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**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

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**Different Strategies of the United States  
towards the ‘Nuclear Issue’ in Rogue States:  
Iran and North Korea**

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## **Abstract**

The focus of the thesis is placed on different strategies executed by the United States toward the 'nuclear issue' in two particular rogue states: Iran and North Korea. Interestingly, we find inconsistencies in the theoretical framework; namely in the rogue states concept and the strategies chosen to approach both countries. While Iranian nuclear issue has been treated in terms of containment and isolation, The United States has chosen to engage with the nuclear program in North Korea. This thesis explores the dissimilarity in strategies and focuses on the concept of rogue states and their link to the culture of American national security, as well as continuity and change in American foreign policy. The thesis further analyzes the impact of background and contextual factors that on different perception of threat in America.

## **Key words**

United States, Iran, North Korea, Rogue states, American national security culture, long-term patterns, foreign policy, treat perception.

## **Declaration**

1. I declare that I have written this bachelor thesis independently only on the basis of listed references.

2. I give my permission to use this thesis for study purposes and place it to the Main Library of the Charles University.

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Lenka Petrželová

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# 1. Introduction

The United States (U.S.) has always been a key player in the modern international arena. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the bipolar system of two superpowers was replaced by what Samuel Huntington called a “strange hybrid, a uni-multipolar system with one superpower and several major powers”.<sup>1</sup> Regardless of the world order, U.S. foreign policy and security thinking have always attracted a lot of attention. The concept of rogue states has gained dominance since the end of the Cold War and is currently well established within American circles. Therefore, it can serve as a useful tool for analyzing trends and patterns in U.S. foreign policy. This thesis assumes that the rogue states concept cannot be analyzed separately but rather that it should be seen as stemming from American security culture and as a partial expression of continuity in U.S. foreign policy. The thesis will concentrate its attention on two rogue states, namely Iran and North Korea. Paradoxically, although the U.S. regards both countries indisputably as rogue states, it does not behave coherently in respect to its chosen strategies. The containment and isolation strategy that is usually related to the rogue state concept has been chosen in dealing with Teheran. There is a striking exception in the case of North Korea’s nuclear issue, which has been treated more in terms of engagement. This remarkable disparity in strategies will be the focus of this thesis.

Regardless, recent breakthrough events may mean a change in the U.S. course of action. Iranian and American representatives met face to face on an official level for the first time in 40 years to address the Iranian nuclear program. Talks are extremely important on a symbolic level and could result in a real shift in strategy away from containment; however, it is too early to make any judgments. Although the Obama Administration distances itself from the term rogue state, the continuity with previous political action is still visible. Obama’s main contribution is the broadening of maneuvering space in regard to North Korea and especially to Iran.

Aside from reasons for different strategies, the question of utility should be assessed. Despite initial enthusiasm about U.S.-Iranian talks, it is not certain that the U.S. will succeed in restraining Iran from ‘going nuclear’. There is a chance that the talks will end similarly to those in North Korea, who moved closer to becoming a nuclear weapon status state by its second nuclear test. Moreover, North Korea recently declared unwillingness to

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<sup>1</sup> In: Huntington, Samuel P. “The Lonely Superpower”. *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 78, Issue 2 (Mar/Apr 1999), p. 36.

participate any further in the Six-Party talks. This caused further doubts about the utility of this platform for negotiation of the nuclear issue.

I have chosen the topic because I find it interesting that completely different strategies can apply to two states with the rogue state label. Moreover, the rogue states became well established within the circles of American decision makers and can thus reveal a lot about the U.S. foreign policy and security thinking. There have been many authors who have dealt with the definition of rogues states; however, not many have identified and defined the striking differences in strategies. This topic has been chosen because of its topicality in today's discourse, where the nuclear issue in rogue states poses a great challenge to President Obama's vision of full nuclear disarmament.

### ***1. 1. Objectives and structure of the thesis***

The core research question stands: *Why is there disparity between U.S. strategies toward the nuclear issue in two particular rogue states: Iran and North Korea?* Although the theoretical framework regarding both states remains the same, specifically regarding the rogue states concept within the field of security studies, the strategies for dealing with them are dissimilar. The containment policy in Iran strikingly contrasts with long-term effort to engage North Korea. Many scholars have pointed out this incoherence, but not many have sought the actual roots for those differences. The thesis should fill that gap.

To give as good and convincing an explanation as possible, I had to considerably narrow my focus in respect to the content and time frame of this thesis. First, I will limit my analysis to just the consideration of the nuclear program in both states. I found the nuclear question the most illuminating in relation to U.S. strategic thinking and it is also the most discussed area of concern in both states. Second, I will concentrate on developments during recent years: 1993- 2009. The time frame covers Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and current president Barack Obama's Administrations.

Although the foreign policy of every particular Administration has differed, often in an effort to become distinct from the previous one, the ways of dealing with the nuclear issue have remained consistent – to contain Iran and engage North Korea. From the theoretical point of view, I will thus study the matter within the broader discourse of continuity and change in U.S. foreign policy, which will be tied to American national

security culture in general. Special attention will be paid to the rogue states concept as a common ground for dealing with both states.

To provide a broader insight into the problem, I will also analyze background and contextual factors. Historical background can shed light on current actions because old entrenched hatreds and grievances are difficult to overcome. Contextual factors will be analyzed in order to reveal the differing U.S. perceptions of threat from Pyongyang and Teheran. The interpretation of danger arising from the nuclear issue in both states can then help to answer the paramount question of the thesis.

Accordingly, this thesis will be divided into three main parts. The first part will address the underlying theoretical concept: I will present the rogue states concept and its relation to U.S. national security culture and in regard to continuity and change in foreign policy. The development of the concept within the three administrations will be presented subsequently. The second part of my thesis will present the different strategies used to deal with Iran and North Korea as they developed in respect to different administrations. At the beginning of this section I will consider the background for mutual relationship between the U.S. and Iran on one side and the U.S. and North Korea on the other. The final part will concern contextual factors, which cast light on different levels of danger as perceived by American government.

## ***1. 2. Brief introduction to the problem***

Iran is a country with a great historical importance that is situated in the Middle East. In 1979, Iran became an Islamic republic. The current chief of state is Supreme Leader Ali Hosenei-Khamenei and President Mahmud Ahmadi-Nejad rules the government. The burden of historical grievances lies on a mutual relationship with the U.S. Its nuclear program, which dates back to the 1980s, has significantly accelerated in recent years, and is a matter of great concern. Iran argues that, as a member of Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), it has the right to a peaceful nuclear program. The U.S. has growing confidence that the country is seeking nuclear weapons, although they lack unambiguous evidence. In dealing with the nuclear issue, the U.S. usually implements a strategy of containment and isolation. President Obama has recently presented a diplomatic initiative toward Iran, but there has been no real shift toward a solution.

North Korea, or Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), is an important player in another region vital to U.S. interests, East Asia. It is a communist state ruled by one man Kim Chong-il. North Korea is not fully isolated from the U.S., mostly because of its dependence on aid, and the relationship is less stigmatized with historical grievances. Although North Korea's nuclear program is more advanced – two nuclear tests have already been launched – the U.S. has engaged in direct bilateral and multilateral negotiations. However, even engagement has not met its objective and the nuclear issue remains unresolved.

The nuclear programs in both countries are perceived as threatening to U.S. national security, so its objective is to stop nuclear ambitions or at least suppress them to a tolerable degree. America's main motive has always been denuclearization in line with its nonproliferation policy, especially after post 9/11 security concerns. The manner in which U.S. foreign policy attempts this is a matter of analysis; given different strategies, long-term patterns within foreign policy will be analyzed in relation to national security culture. This will shed light on the rogue state concept, and the categorical labeling of both states.

## 2. Theoretical concept

This thesis deals with a matter of national security studies. The analysis will focus on traditional national security issues, which are expressed in a narrow view that only encompasses military issues and material capabilities. With the emergence of new national security issues, such as ethnic conflicts, issues of cultural identity and environmental degradation, there are rising voices that advocate a broader concept of security<sup>2</sup> that incorporates non-military issues and non-state actors. Although this broad, unconventional view on security has influenced America's foreign policy agenda, the strategies toward Iran and North Korea remain in the traditional military view on security. It is important to note that what is considered a national security issue is not predetermined so the concept of national security is best described as "essentially contested".

Theoretical grounding will cover three mutually connected areas of concern. The underlying framework for the analysis will relate to the rogue states concept, so I will first present its definition. I will elaborate on the concept, but it is not commonly considered a suitable tool for analysis because of its many inconsistencies. I will also use the help of two related issues in order to better understand the rogue states concept: first, a presentation of American national security culture will illustrate the basis for U.S. foreign policy, and second, continuity and change in U.S. foreign policy will be discussed with special attention to long-term patterns within chosen presidencies. I explore how the interconnectedness of the concept of rogue states and American national security culture produces long-term patterns in foreign policy.

### 2. 1. *The concept of rogue states*

Although most academic scholars do not recognize the concept of rogue states as a valid and distinctive analytical category, it has attracted attention because it provides a

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<sup>2</sup> The Copenhagen School argues in favour of broadening the security agenda beyond the traditional approach concentrating mostly on military issues. For this purpose, Buzan offers a constructivist approach, which extends the view on security in order to comprise political, economical, societal and environmental factors. Military security is introduced as one of five sectors – political, economic, societal and environmental security. Each sector covers a different type of interaction where referent objects other than states can be found. The multi-sectoral approach enables study of the problem from different angles, however, we have to bear in mind that the complex system of security is created by all sectors together; it is therefore plausible to separate them only as a method of study. In: Buzan, Barry – Ole Wæver – Jaap de Wilde. *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers 1998.

better understanding of American political culture and long-term patterns in its foreign policy decision making.

Since their origin in the 1980s, rogue states have been called ‘outlaws’ or ‘pariahs’. Although the U.S. has since claimed that they constitute a distinct category of states, it has never clearly defined the concept. Because of this, the term has been subjected to many meanings during different presidencies and in relation to milestones in the modern history of international relations. There are several questions I will address and elaborate on when dealing with rogue states concept.

What does it mean when a state is regarded as rogue; what are the criteria?

What kinds of policies are chosen towards rogue states?

Is the category objective or does it serve its own purpose?

## **2. 1. 1. Criteria**

The concept of rogue states has always been highly contested and there has been even more criticism in recent years. There is no consensus on the specific criteria a rogue state should meet. In addition, the concept has no standing in international law and therefore has no legitimate grounds.<sup>3</sup> Yet, there are some common constitutive characteristics in American use of the term. According to Hoyt, a rogue state is engaged in four types of behavior: development of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), involvement in international terrorism, posing a military threat either to the local region or the globe and challenging international norms.<sup>4</sup> Litwak posits that rogue states are relatively marginalized and isolated and therefore can be only a minor threat to existing international order, however, he draws attention to their role in regional destabilization.<sup>5</sup> This has caused a debate about the reach of rogue states’ threat. The regional threat is mentioned most often, but because of the connection to WMD, rogue states may threaten whole globe. Aside from the above-mentioned characteristics, some authors also take into consideration the internal behavior of states, especially in non-democratic regimes.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In: Litwak, Robert S. “New Calculus for pre-emption“. *Survival*. Vol. 44, No. 4 (2002): 53-79.

<sup>4</sup> In: Hoyt , Paul D. “The ‘Rogue State’ Image in American Foreign Policy”. *Global Society*. Vol. 14, No. 2 (2000), p. 303.

<sup>5</sup> In: Litwak, Robert, S. *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War*. Washington: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press 2000, p. 7, 47.

<sup>6</sup> In: O’Reilly, K. P. “Perceiving Rogue States: The Use of the ‘Rogue State’ Concept by U. S. Foreign Policy Elites”. *Foreign Policy Analysis*. Vol. 3, No.4 (2007), p. 297.

Altogether, the definition is similar to the one presented in the National Security Strategy from 2002. This definition also makes the assumptions that rogue states mistreat their own people, reject basic human values and feel strongly anti-American. Moreover, they are alleged sponsors of international terrorism who are seeking WMD and have no respect to international law.<sup>7</sup> The definition includes both internal and external behavior; the latter is often considered more important because it is more threatening to U.S. interests. The first uses of the term rogue states were directed toward assumptions about internal behavior, which didn't seem to threaten U.S. interests in such serious terms.<sup>8</sup>

Since 1980s, rogue states have included North Korea, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Libya. Afghanistan was removed from the list after the invasion in 2001 and Iraq was removed after the war in 2003. For some period of time, other states such as Cuba and Syria were also labeled rogue. Cuba's inclusion was subject to debate because it did not fit some criteria (support of terrorism and acquisition of WMD), and Syria was removed from the list despite meeting the criteria.<sup>9</sup> Although the list of rogue states is rather fluid, Iran and North Korea are integral to it. Both states were hostile to U.S. interests even before the concept emerged: Iran's relationship with the U.S. has been deteriorating steadily since the Iranian revolution in 1979 and North Korea from the end of the Korean War in the 1950s.

## 2. 1. 2. Policies

What are the policies chosen to counter rogue states? Policies tend to be aggressive and the use of force is considered as a feasible option.<sup>10</sup> O'Reilly's study shows that the most common policy actions in relation to rogue states between 1993 and 2004 were non-proliferation efforts and missile defense. Surprisingly, sanctions and military force were in the study anticipated by reference to cooperation and strengthening of alliances and partnerships.<sup>11</sup> However, it is important to bear in mind that this particular study deals with public policy statements, which are often distinct from the actual government strategy. In

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<sup>7</sup> In: "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America". Washington: The White House 2002, p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> In: Caprioli, Mary – Peter F. Trumbore. "Rhetoric versus Reality: Rogue States in Interstate Conflict", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Vol. 49, No. 5 (2005), p. 773.

<sup>9</sup> In: Litwak, Robert, S. *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War*. Washington: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press 2000, p. 76.

<sup>10</sup> In: Hoyt, Paul D. "The 'Rogue State' Image in American Foreign Policy". *Global Society*. Vol. 14, No. 2 (2000), p. 309.

<sup>11</sup> In: O'Reilly, K. P. "Perceiving Rogue States: The Use of the 'Rogue State' Concept by U. S. Foreign Policy Elites". *Foreign Policy Analysis*. Vol. 3, No.4 (2007): 295-315.

practice, some countries are subjected to economic sanctions and restrictions that coincide with the strategy of containment and isolation. One exception is limited engagement with North Korea. In this case, sanctions remain an important part of this strategy but the U.S. also concedes bilateral and multilateral negotiations.

When considering the notion of rogue states at large the scope of possible policy is rather limited and inflexible. The long-term preference toward harsher measures other than diplomacy such as non-recognition, embargoes or isolation fundamentally narrow the maneuver space and expose the possible non-coercive means to a strong criticism.<sup>12</sup> It is noteworthy that no U.S. administration has made it clear whether the main goal in regard to rogue states is change of behavior or change of regime. The priority has changed throughout administrations in respect to each particular state.

### **2. 1. 3. Analytical or political tool?**

Now that we know what the term rogue state entails and what policies are most likely to be adopted, we can examine whether or not the category is valid as an analytical tool. Many authors doubt that the rogue state concept can serve for analytical purposes because of its subjectivity and selectivity. As Hoyt and Litwak observe, there are many instances where rogue behavior has not been compatible with the rogue state label as applied by U.S. officials.<sup>13</sup> For example, Syria has been excluded despite its designation as a state sponsor of terrorism<sup>14</sup> because of its constructive role in the Middle East peace process. Political concern outweighed Syria's rogue behavior. Accordingly, we can argue that actual rogue behavior is of minor importance; the main weight is whether or not the country is perceived as a friend to the U.S.<sup>15</sup> There is a strong camp of analysts who argue that the categorization is *political* rather than analytical. The categorization works as a tool for political mobilization of domestic and international support for rogue states and therefore can be changed according to short-term priorities.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> In: Litwak, Robert, S. *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War*. Washington: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press 2000.

<sup>13</sup> In: Hoyt, Paul D. "The 'Rogue State' Image in American Foreign Policy". *Global Society*. Vol. 14, No. 2 (2000), p. 304; Litwak, Robert, S. *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War*. Washington: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press 2000.

<sup>14</sup> In: U.S. Department of State "State Sponsors of Terrorism", 2009.

<sup>15</sup> In: Boniface, Pascal. "What Justifies Regime Change?". *The Washington Quarterly*. Vol. 26, No. 3 (Summer 2003), p. 66.

<sup>16</sup> In: Litwak, Robert, S. *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War*. Washington: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press 2000.

Despite the fact that the term is used subjectively and for political purposes, there are inconsistencies in basic assumptions about the term. The study carried out by Caprioli and Trumbore shows that rogue states are not any more militarily aggressive than any other non-rogue state.<sup>17</sup> The study challenges the basic foundations on which the concept was built and confirms its lack of coherence.

The *rogue state image* is a better way to present the basic principles of the rogue state doctrine. A rogue state as defined by the image theory is a “perceptual image, that is, a cognitive construction utilized by policy-makers to explain the world around them”.<sup>18</sup> Rogue states are threatening to U.S. interests because they are perceived to have incompatible goals, inferior culture and are trying to increase their power by acquiring WMD.<sup>19</sup> Their negative image has significant consequences on mutual behavior. The U.S. uses rhetoric to justify its belligerent actions, which only further encourages rogue states to build their power capabilities, or at least cause outsiders to believe their capabilities are sufficient.<sup>20</sup> There is a danger that the rogue states’ image works counterproductively and, in extreme cases, it can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. The U.S. behavior toward rogue states may, despite the attempt to achieve the reverse, contribute to a greater proliferation and consequent spreading of WMD to the hands of terrorists.<sup>21</sup> Some authors even claim that the current U.S. policy may lead to rogue states owning their own WMD.<sup>22</sup> When we apply this logic to our cases it is plausible that Iran and North Korea have been designated rogue as a result of the United States’ negative view of them and not vice versa.

There are two uses of the term rogue states: propagandist and literal.<sup>23</sup> Whereas the literal use, as I have shown above, suffers from many inconsistencies, the propagandist use of the term when applied to the enemies of the U.S. is partly self-serving. In this case, it is not so important that the categorization lacks analytical logic; it can be still a useful rhetorical tool that can influence rogue states’ behavior. Whether the behavior is influenced in a desirable way is a question beyond the scope of this thesis.

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<sup>17</sup> In: Caprioli, Mary – Peter F. Trumbore. “Rhetoric versus Reality: Rogue States in Interstate Conflict”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Vol. 49, No. 5 (2005): 770-791.

<sup>18</sup> In: Hoyt, Paul D. “The ‘Rogue State’ Image in American Foreign Policy”. *Global Society*. Vol. 14, No. 2 (2000), p. 306.

<sup>19</sup> O’Reilly, K. P. “Perceiving Rogue States: The Use of the ‘Rogue State’ Concept by U. S. Foreign Policy Elites”. *Foreign Policy Analysis*. Vol. 3, No.4 (2007), p. 301.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, p. 302.

<sup>21</sup> In: Smith, Derek D. *Deterring America: rogue states and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University 2006, p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> In: Hartung, William D. *And Weapons for All: How America’s Multibillion-dollar Arms Trade Warps our Foreign Policy and Subverts Democracy at Home*. New York: Harper Perennial 1995; Jentleson, Bruce E. *With Friends Like These: Reagan, Bush, and Saddam. 1982-1990*. New York & London: W. W. Norton 1994.

<sup>23</sup> In: Chomsky, Noam. *Rogue States: The rule of Force in World Affairs*. London: Pluto Press 2000, p. 1.

In conclusion, we can agree with Litwak when he challenges the objectivity of the rogue states category and his designation of the term as, “analytically soft [and] politically selective”.<sup>24</sup> Instead, we understand that it is a matter of subjective interpretation. The adoption of the rogue state rubric by U.S. foreign policy decision makers resulted in a one-size-fits-all strategy of containment and isolation.<sup>25</sup> North Korea is one exception from the strategy of comprehensive containment. North Korea’s ‘conditional containment’,<sup>26</sup> or limited engagement, was brought into play even though the general framework of rogue states aggravates the exercise of non-compulsion policies. Finally, it should be noted that ever since Litwak’s work appeared in 2000 there have been even more challenges to the rogue doctrine (this is discussed in detail in the chapters dealing with concept’s development). Still, the notion of the rogue state is part of the debate that surrounds the current direction of the foreign policy; thus we can see it as an indirect but useful tool in approaching it.

## ***2. 2. American national security culture***

*The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*<sup>27</sup> edited by Peter J. Katzenstein is an essential work regarding the history of American national security. It is an attempt to present a sociological approach to traditional thinking about national security that goes beyond the leading mainstream approaches to security studies, which are realism and liberalism. The authors do not reject the utility of those theoretical concepts, but they find them either insufficient or inappropriate to explain the current national security issues. Therefore they appeal for reconsideration and a broadening of the approaches to national security that were used during the Cold War era. For this reason, the authors put forward an alternative analytical framework that sheds light on how social factors – identity, culture and norms – shape and affect the diverse aspects of national security. The authors define identity as a label that encompasses the basic character of

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<sup>24</sup> In: Litwak, Robert S. *Regime Change: U.S. Strategy through the Prism of 9/1*. Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and The Johns Hopkins University Press 2007, preface xiii.

<sup>25</sup> In: Litwak, Robert, S. *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War*. Washington: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press 2000, p. 8.

<sup>26</sup> According to Litwak, conditional containment consists of traditional containment and limited engagement. More in: Litwak, Robert, S. *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War*. Washington: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press 2000, p. 108-109.

<sup>27</sup> In: Katzenstein, Peter J. (ed.). *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press 1996.

states, the “varying constructions of nationhood or statehood”;<sup>28</sup> culture as a broad label for “collective models of nation-state authority or identity, represented in custom or law”;<sup>29</sup> and norms as “collective expectations about proper behavior for a given identity”.<sup>30</sup>

Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein make five assumptions about national security policy. First, they assume that cultural and institutional environmental structure (norms) “shapes the national security interests or (directly) the security policies of states”,<sup>31</sup> which basically means that norms affect the execution of policy; for example, the U.S. has developed special norms that influence its foreign policy. Their second argument is that norms not only shape national security interests and policies, but also the state’s identity. Thirdly, they argue that this identity in turn affects national security interests and state policies. The perception of ‘who we are’ helps define interests. Authors contend that there was uncertainty about American national interests after the Cold War because the U.S. was having a problem with defining itself; the U.S. had a hard time after the Soviet empire, which represented the great ‘other’, dissolved. By the same logic, change in state identity can cause change in national security policy that is defined by national interests. This also applies to the continuity of security policy, which is inextricable from national identity. Although underlying norms must be taken into account, continuity and change in U.S. foreign policy should therefore be perceived in relation to the American identity rather than the structure of the international system. The impact of American identity can also be seen beyond the scope of foreign policy. The authors’ fourth argument is that state identity also influences inter-state normative structures – regimes or security communities. For instance, the participants in Europe’s multilateral structures express the shared identity of liberal democracies. An ambivalent American stance toward multilateralism has an impact on the functioning of some international organizations. This may be one of the reasons for American reluctance toward international cooperation. Fifth, they posit, “state policies both reproduce and reconstruct cultural and institutional structure”.<sup>32</sup>

This work is especially important to our case because it stresses the significance of culture and identity to American national security policy. It departs from the conventional wisdom of realism and liberalism and calls attention to an alternative view on national

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<sup>28</sup> In: Katzenstein, Peter J. (ed.). *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press 1996, p. 59.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 56.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 54.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 54.

<sup>32</sup> In: Katzenstein, Peter J. (ed.). *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press 1996, p. 63.

security that stresses the role of social influences. When we explore American security culture, we have to bear in mind that it is inevitably associated with identity. According to Campbell, who analyzes U.S. foreign policy and politics of identity as a social construction,<sup>33</sup> American identity is linked to its perception of danger and becomes an inherent part of U.S. foreign policy.<sup>34</sup> Hence, American national security culture has to be seen as a projection of American identity, which is shaped by norms and in turn shapes national security interests and policies. American identity is crucial to the understanding of current U.S. policy but must be considered in a historical perspective.

America's identity in relation to the domestic and international environment is unique. Since America's discovery in 1492, its identity has had both territorial and non-territorial dimensions. The territorial characteristic of American identity ties to geographical determinants, namely its isolated position between two oceans. The non-territorial aspect is represented by special norms that have developed within the nation. To understand its complex security culture we have to bear in mind both dimensions.

The special geographic situation was a significant factor that influenced the development of American identity. Because of the geography, the U.S has been allowed, in contrast to European countries and China for example, to develop in the absence of any serious external threats. This special initial position has been interpreted as a reason for its reluctant stance toward engagement, its preference for unilateralism and its imperialistic tendencies. The special security situation also gave rise to an ideology based on freedom, democracy and free enterprise, which flourished because of the dearth of struggles that are common in so many other parts of the world.

American norms are embedded in this particular ideology, which then formed the American identity through the articulation of danger. America has developed an attitude that its values – democracy, freedom and human rights, for example – are unique and morally superior, and it therefore deems them universally valid. Universalism of American ideology, deriving from its particular geography, resulted in a moral confidence and consequent belief that it is America's 'responsibility' to spread it. According to Roger Howard, Americans are said to have a propensity to think more in terms of blueprint plans

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<sup>33</sup> In: Campbell, David. *Writing Security. United States Foreign Policy and Politics of Identity*. Mineapolis: University of Minesota Press 1998.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, p. 1-3.

than in practical steps.<sup>35</sup> However, long-established utopian perspectives in American foreign policy thinking are known to result in a miscalculation of the real world. For instance, the Iraq war was guided by an assumption that the installation of democratic government would be good for the Iraqi people. However, the unexpected resistance and resulting chaos indicated that the idea that those ‘good’ values will be commonly welcomed is not always proven right.<sup>36</sup> Still, the Iraqi case is so important because it shows how American identity continuously affects the conduct of foreign policy. Saddam Hussein’s rule in Iraq was perceived as a danger to American ideology because of its incompatible values. Strong Americanism causes a perception that everything ‘non-American’ is dangerous.

In line with danger as a basic phenomenon that shapes U.S. foreign policy, Americans tend to see the world in a ‘black-and-white’ perspective. The world is simplified and divided into two irreconcilable camps: ‘us’ versus ‘them’, or in a similar vein, ‘good’ versus ‘evil’. American identity is based on a contrast to other countries, especially those who were considered a threat to the U.S. This mindset flourished in the Cold War era, where the Soviet Union (USSR) presented a clearly defined ‘enemy’. American identity embodied a struggle between ‘civilized’ and ‘barbaric’, where an ‘inside’ was created by the articulation of a danger ‘outside’. The U.S. interpreted all issues connected to communism or the USSR in general as ‘evil’.<sup>37</sup> As a result, American identity was more or less defined as an antithesis to the Soviet empire. Following this logic, ever since the ‘Great Satan’ disappeared, the U.S. has been facing the problem of redefining its identity. According to Katzenstein, this looming crisis of identity consequently caused ambiguity about U.S. interests.<sup>38</sup> In the context of the disappearance of the Soviet Union’s monolithic threat and sudden replacement by several regional threats,<sup>39</sup> where a bipolar world with two superpowers transformed into a world of great diversity and blurred hierarchy, the

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<sup>35</sup> In: Howard, Roger. *Iran in crisis? Nuclear Ambitions and American Response*. New York: Gutenberg Press Ltd. 2004, p. 27.

<sup>36</sup> In: Howard, Roger. *Iran in crisis? Nuclear Ambitions and American Response*. New York: Gutenberg Press Ltd. 2004.

It is noteworthy that the U.S. attempt to promote democracy cannot be distilled just to the use of force, which was an exceptional case; the scale of means varies from diplomacy and aid to economic sanction. In: Singh, Robert. “The Bush Doctrine”. In: Buckley, Mary – Singh, Robert (eds.). *The Bush doctrine and the War on Terrorism: global responses, global consequences*. London: Routledge 2006, p. 19.

<sup>37</sup> In: Campbell, David. *Writing Security. United States Foreign Policy and Politics of Identity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1998, p. 140.

<sup>38</sup> In: Katzenstein, Peter J. (ed.). *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press 1996.

<sup>39</sup> In: Klare, Michael T. “An Anachronistic Policy. The Strategic Obsolescence of the ‘Rogue Doctrine’”. *Harvard International Review*. 22 (Summer 2000), p. 47.

U.S. were sought to establish their identity in relation to a new 'evil' or 'other' to serve as a new antithesis to U.S. values. It can thus be argued that the emergence of the concept of rogue states was led by the need for a replacement of 'evil' deriving from the USSR by another 'enemy' in an attempt to preserve American identity.

The rogue states' image is indeed very similar to the 'enemy' image that dominated the Cold War era. Both are perceived as threatening, but the relationship between their power capabilities is different. While USSR had more or less equal capabilities as the U.S., capabilities of rogue states are perceived as inferior.<sup>40</sup> Rogue states also lack homogeneity and their goals are different. There is another explanation for the emergence of the rogue states doctrine. Klare states that the categorization of rogue states materialized in an effort to conserve the American supremacy in the international relations arena, especially its military budget, which would be hard to maintain without an obvious threat.<sup>41</sup> Both interpretations of the rise of the rogue state doctrine rely on the continuity of American security culture, either its need to depict a clear danger or the maintenance of its hegemonic military position that ties to America's exceptional position in the international arena.

The American security thinking is often described in contrast to the European tradition. The most known advocate of a 'gap' between Americans and Europeans is Robert Kagan.<sup>42</sup> He based his work on different *strategic cultures* based on material distribution of power: American power is based on its strength and European power is derived from its weakness. This creates different perceptions of threat and interpretations of danger. Whereas Americans concentrate its attention on 'hard threats' from rogue states, Europeans are more concerned about 'soft threats' such as immigration, ethnic conflicts and environmental degradation. In this context, the American security culture rarely relies on international institutions and favors to act unilaterally when using forceful means, whereas the European security culture that stems from its general weakness prefers to exercise non-forceful diplomatic solutions within a multilateral framework. Although Kagan's work has received criticism for making inappropriate generalizations and false assumptions about stereotypes, it stresses that some U.S. foreign policy practices are entrenched in the American security culture, and it also addresses its relationship with

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<sup>40</sup> In: Hoyt, Paul D. "The 'Rogue State' Image in American Foreign Policy". *Global Society*. Vol. 14, No. 2 (2000), p. 307, 308.

<sup>41</sup> In: Klare, Michael T. "An Anachronistic Policy. The Strategic Obsolescence of the 'Rogue Doctrine'". *Harvard International Review*. 22 (Summer 2000): 46-51.

<sup>42</sup> In: Kagan, R. *Labyrinth síly a ráj slabosti. Amerika, Evropa a nový řád světa*. Praha: Lidové noviny 2003.

rogue states. It is true that the U.S. and Europe have conflicting preferences in strategies for dealing with rogue states. While Europe generally advocates diplomacy and cooperation and is reluctant to use harsh measures, the U.S. prefers resolute containment based on sanctioning. This is probably influenced by less of a perception of threat in most European countries. Moreover, the strategic thinking in the U.S. is influenced by traditional approaches to military security, while Europe sees security in a broader scope where they pay attention to the environment and social security as well. However, we should be cautious when exploring the real reasons for this difference; it is easy to oversimplify different power capabilities.

In presence of danger, Americans have an “ability to represent things as alien, subversive, dirty, or sick”.<sup>43</sup> Rogue states are an excellent example of this. Rogue is a highly pejorative with negative connotations. Besides, the U.S. government tends to concentrate on the negative aspects of rogue states’ behavior that is only supported by dubious evidence that fosters their negative image. The perception of the rogue as ‘bad guys’ has consequent policy implications. The nature of American foreign policy as it relates to danger is closely linked to bad images; the concept of rogue states can be seen as a product of American national security culture. However, we still must bear in mind that danger from the rogue states and the concept itself are both matters of interpretation.

### ***2. 3. Continuity and change in U.S. foreign policy***

There is an ongoing discourse within the academic sphere about continuity and change in U.S. foreign policy. Different administrations are often presented as being entrenched in various theoretical patterns, which in turn make their foreign policies profoundly dissimilar. However, we can observe underlying long-term patterns across different administrations. Some argue that in the realm of national security, there are only small differences among administrations.<sup>44</sup> Accordingly, I will argue that there is more continuity than change within the three most recent administrations. It is not plausible to separate each administration for analysis. On the contrary, this broader insight will help us to see continuity in the U.S. foreign policy. This is essential in order to understand the

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<sup>43</sup> In: Campbell, David. *Writing Security. United States Foreign Policy and Politics of Identity*. Mineapolis: University of Minesota Press 1998, p. 3.

<sup>44</sup> In: Lynch, Timothy J. – Singh, Robert S. *After Bush: The case for Continuity in American Foreign Policy*. New York: Cambridge University Press 2008, p. 43.

different strategies in regard to Iran and North Korea; the tendency to isolate Iran and engage North Korea remains consistent, albeit the language sometimes indicates a different course.

There are three basic traditions that have been shaping the conduct of U.S. foreign policy: isolationism, imperialism and internationalism. Because of the exceptional initial position, America has developed a tendency toward both isolationism and imperialism. Isolationism had been chosen in order to defend American interests from any undesirable interference from other parts of the world. An isolationist position has allowed principles of human rights and democracy to develop for the first time in the history. As a result, Americans tend to see their norms that free government embodies as universal, claiming 'exceptionalism'. Early American foreign policy was not, however, committed to spreading those values but rather to their defense. This stance was illustrated in the Monroe doctrine, which was based on neutrality and isolation. At the same time, America was always imperialistic, during and since the Spanish-American war and also outside the continent.<sup>45</sup> America's dream of 'manifest destiny'<sup>46</sup> served as a justification for imperialist missions. Woodrow Wilson connected previous positions to an internationalism that favored universal interests within democratic structures. His vision of post-war order was based on collective security, international law and self-determination, which were delineated in the famous Fourteen Points of January 1918.<sup>47</sup> The United States' refusal of membership in the League of Nations by the Senate after the First World War was widely portrayed as a triumph of isolationism; Zaborowski argues that it was instead an act of U.S. growing hegemonism<sup>48</sup> and unilateralism in line with Wilson's failed multilateral efforts.<sup>49</sup> In the time of the Cold War, there was a consensus between imperialist and internationalist positions – the U.S. was, in the light of the Communist menace, dedicated to the defense of both national interests and universal values attributed to others.<sup>50</sup> The breakup of the Soviet Union, the victory of 'forces of freedom' over the totalitarianism, began a new era of

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<sup>45</sup> In: Barša, Pavel. *Hodina impéria: Zdroje současné zahraniční politiky USA*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita 2003, p. 18, 21.

<sup>46</sup> The term was used by O'Sullivan in 1839.

<sup>47</sup> In: "President's Wilson Fourteen Points". 8 January 1918.

<sup>48</sup> The perception, 'America first'

<sup>49</sup> In: Zaborowski, Marcin. *Bush's legacy and America's next foreign policy*. Paris: Institute for Security Studies 2008, p. 18, 21.

<sup>50</sup> In: Barša, Pavel. *Hodina impéria: Zdroje současné zahraniční politiky USA*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita 2003, p. 32.

imperialism in U.S. foreign policy that continued the tradition of American imperialism, called neoimperialism.<sup>51</sup>

Post-Cold War U.S. foreign policy should therefore be seen as mostly a derivative of the American historical tradition rather than as a product of a ‘new world order’. In this respect, it is not possible to detach the post-Cold War era from the development before. The general underlying principles guiding policy were established prior to the change in international relations after the dissolution of the Soviet empire. Throughout each of the examined administrations we should bear in mind that the underlying neoimperialist framework and strong hegemonic stance of U.S foreign policy are an inherent part of an established American identity that acts as an influencing factor in molding foreign policy.

The isolationist position is no longer plausible within the globalized world where America is ‘indispensably’ engaged in the international affairs, hence the current division line is drawn between two competing versions of internationalism: unilateralism and multilateralism. There is an obvious U.S. ambivalence toward multilateralism that has resulted in a paradoxical situation. On one hand, the U.S. has been one of the leading forces in the creation of many international organizations; on the other hand, the U.S. has always been reluctant to cooperate multilaterally.<sup>52</sup> As I argue in this thesis, the hesitant stance toward multilateralism and the inclination toward unilateral action is a long-term pattern of the U.S. foreign policy that can be attributed to America’s unique national security culture.

In line with Steward Patrick and Shepard Forman, we can trace three main roots to American ambivalence and its selective stance toward participation in multilateral platforms.<sup>53</sup> The key is the previously mentioned American ‘exceptionalism’; the belief that the American norms and principles that were established as the foundation of the country are exceptional and morally superior and therefore America is on a special mission to spread them. This perception has always been visible in the U.S. foreign policy and has influenced the degree of multilateral cooperation. The perception of American model norms resulted in a ‘right’ to act unilaterally and a reluctance to submit American sovereignty to ‘global governance’, which is the major impediment in achieving its mission. Second, the commitment to multilateral obligations is made more difficult by a

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<sup>51</sup> In: Barša, Pavel. *Hodina impéria: Zdroje současné zahraniční politiky USA*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita 2003, p. 47.

<sup>52</sup> In: Patrick, Stewart – Forman, Shepard (eds.). *Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy. Ambivalent Engagement*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2002, p. 7.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, p. 7-10.

structure of government where both executive and legislative branches control foreign policy. The need for consensus between Congress and the President, who are often from the different political parties, poses a serious hindrance to multilateralism. The rejection of membership in the League of Nations is a good example of how hard it can be to win domestic approval for international commitments. Finally, the lack of enthusiasm toward multilateral cooperation ties to the U.S.'s hegemonic position and its perception of leadership. In a situation where the U.S. has predominant power capabilities, indicated especially by military strength, skepticism about multilateralism seems rational. The U.S. has a variety of options including unilateralism, bilateralism or ad hoc coalitions and therefore does not have to rely on multilateral frameworks. Following this logic, the U.S. acts unilaterally because it sees this method as an efficient tool for the promotion of national interests and U.S. dominance serves as a good justification for this.<sup>54</sup>

Throughout the Clinton, Bush and Obama administrations, we can observe mixed signals about U.S. commitments to multilateralism. On one hand, the U.S. has become a member of many international regimes since the end of Second World War, and joined even more after the Cold War. On the other hand, America has been very selective about its multilateral commitments.<sup>55</sup> When it comes to issues of national security, the U.S. is cautious about multilateral cooperation and is prepared to 'go it alone'. The logic of selective engagement and readiness to act unilaterally is common to all three presidencies. Clinton expressed this stance in the National Security strategy of Engagement and Enlargement in 1996.<sup>56</sup> The Bush administration preserved this course, and upgraded it with a 'right' to strike preemptively when American interests are threatened.<sup>57</sup> He did favor a la carte multilateralism and in many cases relied on coalitions of willing countries. President Obama also favors this strategy, although he is often seen as departing from Bush's unilateralist course, he has proven that the tool for international cooperation is not

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<sup>54</sup> In: Patrick, Stewart – Forman, Shepard (eds.). *Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy. Ambivalent Engagement*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2002, p. 7-10.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, p. 12.

<sup>56</sup> "Our engagement must be selective, focusing on the challenges that are most important our own interests and focusing our resources where we can make the most difference. We must also use the right tools -- being willing to act unilaterally when our direct national interests are most at stake; in alliance and partnership when our interests are shared by others; and multilaterally when our interests are more general and the problems are best addressed by the international community". In: "A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement". Washington: The White House 1999.

<sup>57</sup> In: "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America". Washington: The White House 2002, p. 15.

multilateralism but rather bilateralism.<sup>58</sup> In sum, the long-term pattern toward selective multilateralism, which is believed to best serve U.S. national interests, is present across all three of the examined administrations. However, there are certain risks inherent to this approach,<sup>59</sup> especially because this ambivalence and selectivity toward multilateralism prevents the U.S. from formulating a coherent and effective policy. This is also projected in strategies that deal with Iran and North Korea's nuclear programs.

Long-term patterns tie not only to versions of internationalism within the U.S. foreign policy but also to the rogue states concept, hence I can argue that there is more continuity in the conduct of the U.S. foreign policy among Clinton, Bush and Obama than is commonly assumed. Certainly there are changes in personnel, rhetoric, strategy, policy priorities and practical steps, but those things refer to the established policy long-term patterns that are central to the American national security culture. There are three main areas of tension between continuity and change: programs, budgets and people.<sup>60</sup> In this respect, we have to bear in mind differences between Republicans and Democrats on foreign policy. Some argue that the bipartisanship has experienced significant polarization, which has had a profound influence on foreign policy.<sup>61</sup> It is certainly true that the political struggle makes it harder to push ahead controversial policies; however, in my analysis, the bipartisanship factor has only played a minor role. The main impact on the perception that there are significant changes within the administrations has varying international and domestic circumstances, or contextual factors. All three presidents had to face a new set of post-Cold war issues but the context shifted. For instance, the events of 9/11 caused many analysts to characterize the following era as an abrupt departure from previous U.S. policies even though the long-term patterns remained the same.

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<sup>58</sup> In: Hynek, Nik. "Continuity and Change in the U.S. Foreign and Security Policy with the Accession of President Obama". *IIR Policy Paper* (August 2009), p. 15.

<sup>59</sup> More in: Patrick, Stewart – Forman, Shepard (eds.). *Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy. Ambivalent Engagement*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2002, p. 20-27.

Rockman, Bert A. "The Federal Executive: Equilibrium and Change". In: Jones, Bryan D. (ed.). *The New American Politics: Reflections in Political Change and the Clinton Administration*. Boulder/San Francisco/Oxford: Westview Press 1995, p. 163.

<sup>61</sup> In: Singh, Robert. "The Bush Doctrine". In: Buckley, Mary – Singh, Robert (eds.). *The Bush doctrine and the War on Terrorism: global responses, global consequences*. London: Routledge 2006, p. 16.

## ***2. 4. Development of the concept in relation to long-term patterns in U.S. foreign policy and American national security culture***

The rogue states category as a part of American national security culture has been proven to be politically relevant and well established in the sphere of American foreign policy.<sup>62</sup> However, the concept has not always been at the top of the agenda and its interpretation has slightly differed during each different administration. Still, the trends that can be seen beyond the rogue states label remain consistent within all three administrations, even though President Obama abandoned that method of categorization. For this reason I will focus on continuity in U.S. foreign policy toward rogue states.

### **2. 4. 1. Clinton doctrine**

Democrat Bill Clinton took office January 20<sup>th</sup> 1993 and served for two terms as the first post-Cold War American president. The President adopted a strategy of enlargement that was created by Anthony Lake, as a way of presenting the administration's policy priorities. Enlargement was supposed to become America's grand strategy and replace the method of containment which dominated during the Cold War. The core of the enlargement strategy made a connection between free trade and the spreading of democracy. Clinton believed that democracy could flourish and Western values could be adopted only in countries with a free-spending middle class.<sup>63</sup> For this reason, the inclusion of new free market democracies in Central and Eastern Europe in NATO became a top priority. Clinton also supported the European integration.

Clinton stressed continuity with the policies of his predecessors but promised to adopt a new foreign and military agenda that would reflect post Cold War changes.<sup>64</sup> However, the resulting 'bottom-up-review' (BUR) that Secretary of Defense Les Aspin ordered was

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<sup>62</sup> In: Hoyt , Paul D. "The 'Rogue State' Image in American Foreign Policy". *Global Society*. Vol. 14, No. 2 (2000): 297- 310.

<sup>63</sup> In: Brinkley, Douglas. "Democratic Enlargement: The Clinton Doctrine". *Foreign Policy*. No. 106 (Spring 1997), p. 118.

<sup>64</sup> In: Klare, Michael T. "An Anachronistic Policy. The Strategic Obsolescence of the 'Rogue Doctrine'". *Harvard International Review*. 22 (Summer 2000), p. 48.

rather similar to the Colin Powell's 1989 concept.<sup>65</sup> We observe a considerable amount of continuity in this area in line with the policies of George Bush Senior's previous administration. The development of the BUR doctrine was, according to Les Aspin, led by the need to contain rogue states whose leaders were "set on regional domination through military aggression while simultaneously pursuing nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons capabilities".<sup>66</sup> Les Aspin also announced a new Defense Counter-proliferation Initiative (DCI)<sup>67</sup> in which he presented the nature of threat in today's world and the way it spreads: "perhaps [there are] a handful of nuclear devices in the hands of rogue states or even terrorist groups. The engine of this new danger is proliferation".<sup>68</sup> In addition to BUR and DCI, Clinton showed a strong commitment to nonproliferation regime replacing special emphasis on WMD and the transfer of fissile material. The attempt to stop the spread of such weapons was made one of his administration's highest priorities.<sup>69</sup>

Clinton's Administration continued the tradition of national security culture when Clinton stressed the essential, special responsibility of American leadership and uniqueness of American ideology, with a special reference to the promotion of democracy. According to the 1996 document A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement,<sup>70</sup> the U.S. should 'engage' with the rest of the world in order to 'enlarge' the process of democracy and market economy, and thus the values represented by America. The document also suggested that strong military capability is a basic element of U.S. power and dedication to its maintenance should be global. The shift in security challenges since the Cold War era has been reflected in a new emphasis on ethnic conflict and rogue states,

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<sup>65</sup> In: Les Aspin, Secretary of Defense. "Report on the BOTTOM-UP REVIEW. Section I: National Security in the Post-Cold War Era". October 1993.

Collin Powell's Base Force concept called for the ability of American military forces to fight two major regional conflicts 'at more or less the same time', while BUR counts on fighting two regional conflicts 'nearly simultaneously'. In: Klare, Michael T. "An Anachronistic Policy. The Strategic Obsolescence of the 'Rogue Doctrine'". *Harvard International Review*. 22 (Summer 2000), p. 48-49.

<sup>66</sup> In: Les Aspin, Secretary of Defense. "Report on the BOTTOM-UP REVIEW. Section I: National Security in the Post-Cold War Era". October 1993.

<sup>67</sup> There is a common confusion between terms non-proliferation and counterproliferation. Counterproliferation policy refers to diplomatic, intelligence and *military* efforts to prevent proliferation of WMD, while non-proliferation is a more general term referring to stopping the spread of WMD. After the publication of DCI, there was debate about preemption in relation to the counterproliferation policy because DCI was interpreted in other countries as giving arguments to preemptive strikes toward states acquiring WMD in the Third world. More in: Litwak, Robert S. "New Calculus for pre-emption". *Survival*. Vol. 44, No. 4 (2002), p. 56.

<sup>68</sup> Williams, Chris. "DOD's Counterproliferation Initiative: A Critical Assessment". In: Sokolski, Henry (ed.). *Fighting Proliferation: New Concerns for the Nineties*. Maxwell AFB: Air University Press, 1996.

<sup>69</sup> In: Dr. Lynn E. Davis, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs. "Global Proliferation Threats. Controlling the Spread of Dangerous Weapons: An Overview of the Clinton Administration's Non-Proliferation Policy". House Committee on International Relations, 19 June 1996.

<sup>70</sup> In: "A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement". Washington: The White House 1999.

especially in connection to WMD proliferation.<sup>71</sup> Although in Clinton's eyes security is sometimes understood in more broad terms, the military issue is narrower, particularly in that "the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction represents a major challenge to [U.S.] security".<sup>72</sup> Concern about rogue states' hostile policies toward their respective regions and subsequently to U.S. interests was presented as equally important.

An opposition to the rogue states that posed the biggest challenges to American national security defined Clinton's general. Clinton was not in a position with access to a comprehensive strategy like containment because the former single enemy, the USSR, disappeared. Here again, we can see a propensity to define American values in contrast to the 'other' deviant one. The administration's policy toward rogue states was introduced to the general public by National Security Adviser Anthony Lake in his 1994 Foreign Affairs article<sup>73</sup> although Martin Indyk was the first to present the idea of 'dual containment', the gist of anti-rogue policy. Lake presented a general approach toward any given band of outlaws called 'backlash states' that were defined by common characteristics based on internal suppressive behavior as well as external hostile actions toward international order (especially by their engagement in WMD programs) and therefore to the U.S. interests. The 'dual containment' strategy towards Iran and Iraq was presented as the most suitable option how to deal with them. The main idea of this strategy was to contain both states, but in different ways. Lake explained the strategy as follows: "the basic purpose is to counter the hostility of both Baghdad and Tehran, but the challenges posed by the two regimes are distinct and therefore require tailored approaches".<sup>74</sup> It is important to note that the article highlighted the fact that Washington seeks *only* a change of behavior not a change of regime in Iran. In line with an effort toward behavioral change, Lake also stressed that the U.S. seeks to strengthen ties to allies. The text also highlighted a previously mentioned commitment to the global nonproliferation regime. North Korea's nuclear program was, from this point of view, the most critical concern. In contrast to the strategy in regard to Iran, the U.S. was willing to improve mutual relations on the condition that North Korea roll back its nuclear program.

Although it is often claimed that Clinton's foreign policy emphasized multilateralism over independent action as I have shown above, it is also during this period that we can identify ambivalence toward collective security commitments and international

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<sup>71</sup> In: "A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement". Washington: The White House 1999-

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> In: Lake, Anthony. "Confronting Backlash States". Foreign Affairs. Vol. 73, No. 2 (March/April 1994): 45-55.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, p. 49.

organizations. The tendency toward imperialism and unilateralism during the Clinton's years was not so readily apparent and clearly articulated as it was widely covered in rhetoric about multilateral commitments. In practice, although the general premise was that the use of force should be minimal and limited, the U.S. under Clinton showed resolution to use military force and in the four cases of Panama, Iraq, Bosnia, and Haiti it was actually used. In the bombing of Iraq in 1998 and in the province of Kosovo in 1999 the U.S. acted prior to approval by the Security Council Especially after failure in Somalia, which had significantly shaken the public perception of the efficiency of U.S. military power,<sup>75</sup> the U.S. adopted an even more cautious position toward those missions. Despite the fact that those issues were on the top of the U.S. foreign policy agenda, there was skepticism toward multilateral cooperation in the field of nonproliferation and arms control for several reasons: the 1999 Senate rejection of the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT);<sup>76</sup> and the rising commitment to building national missile defense (NMD), a top priority for Bush's agenda; and the failed adoption of the doctrine of the Ottawa Convention.<sup>77</sup>

Clinton's administration held a very strong adversarial view in relation to rogue states, and reference to the concept was common in foreign policy rhetoric. As Hoyt showed, the term rogue was most frequently used in 1997, which was probably linked to the nonproliferation effort to ratify the Chemical Weapon Convention.<sup>78</sup> The most common instrument of the rogue states policy was sanctioning. There were several unilateral sanctions applied toward both Iran and North Korea and the rogue state concept eased their implementation. Conversely, bargaining with North Korea was made more difficult. Although it was celebrated as a success by many, the policy toward an agreement in 1994 was designated an act of appeasement by critics.

Although the term rogue experienced its golden age during the Clinton presidency,<sup>79</sup> the State Department abandoned usage of the term in 2000. It was replaced by 'state of concern'. According to Litwak, the decision was led by the need for differentiated policies toward Iran and Iraq. Whereas the threat stemming from Saddam Husain in Iraq required

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<sup>75</sup> In: Blechman, Barry M. – Wittes, Tamara Cofman. "Defining Moment: The Threat and Use of Force in American Foreign Policy". *Political Science Quarterly*. Vol. 114, No. 1 (Spring 1999), p. 17-18.

<sup>76</sup> The ratification was not a priority for the Bush administration but Obama showed will to secure ratification in Congress.

<sup>77</sup> The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction entered into force in 1999.

<sup>78</sup> In: Hoyt, Paul D. "The 'Rogue State' Image in American Foreign Policy". *Global Society*. Vol. 14, No. 2 (2000): 297- 310.

<sup>79</sup> Klare regards the period from August 1990 to February 1998 as the golden age of the rogue states doctrine.

maintenance of the containment strategy, the elections of moderate president Khatami in Iran offered an opportunity for diplomacy.<sup>80</sup> It also loosened hands for negotiations of the comprehensive deal with North Korea. It has to be considered though that change in rhetoric lasted only six months, hence we cannot say whether or it would have had a desirable effect.

#### **2. 4. 2. Bush doctrine**

George W. Bush became president on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2001 and served for two terms. Because he was from the republican camp, his stances were in sharp contrast to Clinton's domestic and foreign policy. However, aside from the rhetoric, there was also a considerable amount of continuity with Clinton's policies, especially in the realm of national security, although Bush's conduct of foreign policy is often touted as revolutionary.

Domestic issues dominated his campaign, in 2000; foreign policy issues, particularly regarding WMD and terrorism, were not set high on the foreign policy agenda before the events of 9/11.<sup>81</sup> Priorities changed dramatically with the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. Those events had far-reaching consequences for both domestic and foreign policy. National security for the U.S. became universal and the distinction between domestic and foreign policy became blurred. American interests started to be perceived as the best for all humankind. By the same logic, national self-defense widened to the extent that it included the option to preemptively strike against any rogue regime.<sup>82</sup> However, it is important to stress that those changes did not occur merely as a reaction to terrorist attacks, but they are trends in American foreign policy that have been visible since the breakup of the Soviet empire. Bush's direction in foreign policy and generally recalcitrant stance toward international institutions and his selectivity in multilateral obligations were recognizable long before the attacks occurred.<sup>83</sup>

The most significant guiding document during the Bush era was the National Security Strategy, which was presented to the public in 2002. It is a strong reaction to the terrorist

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<sup>80</sup> In: Litwak, Robert S. "New Calculus for pre-emption". *Survival*. Vol. 44, No. 4 (2002), p. 57.

<sup>81</sup> In: Zaborowski, Marcin. *Bush's legacy and America's next foreign policy*. Paris: Institute for Security Studies 2008, p. 28-9.

<sup>82</sup> In: Barša, Pavel. *Hodina impéria: Zdroje současné zahraniční politiky USA*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita 2003, p. 55.

<sup>83</sup> In: Singh, Robert. "The Bush Doctrine". In: Buckley, Mary – Singh, Robert (eds.). *The Bush doctrine and the War on Terrorism: global responses, global consequences*. London: Routledge 2006, p. 15.

attacks, which were his main point of reference in regard to strategy. It is not surprising that the biggest perceived threat to national security was terrorism, along with rogue states and WMD. President Clinton shared similar perceptions of threat, although he did not present them in such strong terms. The document also showed the continuation of American 'exceptionalism' and the feeling of responsibility to defend universal principles which are not geographically binding. From the beginning, Bush said, "the United States must defend liberty and justice because these principles are right and true for all people everywhere".<sup>84</sup> In line with the two-dimensional American perspective, the U.S. felt responsible to "rid the world of the evil".<sup>85</sup>

The U.S. punctuated its persisting hegemonic position with unparalleled superiority in military capabilities. America saw itself as a natural leader with a historical responsibility "to lead in this great mission".<sup>86</sup> In the context of leadership, the U.S. claimed readiness to act unilaterally when necessary. Generally, the National Security Strategy noted only limited U.S. commitment to multilateralism, even though it claims it is necessary to cooperate with allies, especially with Europe and NATO. President Bush viewed multilateralism with the same lenses as Clinton: the U.S. will rely on it when it can but will act independently when it must. In addition, Bush created ad hoc coalitions of willing and, most importantly, he presented the concept of preventive war, known more commonly as preemptive action. The difference between preventive and preemptive action should be mentioned here, although Bush did not draw a clear line between those two terms and frequently used them more or less interchangeably. Whereas preventive action is a deliberate response that could incorporate a wide range of strategies, including force, to a long-term threat, preemptive action refers to a military response when threat is imminent.<sup>87</sup> As we can see, preventive action is more flexible and can justify many kinds of action, while preemption makes a first strike in an effort to gain advantage in the event of further confrontation. It is not surprising that Bush preferred to talk about preemption whereas the actual practice resembled preventive war. For instance, the war on Iraq had been presented as an example of preemptive action in practice, even though it was a clear example of a

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<sup>84</sup> In: "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America". Washington: The White House 2002, p. 3.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, p. 5.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, p. vi.

<sup>87</sup> In: Smith, Derek D. *Deterring America: rogue states and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University 2006, p. 117-118; Litwak, Robert S. "New Calculus for pre-emption". *Survival*. Vol. 44, No. 4 (2002), p. 54.

preventive attack, which was not legal according to the UN Charter.<sup>88</sup> Generally, there is a consensus that preemption is used in response to terrorism, while controversy remains in respect to rogue states. There are no clear criterion defining when use is justifiable and therefore the legality of such a step can be easily challenged. The definition in 2002's National Security Strategy was rather general and therefore did not contribute to any clarification of the term.<sup>89</sup>

In relation to rogue states, the Bush administration committed itself to bringing about regime change with the spreading of democracy. This assumption served as a justification for the overthrowing of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Nonetheless, in the light of restless situation in this country, the U.S. intentions toward regime in Iran became unclear. Even though Bush preferred a diplomatic solution, he declared, "all options are on the table".<sup>90</sup> In regard to the case of North Korea, the administration's intentions concerning its local regime were also uncertain. It is not desirable to overthrow Kim Chong-il because of the havoc that could follow and the general disapproval of other major powers in the region. Clinton and Bush differed in their approaches to Iraq in that the former intended to change their behavior and the latter strived for regime change. However, this cannot be applied to their approach to all rogue states because priorities toward regimes in Iran and North Korea were blurred. This is another feature the two administrations had in common: discontinuity in strategies toward rogue states.

The case of Iraq also illustrates the American occupation with the spreading of democratic values, which are considered universally good regardless of the context. As I have shown earlier, this mentality is deeply ingrained in American national security culture and therefore does not represent anything revolutionary. Bush's policy contrasted with the two other presidencies in the respect that it tied American hegemonism and unilateralism to strong imperialist implications,<sup>91</sup> which, once again, is nothing new in U.S. history.

All of the above mentioned elements of Bush's policy gave rise to the so-called Bush doctrine. Although it was never formally articulated, the Bush doctrine became a key

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<sup>88</sup> In: Singh, Robert. "The Bush Doctrine". In: Buckley, Mary – Singh, Robert (eds.). *The Bush doctrine and the War on Terrorism: global responses, global consequences*. London: Routledge 2006, p. 19.

<sup>89</sup> "The United States has long maintained the option of preemptive actions to counter a sufficient threat to our national security. The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction — and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively". In: "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America". Washington: The White House 2002, p. 15.

<sup>90</sup> In: Reuters. "Bush says all options on table on Iran". Washington, 19 June 2007.

<sup>91</sup> In: Rudolf, Peter. "American Policy. Some Conceptual Thoughts about Dealing with the Hegemon". *SWP Research Paper*, Berlin (January 2007), p. 11-12.

feature of the administration's policy. Robert Singh identifies four key elements of the doctrine: preventive war, the connection between WMD to international terrorism, regime change in rogue states and the promotion of democracy.<sup>92</sup> The author also claims that the doctrine has three characteristics that distinguish Bush's approach to foreign policy from the previous political course: preemptive action, change of regime in relation to the spreading of democracy, and the preservation of U.S. hegemony.<sup>93</sup> However, as I have shown, most of those elements stem from national security culture because they are intrinsic to American identity. Preemptive action is linked to the unilateral defense of national interests; the imperative of regime change is linked to American 'exceptionalism;' and U.S. hegemony is linked to its perceived leading role among states. It is true that Bush's priorities were different from those of the Clinton administration, but in general, the Bush doctrine was not a groundbreaking event in U.S. foreign policy.

Bush remained in line with Clinton's commitment to nonproliferation efforts, and emphasized a concrete counterproliferation policy to combat WMD. The concept of rogue states served as a tool for mobilizing political support, especially for national missile defense (NMD),<sup>94</sup> in a fight against the 'inevitable' threat from rogue states. The unilateral withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty<sup>95</sup> was explained accordingly: the "ABM treaty hinders our government's ability to develop ways to protect our people from future terrorist or rogue state missile attacks".<sup>96</sup> Missile defense was advocated as a response to the proliferation of WMD and ballistic missiles in rogue states, which was the most urgent security threat.<sup>97</sup> Some argued that a strong commitment to NMD deployment and a persisting negative stance toward the ratification of the CTBT is an expression of the unilateral trend in U.S. nuclear weapon policy, which has dangerous implications that can undermine international peace and stability.<sup>98</sup> The President made clear that he intended to strengthen nonproliferation efforts to prevent rogue states and terrorists from acquiring

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<sup>92</sup>In: Singh, Robert. "The Bush Doctrine". In: Buckley, Mary – Singh, Robert (eds.). *The Bush doctrine and the War on Terrorism: global responses, global consequences*. London: Routledge 2006, p. 12.

<sup>93</sup>In: Singh, Robert. "The Bush Doctrine". In: Buckley, Mary – Singh, Robert (eds.). *The Bush doctrine and the War on Terrorism: global responses, global consequences*. London: Routledge 2006, p. 18-20.

<sup>94</sup>In: Litwak, Robert S. "New Calculus for pre-emption". *Survival*. Vol. 44, No. 4 (2002), p. 57.

<sup>95</sup>Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty signed in 1972 between U.S. and Soviet Union posed limitation on missile defense systems.

<sup>96</sup>In: CNN. "U.S. quits ABM treaty". Washington, 14 December 2001.

<sup>97</sup>In: "Dealing with the 'axis of evil'. The US and the 'perilous crossroads'". *Strategic Comments*. Vol. 8, Iss. 5 (June 2002), p. 1.

<sup>98</sup>In: LaVera, Graham Jr. "Nuclear Weapons: The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and National Missile Defense". In: Patrick, Stewart – Forman, Shepard (eds.). *Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy. Ambivalent Engagement*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2002, p. 225.

WMD.<sup>99</sup> As a part of this effort, Bush proposed the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) as a tool to limit possibilities of WMD transfer. As James Cotton argues, PSI can be seen as a reworking of the same principles that gave rise to Clinton's Defense Counterproliferation Initiative.<sup>100</sup>

Bush's policy toward rogue states was, as pointed out earlier, inconsistent. Bush, like Clinton, expressed animosity toward rogue states, but his approach appeared more active. Because the danger from Iraq and Afghanistan was interpreted as imminent and jeopardizing to U.S. national interests, Bush maintained unilateral sanctions and called for resolute action. The rogue states concept made winning political support easier within a coalition of willing states who then stood by the U.S. when it decided to change conditions in Afghanistan and later in Iraq. The strategy toward Iran and North Korea, the remaining states that fall within the rogue state label, remained undefined.

At the time that Bush took office, the term 'states of concern' was favored over rogue states, but shortly after Bush's inauguration the original term was revitalized. After September 11<sup>th</sup>, references to rogue states were especially common, although use of term decreased compared to the Clinton's second term.<sup>101</sup> In 2002, the President labeled Iraq, Iran and North Korea with an aggressive term: 'axis of evil.' This term did not replace rogue states; they coexisted during the following years. Some argue that the term 'axis of evil' has no connection to any specific U.S. policy course,<sup>102</sup> although it did have consequences reflected in policy. Development of this new term was probably nourished by an attempt to combine old threats (rogue states with WMD) with post 9/11 threats (terrorists possessing WMD).<sup>103</sup> It indicates that attention in respect to rogue states was narrowed down to military issues, specifically those that were WMD related. It is noteworthy that Bush's strategy toward Iran and North Korea was not a departure from patterns that Clinton established even though official rhetoric indicated a reversal of policy. This shows a growing divergence between rhetoric and action.

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<sup>99</sup> In: "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America". Washington: The White House 2002, p. 14.

<sup>100</sup> In: Cotton, James. "The Proliferation Security Initiative and North Korea: Legality and Limitations of a Coalition Strategy". *Security Dialogue*. Vol. 36, No. 2 (June 2005), p. 196.

<sup>101</sup> In: Hoyt, Paul D. "The 'Rogue State' Image in American Foreign Policy". *Global Society*. Vol. 14, No. 2 (2000): 297- 310.

<sup>102</sup> In: "America and Iran". *Strategic Comments*. Vol. 9, No. 6 (2003), p. 1.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2.

### 2. 4. 3. Obama doctrine

The election of Democrat President Barack Obama is often characterized as a ‘new chapter’ in American modern history, which ties to many expectations. Accordingly, his policy agenda is presented as radical and innovative. I will argue that there is continuity with previous administrations in key areas, which stems from long-term patterns within U.S. foreign policy. However, we have to be aware of the fact that it is too early to assess Obama’s presidency in the same manner as Clinton and Bush. It is also true that “there did not emerge any new unexpected issues that would really test Obama in his role as the Commander in Chief”.<sup>104</sup>

His foreign policy agenda continues the trend toward a strong commitment to nonproliferation regime. Obama has already started negotiation over nuclear-weapons arms-control with Russia. On July 6, 2009, the agreement to cut possession by at least one-quarter was signed between Obama and Medvedev. This agreement should be seen as a routine step because President Bush began this course of action during his meeting with Putin in 2008.<sup>105</sup> However, in contrast to Bush, Obama presented an ambitious vision of a world without nuclear weapons. In his speech in Prague in April 2009,<sup>106</sup> he expressed that the U.S. has a “moral responsibility to act” toward nuclear disarmament. Obama also assured that he would pursue ratification of the CTBT and strengthen the Nonproliferation Treaty as a “basis for cooperation”. The total ban on nuclear weapons is especially challenging in Iran and North Korea, who do not appear to be willing to cooperate.

The new administration maintains counterproliferation efforts in American national missile defense (NMD). There is a visible departure from Bush’s stance: a suppression of the “third pillar of NMD”, radar bases in the Czech Republic and Poland. This shift has to be understood in the broader context of the relationship with Russia. Obama prefers to see NMD as a *political* - not *geostrategic* - tool that helps the U.S. in bargaining with Russia about reducing the number of nuclear arsenals and in Russia’s pressure on Iran as part of the effort to abandon nuclear weapons entirely.<sup>107</sup> The negotiations with Russia indicate that Obama, despite the commonly held assumption, prefers to tackle security issues

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<sup>104</sup> In: Hynek, Nik. “Continuity and Change in the U.S. Foreign and Security Policy with the Accession of President Obama”. *IIR Policy Paper* (August 2009), p. 2.

<sup>105</sup> In: Hynek, Nik. “Continuity and Change in the U.S. Foreign and Security Policy with the Accession of President Obama”. *IIR Policy Paper* (August 2009), p. 5.

<sup>106</sup> In: The Huffington Post. “Obama Prague Speech on Nuclear Weapons: Full Text”. 5 June 2009.

<sup>107</sup> In: Hynek, Nik. “Continuity and Change in the U.S. Foreign and Security Policy with the Accession of President Obama”. *IIR Policy Paper* (August 2009), p. 6.

bilaterally. He did not consult either governments in the Czech Republic and Poland or NATO about the radar bases.

As we can see, the tentative removal of the third pillar of NMD has been led by political incentives and not by a shift in threat perceptions from Iran. On the contrary, Obama's move was an attempt to persuade Russia to put some pressure on Iran because Russia has great economic interests in that country.

Obama abandoned some controversial terms such as 'war on terror' and 'rogue states' in order to soften the rhetoric. Like both Clinton and Bush, Obama identifies Iran, North Korea and others as threatening, yet he does not call them rogue states. There are several possible reasons for this step. Most importantly, it offers an opportunity for diplomacy so that the U.S. can have a better initial position when dealing with the thorny nuclear issue in both Pyongyang and Teheran. Obama's general policy direction diverges from that of previous administrations. Obama has already made steps toward engagement with Iran and has promised to put more pressure on North Korea. Generally speaking, Obama shows willingness to engage states that were previously referred to as rogue. Needless to say, although it appears that the decision to engage Iran is firm, the military option has not yet been ruled out.<sup>108</sup> However, in light of recent events it is unlikely that force will be implemented.

Current American foreign policy is to a large extent an expression of American national security culture, a culture that by nature is imperialistic because of its attempts to ensure dominance in international relations. This trend has been instilled in the phrase 'American empire'. America has exercised this role through hard coercive power toward rogue states. The concept itself is a useful and fitting label for dealing with states with 'anti-American' values.

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<sup>108</sup> In: Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. "U.S. National Security Strategy Update". U.S. Department of State. Washington, DC: Foreign Press Center, 27 January 2009.

### **3. Different U.S. strategies towards Iranian and North Korean nuclear programs**

'Rogueness' is well established in American foreign policy thinking. The image of rogue states derives from America's unique national strategic culture and mindset. Historically, there has been a consensus that rogue states pose a grave danger to U.S. interests, but not all strategies have acted accordingly. Comprehensive containment and deterrence were strategies for dealing with the 'enemy' during the Cold War. There were several changes in the treatment of rogue states during the post-Cold War period. Bush explained at Westpoint that: "Containment is not possible when unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can deliver those weapons on missiles or secretly provide them to terrorist allies".<sup>109</sup> Although it may seem that deterrence can be no longer applied, it is still applied on a regional level instead of a global one. It has been sometimes wrongly argued that rogue states are undeterrable. However, for example in the case of Iran, U.S. ballistic-missile defense and the threat of preventive war have served as strong deterrents. In the same vein, the strengthening of the Iranian nuclear program would be a deterrent to the U.S. Since the single overarching strategy toward the USSR as one unified threat transformed into *several* parallel strategies toward *several* smaller, regional threats, it is no longer suitable that the 'enemy' be handled only by containment and deterrence. Different types of engagement efforts and modified versions of the evolving concept of deterrence, which are no longer based on mutual assured destruction, can now come into play. Interestingly, there was willingness to negotiate with North Korea, but not with many other states. During this period there was only a small shift in tactical strategies that served only particular interests.

Before I elaborate on the particular strategies adopted by Clinton, Bush and Obama, it is essential that we take into consideration the history<sup>110</sup> of the mutual relationship between the U.S. and Iran on one side, and the U.S.-North Korea relationship on the other. This will contribute to the explanation of the different strategies that have been chosen and maintained.

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<sup>109</sup> In: Phil Taylor's Web Site. "President Bush's speech at Westpoint". New York: West Point, 1 June 2002.

<sup>110</sup> More precisely, I will detail the events that predated the time period of this thesis.

### ***3. 1. Background for U.S.-Iran relations***

It is crucial to stress that the relationship between Iran and the United States has not always been hostile. It was not until the Iranian revolution in 1979 that Iran appeared on the list of rogue states. After the Second World War, the country became a focus in the Cold War struggle between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The competition over sphere of influence between U.S and USSR ended in 1953 when a military coup,<sup>111</sup> supported by American and British forces, restored the rule of the Shah. CIA intelligence operatives and historical reconstructions revealed later that America's role in this was critical.<sup>112</sup> The restored regime of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi created close political ties to the U.S. and the two countries became close strategic allies. Under the Nixon Doctrine, Iran became one of main security 'pillars' in the region because the regime proved to be a strong anti-communist partner.

The partnership was not only economic and military, but also included cooperation over nuclear weapon technology and science.<sup>113</sup> The Agreement for Cooperation Concerning Civil Uses of Atoms was signed in 1957 as a part of the U.S. Atoms for Peace Program.<sup>114</sup> The relationship was affirmed and extended when President Nixon visited Teheran in 1972. The U.S. declared its strategic interests in the country and power relations shifted toward 'partnership between near equals'.<sup>115</sup> The cooperation on technology and expertise continued with President Ford and during the beginning of Carter's presidency. However the Iraqi revolution brought nuclear assistance to an end. It is crucial to bear in mind that Americans encouraged nuclear weapon cooperation and made a significant contribution to its development, which illustrates that the perceived threat from Iran was minor and that Iran itself was not considered dangerous.

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<sup>111</sup> The coup overthrew the autocratic rule of Prime Minister Mohammad Mogaddeq. The myth about him in Iranian minds is one of the stumbling blocks toward improvement in relations. He is presented as a hero who stood up against West and was the one who was betrayed by the U.S., which sought to become an Iranian benefactor. More in: Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*. New York: Random House 2005.

<sup>112</sup> More in: Gasiorowski, Mark J. – Byrne, Malcolm (eds.). *Mohammad Mosaddeq and the 1953 Coup in Iran*. New York: Syracuse University Press 2004.

<sup>113</sup> In: Kbarolu, Mustafa. "Iran's nuclear ambitions from a historical perspective and the attitude of the West". *Middle Eastern Studies*. Vol. 43, No. 2 (2007): 223-245.

<sup>114</sup> In: U.S. Department of State, "Atoms for Peace Agreement with Iran". Department of State Bulletin 36, Washington DC, 15 April 1957.

<sup>115</sup> In: Kbarolu, Mustafa. "Iran's nuclear ambitions from a historical perspective and the attitude of the West". *Middle Eastern Studies*. Vol. 43, No. 2 (2007), p. 228.

The revolution was a decisive event in U.S.-Iran relations. Iran became a revolutionary Islamic state that claimed that the principles of revolution could be exported and it declared that 'neither East, neither West' would be its guiding policy. One effect of this abrupt change in policies, away from being allies toward being major enemies, was the 'hostage crisis' at the American embassy in Teheran.<sup>116</sup> From the American point of view, it was an unjustifiable hostile act, but the motivation behind it was more complex.<sup>117</sup> Diplomatic relations were broken;<sup>118</sup> any interference in Iranian domestic issues stopped and Washington implemented a 'policy of denial'.<sup>119</sup> As a consequence, the U.S. imposed the first sanctions on Iran, which were tightened in 1984 when Iran was added to the list of state sponsors of terrorism.<sup>120</sup> Unyielding hostility toward the U.S. was fed when the U.S. began to support Iraq in the Iraq-Iran war.<sup>121</sup> The main reason that the U.S. intervened was not to suppress Iran, but to weaken both Iran and Iraq in an effort to maintain a balance of power in the region. Iran believed that U.S. engagement in the war was clear evidence of hostility, which nourished antagonism toward Americans. Interestingly, Iran remained neutral during the Gulf War, but this gesture did not have any positive response from the U.S.

Ever since the revolution, the U.S.-Iran relationship has been full of grievances and mistrust. This communication vacuum often leads to misunderstandings and judgments. According to Sadri, Washington has a very confined view of Teheran; it fails to listen and tend to see only what fits into the overarching policy - containment and isolation.<sup>122</sup> In addition, a lack of U.S. intelligence results in a perception of evil Iranian intentions. Iran is uneasy about U.S. intentions as well, believing them to be insincere. There have been several gestures and signals from both sides that have indicated an opportunity for a change in attitude, but it has never materialized. Complex and deep-seated political

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<sup>116</sup> On November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1979, a group of Muslim Iranian students and militants took over the American Embassy in Teheran and held 63 Americans hostages for 444 days. The rescue action in April 1980 ended in disaster and hostages were released by the time the new president Reagan took office on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1981.

<sup>117</sup> For a more complex insight into Iranian motivation see: Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*. New York: Random House 2005.

<sup>118</sup> The Swiss government represents the U.S. interests in Teheran; the Pakistani government represents the Iranian interests.

<sup>119</sup> In: Kbarolu, Mustafa. "Iran's nuclear ambitions from a historical perspective and the attitude of the West". *Middle Eastern Studies*. Vol. 43, No. 2 (2007), p. 233.

<sup>120</sup> The list was designed by the U.S. Department of State in December 1979.

<sup>121</sup> The war lasted from September 1980 to August 1988. Because of the support for Iraq, the U.S. found itself in an undeclared war with Iran.

<sup>122</sup> In: Sadri, Houman A. "Surrounded: Seeing the World from Iran's Point of View". *Military Review*. No. 87 (July-August 2007), p. 14.

circumstances can serve as part of an explanation why the extended hand has never been taken.

### ***3. 2. Background for U.S.-North Korean relations***

The Korean Peninsula was one of the places where the Cold War gained the form of conventional warfare. One of the deadliest struggles for leverage between the U.S. and the USSR began in June of 1950 and ended in July of 1953 when an armistice was signed in Pyongyang. However, a comprehensive peace agreement has not yet been signed and the peninsula still remains divided. During the Cold War, North Korea found itself in the Soviet and Chinese sphere of influence and was therefore isolated from American leverage. Yet, the country has always attempted to improve relations with major powers in the region, namely the U.S. and Japan, and the effort accelerated after the collapse of the USSR. The U.S. has been trying to engage North Korea since Reagan's 'modest initiative',<sup>123</sup> and even continued after the Cold War came to a halt. It is important to take into account that North Korea has never been as close to the western world as Iran; it has been more close to the countries in the Asian region.

Despite effort on the part of the U.S. to engage North Korea, the country represents a definitive ideological foe to the U.S. The nature of a one-man totalitarian regime, namely Kim Chong-il, goes directly against American liberal principles. Similarly, Pyongyang uses ideological propaganda to demonize the U.S. Hostility between the U.S. and North Korea has never been as intense as in the case of Iran, but the logic of mutual distrust also works here. The main stumbling block is that the U.S. is not sure about the sincerity of North Korean intentions. The question whether Pyongyang is genuinely willing to abandon its nuclear program or not cannot be clearly answered. The situation is further complicated by the dictator's dependence on international aid, especially on food since the era of famines in 1990s.

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<sup>123</sup> In: Smith, Derek D. *Deterring America: rogue states and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University 2006, p. 66.

### ***3. 3. Defining strategies***

The strategy is defined by a concrete set of steps the U.S. has taken when dealing with the nuclear issue in Iran and North Korea. The scale varies from containment to engagement. On one side of the scale is containment, which refers to a policy of denial with no formal or informal diplomatic relations. Strong public language is often the only tool for exchange of information. On the opposite side of the scale is engagement, which is based on interaction on both sides. There are several ways that this can be exercised, but the main point is that there is some kind of reciprocity. Engagement does not necessarily mean that the country has to be recognized by the U.S. government, as negotiations are often informal. Although it can appear that containment and engagement are opposite strategies, they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. This is a common mistake in the minds of U.S. foreign policy decision makers who tend to understand that any engagement initiative is incompatible with comprehensive strategy of containment.

### ***3. 4. Shift in strategies in respect to different administrations***

In the theoretical part of the thesis I have analyzed the rogue states concept and how it developed in relation to different presidents with special attention to national security culture and long-term tendencies in U.S. foreign policy; now I will concentrate my attention on the concrete steps that compose the strategies toward Iran and North Korea in more detail.

#### **3. 4. 1. Iran**

##### ***3. 4. 1. 1. Clinton Administration***

Clinton's policy toward Iran was guided by the 'dual containment' strategy. Basically, it was composed of political and economic isolation in an effort to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. As shown before, it was not just a declarative policy based on deterrence but it also included practical measures in the form of sanctions. This policy was a sharp contrast to the 'critical dialogue' applied by European countries. It exemplified the

main difference between U.S. and European strategies that derived from a different perception of threat. Whereas Europe often offered carrots, mostly in the form of economic ties, the U.S. relied almost solely on sticks, namely sanctions. However, both approaches failed to meet the declared objective – the modification of Iranian behavior. European economic and political engagement efforts are commonly called inefficient and ineffective; some even argue that the U.S. sanctioning policy was not only similarly fruitless but also caused a loss of leverage in Iran.<sup>124</sup> However, it has to be noted that the U.S. cooperated multilaterally with European countries on restrictions on Iran, for instance in the Nuclear Suppliers Group and in Missile Technology control regime. Yet, European governments generally opposed U.S. comprehensive sanctions and preferred to employ sanctions selectively.<sup>125</sup>

In first years of Clinton's administration, Iran accelerated its confrontational politics including support for Hezbollah and Hamas and making a deal with Russia to build the Busher nuclear reactor.<sup>126</sup> The U.S. attempted to persuade Europe to put pressure on Iran, but finally decided to act unilaterally. Oil and trade sanctions, including prohibition of any U.S. involvement in the Iranian energy sector and a ban on all U.S. export to Iran, were imposed in 1995.<sup>127</sup> The Administration was motivated to make this decision because of Iranian sponsorship of international terrorism and their pursuit of WMD.<sup>128</sup> Although it did some harm on Iran's economy, the strict trade embargo was not as successful as it would have been if it had been applied multilaterally. It was noticeably undermined by Europe, Russia and Japan whose trade ties with Iran grew significantly at this time.<sup>129</sup>

Because Iran supported Hamas, their 1996 attack on Israel caused the U.S.-Iran confrontation to gain momentum. This ratcheted up Clinton's rhetoric and he publicly questioned how other countries could trade with a state that sponsored terrorism.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> In: Sadri, Houman A. "Surrounded: Seeing the World from Iran's Point of View". *Military Review*. No. 87 (July-August 2007), p. 28.

<sup>125</sup> In: Mastanduno, Michael. "Extraterritorial Sanctions: Managing 'Hyper-Unilateralism'". In: Patrick, Stewart – Forman, Shepard (eds.). *Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy. Ambivalent Engagement*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2002, p. 312.

<sup>126</sup> In: Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*. New York: Random House 2005, p. 268.

<sup>127</sup> It was also reaction to the fact that the U.S. was Iran's third largest trade partner and largest consumer of its oil. In: Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*. New York: Random House 2005, p. 270.

<sup>128</sup> In: "An overview of O.F.A.C. Regulations involving Sanctions against Iran". Washington: Office of Foreign Assets Control. U.S. Department of The Treasury 2009.

<sup>129</sup> In: Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*. New York: Random House 2005, p. 289-290.

<sup>130</sup> In: Litwak, Robert, S. *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War*. Washington: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press 2000, p. 4.

Consequently, the extraterritorial Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA)<sup>131</sup> was instituted. European countries opposed the law because it threatened their interests in forbidding even non-U.S. countries from making certain investments in Iran. However, both sides agreed to avoid confrontation and the U.S. finally allowed some ILSA waivers.<sup>132</sup> Still, extraterritorial sanctions are highly controversial and legally dubious because “they seek to intrude upon the sovereignty of others so that the United States can accomplish its own foreign policy objectives more effectively”.<sup>133</sup> For this reason, ILSA earned a “hyper-unilateralism” label.

The surprising election of President Mohammad Khatami, a moderate, in 1997 considerably influenced the following events and presented an opportunity for change. Pollack assesses this event as a partial success of the containment policy because it caused a slight change in Teheran’s behavior. Unfortunately, change was only temporary. Khatami gave many signals that he wanted to lessen the antagonism with the U.S. when, for instance, he called for ‘dialogue among civilizations’ in general and ‘dialogue with American people’ in particular, and sent unofficial diplomats to Washington.<sup>134</sup> Although Clinton ‘hoped’ for a change, he stressed the U.S. position that a change in Iranian behavior concerning support of terrorism, pursuit of WMD or opposition to the Middle East peace process must occur before any change in policy.<sup>135</sup> Further symbolically significant<sup>136</sup> actions convinced the U.S. to accede to some improvement in relations. Clinton chose to add some carrots to a policy consisting mostly of sticks.

The carrots included a demonstration of goodwill on the part of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright’s offer of a ‘road map’ leading to the normal relations,<sup>137</sup> and Clinton’s call for ‘genuine reconciliation with Iran’.<sup>138</sup> Sanctions were also partially reconsidered in 1999 to allow humanitarian aid access the country. Most importantly, Clinton’s effort to change the direction away from isolation required addressing Iran’s rogue state label.

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<sup>131</sup> In: Kenneth Katzman, Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division. „The Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA)“. CRS Report for Congress, RS20871, 26 April 2006.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> In: Mastanduno, Michael. “Extraterritorial Sanctions: Managing ‘Hyper-Unilateralism’”. In: Patrick, Stewart – Forman, Shepard (eds.). *Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy. Ambivalent Engagement*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 2002, p. 296.

<sup>134</sup> In: BBC. “US-Iran ties”. 16 January 2009. See also: Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*. New York: Random House 2005, p. 216, 317.

<sup>135</sup> In: Mitchell, Alison. “Clinton Sees Hope in the Election of Moderate as President of Iran”. *The New York Times*, 30 May 1997.

<sup>136</sup> Probably the biggest gesture was the step toward shutting down Iraq’s illegal oil trade.

<sup>137</sup> In: Crossette, Barbara. “Albright, in Overture to Iran, Seeks a ‘Road Map’ to Amity”. *The New York Times*, 18 June 1998.

<sup>138</sup> In: Knowlton, Brian. “Clinton Offers ‘Genuine Reconciliation’ to Iran”. *The New York Times*, 19 June 1998.

Abandonment of the rogue state rubric was a necessary step in order for Clinton to engage with Iran. Meanwhile, reformist Khatami was fighting a domestic battle against hard-liners who were unwilling to concede any changes in relation toward the U.S. Violent riots broke out, but revolution did not follow. Conservatives won the battle in 1999.

Albright's 2000 speech<sup>139</sup> was one of the biggest gestures the U.S. made after Khatami started his initiatives toward improved relations. She referred to lifting sanctions on foodstuffs and carpets and called again for direct official dialogue. Ayatollah Khamene'i, Iranian supreme leader, gave the U.S. a very negative response<sup>140</sup> in which he portrayed America as Iran's archenemy. The promising 'détente' in U.S.-Iran relations sharply ended and "the Clinton government gave the George W. Bush administration the perfect argument to demand a harder line on Iran from America's allies".<sup>141</sup>

Although Pollack argues that containment played a role in slowing down the Iranian nuclear program development,<sup>142</sup> the general consensus is that sanctions had only a marginal impact and that Iran's pursuit of WMD had even accelerated. The engagement initiative remained only in the rhetorical level and genuine talks did not materialize. It is also true that at the end of his term, Clinton was preoccupied with the Middle East peace process, which hampered the strategy toward Iran.

The strategy toward Iran was led by a coherent-looking strategy of dual containment. In line with strict opposition to Iran, Clinton manipulated the rogue state label in an effort to win U.S. public support for harder measures. Clinton also tried to convince European governments to politically and economically isolate Iran because it was the only way to meet the main objective of changing its behavior. When Europeans did not feel comfortable with comprehensive sanctions proposed by U.S., Washington resorted to its unilateral implementation. It resembles the tradition of U.S. foreign policy to claim that it will rely on multilateral cooperation only when it can but will go at it alone when it must as in the cases ILSA and other restrictions. An opportunity for breakthrough appeared with the election of Khatami. Clinton reacted readily with symbolic steps and even added some incentives into the strategy. Most significantly, he abandoned the rogue state rubric in order to make way for change in strategy. However, the defeat of Khatami and his

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<sup>139</sup> The speech was symbolic also because it was the first time the U.S. apologized for the coup in 1953. See full text version in: Alexander's Gas & Oil Connections Speeches. "Albright's speech on Iran-U.S. relations". presented to the American-Iranian Council on the relaxation of U.S. sanctions against Iran, 17 March 2000.

<sup>140</sup> In: Samii, A. William. "Iran Report". Global Security. Vol. 3, No. 13 (27 March 2000).

<sup>141</sup> In: Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*. New York: Random House 2005, p. 342.

<sup>142</sup> In: Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*. New York: Random House 2005, p. 295.

preoccupation with other priorities caused it never to be put in practice. With regard to the continuity in policy toward Iran, we can ask whether it was a genuine effort to change the course or just a rhetorical shift linked to the termination of his term in office.

### 3. 4. 1. 2. *Bush Administration*

When George W. Bush took office, Iran was at the bottom of the foreign policy agenda. But after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, it became one of the major priorities. Treatment of Iran was one of the key issues that divided the government into so called ‘hawks’ and ‘doves’. Whereas hard-line ‘hawks’ argued in favor of regime change, ‘doves’ tried to shift attention to possible engagement with Iran. As a result, there was no comprehensive strategy, which basically meant near complete inaction on the Iranian issue during Bush’s first year.<sup>143</sup>

Quite paradoxically, there was an opportunity for improvement after 9/11 when Teheran responded to the events compassionately.<sup>144</sup> Iran also showed strong support for fighting against the Taliban and al-Qaeda and became a strong advocate of war on Afghanistan in ‘six-plus-two’ talks.<sup>145</sup> Shortly after 9/11, the Geneva group<sup>146</sup> was established as a tool for U.S.-Iranian dialogue about the issue of common interest: Afghanistan. After the war on Afghanistan, Iranians indicated that they would be willing to discuss other regional issues, particularly regarding Iraq. Bush thus with little effort achieved what Clinton never did – direct U.S.-Iranian talks on various issues.<sup>147</sup>

The U.S.-Iranian relationship quickly deteriorated. In January 2002, Israel intercepted a ship, *Karine A*, in the Red Sea and discovered that it was loaded with a variety of weapons. Israel asserted that this was proof of an Iranian attempt to smuggle weapons into the hands of Hamas and the U.S. seemed convinced despite questionable evidence in support of this claim.<sup>148</sup> To U.S. decision makers, this incident signified a confirmation that Iranian intentions in improvement of relations were not sincere and Washington concluded that Iran continued to support terrorism and oppose the Middle East peace

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<sup>143</sup> In: Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*. New York: Random House 2005, p. 344.

<sup>144</sup> In: Muir, Jim. “Iran condemns attacks on US”. BBC, Teheran, 17 September 2001.

<sup>145</sup> Those talks were held in 1999 in an attempt to create a solution for the problem in Afghanistan.

<sup>146</sup> The Geneva group consisted of the U.S., Iran, Italy and Germany; however the last two countries rarely attended the meetings.

<sup>147</sup> In: Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*. New York: Random House 2005, p. 350.

<sup>148</sup> In: Whitaker, Brian. “The strange affair of *Karine A*”. Guardian, 21 January 2002.

process. The American hard-line stance was expressed in Bush's State of the Union Address three weeks later. Iran, North Korea and Iraq were labeled an 'axis of evil'. The President stated: "Iran aggressively pursues weapons of mass destruction and exports terror, while an unelected few repress the Iranian people's hope for freedom".<sup>149</sup> According to Bob Woodward, the inclusion of Iran was contested because of its moves toward somewhat democratic movement, but in the end, they decided that it posed one of the biggest threats to peace and to include it in the rubric.<sup>150</sup> In reaction, Iranian representatives stopped attending the Geneva Group. Yet, soon they returned to the negotiating table because the U.S. ratcheted up its rhetoric toward Iraq and Iran wanted to remain a key player in its neighbor's domestic situation. When the Operation Iraqi Freedom began, Iran remained neutral and then actively participated in postwar reconstruction.<sup>151</sup>

In 2002, the nuclear issue gained predominance. Despite strong U.S. protest, Russians started to construct the first nuclear power plant at Busher in Iran. Soon, satellites spotted two nuclear sites at Arak and Natanz, revealing that Iran had made substantial progress in its nuclear program.<sup>152</sup> The clandestine nature of the nuclear plants was a violation of NPT safeguards that demanded reporting of all activities concerning nuclear development. Iran rejected allegations that it was building nuclear weapons and insisted that the plants were for civilian purposes. This caused a resurgence of the division within the American government. Whereas 'doves' wanted to solve the problem diplomatically, 'hawks' argued in favor of radical steps, including the military option. The 'hawks' appeared to gain the upper hand when military force became a feasible option again.<sup>153</sup> The economic sanctions remained in place and the U.S. continued pressuring other countries to join.

Although the U.S. was not willing to join in the European diplomatic initiative at first,<sup>154</sup> Bush changed his position in 2005 and announced his support for European negotiations with Iran. Consequently, the U.S. agreed that a successful strategy must

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<sup>149</sup> In: BBC. "Full text: State of the Union address". George W. Bush, 30 January 2002.

<sup>150</sup> In: Woodward, Bob. *Plan of Attack: The Definite Account of the Decision to Invade Iraq*. New York: Simon & Shuster Paperbacks 2004, p. 86-88.

<sup>151</sup> In: Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*. New York: Random House 2005, p. 354-355.

<sup>152</sup> In: Pollack, Kenneth M. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*. New York: Random House 2005, p. 362; Zaborowski, Marcin. *Bush's legacy and America's next foreign policy*. Paris: Institute for Security Studies 2008, p. 75.

<sup>153</sup> In: Zaborowski, Marcin. *Bush's legacy and America's next foreign policy*. Paris: Institute for Security Studies 2008, p. 77.

<sup>154</sup> The EU-3 talks included Germany, Great Britain and France.

include both sticks and carrots.<sup>155</sup> The U.S. offered to remove the veto on Iranian membership in WTO as an incentive. In addition, the U.S. softened its initial position by acknowledging the Iranian right for civil nuclear energy.

In 2005 there was another rise in tensions. When Ahmadinejad replaced Khatami as president, he restored the aggressive nature of Iranian diplomacy. Although Iran insisted that it had a right for peaceful nuclear energy development,<sup>156</sup> IAEA found Iran in non-compliance with the NPT and, after heated debate, the UN Security Council implemented its first sanctions on Iran.<sup>157</sup> The U.S. also sharpened the provocative discourse when it stated that “[the U.S.] may face no greater challenge from a single country than from Iran”<sup>158</sup> with special reference to their nuclear program. Although a military strike was still on the table, Bush stated that he had no intention to attack the country and denied allegations that the U.S. had planned such an attack.<sup>159</sup>

The Geneva group fell apart when the nuclear issue accelerated in 2002, but five years later representatives met again. It had mostly symbolic significance because little progress was made.<sup>160</sup> A report released by National Intelligence Estimate in 2007 was a small victory for Teheran. It stated with ‘high confidence’ that Iran had halted its nuclear program in 2003 and it did not possess a nuclear weapon, albeit the possibility to develop one remained.<sup>161</sup> Despite those conclusions Bush stated his unchanged position that “Iran was dangerous, Iran is dangerous, and Iran will be dangerous”.<sup>162</sup>

It is generally agreed that Bush did not have a comprehensive policy on Iran; he basically continued the course started by Clinton. The difference was that the possibility of regime change was on the table. Despite some limited engagement efforts, negotiations over the nuclear program during Bush’s presidency had been primarily left to Europeans and IAEA. Overall, there was almost no progress in diplomatic relations and the nuclear program even advanced. According to Davies, neither containment nor engagement has led

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<sup>155</sup> In: Fitzpatrick, Mark. *The Iranian nuclear crisis: avoiding worst-case outcomes*. Oxford : Routledge 2008, p. 31.

<sup>156</sup> In: Information Clearing House. “Iran's President Ahmadinejad's speech at UN”. Speech before the Sixtieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly on 17 September 2005.

<sup>157</sup> The UN Security Council accepted the following sanctions resolutions: UNSCR 1737 in 2006, UNSCR 1747 in 2007, UNSCR 1803 and 1835 in 2008.

<sup>158</sup> In: “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America”. Washington: The White House March 2006, p. 19.

<sup>159</sup> In: AFP. “Bush says no plans to attack Iran: interview”. 11 April 2008.

<sup>160</sup> In: Zaborowski, Marcin. *Bush's legacy and America's next foreign policy*. Paris: Institute for Security Studies 2008, p.68.

<sup>161</sup> In: National Intelligence Estimate. “Iran Nuclear Intentions and Capabilities”. National Intelligence Council November 2007.

<sup>162</sup> In: Myers, Steven Lee – Cooper, Helene. “Bush Says Iran Still a Danger Despite Report on Weapons”. The New York Times, 4 December 2007.

to Iran's cooperation with the U.S.<sup>163</sup> It should be taken into consideration, however, that both countries made a positive step when collaborating on the Afghan and Iraqi issues. Unfortunately, the occupation with the war on Iraq had a negative effect on the degree of interaction. Bush also had a rising concern about human rights that decreased the possibility of cooperation. The rogue state concept continued to play a political role; it partly served as a justification for the maintenance of unilateral sanctions and as a tool for pressuring other countries to take a more radical approach toward Iran. The term also constrained Washington to break its diplomatic boycott and engage in the diplomatic initiatives carried out by EU-3.

### 3. 4. 1. 3. *Obama Administration*

Iran, along with Afghanistan and Pakistan, is on the top of Obama's foreign policy agenda. The new Administration's approach toward Iran differs in two main respects. Most importantly, Obama abandoned the label of rogue states and axis of evil. Those categories worked counterproductively by binding Iran and North Korea together, even though the strategies were not coherent. Obama is aware of the fact that Iran requires a separate tailored strategy and the abolition of the rogue states label gave him more maneuvering space for new policy. Second, Obama stopped the political and economic isolation of Iran and started a broad-minded diplomatic approach.<sup>164</sup> The President called for direct diplomacy without any conditions and, in contrast to Bush, he did not condition this step upon enrichment suspension. Through Obama's speeches, he gave the Iranian government signals that he wanted to start a balanced dialogue that concentrates on building a comprehensive relationship with Teheran and not just on controversial issues. This is a major change from previous administrations. There have been also changes within Teheran. After the re-election of President Ahmadinejad, riots exemplified a disintegration of public consensus,<sup>165</sup> which presents an opportunity for change.

Yet, on the basis that the U.S. is not willing to accept nuclear-armed Iran, engagement with Iran shifted from a broad-minded agenda to a focus on the narrow and problematic

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<sup>163</sup> In: Davies, Graeme A. M. "Strategic Cooperation, the Invasion of Iraq and the Behavior of the 'Axis of Evil', 1990-2004". *Journal of Peace Research*. Vol. 45, No. 3 (2008), p. 396.

<sup>164</sup> In: Hynek, Nik. "Continuity and Change in the U.S. Foreign and Security Policy with the Accession of President Obama". *IIR Policy Paper* (August 2009), p. 8.

<sup>165</sup> In: Hynek, Nik. "Continuity and Change in the U.S. Foreign and Security Policy with the Accession of President Obama". *IIR Policy Paper* (August 2009), p. 9.

nuclear issue. Obama participated in the October 1<sup>st</sup> multilateral talks in Geneva that were intended to tackle Teheran's nuclear issue. The talks included Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and China, who demanded that Iran demonstrate by ending uranium enrichment that it was not acquiring nuclear weapons.<sup>166</sup> Both the U.S. and Iran declared that the talks in Geneva were a good start. The talks resulted in six countries offering Iran a deal that proposed that it would send 70% of its low-enriched uranium to Russia and France where it would be processed into fuel rods for a research reactor in Teheran. After weeks of delay, Iran called the deal 'unacceptable,' which delivered a critical blow to Obama's engagement effort.

In light of these events, it seems that the new Administration's policy on Iran will not easily achieve the desirable breakthrough in strategy. On the contrary, we can assume that the structure of interaction with Iran is likely to remain similar to that of the Clinton and Bush administrations. Obama is likely to continue the carrot and stick strategy, but with an expectation that each will be stronger.<sup>167</sup> Since it is not plausible that the U.S. will change its course toward acceptance of the Iranian nuclear program and Teheran is not willing to give it up, Washington is likely to exercise all of its leverage to stop Iran from nuclear development. The issue of Iran is especially important for Obama in relation to his new strategy for Afghanistan. He is attempting to ensure that Teheran will not use its nuclear deterrent to block possible regional intervention, which would make functional anti-ballistic missile defense a bargaining tool. Missile defense is, however, serving a similar role in relations with Russia. It is questionable to what extent the U.S. will respect the multilateral framework of the Geneva talks and restrict itself from taking unilateral steps.

### **3. 4. 2. North Korea**

#### *3. 4. 2. 1. Clinton Administration*

In the first two years, the Clinton Administration had to deal with the first nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula. It was widely believed that the U.S. was in serious danger

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<sup>166</sup> In: Charbonneau, Louis – Hafezi, Parisa. "Iran nuclear talks with U.S. and allies eases tension". Reuters, Geneva, 1 October 2009.

<sup>167</sup> In: Hynek, Nik. "Continuity and Change in the U.S. Foreign and Security Policy with the Accession of President Obama". *IIR Policy Paper* (August 2009), p. 10.

of war.<sup>168</sup> Since 1992, as a signatory member of NPT, North Korea agreed to allow IAEA inspections, but denied entrance to some suspected nuclear sites. In consequence, Pyongyang announced its intention to withdraw from the NPT. Tensions heightened with explosive rhetoric between North Korea and the U.S., which indicated the imminence of danger. The U.S. declared that North Korea had ‘crossed the point of no return’ and demanded full IAEA inspections. On the other side, North Korea claimed that it would rather ‘accept war’ than make any concessions.<sup>169</sup> At the same time, the ‘hawks’ were putting significant pressure on the American government to use the military option.<sup>170</sup> Dangerous language and the IAEA’s failed attempt to negotiate a solution caused former president Jimmy Carter to take initiative and begin bargaining directly with North Korean officials. The threat of withdrawal from NPT and the proximity of potential conflict probably played a major role in his decision.<sup>171</sup>

Direct bilateral negotiations were accomplished with the October 21, 1994 signing of the Agreed Framework, a diplomatic road map for the denuclearization of North Korea. North Korea’s signing of this document made Clinton see the country as a legitimate negotiating partner, which was an unprecedented step concerning rogue states. The deal was simple, North Korea promised to freeze and subsequently dismantle its nuclear facilities in exchange for step-by-step normalization of U.S.-North Korea relations. The U.S. also pledged to construct two light water nuclear reactors for North Korea.<sup>172</sup> The deal proposed reciprocal actions and required both sides to make concessions. This deal’s accommodating approach was widely criticized as ‘rewarding bad behavior’ or an ‘appeasement’ that would allow North Korea to peacefully expand its nuclear arsenal.<sup>173</sup> Most criticism was from Republicans who held a majority in Congress after the 1994 elections. Republicans were generally in favor of fewer carrots and more sticks, however,

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<sup>168</sup> In: Perry, William J. “The United States and the future of East Asian security: Korea - Quo Vadis”? In Woo Keun-Min, (ed.). *Building common peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia*. Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2000, p. 121.

<sup>169</sup> In: Smith, Derek D. *Deterring America: rogue states and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University 2006, p. 69.

<sup>170</sup> In: Litwak, Robert, S. *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War*. Washington: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press 2000, p. 210.

<sup>171</sup> In: Hayes, Peter. “North Korean proliferation and the end of US nuclear hegemony”. In Mærli, Morten Bremer – Lodgard, Sverre (eds.). *Nuclear Proliferation and International Security*. New York: Routledge 2007, p. 123.

<sup>172</sup> In: “Agreed Framework between the United States of America and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”, Geneva, 21 October 1994.

<sup>173</sup> In: Han, Sung-Joo. “Back to Square One on the Korean Peninsula”. In Cronin, Patrick M. (ed.). *Double Trouble. Iran and North Korea as Challenges to the International Security*. London: Praeger Security International 2008, p. 94.

few of them were able to present a viable alternative policy.<sup>174</sup> The rogue states label was as a surmountable hindrance to engagement strategy. It mostly served as a tool for ‘hawks’ within the government to criticize the Framework. North Korea’s perceived imminent threat, presented by Defense Secretary William Perry among others, led to some serious consideration of military action but actually ended in making engagement the only viable option. Litwak noted that the circumstances meant that there was no better alternative to deal with the first Korean nuclear crisis.<sup>175</sup> There were two other factors that made the deal possible. One factor was the perception that North Korea was an irrational, unpredictable actor. Washington was especially concerned over the possible outbreak of war on the Peninsula. The common perception of the high likelihood of regime collapse in North Korea was also a contributing factor. Pyongyang’s perceived weakness actually raised its position for negotiation because the U.S. feared the consequences of regime collapse.<sup>176</sup> The undesirable possibility of collapse served also as a justification for food assistance, which started after the flood in summer in 1995. North Korean dependence on external aid has since been gradually increasing.

Regardless, the Framework ostensibly achieved the U.S.’s main objective: prevent Pyongyang from acquiring nuclear weapon. Yet, it was never clear whether North Korea was genuinely willing to completely abandon its nuclear program. Nuclear weapons serve as both an instrument for incentive and an instrument for deterrence.<sup>177</sup> The Agreed Framework served as a tool for normalization in relation to the U.S. (compellence), but North Korea at the same time sought to maintain the nuclear arsenal as a tool for further deterrence. This causes North Korea to face a serious dilemma: in order to normalize a relation, which has been the long-standing objective, it has to abandon its nuclear program, which is its main deterrent. In addition, the nuclear program works as a stabilization tool for its domestic political situation, serving the purpose of regime survival. All those factors together make any negotiation extremely difficult, so 1994’s nuclear deal should be seen as at least a partial success for Clinton’s first term.

During Clinton’s second term, it seemed that both countries had found a path to their relationship’s normalization. The U.S. made several gestures in an attempt to

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<sup>174</sup> In: Hathaway, Robert M. – Tama, Jordan. “The U.S. Congress and North Korea during the Clinton Years: Talk Though, Carry a Small Stick”. *Asian Survey*. Vol. 44, No. 5 (Sept.-Oct. 2004): 711-733.

<sup>175</sup> In: Litwak, Robert, S. *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment after the Cold War*. Washington: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press 2000, p. 109.

<sup>176</sup> In: Snyder, Scott. “North Korea’s Challenge of Regime Survival: Internal Problems and Implications for the Future”. *Pacific Affairs*. Vol 74, No. 4 (Winter 2000-2001), p. 521-522.

<sup>177</sup> In: Michishita, Narushige. “Coercing to Reconcile: North Korea’s Response to U.S. ‘Hegemony’”. *The Journal of Strategic Studies*. Vol. 29, No. 6 (December 2006), p. 1023.

accommodate North Korea by lifting of sanction on trade, investment and travel, for example. The détente culminated with Albright's visit to Pyongyang and a symbolic meeting between North and South Korea in 2000. The U.S. diplomatic route had a central role in this rapprochement. But it did not last long. Even during the tension-free period, American intelligence suspected a violation of the Agreed Framework, but it was put to the next president to solve this problem.

Clinton administration has treated the nuclear issue in a distinct manner from the established patterns. This contrast is especially visible in treatment of Teheran; whereas Clinton prohibited any interaction with Iran, he recognized North Korea and held bilateral negotiations.

### 3. 4. 2. 2. *Bush Administration*

Although it is often interpreted that Bush's aggressive foreign politics caused a decrease in U.S. influence in Asia, Michael J. Green argues that the opposite is true.<sup>178</sup> President Bush criticized Clinton's concessions toward North Korea and his stance mirrored the hard-liners' policy. It should be noted that the nuclear issue was not his administration's top priority; the events of 9/11 and preoccupation with intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq lowered the issue's position on the Bush agenda.<sup>179</sup> His approach to North Korea differed from Clinton's in that the U.S. participated in multilateral talks<sup>180</sup> with other regional powers, especially China. Clinton's direct approach was replaced by more indirect participation; a more active role was delegated to China to exercise leverage over North Korea. This shift, while not forgetting Bush's preoccupation with Middle East, led some authors to claim that the U.S. had "no genuine intention of achieving the denuclearization of the DPRK, and no coercive capacity to impose it either".<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> In: Green, Michael J. "The United States and Asia after Bush". *The Pacific Review*. Vol. 21, No. 5 (December 2008), p 584.

<sup>179</sup> In: Hayes, Peter. "North Korean proliferation and the end of US nuclear hegemony". In Mærli, Morten Bremer – Lodgard, Sverre (eds.). *Nuclear Proliferation and International Security*. New York: Routledge 2007, p. 129.

<sup>180</sup> So called Six-Party Talks including U.S., South Korea, North Korea, China, Japan, and Russia.

<sup>181</sup> In: Hayes, Peter. "North Korean proliferation and the end of US nuclear hegemony". In: Mærli, Morten Bremer – Lodgard, Sverre (eds.). *Nuclear Proliferation and International Security*. New York: Routledge 2007, p. 129.

The official rhetoric of the so-called ‘hawkish engagement’<sup>182</sup> indicated the reverse. The U.S. reiterated that it is ‘unacceptable’ for North Korea to have a nuclear weapon.<sup>183</sup> Furthermore, President Bush included North Korea in his ‘axis of evil’ speech: “North Korea is a regime arming with missiles and weapons of mass destruction, while starving its citizens”.<sup>184</sup> This step was ‘rewarded’ by a decline in cooperation from the side of North Korea.<sup>185</sup> Generally, we can observe certain ambiguity in the official language that possibly stems from the division within the Bush Administration between those who prefer negotiation and those who advocate diplomatic isolation through economic sanction and final regime change.<sup>186</sup> The doves-hawks division line and their inability to resolve differences created an inconsistent policy toward North Korea.

The Bush Administration suddenly had to deal with a nuclear crisis in 2002 when North Korea revealed that it had clandestine uranium enrichment facilities, which was a violation of the Agreed Framework. As a result the circle of threats, demands and diplomatic attempts started again. The North Korean government expelled IAEA inspectors and finally withdrew definitively from the NPT in 2003, which inflamed tensions. Bush assured ‘hawks’ that ‘all options are on the table’ but he still preferred a diplomatic solution.<sup>187</sup> During the second nuclear crisis, North Korea for the first time proclaimed that it was seeking a ‘nuclear deterrent’; for the first time the country was being seen as a rationally calculating actor instead of with the ‘madman’ logic of before. It is important to consider that the peak of the crisis coincided with President Bush’s occupation with war on Iraq.

The diplomatic initiative, so-called Six-Party Talks, started in 2003 but did not become fruitful until 2005. The course of negotiations was influenced by Washington and Pyongyang’s lack of effort to create a viable solution and continuous North Korean misbehavior.<sup>188</sup> Eventually the Joint Statement<sup>189</sup> came into play, underlining the common

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<sup>182</sup> Viktor d’Cha expression combines the underlying engagement approach with more radical stance of the Bush administration.

<sup>183</sup> In: Reiss, Mitchell B. “North Korea: Getting to Maybe”? In: Cronin, Patrick M. (ed.). *Double Trouble. Iran and North Korea as Challenges to the International Security*. London: Praeger Security International 2008, p. 113.

<sup>184</sup> In: BBC. “Full text: State of the Union address”. George W. Bush, 30 January 2002.

<sup>185</sup> In: Davies, Graeme A. M. “Strategic Cooperation, the Invasion of Iraq and the Behavior of the ‘Axis of Evil’, 1990-2004”. *Journal of Peace Research*. Vol. 45, No. 3 (2008), p. 395.

<sup>186</sup> In: Niksch, Lary A. “North Korea’s Nuclear Weapon Program”. CRS Issue Brief IB98045, 2006, p. 5.

<sup>187</sup> In: Smith, Derek D. *Deterring America: rogue states and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University 2006, p. 78.

<sup>188</sup> In: Hathaway, Robert M. “Just Who Side Is Time On? North Korea and George W. Bush, 2001-4”. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*. Vol. 42 (2007), p. 266-7.

objective of all parties: denuclearization of the peninsula. North Korea would surrender its nuclear program in return for security guarantees and other benefits from the U.S. Unfortunately, the statement did not have a specific schedule for disarmament so it was not implemented and soon began to counter the U.S. decision to impose sanctions.<sup>190</sup> North Korea's claim that it possessed nuclear weapons was verified by missile and nuclear tests in October 2006. In response to pressure from the U.S., the UN Security Council adopted 'targeted' sanctions including an embargo on military, technology and luxury goods as well as making some financial sanctions; however, the international response to North Korea's 'nuclear deterrent' was lukewarm and placed more emphasis on public statements than on action. As a result of the nuclear test, North Korea was able to coerce the U.S. to return to the negotiation table. It is for this reason, it is sometimes pointed out, that North Korea's nuclear capability was serving as a political tool rather than a military one.<sup>191</sup> North Korea is, according to this theory, not seriously interested in acquiring nuclear weapons because it feels externally threatened; instead, the country is simply playing the 'nuclear card'.<sup>192</sup>

The follow-up Six-Party talks achieved a breakthrough in February 13, 2007. The deal incorporated a freeze and subsequent disablement of all North Korean nuclear facilities in exchange for normalization of the country's relationship with the U.S., economic cooperation and providing energy to the public.<sup>193</sup> As a part of the agreement, President Bush removed North Korea from the list of state sponsors of terrorism in 2008.<sup>194</sup> IAEA inspections returned to the country and confirmed that five nuclear facilities had been shut down.<sup>195</sup> However, because it was the end of Bush's term, the talks slowed down and the thorny issue of implementation remained an open challenge to Obama's administration. Like his policy on Iran, Bush's policy on North Korea was never comprehensive and recent tests and public statements show that it failed in its main objective of stopping North

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<sup>189</sup> In: The National Committee on North Korea. "Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks". Beijing, 19 September 2005.

<sup>190</sup> In: Cronin, Patrick M. "The Trouble with North Korea" In: Cronin, Patrick M. (ed.). *Double Trouble. Iran and North Korea as Challenges to the International Security*. London: Praeger Security International 2008, p. 84.

<sup>191</sup> In: Delpech, Thérèse. *Iran and the Bomb: The Abdication of International Responsibility*. Paris: Columbia University Press 2006, p. 11.

<sup>192</sup> In: Delpech, Thérèse. *Iran and the Bomb: The Abdication of International Responsibility*. Paris: Columbia University Press 2006, p. 11; Gurtov, Mel. "South Korea's Foreign Policy and Future Security: Implications of the Nuclear Standoff". *Pacific Affairs*. Vol. 69, No. 1 (Spring 1996), p. 14.

<sup>193</sup> In: Niksch, Lary A. "North Korea's Nuclear Weapons Development and Diplomacy". CRS Report RL33590, 2008.

<sup>194</sup> In: U.S. Department of State. "State Sponsors of Terrorism", 2009.

<sup>195</sup> In: IAEA. "In Focus: IAEA and DPRK. Fact Sheet on DPRK Nuclear Safeguards". no date reported.

Korea from developing nuclear weapons. The strategy incorporated many ambitious initiatives such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)<sup>196</sup> (which was understood to be especially applicable to North Korea) and ‘smart sanctions,’ but practical short-term steps were not sufficient. President Bush did not resort to anticipated hard-line policies even after being subjected to strong republican criticism and belligerent rhetoric in the ‘axis of evil’ speech. Bush’s strategy was, paradoxically, very similar to Clinton’s; he continued negotiations, albeit on multilateral bases, and provided additional food supply.<sup>197</sup> What is more, Bush had a passive and relaxed view on North Korea’s nuclear issue throughout most of his presidency. It is surprising that North Korea and Iran did not become higher priorities after the elimination of Afghanistan and Iraq’s ‘roguehood’.

### 3. 4. 2. 3. *Obama Administration*

North Korea’s nuclear issue is far from being a priority in Washington, although a recent development posed a direct threat to Obama’s Administration. It has never been easy to deal with North Korea, and the same applies to the new administration. Although the 2007 agreement looked promising, the situation deteriorated when North Korea abandoned the Six-Party Talks. The testing of long-range ballistic missiles, even though they were announced in advance, came as a surprise. The tests coincided with Obama’s proposals of full nuclear disarmament, causing his vision to seem implausible for the foreseeable future. Obama, in his Prague speech, called the test a provocation and pledged resolute action to punish North Korea in line with the UN Resolution. The crisis augmented with North Korea’s May 2009 nuclear tests. These tests were successful compared to the previous ones, demonstrating a strengthening of the country’s ‘nuclear deterrent’. UN Security Council condemned the test and tightened sanctions by a unanimous vote.

The recent North Korean behavior was supposed to serve as a bargaining chip; Pyongyang wanted to pull Washington back to the negotiation table and increase the stakes, let say inducements for North Korea when the negotiations materialize. Although this kind of behavior is typical of North Korea, there is another factor that probably played main role in its decision to execute the tests: the regime’s survival is currently at stake.

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<sup>196</sup> In 2003 president Bush announced the PSI: it tries to stop the illicit trade in WMD materials.

<sup>197</sup> In: Hathaway, Robert M. – Tama, Jordan. “The U.S. Congress and North Korea during the Clinton Years: Talk Though, Carry a Small Stick”. *Asian Survey*. Vol. 44, No. 5 (Sept.-Oct. 2004), p. 714.

There is a critical need for stabilization of the domestic political situation, which was shattered by Kim Chong-il's worsening health conditions, by choosing a successor. Kim Chong-il is trying to earn the support of the military elite, which relates to the rising tension in the field of nuclear technology, as well as escalating aggression at sea (South Korea and Japan).<sup>198</sup>

As in the case of Iran, Obama does not have a coherent strategy toward North Korea. He emphasizes a broad, multilateral diplomatic solution to North Korean nuclear aggression as a part of his effort to create a nuclear-free world. However, it seems that the course of events is currently controlled by North Korea and the U.S. finds itself in an unfavorable position. Pyongyang has given mixed signals about its willingness to participate in further Six-party Talks. It is most likely that Obama will maintain the course of action introduced by the Bush Administration, basically a carrot and sticks strategy with an emphasis on strong language as punishment.

### ***3. 5. Impact of the concept of rogue states on different strategies***

The objective toward both states has been the same: end the nuclear program. However, strategies chosen to meet this objective have been different. In Iran, the concept of rogue states made it easier to sustain the containment and isolation strategy. On the other hand, the rogue states categorization made the maneuvering space for diplomacy with North Korea quite narrow. Agreements were possible, but the effort faced many obstacles and it was generally more difficult to win support for such an agreement within the American government. The concept can be counterproductive because it bonds Iran and North Korea together under one label, which makes Washington struggle to apply tailored strategies to each particular state. The change of strategy in Iran toward engagement and North Korea toward containment would be made easier if the rogue term were not in place. President Obama showed awareness of government's sensitivity toward the rogue states term and therefore has never referred to Iran as a rogue state.

The rogue states concept must be understood in terms of its relation to the security culture that the American nation has developed. We can identify some long-term patterns in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy that are unlikely to change even though the

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<sup>198</sup> In: Hynek, Nik. "Continuity and Change in the U.S. Foreign and Security Policy with the Accession of President Obama". *IIR Policy Paper* (August 2009), p. 11-12.

circumstances have changed. Washington is prone to abandon multilateral frameworks and act unilaterally when it comes to national security issues. The rogue states concept sometimes serves as a justification for taking unpopular unilateral measures that many European governments disapprove of. Rogue states have been presented as the world's greatest threat and have replaced the evil 'others' from the Cold War. In this respect, the U.S. has made an attempt to adopt the strategy from the Cold War and adapt it to new circumstances. This attempt is illustrated in Clinton and Bush's strategy in dealing with Iran. Obama's departure from isolation is striking when we consider the continuity from administration to administration; we should be rather skeptical about the materialization of Obama's engagement. The North Korean case is considerably different. Washington has not treated its nuclear program with the 'common' rogue states policy of containment and isolation, even though the country fits every definition of a rogue state. Instead, the U.S. has adopted limited engagement that has persisted unchanged through each of the examined administrations. There does not seem to be an complex explanation for the remarkable differences, but in next chapter I will ask to what extent contextual factors play a role.

## 4. Different perceptions of threats: contextual factors

The employment of different strategies may depend on distinct perceptions of threat in the different cases because, as Campbell<sup>199</sup> stated, danger is always a matter of interpretation. Nuclear weapons are not a new threat but they gained a new dimension in the post-Cold War era. The nuclear issues in Iran and North Korea are being interpreted differently in this new environment. The National Defense Strategy stated, “rogue states such as Iran and North Korea similarly threaten international order [...and...] will remain a threat to U.S. regional interests”.<sup>200</sup> It would seem that both countries have a similar level of perceived threat, however, that threat is interpreted in different ways. Interpretation is largely dependent on contextual factors. As the following section explains, the levels of threat from Iran and North Korea are both high, but different interpretations cause a difference in the extent to which the U.S. finds them dangerous. This fact has consequent policy implications that can influence the selection of strategies.

### 4. 1. Regional settings

The regional setting is a principal factor; while Iran is located in the Middle East, North Korea lies in Eastern Asia. Both countries present core security challenges to these regions and especially to relations between major states.<sup>201</sup> However, it has to be considered that these regions do not hold the same level of importance to U.S. interests.

Iran has a central geostrategic position in the Middle East. For this reason, an Iran with nuclear arms is perceived as a challenge to the balance of power and security in the whole region. The U.S. has established commitment to two bordering countries, Iraq and Afghanistan. Iranian nuclear capability could pose a direct threat to the American troops deployed there. In the eyes of Iranians, the events in Iraq are especially important. On one hand, it threatens the Iranians because it shows Washington’s determination to intervene by toppling the rogue regime. On the other hand, the havoc that has developed in Iraq

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<sup>199</sup> In: Campbell, David. *Writing Security. United States Foreign Policy and Politics of Identity*. Mineapolis: University of Minesota Press 1998.

<sup>200</sup> In: “National Defence Strategy”. Department of Defense June 2008, p. 2, 13.

<sup>201</sup> In: Cronin, Patrick M. “Introduction: The Dual Challenge of Iran and North Korea”. In: Cronin, Patrick M. (ed.). *Double Trouble. Iran and North Korea as Challenges to the International Security*. London: Praeger Security International 2008, p. 1.

makes the military option linked to the regime change less credible.<sup>202</sup> It should be pointed out, however, that Iran generally benefits from the war on Iraq;<sup>203</sup> it has gradually become, along with the U.S., a key player in the future of Iraq.<sup>204</sup> Regional talks on the Iraqi and Afghan issue became, as matter of fact, the only framework where Iranians and Americans were able and willing to cooperate. However, even as the nuclear issue was put aside, there was competition and the cooperation ended in failure. Now, the U.S. perceives Iran as a major destabilizing force in Iraq and a serious impediment to a peaceful settlement in Afghanistan, which is on the top of Obama's foreign policy agenda.

The U.S. strategic ally Israel is also concerned about Iran's nuclear program because of the Ahmadinejad's anti-Semitic rhetoric, which denies Israel's right to exist.<sup>205</sup> Iran also provides military and financial support for Hezbollah and Hamas<sup>206</sup> and generally challenges Israeli military and strategic hegemony. Naturally, Israeli leaders perceive rising Iranian ambitions to be a threat to their country's very existence and an obstacle to the Middle East peace process; they therefore call for vigorous action.<sup>207</sup> Recently Israel has admitted that all options in dealing with Iran are open.<sup>208</sup> The Middle East peace process has always been on the top of the American foreign agenda, so they take the Israeli's concern seriously. Their radical and aggressive approach corresponds with the ideology of hard-liners in the U.S. government. However, most authors agree that a war between Israel and Iran is an unlikely option, mainly because of U.S. unwillingness to

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<sup>202</sup> In: Bahgat, Gawdat. "Nuclear proliferation: The Islamic Republic of Iran". *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (2006), p. 319.

<sup>203</sup> It could be said that the U.S. actually has made Iran regional power. The U.S. weakened two Iran's biggest enemies – Iraq and Afghanistan what has had impact on rising prestige and relative power of Iran in the region. In: Arbatov, Alexei G. "The Inexorable Momentum of Escalation". In: Cronin, Patrick M. (ed.). *Double Trouble. Iran and North Korea as Challenges to the International Security*. London: Praeger Security International 2008, p. 67.

<sup>204</sup> In: Irani, George Emile. "Iran's Regional Security Policy: Opportunities and Challenges", *Real Instituto Elcano*, Working Paper 52/2008, p. 16.

<sup>205</sup> Ahmadinejad said: "The annihilation of the Zionist regime will come (...) Israel must be wiped off the map (...) And God willing, with the force of God blind it, we shall soon experience a world without the United States and Zionism". In: Remarks by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad during a meeting with protesting students at the Iranian Interior Ministry, 25 October 2005.

<sup>206</sup> In: U.S. Department of State. "Country Reports on Terrorism 2008. Chapter 2. Country Reports: Middle East and North Africa Overview". Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 30 April 2009.

<sup>208</sup> In: Howard, Roger. *Iran in crisis? Nuclear Ambitions and American Response*. New York: Gutenberg Press Ltd. 2004, p. 19.

<sup>208</sup> In: BBC. "Israel's 'options open' on Iran". 21 September 2009.

allow unilateral Israeli action.<sup>209</sup> Generally speaking, Iran's nuclear ambitions are seen as a core constraint in cooperating on regional security in the years ahead.<sup>210</sup>

A nuclear-armed Iran would, in relation to U.S. engagement in the region, cause a great problem in the future. As mentioned above, the Middle East peace process is a major concern. Iran's support of terrorism and spreading of nuclear material or technology are equally important because U.S. believes that Iran's actions directly increase the danger of international terrorism. The U.S. also wants to keep the balance of power in the region and therefore insists on restraining Iran from gaining a hegemonic position. Afghanistan is receiving special attention now; Obama announced a new comprehensive strategy, which will to increase the number of American troops there. It is therefore of major importance that Iran not use its nuclear deterrent in order to prevent those steps from happening. A nuclear-armed Iran would probably aggravate tensions, shifting the balance of power and possibly making America's worst-case scenario come true.

The U.S. is 'indispensably' engaged in East Asia with the aim of a political, economic and military cooperation. A notable aspect of this commitment is the enormous strategic and economic importance of this region. North Korea does not have the key position in the region, the central role play China and Japan which has developed firm ties with the U.S., American interests in North Korea are therefore rather indirect – country matters to the U.S. allies, especially Japan and South Korea.<sup>211</sup> Hence, the North Korea's nuclear issue should be high on U.S. foreign policy agenda for a number of reasons. Firstly, a nuclear program in North Korea presents a threat to South Korea, which could aggravate their already fragile relations. Secondly, it threatens the position of Japan and the U.S. whose impetuous actions might lead to an outbreak of war on the Peninsula.<sup>212</sup> Needless to say, Japan and the U.S. share a similar perception of threat over North Korean issue, which has generally strengthened the U.S.-Japan alliance. Thirdly, according to the proliferation logic, North Korea's acquisition of nuclear weapons could cause a 'domino' arms race with South Korea, Japan or Taiwan.<sup>213</sup> Finally, the possibility of nuclear material transfer

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<sup>209</sup> Secretary of State Hilary Clinton supported the Israeli right to self-defense in the wake of Palestinian attacks. In: Reuters. "Clinton says Israel has right to defend itself". Washington, 27 January 2009.

<sup>210</sup> In: Cronin, Patrick M. "The Trouble with Iran". In: Cronin, Patrick M. (ed.). *Double Trouble. Iran and North Korea as Challenges to the International Security*. London: Praeger Security International 2008, p. 21.

<sup>211</sup> In: Dujarric, Robert. "North Korea: Risks and rewards of Engagement". *Journal of International Affairs*. Vol. 54, No. 2 (Spring 2001), p. 477.

<sup>212</sup> North Korea has the fourth largest military in the world, with one million active personnel.

<sup>213</sup> In: Han, Sung-Joo. "Back to Square One on the Korean Peninsula". In: Cronin, Patrick M. (ed.). *Double Trouble. Iran and North Korea as Challenges to the International Security*. London: Praeger Security International 2008, p. 93.

gives rise to serious concern. To force North Korea to give up its nuclear program appears to be a fundamental concern for almost all states in the region as well as for the U.S.

China is the major player in the region and it exercises, due to its close relationship with North Korea, the most influential position and often finds itself in the role of mediator between the U.S. and North Korea. China shares the U.S. the objective to denuclearize North Korea; however, it also worries about the possible collapse of the regime. The subsequent chaos and power vacuum might lead to a flood of refugees, which would present a severe challenge to China's national security. For this reason China generally opposes radical measures against North Korea's nuclear program.<sup>214</sup> It is thus possible that the approach the U.S. takes is partly an attempt to satisfy China because of America's extensive interests and ties to the country.

Another issue in the region regards the divided Korean Peninsula. South Korea has been a strategic ally to the U.S. over several decades. It has to be noted, however, that the strategic relevance of South Korea to the U.S. cannot be overestimated.<sup>215</sup> Until recently, both countries shared a common view of North Korea's threat, but the Bush Administration's stance and other events<sup>216</sup> caused America to perceive a more severe threat.<sup>217</sup> The U.S. remains supportive of a peaceful reunification of North and South Korea, which is seen as a way of handling the nuclear issue. No other country in the region, however, favors the reunification in the foreseeable future because of a possible decline in influence on the Peninsula exercised by each country.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> In: Han, Sung-Joo. "Back to Square One on the Korean Peninsula". In: Cronin, Patrick M. (ed.). *Double Trouble. Iran and North Korea as Challenges to the International Security*. London: Praeger Security International 2008, p. 94-95.

<sup>215</sup> Some even argue that South Korea is not vital but rather of only peripheral importance to U.S. interests. More in: Bandow, Doug – Carpenter, Ted Galen (eds.). *The U.S.-South Korean Alliance: Time for a Change*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers 1992.

<sup>216</sup> Most important, the adoption of the 'Sunshine policy' towards peaceful reunification with North Korea and rising anti-American sentiment.

<sup>217</sup> More in: Kleiner, Juergen. "A Fragile Relationship: The United States and the Republic of Korea". *Diplomacy and Statecraft*. Vol. 17, Issue 2 (July 2006): 215-235.

<sup>218</sup> In: Reiss, Mitchell B. "North Korea: Getting to Maybe"? In: Cronin, Patrick M. (ed.). *Double Trouble. Iran and North Korea as Challenges to the International Security*. London: Praeger Security International 2008, p. 113.

#### ***4. 2. Different stages of development and proximity of threat***

It is important to bear in mind that Iran's nuclear program is less advanced than the one in North Korea. So far, there has been no clear evidence that Iran has 'gone nuclear', although Washington seems positive that it has. Nonetheless, U.S. decision makers and analysts are inclined to talk in terms of certainty rather than likelihood.<sup>219</sup> In contrast, North Korea's nuclear capability has been proven by two nuclear tests.<sup>220</sup> Even though the proximity and relevance of threat is apparently higher and danger is more imminent in Pyongyang, the interpretation of Iranian nuclear program especially in relation to *future* consequences has resulted in a higher perception of danger stemming from Iran.

Still, there are many questions that cannot be unambiguously answered and therefore create biased interpretations of danger. For example, has Iran made the decision to develop nuclear weapons for military purposes? Is North Korea really determined to relinquish its nuclear weapons? Similar uncertainties combined with mixed signals and strategies from the U.S. make the situation hazy. This is partly caused by the inadequacy of U.S. intelligence and communication regarding both countries.

In spite of this, perception of threats widely depends on the purpose of the nuclear program. Depending on the motivation behind nuclear development, the U.S. will answer the question of the necessity of preventing the country from acquiring a nuclear program differently. Although the intentions of both countries concerning their nuclear ambitions remain opaque, mostly because of the continually changing context, they can give us some hints. The decision to develop a nuclear program in Iran has been led by a variety of factors. First, security calculations play a role. The program started in the wake of Iraq-Iranian war and was intended to counter the threat of Saddam Hussein, who had attacked the country with chemical weapons. Currently, nuclear weapons serve as a deterrent against external threats – not only the U.S. but also Israel and Pakistan – and balance a country's inferiority in conventional capabilities. The use of deterrence in the post-Cold War era is still applicable; on the regional level, nuclear weapons in the hands of Iran can serve as a deterrent against U.S. regional intervention. Second, the nationalist, symbolic role of a nuclear program has to be taken into consideration, although some authors see

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<sup>219</sup> Europeans are again more cautious and try to underpin their allegations by certain evidences. In: Howard, Roger. *Iran in crisis? Nuclear Ambitions and American Response*. New York: Gutenberg Press Ltd. 2004, p. 106-107.

<sup>220</sup> However, we do not know what the nuclear capability actually entails in North Korea, either.

regime survival as more influential than ideology.<sup>221</sup> An nuclear program, in this context, symbolizes Iran's indispensable role in the region and gives it symbolic leverage over the U.S.<sup>222</sup> Nuclear weapons can enhance Iran's international status and serve as a tool for regional dominance. Finally, nuclear development can serve as a tool for domestic legitimization. However, Iran has never admitted that it was seeking a nuclear weapon. The officially presented rationale is that Iran is developing its program for civilian purposes. There are many authors who doubt this and are certain that the Iranian nuclear program has military purposes.<sup>223</sup> The most common arguments are about the clandestine nature of the program and the fact that, given its many natural resources, Iran has no need for nuclear energy. Still, the continuous assurance that the Iranian program has peaceful intentions strikingly contrasts with North Korea's effort to gain the status of a nuclear weapon state. The most probable explanation for Iranian behavior is that it wants to become a 'virtual nuclear power', to have the option to decide on building a bomb in a short period of time.<sup>224</sup>

The motivation for the North Korean program is also hard to judge because of the authoritarian nature of the regime. Its nuclear program has ideological subtext and therefore serves prestige and symbolic purposes. It also helps to meet the overarching policy objective - regime survival. Given recent domestic developments, the second nuclear test appears to be led in large part by this logic. However, unlike in the Iranian case, it paradoxically appears that this demonstration of nuclear capability is working as a tool for normalization of the relationship with the U.S. Nuclear tests have become a tactical means of maintaining American engagement in peninsula, which has proven to be highly beneficial in gaining the best from negotiations. The effort for recognition is probably also the reason why North Korea so desperately seeks to gain nuclear weapon state status. For strategic reasons, policy makers would never admit it but it is possible that the U.S. is aware of this dimension of North Korean ambitions and therefore perceives greater danger from the Iranian program.

In the theoretical section, I have shown one possible perspective on the rogue state concept, which sees the American rogue state doctrine as a counterproductive instrument.

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<sup>221</sup> In: Bahgat, Gawdat. "Nuclear proliferation: The Islamic Republic of Iran". *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (2006), p. 316.

<sup>222</sup> In: Huntley, Walde L. "Rebels without a cause: North Korea, Iran and the NPT". *International Affairs*. Vol. 82, No. 4 (2006), p. 735.

<sup>223</sup> In: Delpech, Thérèse. *Iran and the Bomb: The Abdication of International Responsibility*. Paris: Columbia University Press 2006.

<sup>224</sup> In: Thränert, Oliver. "Ending Suspicious Nuclear Activities in Iran: Discussing the European Approach". *SWP Working Paper*. Berlin. Presentation at Brandeis University, Boston, 18 November 2004, p. 2.

Instead of preventing Iran and North Korea's nuclear ambitions, U.S. policies framed by the rogue states label may actually encourage them to further nuclear development. In the regional context, Huntley challenges this view. He contests that the driving force behind Iran and North Korea seeking nuclear weapons is a "combination of regional security circumstances and internal regime legitimization needs".<sup>225</sup> It is in agreement with Green, who asserts that the outcome of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula is more connected to domestic intentions than U.S. politics.<sup>226</sup>

#### ***4. 3. International security and non-proliferation regime***

International security achieved a prominent position after the terrorist attacks in September 2001 in New York and Washington. The terrorism issue has since been internationalized and every action associated with it started to be articulated as an 'existential' threat not only to U.S interests but also to the whole globe. The proclaimed 'war on terror', part of the so-called Bush doctrine; can be seen as an embodiment of threat perception where the distinction between domestic and international security has been blurred. Since North Korea is no longer listed as a state sponsor of terrorism it became less of a threat than Iran, which is still seen as the 'most active state sponsor of terrorism'.<sup>227</sup>

In terms of international security, the U.S. has long been concerned about sustaining the nonproliferation system established by the NPT. The system was shaken by North Korea's withdrawal from the treaty and was likely to lose its grounds when Iran also withdrew. Horizontal proliferation<sup>228</sup> would make the international system more dangerous by increasing the probability of that nuclear weapons would be used either deliberately or accidentally. The fear stems from the fact that irrational actors or fanatical terrorist organizations could acquire the weapons and use them unpredictably.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> In: Huntley, Walde L. "Rebels without a cause: North Korea, Iran and the NPT". *International Affairs*. Vol. 82, No. 4 (2006), p. 739.

<sup>226</sup> In: Green, Michael J. "The United States and Asia after Bush". *The Pacific Review*. Vol. 21, No. 5 (December 2008), p. 590.

<sup>227</sup> In: U.S. Department of State. "Country Reports on Terrorism 2008. Chapter 3: State Sponsors of Terrorism". Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 30 April 2009.

<sup>228</sup> Horizontal proliferation refers to the spreading of weapons to states that did not already possess them. It differs from vertical proliferation, which refers to an increase in stockpiles of weapons by states already owning them. In: Buzzan, Barry – Herring, Eric. *The Arms Dynamic in World Politics*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 1998, p. 53.

<sup>229</sup> In: Buzzan, Barry – Herring, Eric. *The Arms Dynamic in World Politics*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers 1998, p. 58.

The perception of irrationality is crucial in relation to both Iran and North Korea. Deterrence is sometimes seen as harder to implement with irrational actors, although their behavior is never fully rational and is rarely predictable. Still, when actors are perceived as irrational, threat is often interpreted as stronger. For instance, during the first nuclear crisis, American policy makers were convinced that North Korea was an irrational actor, which influenced their accommodating strategy to prohibit such a state to be equipped with an extraordinarily dangerous weapon. However, subsequent actions convinced many analysts that North Korea was behaving more rationally than previously expected. Smith even claims that the North Korean behavior during the first nuclear crisis was a clear rational project.<sup>230</sup> In the context of Iranian leadership, irrationality remains issue of concern, probably because of the belligerent and anti-Semitic rhetoric of current Iranian president Ahmadinejad. ‘Madness’ in connection with a nuclear weapon could make an explosive combination.

The NPT needs active supervision because the world has arrived at a ‘nuclear tipping point’. It means that there is a possibility of domino proliferation if even only a few states go nuclear.<sup>231</sup> This proliferation logic partly explains the U.S. interest in bringing North Korea back to the NPT and in preventing Iran from violating the treaty. However, in the light of recent developments, it is highly unlikely that North Korea would ever submit IAEA inspections. Viktor d Cha confirms this view when he argues that proliferation in Asia is ‘overdetermined’ and that the possibility of the reversion of new nuclear weapon states is low.<sup>232</sup> On the other hand, the possibility of Iran violating the treaty remains a tangible option; however, if the U.S. wants the NPT to survive, Iran has to remain a member. This is a strong commitment that partly determines the strong U.S. perception of threat.

#### ***4. 4. Possibility of military option***

Making a preemptive or preventive military strike has been discussed in regard to both countries. The willingness to use such an action reflects the level of danger perceived

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<sup>230</sup> In: Smith, Derek D. *Deterring America: rogue states and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University 2006.

<sup>231</sup> In: Campbell, Kurt M. – Einhorn, Robert J. – Reiss, Mitchell B. (eds.). *Nuclear Tipping Point: Why States Reconsider Their Nuclear Choices*. Washington: The Brookings Institution 2004.

<sup>232</sup> In: Cha, Viktor D. “The second nuclear age: Proliferation pessimism versus sober optimism in South Asia and East Asia”. *Journal of Strategic Studies*. Vol. 24, No. 4 (2001), p. 99.

within the U.S. government. There is little desire to utilize military action on North Korean nuclear facilities and it is, in some respects, problematic. The 2005 statement that was supposed to ensure North Korea security guarantees was never implemented, which leaves the option still open. A military strike is unlikely, however, because the major powers in the region are in strong opposition to it. China's main worry is about a possible spillover effect that would result in a large flood of refugees. South Korea's opposition stems from the possible outbreak of a major war on the peninsula; the same fear is shared by Japan. The military option against Iran generally has more supporters within the government, but the diplomatic solution is still widely preferred for the following reasons.<sup>233</sup> First, a preventive strike would be highly controversial and could cause further deterioration of America's relationship to its allies; ever since the Iraq war began, there has been an ongoing debate about the legitimacy of such an action. Second, a preventive attack would be likely to aggravate violent tensions within the region, which would not be a good move for the U.S, considering that it is already plenty occupied with the Middle East peace process and pacification of Iraq and Afghanistan. It could also cause an undesirable nuclear arms race in the Middle East. Third, the preemptive military strikes could potentially shatter the whole region and consequently influence the world's economy, especially oil and natural gas prices, which would not be beneficial to Washington. Fourth, terrorist organizations could accept U.S.-led action as a challenge and retaliate. In an effort to combat terrorism, the U.S. could find itself in even greater danger. And finally, a military attack on Iran could strengthen the Iranian motivation to build a nuclear weapon. If Iran crosses the nuclear threshold, it would make any further negotiations more difficult.

#### ***4. 5. Assessing the perception of threat***

It can be concluded that Iran is higher on the scale of perceived threat than North Korea; U.S. policy makers interpret the danger that stems from Iran's nuclear program as more threatening than an actual nuclear-armed North Korea. Contextual factors play a significant role in policy makers' interpretations of threat. In the geostrategic context, Iran is situated in a region where the U.S. has more vested interests. The U.S. has been engaged with the Middle East on a long-term basis that has spread across various administrations.

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<sup>233</sup> Most of the following reasons are described more in details in: Brzezinski, Zbigniew. "Do not attack Iran". The New York Times, April 25, 2006.

Its commitment is especially strong in Afghanistan and Iraq. Israel also plays a long-term strategic role in its relationship with the U.S. Although there is no convincing evidence that Iran is 'going nuclear' and if it is, the program is probably not very advanced, the obscure nature of it makes the U.S. perceive the danger in serious and strong terms. The U.S. is especially anxious about a possible shift in the balance of power that would favor Iran; this would loosen America's influence on the course of events. The prestige of the U.S. as a standing hegemon is at stake. Iran's perceived irrationality and link to international terrorism, continuous concerns of U.S. administrations, also play notable roles. This ties to the fact that a nuclear-armed Iran would exercise deterrence over the U.S., especially since President Obama has suppressed national missile defense. For this reason, the new administration is considering all of its options, including preemptive strikes, although the diplomatic initiative is the most desirable course of action. Washington is primarily threatened by the consequences and implications of Iran's possession of a nuclear bomb. Finally, in line with the U.S. nonproliferation policy and Obama's recent statement about a world without nuclear weapons, emphasis is placed on strengthening and sustaining the NPT. Pyongyang's submission to IAEA inspections is unlikely, so the U.S. is concentrating on Iran as a member of the NPT. The American stance also reflects an effort to justify the treaty to its opponents.

Still, the perception of threat is a highly subjective category that depends on the interpretation of various contextual factors. For this reason, even if Teheran's threat is perceived by U.S. foreign policy circles as higher than Pyongyang's, the objective reality can be surprisingly different. This is demonstrated by the different ways the U.S. and other European countries perceive threats from Iran and North Korea. Europeans are generally unwilling to join the U.S. in containment efforts because they perceive much less threat. Pollack presents an argument that the U.S. actually does not need Iran at all. He demonstrates it by showing the concurrence of isolation toward Iran and exceptional economic and political development that has made U.S. the 'lone superpower'. The U.S. has experienced enormous growth, while Iran has not. The country is facing many economic problems and the standard of living is lower than it would be if ties with the U.S. were restored. Iranians have more reasons to improve their relationship with the U.S. than the U.S. has reasons to improve its relationship with Iran. However, Washington does have some cogent reasons for improvement in relations, too. First, it is likely that Iraq's pacification requires Iran's cooperation and the Iranian role in Afghanistan's domestic situation could be crucial. In addition, Iran's energy resources may be of interest to the

American economy, which is currently under crisis. The U.S. and Iran proved they could cooperate on regional issues without touching the nuclear issue; the same cooperation could be possible in the discussion of energy resources.

It seems that contextual factors play a crucially important role. In addition to background, context is the major variable in determining threat perception. Consequently, the perception of danger has a significant impact on the strategies that are used in managing different levels of threat.

#### ***4. 6. Impact of contextual factors on different strategies***

Contextual factors are a variable that effects perceptions of threat. There are four main areas that I have addressed: regional setting, the proximity of the threat, international security in terms of nonproliferation, and the military option, which are sufficiently representative for the purposes of this thesis even though these areas represent only a small selection of many relevant factors. My research showed that the perception of threat in respect to the examined contextual factors is higher in case of Iran. How does this shed light on the different strategies that represent the core of my thesis? There is a correlation between a strong perception of danger and isolation and containment strategy on one side, while engagement is associated with a lower perception of threat. We have to bear in mind that the perception of threat is always *subjective* and does not necessarily correspond with objective matters. Currently, the imminent danger from North Korea is actually stronger, but when we consider possible outcomes, Iran creates more anxiety for the U.S. Regardless of the actual situation, strategies are always created from a subjective, American point of view.

In regard to Iran, the perceived menace corresponds with the concept of rogue states, which is inherent to America's view of danger. Washington has chosen the passive strategy of diplomatic and economic isolation of the country, while common sense might dictate that engagement tactics would be a better way to approach such an imminent threat. Engagement, on the contrary, has been chosen for management of North Korea, where the imminence of danger is not perceived so strongly. The interpretation of danger has probably also influenced the fact that negotiations were made possible despite North Korea's rogue state status and membership in the 'axis of evil.'

President Obama's attempt to change the strategy toward Iran may indicate that the perception of its threat has become lower. However, in consideration of the continuity of foreign policy and its long-term patterns across presidencies, change seems unlikely. I would argue that it is an act of pragmatism. Because of America's engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan, Obama is attempting to ensure that Iran, with its possible nuclear deterrent, will not prevent his effort to settle the situation in the Middle East. The offer to negotiate can be seen as a pragmatic attempt in response to U.S. national interests.

## 5. Conclusions

The main question of this thesis addresses the striking differences in U.S. strategies toward the nuclear issue in Iran and North Korea. To answer the question I first analyzed the concept of rogue states from a theoretical point of view, then in relation to American national security culture and to continuity and change in foreign policy. Then I presented some background and contextual factors in an effort to assess the perception of threat in the American mind. There are several partial conclusions.

### 5. 1. *Inconsistency in the rogue state category*

There are several problems inherent to the rogue states concept itself, which is the basic point of reference of this thesis. Those inconsistencies consequently relate to the preferred strategies to manage Iran and North Korea. Foremost, there is no formal articulation of the rogue states doctrine. Although we can find some common characteristics in American security documents (especially in the 2002 National Security Strategy), there is no agreement about which characteristics a state must possess in order to be considered rogue. Because of this, the category cannot be applied analytically but only as a political tool. Countries have been included despite not fitting the criteria in an effort to strengthen policy measures (Cuba), or excluded as a ‘reward’ to the country in order to establish diplomatic relations even in face of the fact that the country fits ‘rogue’ criteria (Syria). In other words, *the rogue state category serves as an instrument for ensuring both short-term and long-term American political interests toward countries of major concern.*

Although the category is not theoretically binding and provides only a vague, general framework for action, the concept in general creates a *predisposition* for favoring the containment and isolation strategy. This proved to be problematic in relation to both Iran and North Korea. In Iran, the strategy has been mostly in compliance with the ‘common’ rogue policy. The rogue concept made it easier to implement of hard policy measures. On the other hand, it has also worked in favor of maintaining an isolationist policy. The spectrum of policies toward Iran from which Washington could choose was significantly narrowed. Not until Obama took the office was there any effort to engage with Iran because the rogue states label had been so influential to U.S. decision makers. However, Obama sagaciously abandoned the concept of rogue states and Bush’s ‘axis of evil’ and

withdrew the conditions that were preventing dialogue. He now has a full spectrum of policies that can be exercised to treat Iranian nuclear misbehavior. The rogue states concept has played quite a different role in the case of North Korea. The U.S. has chosen to engage the country on bilateral and multilateral levels. This proves that the predisposition toward using the containment strategy is not determinative and can be overcome. However, the general designation of rogue states creates serious obstacles to the engagement strategy. The strategy toward North Korea has always been under strong criticism from the side of ‘hawks’ and has had to struggle for justification within the American government. In the continuing policy of engagement during Obama’s administration, the ‘rogue-ness’ of North Korea has been perceived as less threatening than Iran’s rogue behavior. It can be concluded that *there is no determining connection between the rogue states concept and any specific strategy.*

## ***5. 2. Impact of security culture and long-term patterns in U.S. foreign policy***

The U.S. has always conducted foreign policy *sui generis*. Basic patterns have been established as a part of the unique American national security culture that influences long-term foreign policy. The main thing that constitutes security culture is American identity, which is embodied in the country’s interpretation of danger. America has always defined ‘who they are’ in relation to evil ‘others’, which ties to a habit of thinking two-dimensionally. It also contributes to the perception of exceptionality, superiority and thus exemplarity of American values. America’s identity influences its behavior in the international arena. Although we can identify both general and partial changes in foreign policy, I argue that they all more or less reflect established, long-term patterns. It is not surprising that we can observe a significant amount of continuity among Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama.

The concept of rogue states also derives from America’s security culture. It can be argued that rogues states have replaced the position of ‘evil’ that the Soviet empire enjoyed during the Cold War. In this respect, the Cold War’s main foreign policy strategy of containment, established in the 1940s, has created a predisposition toward this strategy. Although we cannot compare Cold War containment to the containment used with rogue states, it still indicates that there is an established tendency; when depicting ‘others’ as evil, subversive or sick, the U.S. is prone to use the strategy of containment rather than

engagement in an effort to face rogue states' menace. There is also ambivalence toward multilateralism entrenched in American security culture. The U.S. regards multilateral platforms with skepticism, especially when vital interests are at stake. This tendency was especially visible when U.S. decided to adopt variety of unilateral sanctions toward Iran. Interestingly, in relation to North Korea, the U.S. has relied on the multilateral Six-Party Talks. This implies that nuclear issue in Iran seems to touch more U.S. vital interests, which makes Washington willing to adopt necessary measures independently when international consensus is not reached.

In relation to the observed high level of continuity among the three examined administrations, there is particular continuity concerning the strategies implemented in Iran and North Korea. Continuity is relevant especially when we consider the current lack of coherent strategies in both countries. Obama called off the use of rogue states term, which enabled him to approach Iran and North Korea separately and offered him full scale of policy options. He has chosen a diplomatic route toward both countries. Whereas he approaches negotiations with North Korea with the established Six-Party Talks platform, the decision to engage Iran necessitates a significant departure from the previous strategy. However, this change cannot be overestimated. The measures of dealing with Iran have been consistent since the revolution in 1979. Obama is thus likely to use the same structure for interaction with Iran as Clinton and Bush, which is basically a policy of carrots and sticks. Besides, current events indicate that there are still significant tendencies to use a more aggressive approach to meet the American objective. For this reason, I argue that the proposed dramatic change in strategy is unlikely. The same logic applies to North Korea, Obama is likely to maintain the course and make an effort to get North Korea back to the negotiation table. Generally speaking, *the strategies toward Iran and North Korea are prone to continue established trends and thus change only in particular details.*

### **5. 3. Background**

As I have revealed, the rogue state concept, mostly because of its lack of analytical consistency, cannot provide an explanation for the strategies' incoherency. However, America's security culture helps explain long-term patterns in U.S. foreign policy, which can help explain its behavior toward rogue states. However, those factors are not able to

elucidate *why* different strategies have been applied to each country. This makes background and context a considerably useful part of the explanation.

My study revealed that background is especially important to the case of Iran. U.S.-Iranian relations have carried a burden of animosity and mistrust since the revolution and following ‘hostage crisis’. There are many issues that have not yet been resolved and that raise serious obstacles toward mutual understanding. Because of these historic grievances, there is often no political goodwill, especially from the U.S., to break the old hostility and start a new chapter in the relationship. The countries’ historical background made engagement extremely difficult. For this reason, when Obama said he wanted to change the political course toward Iran, Iranian President Ahmadinejad told him that the U.S. must first apologize for past events.<sup>234</sup> The U.S. had already given a direct apology to Iran through Madeline Albright’s 2000 symbolic speech; however at that point, the Bush administration did not initiate engagement. Instead, Bush chose to include the country in the ‘axis of evil.’ Obama did not apologize for any ‘crimes’ toward Iran, but he did make several symbolic gestures. He called for relations grounded in ‘mutual respect’ and diplomacy in order to address the ‘full range of issues.’<sup>235</sup> Nevertheless, there is a long way to go before a genuine reconciliation between the countries. Every effort to engage Iran faces impediments posed by background factors.

The North Korean history with U.S. is different. Although both countries were at war in 1950s, we can observe a continuing effort from both sides to normalize relations. A positive relationship is especially important to North Korea, because the country is strongly dependent on aid from the U.S. However, Pyongyang’s true intentions about its nuclear program remain opaque, which contributes to U.S. suspicion about their motives. Nevertheless, there has been no call for an apology, which could prevent a diplomatic initiative. Thus, engagement has been possible and Six-Party Talks have developed as a tool for dealing with the nuclear issue. In sum, *the engagement with North Korea and reluctance toward it in the case of Iran has been partly shaped by background factors.*

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<sup>234</sup> Those events include mainly the American support for the coup in 1953 and American support for Iraq during the Iraq-Iran war in 1980s.

<sup>235</sup> In: Maleki, Anoush. “A year after, Obama’s Iran policy unchanged”. Press TV, 5 November 2009.

#### 5. 4. Contextual factors

Contextual factors help explain the roots of the disparity in strategies. The study of contextual factors explored the intensity of Iranian and North Korean threats as perceived by the U.S. The level of threat that Iran poses is higher for several reasons. The stage of its nuclear program development is not clear and pure evidence that Iran has decided to ‘go nuclear’ is lacking. However, the U.S. fear of the consequences of a nuclear-armed Iran outweighs similar misgivings about North Korea, which has de facto nuclear weapons. It seems that policy makers are more worried about a *future* threat posed by Iran than its actual power capabilities, which are significantly inferior.<sup>236</sup> Iran is situated in a region where vital U.S. interests are at stake, and the possibility that Iran has WMD poses a hindrance to their insurance. Another factor is that Iran is not only perceived as a threat to U.S. national security, but also to international security at large. The connection between international terrorism and WMD is of great concern in this respect. Iranian misbehavior challenges the nonproliferation regime, so it is in Washington’s interest to strengthen its stance on nonproliferation by subjecting Iran to inspections. The motivation behind Iran’s program is also shaping U.S. perceptions. It is unclear what the purpose of the alleged nuclear program is. Washington is especially anxious that a nuclear bomb in Teheran would provide sufficient deterrence to prevent U.S. military intervention in the region. An increase in Iran’s prestige and a shift in the regional balance of power similarly threatens Washington. Finally, despite recent positive rhetoric and the preference for a diplomatic solution to the nuclear issue, the military option remains on the table. This indicates how important it is for Washington to prevent Teheran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

According to my study, there seems to be a *link of a high perception of threat to comprehensive containment strategy on one side and a low perception of threat to engagement on the other*. The larger danger, in this case Iran, is generally subject to an avoidance of negotiation rather than inclusion in diplomacy, which again stems from American national security culture. On the other side, engagement with North Korea is possible because its nuclear program is not seen as imminently threatening to American vital interests. Those facts appear paradoxical; one assumes that the bigger the danger, the more effort would be put toward negotiations. But this thinking has deep roots in American

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<sup>236</sup> Oreily’s study concluded that this applies to all rogues states. In: O’Reilly, K. P. “Perceiving Rogue States: The Use of the ‘Rogue State’ Concept by U. S. Foreign Policy Elites”. *Foreign Policy Analysis*. Vol. 3, No.4 (2007): 295-315.

foreign policy practice. Current events indicate a change in strategy toward Iran, but do not necessarily mean a change in threat perception. Obama made it clear that he regards the Iranian nuclear issue as a crucial security problem on both regional and international levels. For this reason, his engagement with Iran should be viewed as a partial pragmatic step; an attempt to achieve other policy objectives in the sphere of nuclear disarmament in general and the situation in the Middle East in particular. Generally speaking, it is still valid that *the decision to use different strategies has been partly led by contextual factors, particularly by different perceptions of the levels of threat.*

The thesis has 69 pages, 28 931 words, 157 301 characters (157 301 including spaces).

## Summary

Two completely divergent strategies have been chosen to deal with the nuclear issue in two particular rogue states, Iran and North Korea. The concept of rogue states, which is grounded in American security culture, provides a partial explanation as to why containment is used with the Iranian 'enemy', but it gives us only a small hint as to why Washington uses a diplomatic initiative with North Korea. Background and contextual factors that shape threat perception can provide a better explanation. Historical U.S.-Iranian mutually fed grievances proved to pose a serious hindrance to the possibility of engagement. In the same vein, the absence of a similar burden enabled the U.S. to engage with North Korea. The diplomatic path of U.S. foreign policy in relation to the nuclear issue in North Korea is sometimes explained by North Korea's higher level of perceived threat. A high level of threat such as this might indicate an urgent need for a solution. However, as this thesis revealed, Iran presents a higher level of threat in American eyes. This could mean that there is a connection between high perception of danger to the containment strategy and not vice versa. The study of continuity and change in U.S. foreign policy also indicates that the strategies, namely the established structures of interaction, are likely to remain unchanged in years ahead.

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# **Approved Project of the Bachelor Thesis**

## ***Different Strategies of the United States towards the 'Nuclear issue' in Rogue States: Iran and North Korea***

### **Introduction to the Problematic**

Iran and North Korea, in different respects, are on their way toward developing nuclear weapon capability and therefore are perceived as threats to the security of the United States (U.S.). North Korea has already conducted two nuclear tests and declared its ability to develop a nuclear arsenal, yet there are still uncertainties about intentions and capabilities of Iranian nuclear program. Although both states are labeled as a rogue states<sup>237</sup> and we would therefore expect rather similar strategy in approaching them, the U.S. tend to handle Pyongyang and Teheran differently. Isolation and containment, two strategies usually related to the rogue state concept, have been used in dealing with nuclear issue in Iran. In contrast, North Korea's nuclear program has been treated more in terms of engagement strategy.

### **The Focus of the Thesis**

The focus of this paper will be on the reasons for U.S. adopting different security strategies towards Iranian and North Korean nuclear programs. The limitation of the analysis on one particular matter, in my case nuclear, is considered necessary to stay focused, and to avoid unnecessary shifts of attention away from the key matter.

Generally, the thesis will apply theoretical perspective on various security strategies towards Iran and North Korea in respect of different U.S. Administration's approaches. In theoretical capacity I will focus on rogue state concept which is considered as playing significant role in managing both states. The concept will be first defined and then interpreted in its development since 1993. Further, this section will deal with the notion of American national security culture. I will try to underline the perception of rogue state in an American national security culture.

The problem will be analyzed in the time period from 1993 to the present. The time frame has been chosen to cover Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and recently elected Barack

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<sup>237</sup> Term rogue state has been used by the U.S. to the states considered as a threat to the world's peace. Since 1980s the term has entitled North Korea, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Libya. Afghanistan was removed from the list after the invasion in 2001 and Iraq after the war in 2003.

Obama Administration. Developments and shifts in strategies throughout three different presidencies will be examined with special attention to changing perception of 'rogue-ness' with regard to Iran and North Korea. I will try to find the connection between the term rogue state and American counter-proliferation policy in fundamental security documents. I assume that despite many differences, the trend to contain Iran and engage North Korea has persisted quite consistently.

The thesis will be also dealing with the background for a mutual relationship between U.S. on one side and Iran and North Korea on the other. I consider it to be necessary for better and more complex understanding of a researched matter. Substantial part of the thesis will be dealing with changes in discourse over time. I would like to take into consideration major factors taking place in this development.

Notwithstanding, I do not expect that a rogue state concept will give me a comprehensive explanation for implementation of different strategies. For this reason I would like to take into account also other contextual external factors (other than history of relations which will be handled in previous chapter) which may further add to my explanation and will hopefully shed light on different threats' perception towards both states.

## **Main Research Questions**

In line with the given topic this thesis will try to answer core research question: Why is there disparity between the U.S. approach towards two rogue states - Iran and North Korea? I will analyze both rogue state concept and American national security culture to find the answer. Other questions I will ask might be: How the term rogue state has influenced diverse strategies? How is it possible that two states from the same category have been treated differently? Is the concept being interpreted in different ways?

In regard to other factors, I would like to concentrate on different perceptions of threats. I assume that the perception of threat is higher in the case of North Korea which has interestingly led U.S. elites to address Pyongyang's problem by strategy of engagement. How is this connected to the concept of rogue state? How is the position of both states different in relation to the U.S.? Why is the perception of threat different and what factors play role? How has the perception changed in terms of distinct doctrines adopted by different Presidents? Finally, I would pose the following question: Which strategy has been more efficient and successful in relation to the stated objective (counter-proliferation)?

## **Theoretical Concept and Objectives**

The theoretical framework will relate to the rogue state concept as developed since the beginning of the Clinton presidency. I will try to find the connection between this concept and a nuclear counter-proliferation policy rooted in American national security culture. To limit the wide and complex matter I have chosen the method of two case studies; my attention will be concentrated on Iran and North Korea. In trying to contrast distinct strategies I will use comparative method.

Main objective of my work is to find reasons for the implementation of distinct strategy towards countries to which both it is referred as rogue. I would like to find factors shaping different perception of threats and therefore causing different understanding of the term rogue. Finally, I would like to consider to which extent both strategies have been efficient in meeting primary objective and try to sketch most suitable one to the future.

## **Supposed Structure**

### **1. Introduction**

1. 1. Objectives of the Paper
1. 2. General Introduction to the Problematic

### **2. Theoretical Concept**

2. 1. The Concept of Rogue State
  2. 1. 1. Defining Criteria
  2. 1. 2. Development of the Concept
    2. 1. 2. 1. Clinton Doctrine
    2. 1. 2. 2. Bush Doctrine
    2. 1. 2. 3. Obama Doctrine
2. 2. Defining American National Security Culture
  2. 2. 1. Perception of 'Rogueness'

### **3. Different U.S. Strategies towards Iranian and North Korean nuclear programs**

3. 1. Background for the U.S.-Iranian Relations
3. 2. Background for U.S.-North Korean Relations
3. 3. Defining Strategies
3. 4. Shift in Strategies in Respect to Different Administration
  3. 4. 1. Clinton Administration

- 3. 4. 1. 1. Iran
- 3. 4. 1. 2. North Korea
- 3. 4. 2. Bush Administration
  - 3. 4. 2. 1. Iran
  - 3. 4. 2. 2. North Korea
- 3. 4. 3. Obama Administration
  - 3. 4. 3. 1. Iran
  - 3. 4. 3. 2. North Korea

#### **4. Impact of the Concept of ‘Rogue States’ on Different Strategies**

#### **5. Different Perception of Threats – Contextual Factors**

- 5. 1. Regional Setting
- 5. 2. Global ‘War on terror’ and International Security
- 5. 3. Different Stages of Development and Proximity of Threat
- 5. 4. Economic Incentives

#### **6. Conclusion**

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