranium on them, indicating that the North Koreans were not acting in good faith (Sanger, 2009c: 339). But in response to what the North Koreans had done so far, such as blowing up the cooling tower at Yongbyon, Bush took North Korea off the list of states sponsoring terrorism, which according to Bush was only symbolic and nothing more. Even this was not without complications. Bush refused to proceed any further until North Korea agreed to inspections. North Korea in return threatened to resume making bomb fuel. Hill managed to convince Bush to take North Korea off the list and managed to convince the North Koreans to allow inspections around Yongbyon (Sanger, 2009c: 340-342).

Additionally, there were talks about North Korea agreeing to remove its nuclear stockpile in return for the lifting of sanctions. These negotiations soon broke off after the North Koreans once more walked out of the six-nation talks (as they had done frequently over the years) declaring they would never be back because the six-nation talks were threatening their sovereignty (Harden, 2009b). In the end though, this meant that the deal that the US was trying to broker with North Korea collapsed with North Korea being able to produce more bombs at the end of Bush's second terms than in the first term.

From these actions one can clearly see that using only a single mode of diplomacy (either just sanctions, or just talking, or not talking at all), does not really deliver dividends (Shen, 2008: 91-97). More is needed, as the Obama administration seems to have realised.

4.5 Policy under Obama

Obama's policy towards Iran is aimed at one goal: preventing Iran from becoming a state with nuclear weapons. The broader details of the policy towards Iran appear to be one of different stages, depending on how accommodating the Iranians are. These stages can roughly be summarised as the following: negotiations; sanctions and military force. These stages are not mutually exclusive, meaning that more than one stage may be employed at a time (Obama, 2009: 134).

Obama already began with the first stage on March 20, roughly two months after his inauguration. The implementation of this stage was in the form of an address to the Iranian public via television, in which Obama declared his intent of talking with Iranian leaders in a mutually respectful manner. At the same time Obama also said that the Iranian leaders would have to act in good faith and could not continue with their current tactics (that is, sponsoring terrorist activities and its nuclear programme (Erdbrink and Kessler, 2009)).

The initial response to this by the Iranian government was mixed, but for all intents and purposes Khamenei and Ahmadinejad both rejected the statement, citing that the US would have to show proof of its intentions first. Even so, the Iranians were willing to talk with the US on a broad range of issues, specifically focused on recognising Iran as a regional power, as well as its nuclear programme of Iran (Erdbrink, 2009). They contacted the US government in June with regard to a medical problem they were facing: basically, they were running out of medium enriched uranium used in the process of detecting and treating illnesses. The general consensus at the time was that if the US refused to help, then the Iranians would have an excuse to proceed with enriching uranium (Kessler, 2009b).

The US acted on this, however, thus paving the way for an official meeting on 1 October 2009 between the US and Iran in Geneva. Sitting around the same table was also Russia,

China, Britain, France and Germany²⁷. According to the US the talks would focus primarily on Iran's nuclear programme, whereas the Iranians wanted to focus on the medical problem. (Takeyh, 2009). Then the Iranians proceeded to reveal information to the IAEA in September about the undisclosed nuclear centrifuge being built in Qom, which prompted a call for tougher sanctions against Iran by the US, France and Britain. At the time Russia and China both seemed to be willing to support such an action. Between then and October 1 the Iranians were willing (as a sign of cooperation) to have its nuclear scientists meet with the scientists from the P5+1 states (Kessler, 2009a; Kessler, 2009c; Neo, 2009).

When the states eventually met on 1 October, Iran was willing to provide access to the site for inspectors which is due to take place on October 25. Also, in return for the medium enriched uranium it requires for its medical purposes, to be supplied by the US, the Iranians will hand over the low enriched uranium they have been producing to Russia (Hurst, 2009; Kessler, 2009b).

Some argue that this action will only bring the Iranians that much closer to finally building the bomb, but the US administration has other plans (Diehl, 2009). This supply of uranium will be monitored, as it is a declared supply, meaning that any deviation from its intended use will be noted. Should a deviation occur, it will provide the world with more proof that the Iranians do not intend to act in good faith. This would provide the Americans with more ammunition to push for heavier sanctions (Lee, 2009a), sanctions which the US has threatened to impose on Iran by itself. The US stressed this point with the passing of a bill on 14 October. If this bill (currently in front of the Senate) is passed, it will allow "state and local governments to curtail investments in international corporations doing business with Iran's energy sector" (Abrams, 2009a) The thinking from the US is that if there is more pressure on the Iranians and if they are isolated, then they may perhaps be more responsive to cooperation efforts (Abrams, 2009a, 2009b).

²⁷ Including the US these states are called the P5+1: the UN Security Council permanent members plus Germany.

But that is only if other states agree to do the same. Currently Russia and China are having some doubts regarding the call for heavier sanctions. Both the Russian Foreign Minister and Prime Minister backed off from earlier statements by the Russian President about tougher sanctions. The Foreign Minister claimed that even the threat of such actions would be counterproductive and the Prime Minister declared that such actions are premature. In relation to the apparent openness and willingness to cooperate by the Iranians, this would appear to be sound reasoning. After all, where is the gesture of good faith if one party agrees to open up and make cessations (as the Iranians clearly view this) if the other side will only continue with its plans as it had before? Such actions are just counter productive (Lee, 2009b; Isachenkov, 2009; Hiatt 2009).

It is for this reason that the bill in the Senate is still under discussion. Should sanctions fail, which if anything had only delayed the Iranians under the Bush administration, Obama is still considering the use of armed intervention. At least that is the rhetoric. According to Gates, the US Secretary of Defence, there are no plans to interfere with Iran militarily. There are of course scenario plans laid out should a decision to invade Iran be taken, but these plans are rough drafts and do tend to change as other information is gathered (Sanger and Broad, 2009). It is with this reasoning that the US government is playing down the rushing ahead of the development of a new type of bunker-buster missile, a type of missile that is capable of penetrating underground, reinforced facilities. (Gearan, 2009).

As has already been stated, however, the use of armed force is currently the last thing the US is considering, and for good reasons. As is well known the US is currently involved in two wars (Iraq and Afghanistan). While the US is trying to withdraw its forces from Iraq (something that in all likelihood will be completed next year August), it is sending more troops to Afghanistan. So it does not have the capacity to invade Iran. While it may have the troops and bases in the area from which to strike at Iran, the chances of it having the capacity to do so is slim (Sanger & Broad, 2009).

Second, even if the use of armed force is limited only to airstrikes, the Iranians may have more undisclosed locations. Merely targeting and successfully destroying the known sites might not dissuade the Iranians from pursuing nuclear power. In fact about the only thing such an action would do besides delay the eventual creation of the bomb is to encourage the Iranians retaliate (Gearan. 2009). That is the third reason why the use of force by the US is unlikely - the threat of retaliation is high. The Iranians have on more than one occasion issued proclamations that they would retaliate should such action be taken. The obvious targets are of course US bases and Israel.

With regards to the policy on North Korea, Obama's policy is focused on getting North Korea to relinquish its nuclear weapons (however many there may be) and shut down the nuclear weapons programme (Obama, 2009; 136). However, as opposed to the three stage approach to Iran, Obama's administration only seems to be focused on two stages: negotiations and sanctions.

Neither approach is going to be easy. Since walking out of the six-nation talks last year, North Korea has done nothing to appease itself to the rest of the world. In fact, it has performed two actions that have severely angered the world. The first was to launch a rocket in April 2009, despite a UN Security Council resolution prohibiting it from doing so (North Korea claims that the rocket was trying to put a satellite in orbit). What can be confirmed about this rocket was that it was an improvement on the previous one that had been launched (Lynch & Harden, 2009). Following this defiance of the Security Council the US, other Western States, South Korea and Japan called for tougher sanctions, with South Korea stating that it would "seriously consider joining the Proliferation Security Initiative", an initiative intercepting ships from North Korea or other nations with WMD suspicions regarding the cargo. North Korea as always proclaimed that such action from the South would be a declaration of war (Lynch & Harden, 2009).

Unfortunately the US failed to get the Russians and Chinese on board with the talk of sanctions, with Russia steadfastly proclaiming that the version given by North Korea as

to the events regarding the rocket launch (to put a satellite in orbit) was not illegal, in the process thwarting Security Council action (Lynch & Harden, 2009).

What followed this rocket launch and the reaction from states, was more defiance by North Korea. It threatened to test, and subsequently did, a second nuclear weapon in May 2009. This action brought a reaction from Russia and China, denouncing the action strongly (Harden, 2009a; Sanger, 2009b). North Korea also restarted its reactor that had been shut down last year. These actions finally allowed for tougher sanctions to be introduced against its (Sanger, 2009b; Harden, 2009d).

North Korea remains defiant however. It announced in September that it was close to completing the steps required to enrich uranium, provoking more disapproval from the US. Even so, the Obama administration remains committed to negotiations'. In a method that is guaranteed to get North Korea's attention, US officials target banks that are thought to provide cover for North Korean funding and shut the operations down (Harden, 2009d; Klug, 2009). This is in part why North Korea is once more willing to resume talks with the US. In an act of good faith it released a few hostages to the US and South Korea, and opened trade again with South Korea. It also wants to talk with the US bilaterally. The Obama administration however refuses to negotiate with North Korea if it is not in the context of the six-party talks (Harden, 2009b; Sheridan, 2009a).

On September 18 the North said it might be willing to return to the six-party talks. The administration, however, remains on their guard. They are cautious of a repeat performance of what happened during the Bush administration's terms, when the North Koreans walked away from talks, created crises that need to be solved, and then demanded "economic and diplomatic concessions" (Burns, 2009). Even more importantly perhaps is the scepticism of US officials about the seriousness of the North Koreans to end the programme which they had initially agreed to do. Despite this, the US and the rest of North Korea's neighbours have been rigorously trying get North Korea to return to the talks. The latest information suggests that North Korea will be returning to the talks. If the last decade's record of talks and actions is any indication though, a very long road

lies ahead. This was made abundantly clear with North Korea's statement that they would only completely disarm if the US completely disarmed (Harden, 2009c; Buckley, 2009).

4.6 Concluding Remarks

Iran and North Korea sought nuclear weapons for a variety of reasons, each according to the circumstances of their history. Iran first sought it for prestige, but later apparently for security and due to domestic willingness. For North Korea, on the other hand, it was first and foremost about security (to stand on equal footing with America, both in the Kim Il Song and Kim Jong Il periods), and then about economic consideration. Should either state acquire these weapons, or should fear that the talks are failing overwhelm their neighbours, there would be serious regional as well as global implications.

The origins of the challenges faced by the current US government in dealing with these states can be found in part in the actions of the Bush administration. Sever sanctions, aggressive talk about invading anyone who is trying to acquire nuclear weapons and it's the US's actions in the Middle East, arguably motivated these states to hasten their programmes. In not doing anything concrete about it when the US knew of these actions; when not making good on their rhetoric about what would happen should these states continue; in getting involved in Iraq in the first place, the US exacerbated the problem, a problem the Obama administration now has to solve.

The new administration is already addressing these states in a manner that shows an almost complete reversal of what the Bush administration had done. Whereas the latter's policies focused on regime change and conditional talks, Obama's policies are more focused on negotiation from the beginning. There are, however, other similarities as well. Just like Bush, Obama intends to pursue the use of sanctions against Iran and North Korea. An example of this is the constraint on banks suspected of handling North Korean money. Both administrations are also intent on seeing these two states without any nuclear weapons.

But whereas the Bush administration actively pursued sanctions against these countries while all the way refusing to directly speak to Iran and North Korea, Obama intends to use the threat of sanctions while at the same time pursuing negotiations. This is the primary difference between Bush and Obama. Bush pursued only one policy option at a time. Obama intends to use many different policy options at the same time. It is far too early to determine if these actions will be enough, but it is enough to show that Obama intends to follow through on what he promised during his election campaign.

Chapter Five: Nuclear Terrorism

5.1 Introduction

The final problem in the exploration of nuclear non-proliferation is the acquisition of a nuclear bomb by terrorists. This US nightmare scenario has been the key principle behind some of the US's actions in the last decade. Terrorists do not think in the way states do. As such their reason for acquiring the bomb differs from that of a state's. The reason why terrorists seek out the weapon in the first place is the first of three issues that need to be explored. The second involves the measures taken to actually acquire a bomb, while the third focuses on other types of nuclear terrorism that do not involve the use of a nuclear bomb. After all, terrorism is not about causing as much damage as possible, but sending the right message.

As had been done in the previous chapter, the policies as implemented by Bush and as promoted by Obama will also be explored.

5.2 Reasons to acquire nuclear weapons

Terrorists do not act like other paramilitaries for several reasons: the idea behind terrorism is not to defeat one's enemy militarily. In fact, it is perhaps because of the reason that trying to do so would be a futile gesture that terrorists try not to engage their enemies in conventional fighting. Rather, the idea behind most terrorist acts is to erode people's support and willingness to continue with the fight against the terrorist organisations. As such terrorism is more often than not aimed not at military targets, but at civilian targets, and at symbols. The idea behind these actions is that if the acts committed against them are heinous enough then the people will no longer support the government in the actions taken against the terrorists, and then the terrorists will gain the upper hand (Burleigh, 2008: xiv; Cirincione, 2007: 90).

There are numerous cases of such terrorist activities: these include the US embassy bombing in Kenya during the 1990s, the numerous suicide bombings in Iraq ever since 2003 and the bombings in Spain and London. Then there are the constant rocket attacks upon Israel by Hamas, the abduction of civilians in conflict regions²⁸, and the attacks on people in Afghanistan by the Taliban who support the NATO forces there. Moving east there is also last year's attack in Mumbai by Pakistani extremists, the numerous assassinations of political figures, including Benazir Bhutto. And finally, there were the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon of 11 September, 2001 (Burleigh, 2008: 414-448; Rashid, 2008: 374-379). There are of course other examples of terrorist activities like the Lockerbie air plane bombing, the activities of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) during the Troubles²⁹ and so on. All these examples highlight one important detail: all were carried out by extremists who were willing to kill and to die for their belief. Some are willing to do this because it is their belief that they will be rewarded in heaven for their actions (Cirincione, 2007: 89-90). And that is at the heart of the problem. Terrorists are willing to commit mass murder without fear of the repercussions. In addition, they are out to terrify others into submission, and the bigger the symbol of terror the better. One can therefore begin to understand why extremist terrorists are willing to seek the ultimate bomb.

It is perhaps fortunate that the majority of terrorist organizations do not seek the bomb for the obvious reason that if they use it, they would be destroying what it is they seek to accomplish (if it is freedom, then bombing one's own country will not help). Even Hamas might think twice about using the bomb (the nuclear fallout has a good chance of spreading into Palestine). But with religious fundamentalists whose goals are to eliminate the "Great Satan" and end "western imperialism", these problems are not of concern. So it is only a very specific type of terrorist organization that would seek this bomb, Al Qaeda being one such organisation. Numerous attempts have been made by Al Qaeda to

²⁸ Such as the abduction of the Korean religious workers in Afghanistan that secured an agreement for South Korea to pull its aid out of Afghanistan.

²⁹ The Troubles were the period of greatest tension and violence between the pro-independence activists and the pro-monarch's (those who wished to remain part of the United Kingdom) in Northern-Ireland roughly spanning from after the independence of Ireland till the 1990s.

acquire a bomb in the past, and it is well known that Osama bin Laden wants the bomb (Cirincione, 2007: 89-92).

5.3 Securing nuclear weapons

For terrorist organisations wanting to acquire nuclear weapons, securing an actual nuclear bomb is exceedingly difficult. Considering the sheer destructive power of these weapons, they are under the closest of security in the countries that have them. The reason for this is two-fold. In the case of countries that rely on them for defence, the theft of these weapons would severely strain these countries' military arsenal. As such, the weapons will be heavily defended. In other cases, the weapon is seen as a symbol of prestige, and again it is not likely that countries would give these weapons up without a fight. Likewise, for the same reason these countries are not likely to sell their nuclear weapons either. Even Kim Jong Il is not likely to sell the few weapons that he has to others: he has too many targets of his own to consider. What he might do, and what he has done, is to sell the plans to make a bomb, or construct facilities that can enrich uranium (as was done with Syria a few years ago) (Cirincione, 2007:90). However, a facility is of no use to terrorists for two reasons. First, they require a fuel source, uranium, and second, that sort of facility tends to get one noticed, something that terrorists try to avoid when not actually initiating plans. In short, it is a very expensive endeavour that might hamper the organization more than it assists them (Cirincione, 2007: 90).

Unfortunately this does not mean that one can stop worrying either. Terrorists do not require a bomb that is ten times more explosive than the one dropped on Hiroshima. All they require is a bomb that is nuclear in nature, and can be set off in a city of their choice. Terrorists will do this just to prove that they can and to show how weak the enemy government is to stop them. Thus, a suitcase nuclear bomb will suffice just as well. Stated differently, the bomb can be of a very crude nature (Laqueur, 1999: 70-71; Ellingsen, 2008: 130-131).

In terms of acquiring a bomb, the first method is to buy the materials needed from corrupt officials (as had existed within the Khan network) or to steal a bomb from existing, less well guarded stockpiles. In the case of the latter there are three likely candidates for such a theft: Russia (and other former Soviet states), Pakistan, and countries who have civilian nuclear reactors that are not as heavily guarded as military sites (Cirincione, 2007:92-95). Russia is a problem because the administration of the weapons after the break-up of the Soviet Union was not done very efficiently, meaning nobody knows how many tons of plutonium and HEU there actually are. While most of these tons are kept in storage, the only thing that stops terrorists from acquiring the material needed is the physical capability of the guards that patrol the sites.

Pakistan is also a problem for the following reasons: ever since the US invaded Afghanistan, Al Qaeda and Taliban officials fled into the tribal and remote areas of Pakistan, from where they engage in their cross border attacks on the “usurpers”. Pakistan has done little in the past to drive these people out of its borders. In fact, when these extremists became more radical within Pakistan itself and exercised their methods on the people of Pakistan, the Pakistani government did its best to calm the extremists down, such as agreeing to some autonomy within the northern tribal regions in the hope that this would broker a ceasefire³⁰ (Sanger, 2009c: 120-122; Malik, 2009: 146). However, when the extremists again carried out bombings on Pakistani civilians earlier this year, this time outside the tribal regions, it was clear that the extremists were intent on taking control in one way or another. Currently there is a massive conflict raging between the extremists and the Pakistani government, sowing more chaos in the region. Considering that Pakistan is a state with nuclear weapons, the possibility exists that the extremists might sooner or later make attempts at striking the nuclear facilities to try and get their hands on workable nuclear material (Sheridan, 2009b; Mail & Guardian, 2009).

But Pakistan presents another problem as well, and that is corruption, where officials are willing to share information on how to make a bomb and to provide the materials. This has already happened with two people: Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood and Chaudiri Abdul

³⁰ This despite proclamations by the Pakistani government that it is America’s friend and ally.

Majeed gave detailed information to the Al Qaeda leadership on topics of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, short of providing them with actual material (Cirincione, 2007: 94).

Finally, nuclear material is also available from other countries that have nuclear reactors but who are using these reactors either for research or energy. Either way, it requires uranium to be present, and where uranium is used in a reaction, plutonium is produced as a waste product. All that is needed to make a bomb is either twenty-five kilograms of highly enriched uranium or eight kilograms of plutonium. In addition, these civilian reactors in other countries are not as well guarded as those in the US, for example. It is therefore quite possible for a terrorist organisation to acquire the bomb, given enough diligence and perseverance. Considering that Al Qaeda had been trying to get their hands on a bomb throughout the 1990s, it may just be matter of time (Cirincione, 2007: 94-95).

5.4 Other forms of nuclear terrorism

Acquiring the bomb is just one method of using nuclear technology to terrorise others. There are two other methods as well: radiological weapons and targeting nuclear reactors. In the first case, the purpose of a radiological weapon is very simple: to spread radioactive contamination. And to make one is also simple: all one needs is radioactive material. It need not be uranium; other radioactive materials such as cesium-137, strontium and cobalt-60 could work just as well, and conventional weapons can be used to scatter the material across a wide area. The sources of radioactive materials are widely available, from hospitals to laboratories to research centres to universities. While this sort of nuclear terrorism does not threaten to immediately kill hundreds of thousands of people, its purpose is just as terrifying, because the scattering of radioactive material could potentially lead to areas of a city (including water sources) becoming severely contaminated. This sort of contamination is a healthcare nightmare (Laqueur, 1999: 72-73). As such, a radiological weapon more than meets the ends of a terrorist's ends: to spread terror and prove that the enemy government is not capable of stopping them.

In the second case, one has to recall that nuclear reactors are a source of a lot of radioactive material. Depending upon the type of terrorist interested in the destruction of such a plant, this will determine when such an attack occurs. If it is an environmentalist terrorist organisation, they may attack before the plant becomes operational. In the case of a nihilist/religious fundamentalist terrorist organisation, the aim would be to cause as much destruction as possible, thus causing a meltdown would be in their interests. As such, the nuclear reactors targeted would also potentially be in areas with a sufficient demography (Laqueur, 1999: 72). There is therefore ample reason for the US government to ensure that terrorists do not succeed in these attempts. The moral victory terrorists would achieve through these acts might just be enough to spur them on to other feats of equal terror.

5.5 Policy under Bush

Bush's policy with regards to nuclear terrorism can be split into four sections: 1) dealing with the terrorists; 2) dealing with states that would potentially supply terrorists with nuclear weapons; 3) targeting the general spread of weapons and 4) homeland security.

In effect, the war against terror, as the war against Al-Qaeda came to be known, was an effort to do so much damage to the organisation that it would never recover. In addition, the war was meant to serve as a warning to any state that was harbouring and assisting terrorists. To that effect, the US secured a resolution from the Security Council to invade Afghanistan. The premise of the war in Afghanistan was two-fold: to defeat the Taliban, who were hosting Al-Qaeda in their territory and to defeat Al-Qaeda itself. The US secured numerous bases all around Afghanistan with the sole purpose of launching attacks from them. Furthermore, the US secured a cooperation agreement with the Northern Alliance, a group that was opposed to the Taliban and bent on their destruction (and ironically enough supplied by Iran) (Sanger, 2009c: 40). With these efforts the US secured a quick victory against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. Both these groups were forced

to retreat to the mountainous border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. With the Taliban and Al-Qaeda surging into Pakistan, the US secured an agreement with President Pervez Musharraf to fight these groups in the territory of Pakistan³¹ (Sanger, 2009c: 114-115).

This is where the so-called war on terror also stopped. The US did not initially try to prevent the citizens of Afghanistan from supporting these groups. On the contrary, their only objective was to find them and destroy them. It was up to the other members of NATO who were also bogged down in Afghanistan to try and rebuild the country (Sanger, 2009c: 114). In addition, the US decided instead to focus on Iraq, diverting most of its resources to that war instead. The result of these actions are quickly deteriorating conditions in Pakistan, and a drawn out war in Afghanistan where both the Taliban and Al-Qaeda have been resurgent, retaking territories previously thought to be pacified (Sanger, 2009c: 122-125).

In its effort to dissuade states the US perceived as possibly trading nuclear material to terrorists to not partake in such actions, the Bush Administration warned them of the dire consequences of proliferating and selling nuclear weapons. Similarly, the US formed a policy that would also hold individuals (such as A.Q. Khan) fully responsible in the event of a nuclear attack on the US, its friends or allies. In a show of force the US also (using Security Council Resolutions in an ambiguous manner) formed the coalition of the willing and invaded Iraq, which it accused of having weapons of mass destruction. The actions it took against Iran and North Korea were also done in a similar vein, not just with the intent of stopping more states from becoming nuclear weapon states (as discussed in Chapter Four). The principal reason why the US did not move in a similar manner against these two states is because it was preoccupied with Iraq, and any attacks on North Korea would hold dire consequences for South Korea (Sanger, 2009c: 411, 416). The consequences of this show of force are that both Iran and North Korea hastened its nuclear programmes. In fact, the only positive result this action has had is to get Libya to stop its nuclear and long-range weapons programmes (Cirincione, 2007: 115).

³¹ The consequences of this have already been discussed.

In an effort to target the general spread of nuclear weapons, the US has done three things: 1) used the UN Security Council to pass resolutions; 2) infiltrated the black market on nuclear materials and subsequently exposed and shut this part of the known market down (as discussed in Chapter Three) and 4) initiated programmes aimed at nuclear materials itself.

Security Council Resolution 1540 was aimed at adopting laws to “strengthen their [all nations] export control regimes and to criminalize illegal trade in biological, chemical and nuclear weapon-related technologies.” The initiatives include the following two: the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) and the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). The GTRI’s purpose is to unite the efforts already undertaken to secure and remove highly enriched uranium from research and civilian reactors around the world. The PSI’s purpose is to “interdict illegal trade in nuclear weapon components” (Cirincione, 2007: 116). This initiative has had some success, having already intercepted eleven such shipments since its inception.

Finally, the Bush administration also looked to homeland security. In an effort to prevent actions like 9/11 from occurring again, and thus in the same manner trying to stop terrorists from operating on its own soil, the US passed several bills to oversee this process. The first of these was to create the Department of Homeland Security. One of the responsibilities of this department is counterterrorism, which is to protect the country’s assets, such as infrastructure, the cyber network and aviation against terrorism (Department of Homeland Security, 2009).

Other acts soon followed, including the Patriot Act. This act’s sole intent was to hasten intelligence gathering within the US on suspected individuals. This hastening includes listening to the context of phone calls (as well as reading statements posted on the Internet), and searching homes without the need of a warrant. In a similar vein the Act provides the US government with the capacity to detain people without question for longer. The US intelligence agencies are also on constant vigilance, gathering

information from several sources (including informants) to discover the plans for such an attack. In the same breath the US forced stricter controls on people entering the country (US Congress, 2001).

As for the captured terrorists, the US detained and deported these individuals to facilities not on American soil, where they were being held indefinitely and denied their rights. Such actions caused the scandals of Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib. In a similar vein, the US secured agreements with other states to extradite individuals thought to be connected to terrorism in a manner that more or less constitutes illegal procedures. The extradition of a Pakistani to an American held base from South Africa, after which the individual disappeared, is one such example (Strumpf & Dawes, 2006).

None of these actions did anything for the popularity of the US government either at home or abroad (as discussed in Chapter One). But it is with regard to preventing the actual act of nuclear terrorism³² where the US has made the least amount of progress. In this area the US has a three layered policy: the first is for the intelligence community to gather the intelligence supposed to warn of an impending attack, the second is for the Department of Homeland Security to inspect the cargo aboard ships as they enter US waters, and the third is to have detectors at the harbour itself which would screen all containers for nuclear substances. Similarly, the US also wanted US customs inspectors to be operating in foreign ports, something other states did not take kindly to, which is why this policy was never implemented. In addition, the US will only allow cargo that comes in “trusted carriers,” meaning that they bear the approval of the US to transfer cargo to enter the US (Sanger, 2009c: 402-403, 405).

There are several problems with this specific policy. The first, as already mentioned, is the allowance of US customs inspectors on foreign soil. The second problem is allowing the “trusted carriers” through. There is a good chance that terrorists would not use

³² That is to say, the smuggling in of a crude nuclear weapon into the US and then detonating it successfully.

channels of transportation that are obvious, such as cargo carriers coming from ports that are not secure (Sanger, 2009c: 405-406).

A third problem is that these detectors that are supposed to detect nuclear weapons do not do what they are supposed to do. They will, for instance, not be able to detect whether traditional cargo is loaded with highly enriched uranium. This is because nuclear weapons in general do not emit a lot of radiation. The radiation only comes after the weapon explodes. Efforts were being made to find replacement detectors, but these detectors are very expensive and although more capable, can also be fooled (Sanger, 2009c: 403-408).

Fourthly, should a bomb actually explode, there is no real plan of action for what comes afterwards. This problem is exacerbated by the problem that there is no real coordination between the different intelligence departments that are supposed to prevent such an attack, meaning that the efficiency of possible actions in preventing (and acting after) such an attack are also hampered (Sanger, 2009c: 409-410).

5.6 Policy under Obama

The Obama administration is currently focusing on three areas. These areas include: stopping terrorism in general, securing nuclear material and reinforcing homeland security. The actions taken against Iran and North Korea also constitute as action against nuclear terrorism.

When taking on terrorism, the Obama administration intends to do the following: remove the Taliban and Al-Qaeda as a threat; improve the US partners' capacity to combat terrorism; and improve intelligence and information capacity and sharing. Combating the Taliban and Al-Qaeda means refocusing the fight on Afghanistan and Pakistan, and withdrawing troops from Iraq (action which has already been discussed). Recently President Obama approved the increase of troops (an extra eleven thousand) to be deployed in Afghanistan, provided that the Afghan president enacts reforms to improve

his country (Jakes and Lekic, 2009). Additionally, the US has been trying to get NATO members to commit more fully to fighting the forces in Afghanistan (after all, an attack on one member is an attack on all members of NATO). In his campaign manifesto, Obama also stated that the administration will provide more resources to the training and equipping of the Afghan police and army. Similarly, Obama also promised to increase non-military aid with \$1 billion dollars, placing the current amount of aid at \$3 billion. (Obama, 2009a: 114-118).

With regards to Pakistan, the current US policy is to secure the defence of Pakistan. This means that the US will in all likelihood provide an aid package of around \$1.5 billion dollars a year - an amount the Pakistanis say is not enough. Although Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated confidence in Pakistan's capacity to protect its nuclear stockpiles, the recent attack on Pakistani military headquarters sends doubtful signals. After all, the insurgents managed to get inside the facility and take hostages (Sheridan, 2009b). The effort of flushing them out also proved to be costly. However, with roughly ten thousand elite soldiers guarding these sites, many of which are reinforced areas that are difficult to conduct military operations in to begin with, one can assume that a frontal assault is not possible. Additionally, the Pakistanis have several counter-intelligence teams operating on the sites as well. Where the US has provided additional support is with the creation of undisclosed transport vehicles (Schweid, 2009; Jagadish, 2009: 231-237). The other action that President Obama intends to take is to sway the attitudes of local Pakistanis away from the Taliban and Al-Qaeda to be more American friendly. The \$1.5 billion of aid allocated to Pakistan is a part of this action and its intent is to improve education, infrastructure and "other programmes for public good" (White House, 2009a)

With regards to improving the US allies' capacity to combat terrorism, the US will also be providing an additional \$5 billion of assistance via the Shared Security Partnership. This partnership includes the following: information sharing, training, operations, border security, anticorruption programmes, technology and targeting terrorist financing. Also, the initiative is aimed at decreasing the brutality of tactics currently used to fight terrorists (White House, 2009b).

With regards to the intelligence gathering and information sharing capacity of the US, the administration intends to improve two things: the analytical capacity of the US to accurately gather intelligence, and the sharing of such intelligence between the departments of the government. As of yet there appears to be no specific initiative or bill set out to do this (White House, 2009b).

The second area that needs to be looked at is the securing of nuclear material. The securing of such material comes in several steps. These steps constitute the following: preventing the theft, diversion and spreading of nuclear weapons and the securing of nuclear weapons materials. In a speech after the unanimous passing of resolution 1887, President Obama stated that one of the purposes of this resolution is to “strengthen the institutions and initiatives that combat smuggling, financing, and theft of proliferation-related materials” (Sanger, 2009a). Thus, there is no new policy, only the reinforcing of policies already drafted (White House, 2009a).

With regards to the securing of nuclear weapons material, Obama intends to secure funding of roughly \$1 billion to remove the essential ingredients from the least secure nuclear sites in the world and to strengthen security at the remaining sites. Additionally, the Obama administration also intends to fully cooperate with the states that are affected by this problem (Obama, 2009a; 134-135).

Finally, the third area of homeland security is set out in two steps: strengthening the nuclear security and “promoting the resiliency of our Physical and Social Infrastructure” (White House, 2009b). The strengthening of the nuclear security involves the improvement of the “nuclear detection architecture” (White House, 2009b), securing their own nuclear sites and the drafting and exercising of comprehensive plans of response with regard to nuclear incidents. In relation to the latter of the two steps, the US intends to develop an “effective, holistic, critical, infrastructure protection and resiliency plan that centres on investments in business, technology, civil society, government and education” (White House, 2009b). This plan of course would appear to involve much

more than just safeguards against terrorist activities, including nuclear terrorist activities, but the securing of the infrastructure is nevertheless vital in stopping terrorist from exploiting them. As of yet though, there appears to be no drafting of an actual plan.

5.7 Concluding Remarks

It really should not surprise anyone that religious fundamentalist terrorists would seek to acquire the ultimate weapon. After all, why would people that care nothing about the rules of engagement, innocent people's lives or their own lives for that matter care about unleashing such a weapon? If the purpose of terrorism is to force one's opponent to lose the will to fight and capitulate to one's interests then detonating one of these weapons is the ultimate gesture of just how weak and pathetic one's opponent really is.

In an effort to accomplish this, terrorists will seek out several avenues to acquire the bomb, ranging from buying the materials to just stealing a bomb. There are several sites around the world where they may come by the necessary material. Perhaps not quite as spectacular, but just as symbolic, would be to simply use radioactive material, or sabotage a nuclear reactor. In any event, it would be a disaster.

For these reasons, both Bush and Obama have tried and are trying to do something about nuclear terrorism. Bush started out strong, and for a while seemed to actually be achieving something, with the invasion of Afghanistan. The biggest mistake that Bush made in this regard was to get sidetracked with the invasion of Iraq, to not see things through. It is that inconsistency that ultimately determined his legacy. Something else that determined his legacy were his more draconian methods to secure the safety of the American people - methods that included the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security, the passing of the Patriot Act, and the treatment of suspected terrorists at prisons such as Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay. While it may have appeared to have done the job of protecting the US from further terrorist attacks, the US lost much influence with such actions.

Obama on the other hand seems intent to finish what was begun. This action takes the form of pulling out of Iraq and refocusing the US's military forces on Afghanistan and Pakistan (another front that the Bush administration largely ignored). At the same time, Obama intends to reinforce efforts to rebuild the country, whereas the Bush's administration was focused more on just hunting the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. In the same spirit, President Obama's first executive order was to close down the Guantanamo Bay prison.

There are continuities as well: like Bush, Obama intends to use the PSI and the GTRI to secure the transport and storage of nuclear fissile material around the globe. With regard to the defence of the US from a nuclear attack, Obama's focus on adopting proper detection devices is a continuation of action already undertaken in Bush's presidential terms.

Once again then, it would appear that Obama's approach is focused on pursuing different avenues to reach the same goal. While Bush's policies may have been more multi-faceted with regards to nuclear terrorism, the policies were single-mindedly authoritarian for a state that considers itself to be the epitome of freedom and democracy. Obama's policies appear to be more focused on helping the people that are affected the worst by the crisis, defend the homeland and root out the terrorists. Stated differently, Obama's policies appear to have a more humane character. It is, however, still only the first year of his term. Thus what plan Obama finally implements needs to be observed carefully.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

In this final chapter, an analysis will be done of the similarities and differences between the Bush administration and the Obama administration's approaches to nuclear non-proliferation. This will be done according to the three aspects of nuclear proliferation that have been discussed in this study, but also from the perspective of three concepts of power, which will be defined in the next section. The chapter will conclude with the implications for future study, and a short summary of the findings of the thesis.

6.2 Hard, soft and smart power

As stated in the first chapter, the notion of power is crucial to understanding the role of and responses to nuclear weapons. In particular, the concepts of hard power, soft power and smart power are central to understanding the differences between the policies of the Obama administration and those of the Bush administration.

From a realist perspective, power is conceived primarily as consisting of military power. Other authors have however advocated more expansive definitions of power. Examples include Barnett and Duvall's (2005: 45-57) taxonomy of power (including the four categories of Compulsory, Institutional, Structural and Productive power). Another conceptualisation of power which has had significant impact in both academic and policy circles has been Joseph Nye's distinction between hard and soft power.

According to Nye (2004:5), hard power is the category of power that is tangible. In other words it is the use of physical assets, like economic and military capacity, either to induce or threaten someone else to do what one wants them to do. This also implies that

getting someone (or a state) to do action A involves that person or state not having a real inclination to do action A. In other words, one is forcing them to do something that they do not wish to do. Soft power then “rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others”. In other words it involves getting people to want to do what one wants them to do. It is in other words the power to influence without using the tangible, meaning to change their desires. Nye also refers to it as the power of attraction.

While hard and soft power may be defined separately from each other, and while one can certainly have the one category of power without holding the other, one can nevertheless use the one to acquire the other. For example: one state can use its economic capacity to build the infrastructure of another state’s (using tangible or hard power). In the process of doing this state gains the admiration and respect of the other state if the process of building the infrastructure is not used as an inducement for something else (like the changing of the political regime) and thus begin the process of acquiring soft power. Similarly, one can use soft power to acquire hard power. For example: if state A uses its soft power to influence trade relations with another state, state A could gain more hard power in the form of economic capacity. The two categories are thus interlinked with one another.

There is another more recent concept that needs to be defined with relation to hard and soft power. Because states can have both hard and soft power at the same time, it is only logical that states would also be able to use both hard and soft power at the same time to further pursue the state’s interests. This combination of hard and soft power is what Nye (2004; 5-10) calls smart power. The term has been used extensively over the past year by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in particular, in describing her approach to foreign policy.

Having conceptualised hard, soft and smart power, we now turn to a final comparison between Bush and Obama’s policies. This final comparison will be conducted according to the three aspects of nuclear proliferation that have been discussed in this study.

With regard to nuclear disarmament then, there are some similarities between Bush and Obama's policies. Both presidents have now accepted the need to for an anti-ballistic missile defence. This form of hard power does differ between the two presidents though: Bush's ABMs would have been deployed in the two allied states of Poland and the Czech Republic. Obama's ABM deployment will be focused on water-based stations. But there are more differences than similarities. While Bush may have agreed on one nuclear disarmament treaty, his subsequent policies regarding the US's nuclear proliferation have taken the opposite approach. In contrast, Obama intends to work towards a world without nuclear weapons at all.

In this one sees a different approach to power. Bush's actions are an effort to acquire more hard power, while Obama's policies value soft power. Another example of Obama using soft power has been the abandonment of the nuclear missile shield in Poland and the Czech Republic in an effort to appease Russia to be more forthcoming in the latest round of START talks. In this one sees another phenomenon: namely the removal of hard power for the gain of soft power, in order to reduce the hard power of another state's. Obama's other actions with regards to nuclear disarmament also show a more comprehensive plan than Bush's. These include a resolution to secure fissile material around the world with questionable protection. As this resolution is more of a call for states to secure their fissile material at this point in time, the use of this resolution is more a form of soft power than hard power, since the resolution cannot be enforced.

Overall then, Obama's approach to nuclear disarmament is more inclined towards the use of soft power. But Obama's actions can also be seen as using the one category of power to acquire the other in order to accomplish the goals of the Obama administration. The trend thus shows the following: if Obama does not have sufficient amounts of one type of power, then it would appear that he intends to trade what type of power he has in order to gain the form power required for the situation. While this does not exactly entail the use of smart power as defined by Nye, one can nevertheless argue that this is using power smartly.

In contrast, Bush appears to have favoured one form of power, that being hard power. The order to develop new tactical nuclear weapons was a clear case in point. Ironically, the weapons under development did not reach completion under the Bush's terms. Thus, Bush lost the soft power of the US while not gaining any hard power in the trade off.

With regards to proliferation by other states, Bush's policy of sanctions and Regime Change (the use of threat of force or hard power) differs completely from what Obama intends to do. Bush's policies in this regard can also be considered in different phases. The first phase was to not negotiate or talk with these regimes at all, in the belief that the regimes would soon change. When that, together with the invasion of Iraq, resulted in the opposite action, the US pushed for sanctions. However, due to the Iraq situation, the US could not move too aggressively with these sanctions. The situation in Iraq also prevented the US from invading these other states. The result was sanctions that could not do much in the case of Iran. In the case of North Korea, the sanctions were more thorough. Even so, the sanctions did not appear to have too much effect on North Korea's nuclear programme. Thus, towards the end of Bush's second term, he was forced to try and talk with these states. But the damage had been done, which meant that Bush did not manage to accomplish too much. For a while it would have appeared that Bush managed to secure an agreement with North Korea for a reduction in its nuclear proliferation efforts. But even that fell through. What was primarily wrong with Bush's approach here was to try and use soft power when the US had already lost a significant part of their soft power. Another problem was to apply only one type of power at a time.

Obama's policies, however, appear to try and make use of both hard and soft power at the same time. This comes in the form of President Obama appealing to the people and governments of Iran and North Korea through the use of his charisma, which constitutes soft power. At the same time, the enforcement of more serious sanctions against North Korea and the talk of enforcing more serious sanctions, while also trying to talk with these two states, constitutes the use of hard power. Developing weapons specifically intended to target nuclear sites such as the ones built by Iran and North Korea (that is, enforced bunkers underground), also constitute the use of hard power. Thus, Obama's

policies appear to make use of smart power. This action, along with the engagement of the other parties at these talks is also an indication of the US seeking to restore its soft power.

This regaining of soft power can also be seen in the trading of Iran's low enriched uranium to Russia for medium enriched uranium supplied by the US. Once again this constitutes the exchange of hard power for soft power in an effort to restrict the overall hard power of another. Should Iran be found to have acted in bad faith, the US will have acquired even more soft power which it could use to persuade others to impose hard power sanctions.

With regard to nuclear terrorism, there are many similarities between Bush and Obama. Both use(d) (and in the case of Obama, intend to use) hard power to confront the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. But again, Obama also intends to use soft power in tandem with hard power. This use of smart power is in the form of rebuilding the state of Afghanistan. Stated differently, Obama intends to invest more money in rebuilding the infrastructure of Afghanistan, and intends to use the assets in place in Afghanistan to assist the Afghani people in such a way which will engender a more positive image of the US in the end. This is aimed specifically at reducing the support base of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda.

The actions taken to assist Pakistan against the insurgents can be interpreted in a similar manner. Preventing Pakistan from imploding via investing in social development (hard power) to sway the Pakistani people towards the US and away from the Taliban and Al-Qaeda (soft power) is very much in the US's interest because of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. Should these weapons fall into the hands of the insurgents, the US will have a far bigger problem. Keeping Pakistan's nuclear supply out of the hands of insurgents can lead to the increase in Pakistan's hard power, but it will also lead to the increase of the US's soft power. And this soft power will not just increase with Pakistan, but also with other states that are observing the US and Pakistan closely. Bush also provided monetary

assistance to Pakistan, but his disregard of the use of soft power to sway the citizens of Pakistan negated these efforts.

The creation of the GTRI and the PSI under the Bush administration to restrict and regulate the supply and transport of nuclear fissile material constitutes the use of soft power, as these are initiatives that recommend the cooperation of states in this regard as directed from the Security Council. Obama has deemed this policy by Bush to be useful enough to adopt as his own. Other actions, however, constitute a reversal from Bush's policies. This includes the use of Guantanamo Bay. Other actions involve the strengthening policies already in place, such as the plan to prevent nuclear weapons from being smuggled into the country. These policies by and large constitute the expanding and reinforcing of hard power assets (like the intelligence gathering departments and the radiation detectors) already in place.

Thus, Obama's policies can be summarised in this manner: Obama is showing clear signs that he is making use of more than just hard or soft power. Instead, he is making use of smart power (meaning hard and soft power simultaneously). This is one of the major differences between Bush and Obama's use of power, and this sort of pragmatism may just be what the US needs right now in order to address the problem of nuclear proliferation.

6.3 The Implications of the Study

There are a number of implications that this study has revealed that may be useful for future studies. The first implication is that, while this study may have focused on nuclear (non-) proliferation, many other factors and issues have an impact on this issue. One of these issues - that of nuclear terrorism – has already been highlighted. But there are other issues, such as the state of the economy, the level of trust between the US and its allies, and so on, that this study has touched on, but which lie beyond its scope. In order to gain a more comprehensive view of the US's future role in the world (and whether it will be

significantly different from what we have seen in recent years), these issues need to be explored as well.

Another area for future research is the question whether or not these policies will be effective. While this study has made an initial attempt to comment on the effectiveness of Obama's policies, the truth is that it is still too early. In some cases, President Obama is yet to formulate proper plans with regards to the policies he wants initiated. In the cases of policies where Obama has already begun some action, many of the decisions are yet to be implemented, and negotiations are still under way. Stated differently, the consequences of these policies cannot yet be determined. As such (and in the interest of determining in which direction the US's role in the world is likely to shift in the future) further research is required.

While the Obama administration may have started off with ambitious goals, such as the removal of all nuclear weapons in the world, the administration is still only in its first year. There is still a lot that can happen in the next three years. And the threat of nuclear proliferation remains a daunting challenge. Even so, it is for these ambitious efforts and plans towards a world of greater peace that President Obama has been rewarded with the Nobel Peace Prize this year. Some say it is still too early for such a reward, as the majority of his plans are yet to be accepted or implemented. For now the award serves as extra motivation for the President not to let the world down.

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