



THE UNITED STATES MILITARY INTERVENTION TO SYRIA (2011 – 2017)

By

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THESIS ADVISER RECOMMENDATION LETTER

This thesis entitled “**The United States Military Intervention to Syria (2011 – 2017)**” prepared and submitted by Syifa Thenika Fatma in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of the Arts in International Relations in the Faculty of Humanities has been reviewed and found to have satisfied the requirements for a thesis fit to be examined. I therefore recommend this thesis for Oral Defense.

Cikarang, Indonesia, April 29th 2019

Recommended and Acknowledged by,



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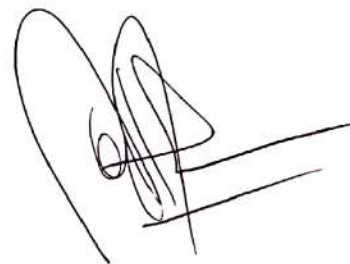


Gibran Mahesa Drajat, MA., MA.

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that this thesis, entitled “**The United States Military Intervention to Syria (2011 – 2017)**” is to the best of my knowledge and belief, an original piece of work that has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, to another university to obtain a degree.

Cikarang, Indonesia, April 29th 2019

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Syifa Thenika Fatma

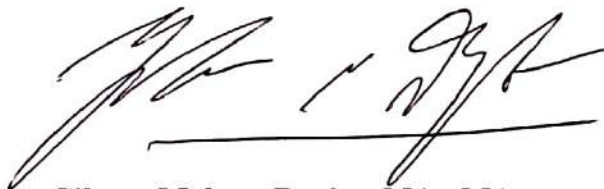
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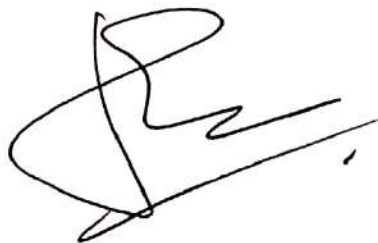
The Panel of Examiners declare that the thesis “**The United States Military Intervention to Syria (2011 – 2017)**” that was submitted by Syifa Thenika Fatma majoring in International Relations from the Faculty of Humanities was assessed and approved to have passed the Oral Examinations on



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ABSTRACT

Thesis Title: “*The United States Military Intervention to Syrian War in the Regime of Bashar Al-Assad (2011 – 2017)*” (Syifa Thenika Fatma)

Syria is one of the countries which is experiencing the wave of the Arab Spring, where people in Middle Eastern countries want their country's leaders to step down. This is an opportunity for the United States to be able to dominate countries in the Middle East, moreover because Bashar Al-Assad has good relations with Iran whose its power is considered a threat to the United States. The first step taken by the United States was to ask the Syrian president, Bashar Al-Assad, to step down from his position as president in 2011. The United States also seeks to change the Syrian regime by seeking military intervention. Military intervention by the United States to Syria is based on national interests which are then applied through foreign policy and defense policy. Thus, the research question is how the United States intervened militarily to Syria (2011-2017). This research is focusing on how the United States did conduct its military intervention to Syria. This study uses qualitative methods with descriptive research types. This study aims to determine the actions of the United States in carrying out military intervention in the period 2011-2017. In analyzing the issue, this research uses the theory of realism and offensive realism. This study found several concrete actions from the United States military intervention to Syria for the period 2011-2017, such as carrying out air strikes on Syria in 2014, supporting Syrian rebel groups to fight Syrian government forces and military action against ISIS along with coalition countries.

Keywords: *United States, military intervention, Syria, Syrian war, Bashar Al-Assad, rebel groups*

ABSTRAK

Thesis Title: “*The United States Military Intervention to Syrian War in the Regime of Bashar Al-Assad (2011 – 2017)*” (Syifa Thenika Fatma)

Suriah menjadi salah satu negara yang mengalami gelombang Arab Spring, yang mana rakyat di negara-negara Timur Tengah menginginkan pemimpin-pemimpin negara mereka untuk lengser. Hal ini menjadi peluang bagi Amerika Serikat untuk bisa mendominasi negara-negara di Timur Tengah, terlebih lagi karena Bashar Al-Assad memiliki hubungan baik dengan Iran yang kekuatannya dianggap ancaman bagi Amerika Serikat. Langkah awal yang dilakukan Amerika Serikat adalah meminta presiden Suriah, Bashar Al-Assad, untuk turun dari jabatannya sebagai presiden pada tahun 2011. Amerika Serikat pun berupaya agar rezim Suriah bisa berganti dengan mengupayakan intervensi militer. Intervensi militer yang dilakukan Amerika Serikat ke Suriah berdasarkan kepentingan nasionalnya yang kemudian diterapkan melalui kebijakan luar negeri dan kebijakan pertahanan. Dengan demikian, pertanyaan penelitian adalah bagaimana Amerika Serikat melakukan intervensi militer ke Suriah (2011-2017). Penelitian ini berfokus pada bagaimana Amerika Serikat melakukan intervensi militernya ke Suriah. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian deskriptif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui aksi Amerika Serikat dalam melakukan intervensi militer pada periode 2011-2017. Dalam menganalisa masalah, penelitian ini menggunakan teori realisme dan realisme ofensif. Penelitian ini menemukan beberapa aksi nyata dari intervensi militer Amerika Serikat ke Suriah untuk periode 2011-2017, seperti melakukan serangan udara ke Suriah pada tahun 2014, mendukung kelompok pemberontak Suriah untuk melawan pasukan pemerintah Suriah dan aksi militernya melawan ISIS bersama dengan negara-negara koalisi.

Kata kunci: *Amerika Serikat, intervensi militer, Suriah, perang Suriah, Bashar Al-Assad, kelompok pemberontak*

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This thesis has been kept on track and been seen through to completion with the support and encouragement of numerous people including my well-wishers, my friends and colleagues. At the end of my thesis I would like to thank all those people who made this thesis possible and an unforgettable experience for me. To express my thanks to all those who contributed in many ways to the success of this study and made it an unforgettable experience for me.

I would like to dedicate this research to my beloved parents as my support system. For my beloved mother, Sri Supatmi, I am really grateful for being your daughter that you always encourage me to maintain my health in working this research study. The health is become number one for my beloved mother and it always keep in my mind every time when I was down. The one who keep give me a nutrition meal for finishing this research. The prayers from my mother always accompany me so that I can work through the process of doing the thesis smoothly. For my beloved father, Jaka Wardhana Ridwandi, I am so thankful for always encouraging me everytime I get down. He always tells me to be a strong and brave woman so I can face and handle the problem in this life well. And I thank to my beloved sibling, Nashwa Afifa Zahra, who never let things get dull or boring, have all made a tremendous contribution in helping me reach this stage in my life. Although she annoys me everyday but I know deep somewhere in her heart, there's love for me.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATGW	: Anti-Tank Guided Weapon
BIRN	: Balkan Investigative Reporting Network
CIA	: Central Intelligence Agency
DoD	: Department of Defense
FBO	: Federal Business Opportunities
FSA	: Free Syrian Army
FY	: Fiscal Year
GDP	: Gross Domestic Product
ISIL	: Islamic State of Iraq and Levant
ISIS	: Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
MANPAD	: Man-portable Air-defense System
NMS	: National Military Strategy
NPR	: Nuclear Posture Review
NSS	: National Security Strategy
OCCRP	: The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project
QDR	: Quadrennial Defense Review
SDF	: Syrian Democratic Forces
SMC	: Supreme Military Council
SOHR	: Syrian Observatory for Human Rights
TOW	: Tube-launched, Optically-tracked, Wire-guided
UN	: United Nations
US	: United States

CHAPTER I

Introduction

I.1 Background of Study

Syrian civil war began since 2011, in which exactly seven years ago as the ongoing Arab Spring occasion. The conflict began in the city named Daraa, in March 2011 Anti-Assad protests erupted in the southern town of Daraa. Rumors circulated that some teenagers got arrested and tortured after they painted revolutionary slogans on school walls (Map S. C., 2018). The slogans said “People wants the fall of the regimes” and “Your turn is coming, Doctor” that referring to the Syrian president, Bashar Al-Assad. Syrian government responded it by using the military forces then it caused the protest by the people in which spread across the country quickly (Syria, 2015). Those teenagers had certainly inspired by the previous cases in some Middle East country that had the same purpose on turning the regimes down.

The movement of revolutionary teenager wanted the regime to fall was affected by the Arab uprisings, as known as Arab Spring. In early 2011 came the seismic events of the Arab Spring. The Arab awakening/Arab Spring is a concept denoting a revolutionary sweeping tide of demonstrations, protests and other forms of opposition to the authorities (both violent and non-violent), riot and protracted civil wars in the Arab territories which started on December 18th, 2010 (Abdelsalam, 2015). This was all begun in Tunisia when 26 years old fruit seller named Mohamed Bouazizi who became breadwinner to all his eight family member became frustated since their economic condition did get any improvement. His family also could not afford bribe money to be given to the local official government then his fruit cart was damaged by the local official government. This made him even more get frustated to make he flushed himself gasoline then light a match to burn himself. He suffererd 90% burn until in January 5th 2011, he passed away.

Libyan President Moammar Khadhafi fell and was killed after a civil war erupted in the country. An uncertain political situation also occurred in Egypt, Yemen and Syria. President Husni Mubarak in Egypt had to leave his office after demonstrations broke out for days in January and February 2011. Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak was wanted to be stepped down by the Egyptian people and he finally left his office after 30 years served the country (Muttaqien, 2017). The same thing happened with the Syrian president, Bashar Al-Assad, whose protest movement has continued until 2017.

On April 19th 2011, the Syrian government cabinet lifted the emergency law and dissolved the Syrian State Security Supreme Court. Special courts are used to try anti-government parties. The Syrian government also requires the public to get permission to demonstrate to reduce popular protests. The newly appointed Syria's Minister of Home Affairs told the people that the people should not demonstrate by saying that the Syrian government considered the demonstration a national threat (A. Muchaddam Fahham, 2016).

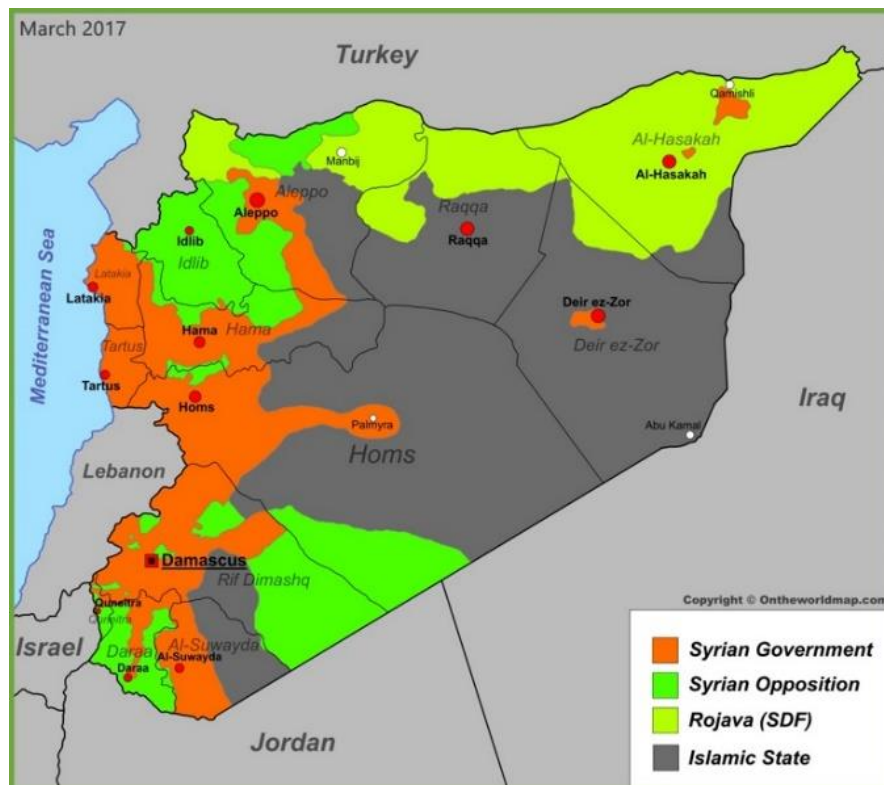


Figure 1: Syrian war map (Map O. T., 2017).

The Syrian war does not only involve the Syrian government and opposition. There are many actors involved, including the United States, ISIS, Russia, Iran, Hezbollah, and Kurdish. This war has considerable consequences. Hundreds of thousands of people were victims of war and buildings were destroyed by bombardment (Khan, 2018). Each actor involved has a different purpose for their actions, but there are also those who have one same goal. Like the United States and ISIS which have the aim of ousting Bashar Al-Assad or Russia and Hezbollah who wants to fight the opposition to defend Bashar Al-Assad.

The conflict in Syria has become very complex in six years since the anti-government movement emerged. Bashar Al-Assad, who emphasized his government against the opposition, while the various opposition groups wanted to take over Syria from him. The various objectives they carry, from liberal democracy to theocracy. ISIS also has a different purpose, namely trying to have its own territory in the middle of Iraq and Syria. There are also Kurdish groups who are still trying to build their own country by fighting Turkish forces on the Iraqi border, with the help of the Syrian government. (Laub, 2017).

Russia

The involvement carried out by Russia was a type of military intervention because the Russian government sent and placed a number of military forces in the internal conflict of Syria. Russia has sent a number of military personnel to both the armed forces and other military fleets to the ruling Syrian government. Russia's economic interests in Syria are cooperation in the economic field, namely cooperation in the Russian arms trade with the Syrian government, where Russia exports arms to the ruling Syrian government (Noor, 2014).

Russia began to intervene in the Syrian conflict by helping Bashar Al-Assad in the year 2015. This was because the Syrian government was at a weak point to fight the opposition and jihadists / extremists. Russia has a sufficient supply of weapons to be supplied to the Syrian government. One reason why Russia is helping the Syrian government is because the Russian Navy has a depot in Tartus (the city

on the Mediterranean coast of Syria). Russia provides its sophisticated weaponry, for example the Su-34 "Fullback" and the 3M-14 "Kalibr" land attack cruise missile. (Lister C. , 2015). Maria Zakharova, spokesman for the Russian foreign ministry, said,

"We have always supplied equipment to them for their struggle against terrorists. We are supporting them, we were supporting them, and we will be supporting them." (Maqfarquhar, 2015).

Iran

Syria and Iran are strategic allies for each other. Both, despite having differences in government, but geopolitics brought them into one goal. Both Syria and Iran make Israel as an enemy. Syria's hatred of Israel increasingly became worse after the defeat at Golan Heights, a plateau in the Syrian border region that was occupied and taken over by Israel. Both are also equally worried about the spread of chaos from Iraq to their country. Both of them also hope that the United States will suffer because they continue to try to change their regime (Byman, 2006).

Syria and Iran were united in helping Lebanon because they had the same goals, especially when helping Hezbollah drive Israel out of Lebanon. Iran provides financial, war training, and ideological support for Hezbollah. In 1985, Hezbollah attacked Israel so they would leave Lebanon. Fifteen years later, Israel was successfully expelled from Lebanese land. Separating Damascus and Tehran is very difficult. Both of them still have the same vision in fighting enemy countries, such as the United States and Britain, but their interests make relations between the two countries strong.

The Lebanon War in 2006 made relations between Syria and Iran increasingly familiar. Syria is becoming increasingly dependent on Iran because it is difficult to build good relations with Arab countries. On June 16, 2006, the Syrian and Iranian Defense Ministers signed military cooperation to address threats that came from the United States and Israel. The details of the cooperation agreement cannot be detailed, but the Iranian Defense Minister, Najjar, said, "Iran regard the security of Syria as security of Iran and we consider our defensive capability

belonging to Syria, and the visit also resulted in the sale of Iranian military equipment to Syria, as well as the acquisition of military equipment, and Iran has continuously invested billions of dollars in the Syrian economy.” (Abdalhamid, 2018).

Islamiq State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

The Islamic State Group (also known as IS, Daesh, ISIS or ISIL) is an Islamic extremist group by following a fundamentalist doctrine of Sunni Islam. They published a document in which claimed that their leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, as a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad. Although it has never been recognized as a state, by taking over the territory of Iraq and Syria, ISIS has a state aspect because it has succeeded in controlling an area on the border. They also has enough weapons and ideology of war to fight any party that is considered threatening (Sandrina Antunes, 2018).

But traditionally about the State's Rights and Obligations in Article 1 of the 1933 Montevideo Convention, it is considered a useful guideline because it stipulates four state criteria, namely a designated area, permanent population or people, the government and the capacity to engage with other countries Regions are very important for a country, but regional entities that recognize statehood also must respect the basic rules of the International Community (Longobardo, 2017). Because it does not get recognition from the International Community, then by *de jure* ISIS is not a country.

ISIS was the most powerful Syrian government rebel group. After losing its territorial area because it had to deal with the United States military, ISIS was still devising a strategy to take territory under the control of Bashar Al-Assad (Brandon Wallace, 2018). Unlike Al-Qaeda, ISIS is not too concerned with the mission of suicide attacks, but rather prioritizes efforts to get territory. A number of actions to seize territory in Syria under the control of Bashar Al-Assad were carried out by extortion and kidnapping. They can also get funding from donations from ISIS volunteers from outside countries (Karakoc, 2016).

United States

The military intervention carried out by the United States was its military intervention in the Middle East. Iraq, Iran, Libya and Syria are examples of countries that have been intervened by the United States. The Middle East conflict which was intervened by the United States was none other the Arab Spring. The turmoil of protests by the people in the Middle East who have hopes of being able to implement democracy in their country and want the regime to go down. The involvement of the United States was not spared because of the strength of the country as the number one superpower in the world. Political, economic and other interests are the reason why the United States has a big role in this conflict. By 1900 the American nation had established itself as a world power (Library of Congress).

It was proven by the United States involving in other countries internal conflict, for the example, Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. The United States action to intervene other country's internal conflict is the intervention in middle east countries, as known as Arab Spring. The Arab Spring was a loosely related group of protests that ultimately resulted in regime changes in countries such as Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. Not all of the movements, however, could be deemed successful—at least if the end goal was increased democracy and cultural freedom (Editors H. , 2018)

Interventions carried out by the United States to countries in the Middle East have even been carried out for a long time. Since the cold war occurred, the United States has intervened in foreign countries. Since the Syrian war in 2011, the United States at that time led by Barack Obama, there have been plans to depose Bashar Al-Assad or impose sanctions on the Syrian government (Warrick, 2011).

Sovereign countries in the world generally try to unite their understanding and views with each other. Efforts to unify this understanding and view are marked by the existence of various deliberations or conventions carried out by these countries. Basically these countries try to accept or compromise with each other. But often the understanding between them is not achieved because of differences of opinion, views, and attitudes according to each party is very fundamental. In the end there was an increasing conflict that eventually became a conflict. In order for

a country to instill its will towards other countries, the country intervenes in the internal affairs of a country. For example, if State A is threatened because of internal problems that occur within its sovereignty, while the handling of the problem is deemed not in accordance with the wishes of State B, then State B feels the need to intervene in the affairs of State A so that State B can influence and its will was followed. In the end the intervention or intervention was carried out with violence which resulted in war and losses for many parties (Leatemala, 2013).

I.2 Problem Identification

Until the last decade or so, military force was used most often to achieve a state's geopolitical goals of protecting and/or enhancing its territory, population, and other critical resources (Hauss, 2003). Intervention refers to interference in the affairs of a state. Such interference can take many different forms: political or military, direct or indirect (Artikelsiana, 2018). International law is for the most part worried about dictatorial or coercive obstruction in a state's undertakings, which is on a fundamental level denied. The extent of the denial is, be that as it may, influenced by the political, lawful, or standardizing changes occurring in the universal society at various phases of its advancement. Thus, the legality of certain intervention, (such as interventions for the protection of human rights, democracy, or self-determination), international law is for the most part worried about dictatorial or coercive obstruction in a state's undertakings, which is on a fundamental level denied.

As the United States plan 'Forward Strategy of Freedom in the Middle East' is running that have been applied by United States former president, George Walker Bush in 2003. It was written in the White House's fact sheet;

During this time of change in world history, the President said that the advance of freedom is the calling of our times. Promoting democracy and freedom in the Middle East will be a massive and difficult undertaking, but it is worthy of America's effort and sacrifice. As long as freedom and democracy do not flourish in the Middle East, that region will remain stagnant, resentful, and violent -- and serve as an exporter of violence and terror to free nations. President Bush believes that democracy and Islam can coexist. Millions of Muslims from Turkey

to Indonesia to Niger have proven that Islam and democracy are fully compatible. America has accomplished the task of spreading democracy where it has not existed before, and the President believes that the advance of freedom will increase chances for peace and security for Americans as well as for the people of the Middle East (Bush, 2003).

Although what made the policy was George W. Bush, the previous President of the United States, but United States interference was still carried out by the president who served after him, Barack Obama. The United States considers the conflict that occurred in Syria as humanitarian oppression. Barack Obama considers that the United States must act to stop this conflict for Human Rights because there have been 400,000 fatalities. This will raise the question of why the United States is still passive when a civil war can slaughter the Syrian people. Obama, who was still President of the United States at the time, assumed that the United States must act as soon as possible (Greenberg, 2016).

The main goal of the United States in conducting military intervention in Syria is to defeat Syrian regime's forces so then President Assad could be stepped down. Financial support, training and weapons provided by the United States to the rebels were used by the rebels to fight against the defense of the Assad regime so that the Syrian president step down from the presidency. In addition to providing assistance to rebel groups, the United States also carried out direct attacks on Syrian government forces using fighter planes and drones.

The another goal of the United States to intervene in the Syrian conflict is also to eradicate ISIS. But strangely, the United States has the same goal as ISIS, which is equally willing to depose Bashar Al-Assad from the chair of the Syrian president. President Barack Obama's administration supports rebels who want to oust Bashar Al-Assad. The White House offered assistance to the Syrian government rebels in the form of military equipment and drugs. But they denied giving greater and more serious assistance. But after that, Obama called on Congress to finance military training for the rebels. The aim is to train rebels in Jordan and other countries, to return to Syria against the government (McKelvey, 2015).

I.3 Statement of Problem

Based on the elaboration of Identification Problem (I.2), this research attempts to answer one specific question:

“How did the United States conduct its military intervention to Syrian war in the Bashar Al-Assad’s regime (2011-2017)?”

I.4 Research Objective

This thesis aims to answer the research question through explanatory and analytical methods. The objective of this thesis is to analyze the application of United States to Syria in the case of military intervention which is form of defense to respond Bashar Al-Assad's government.

I.5 Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that this research is able to bring significance to the International Relations study, particularly in the case of the United States military intervention. The writer expects this research could:

1. Add the understanding about how did the United States conduct the military intervention to the Syrian civil war to respond to Bashar Al-Assad’s governance in fulfilling its national interest.

I.6 Theoretical Framework

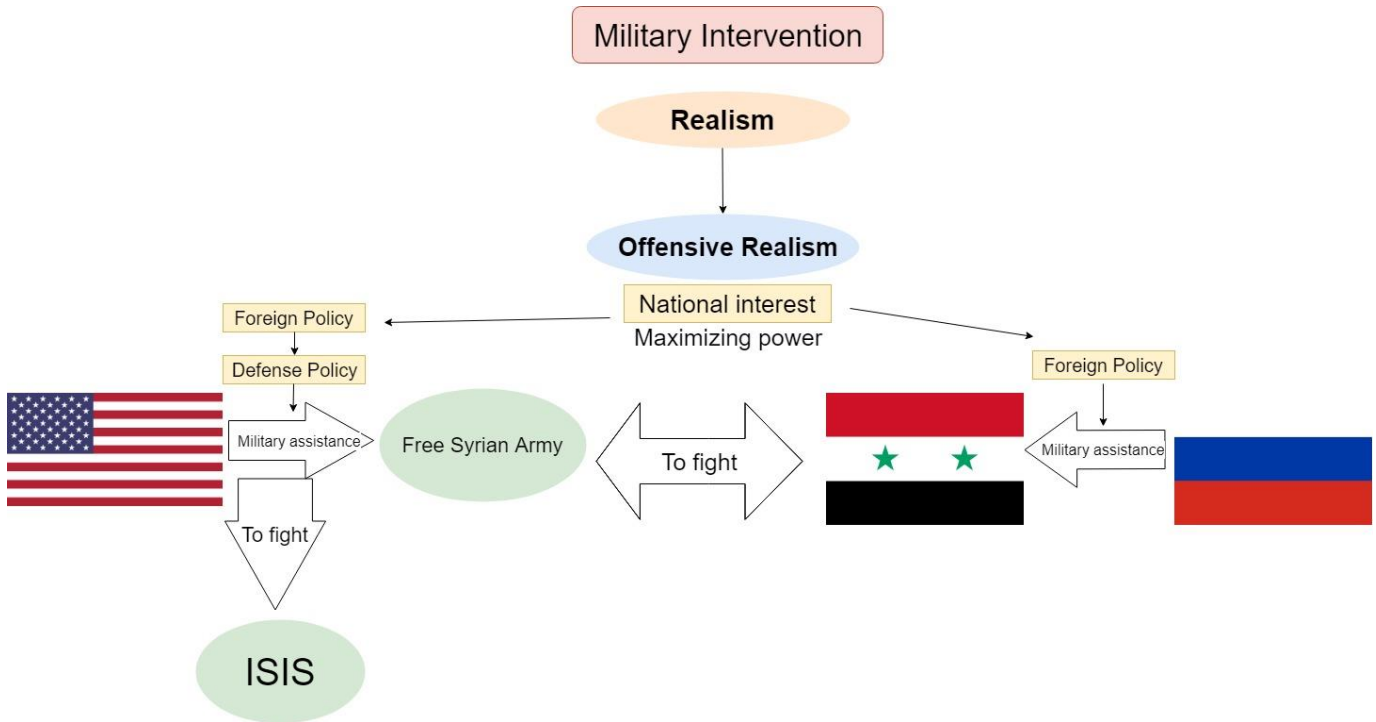


Figure 2: Theoretical framework diagram

In this particular research, the author of the thesis build a theoretical framework from the Realism theory and Offensive Realism concept. The author chooses Realism due to its explanation of international relations which is based on the international system concept. Later the writer will explain further on the international system aspect of Realism which will be the foundation of this thesis. In realism, there are several basic assumptions embraced by realism, one of which is national security in terms of military sector. The writer believes that Realism is very important in defining states' behaviour towards one another, especially in anarchic international system. The writer later will explain further on how Realism helps in explaining states' behaviour.

Thomas Hobbes a scientist and figure of medieval realism gave rise to thought through Leviathan, a paradigm of realism. He assumes that human is equal, human beings act in anarchy, and human beings are driven by competition, distrust and glory (Burchill, 2005). Hobbes argues that basically humans have the desire to conquer one another but he does not deny the existence of a peaceful state. From here arises from within man the sense of hostility and is exacerbated by the

existence of competition, distrust and glory. This is the basis of why war is difficult to avoid. This situation makes a country feel that it must have the power to prepare for the possibility of war. Because there is no limit on how much a country must be strong, then the state must continue to improve its military capabilities. This is called a security dilemma, which is when a country increases its security because of anxiety arising from the insecurity of other countries (Kegley, 1995).

The aim of the United States in the Syrian civil war is to eradicate ISIS, as written by United States Department of State concerning the relation between the United States and Syria; The United States government has supported the international community's efforts to work towards a negotiated political solution to the conflict under the auspices of UN Security Council Resolution 2254. After the rise of ISIS in 2014, the United States government has worked closely with the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS to achieve a lasting defeat of the terror group. Working by, with, and through local partners, the coalition is close to the complete defeat of ISIS in Syria (State, 2018). Between August 20-26 2018, coalition military forces conducted 18 strikes, consisting of 26 engagements, in Iraq and Syria. These strikes were conducted as part of Operation Inherent Resolve, the operation to destroy ISIS in Iraq and Syria. The destruction of ISIS targets in Iraq and Syria also further limits the group's ability to project terror and conduct external operations throughout the region and the rest of the world, task force officials said (Defense, 2018).

In realism point of view, although it was never recognized as a state, but by taking over Syria and Iraq, ISIS had a state aspect by *de facto*. The most difficult thing to fight ISIS is because they have weapons of war and the ability to fight anyway. ISIS is the strongest rebel in Syria. The capital obtained by ISIS to get its action is through the actions of individual donations from volunteers from various countries, kidnapping, controlling oil resources and selling the antiquities (CREST, 2016). This proposes war is viewed as the best strategy for counterbalancing the expanding intensity of psychological oppression in the Middle East and killing the danger that the Islamic State bunch presents not exclusively to Western states yet additionally to states in the area (Sandrina Antunes, 2018). But keep in mind that

although ISIS has claimed its territory, ISIS does not get recognition by the International Community as a country

United States foreign policy has demanded a balance of power between Iraq and Iran; at times, each has enjoyed the support in terms of military spending or weapon sales. With Iraq no longer a factor, Iran has emerged as theregional power. To keep that power in check and prevent Iran from expanding its influence moredeeply within the Middle East and beyond, balance of power geopolitics demands that we isolate Iran and diminish its ability to influence other states and non-state actors (Gerschwer, 2017).

For example, Iran relies on Syria to provide assistance to Hezbollah (Britel, 2015). Syria, which is the same as Iran, is equally hostile to Israel, Europe and the United States is a worthy destination to use military assets by the United States, so that this can be justified. After the change in revenue in Iraq, the United States has experience in gaining victory in an Arab country. The realist view must take into account the effects of the war in Syria, if not, then nothing will get (DePetris, 2017). If Assad falls and the position of president of Syria is empty, then who will fill it? What if the replacement is not in accordance with the wishes of the United States?

Besides seeing this case from the point of view of realism, the author uses the structural theory of realism namely offensive realism. Mearsheimer, who is also a neorealist, tried to present a new theory known as offensive realism. Mearsheimer stated, every country has a tendency to try to fulfill its national interests through efforts to find strength by achieving hegemony and dominance over other countries. Therefore it is necessary for each country to always improve its capabilities or strength in anticipation of the possibility of a war in the future (Mearsheimer J. J., *Structural Realism*, 2006).

Offensive realism sees that the basic structure of the international system forces countries to pay attention to their strength and security in order to compete with other countries in terms of strength. Their main goal is to maximize strength

in the world and dominate the system. This means that the most powerful country seeks the highest power so that no other state power dominates (Toft, 2005).

Offensive realism is a theory that sees a country from the strength of the country that is the maximum for the security of the country. The state will continue to seek power so that they believe in the security of their country under conditions of anarchy in the international system. Offensive realism explains how the state must carry out foreign policy. (Valeriano, 2009). Offensive realism focuses on the great power that aims to achieve the power of hegemony. If a country has the power of hegemony, the country can dominate the international world and it becomes a guarantee that a country can ensure its survival in an anarchist environment. Mearsheimer thought that because no country might achieve the power of hegemony, the world was enveloped by competition and warfare (Toft, 2005).

Competition and fighting against the strength of the United States military power with its enemy state are very clear in the Syrian conflict. Russian and Iranian military support to Syrian government forces was rewarded by United States military support for opposition groups to defeat one another. What the United States does is a form of effort to achieve the power of hegemony caused by feelings of being threatened by the power of other countries (Turner, 2013).

I.6.1 National Interest

United States military intervention to Syria is based on its national interests. National interests refer to power, where most developed countries invest their role in matters of global scope. So from that national interest is closely related to foreign policy. National interests consist of objectives that selected for the country, then the selected objectives become the priority of the country, becoming national interests (Meilinda, 2013). The national interests of the United States include:

”National Security - to protect vital interests and secure peace; deter aggression; prevent, defuse, and manage crises; halt the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and advance arms control and disarmament (Government, 2002).

- *Regional Stability - Ensure that local and regional instabilities do not threaten the security and well-being of the United States or its allies.*
- *Weapons of Mass Destruction - Reduce the threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction.*

Economic Prosperity - To expand exports and open markets, assist American Business, foster economic growth, and promote sustainable development.

- *Open Markets - Open world markets to increase trade and free the flow of goods, services and capital*
- *U.S. Exports - Expand U.S. exports to \$1.2 trillion early in the 21st century.*
- *Global Economic Growth - Increase global economic growth and stability.*
- *Economic Development - Promote broad-based, sustainable growth in developing countries and transitional economies.*

Law Enforcement - To combat international terrorism, crime, and narcotics trafficking.

- *Countering Terrorism - Reduce international terrorist attacks, especially on the United States and its citizens.*
- *International Crime - Minimize the impact of international crime on the United States and its citizens.*
- *Countering Illegal Drugs - Reduce the entry of illegal drugs into the United States.*

Democracy - To support the establishment and consolidation of democracies, and uphold human rights.

- *Democracy & Human Rights - A worldwide community of democracies where human rights, including worker rights, and religious freedom are universally respected.*

Humanitarian Response - To provide humanitarian assistance to victims of crises and disaster.

- *Humanitarian Assistance - Prevent or minimize the human costs of conflicts and natural disasters.*

Global Issues: Environment, Population and Health - To improve the global environment, foster a healthy and educated world population, and protect human health.

- *Environment - Secure a sustainable global environment to protect U.S. citizens and interests from the effects of international environmental degradation.*

- *Population - Achieve a healthy and educated world population.*
- *Health - Improve global health for a more secure world (Government, 2002)."*

In addition to national interests, what underlies the United States of America to intervene in Syria is foreign policy. Policy or foreign policy is not a definition, but this concept is in accordance with the needs or interests of each country. However, in general it can be said that foreign policy is a policy taken by the government of a country or other political community in relations with the state and non-state actors in the international world. Foreign policy bridges domestic and international boundaries. Foreign policy can be diplomatic relations, issuing doctrines, making alliances, proclaiming long-term and short-term goals (Sandi, 2017). Beyond the foreign policy crisis during President Obama's eight-year rule, the Syrian civil war raises questions about whether the United States has a different plan to prevent the situation from worsening. Can the United States prevent this conflict from happening continuously as its main goals?

I.6.2 Defense Policy

National defense is essentially the condition of a nation that describes the ability to overcome all kinds of threats, challenges, obstacles and disturbances. Factors that strengthen national resilience of a nation are ideology, politics, socio-cultural, economic and defense security (Widiuseno, 2018). United States' defense policy by Barack Obama after he took office were announced in 2010 by issuing Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), National Security Strategy (NSS), and National Military Strategy (NMS) (Security Environment Surrounding Japan, 2016).

QDR noted the role of the Department of Defense to protect the United States and its allies and use the military's ability to achieve its national interests. QDR indicates that the United States together with its allies have the ability and desire to use military forces if they are in need. The United States also considers them to have the capacity to make unilateral decisions if they are appropriate (DoD, 2010). The United States will continue to have the strongest role but must

continue to work with its allied countries to maintain stability and peace (Security Environment Surrounding Japan, 2016).

The National Security Strategy (NSS) issued by Barack Obama places the United States to protect its national interests with sustainable and strong leadership. This is to maintain principles and priorities to be used as guidelines for the use of strength and influence of the United States in the world. This signifies the determination and readiness of the United States to prevent or if necessary defeat the enemy (Department of Defense, 2015). While the Nuclear Posture Review describes the application of the president Obama's agenda to reduce nuclear risks and dangers to the United States, its allies, and countries in the international community. Prevention of nuclear terror is the top agenda in this defense strategy (Department of Defense, 2010).

Another case with the National Military Strategy, this describes how the United States uses its troops to advance and protect national interests. The United States feels that it must adapt to new threats quickly while still maintaining its superiority (DoD, 2015). Of all the defense strategies issued by Obama, it can be concluded that the aim is to protect, launch and maintain military action with allied countries. This was also done for its military action in Syria.

One example is the United States managed to establish a strong defense and financial system and maintain it, so that its national goals were achieved. With sophisticated military equipment, the United States has the ability to maintain the defense of its national territory. But it is required a good financial arrangement then the United States has its defense policies and strategies as attached by the Department of Defense;

To be efficient on the battlefield, we have to be efficient with our money. The DOD is working to better manage costs by:

- *Acquiring equipment and services more efficiently.*
- *Consolidating and streamlining contracts.*
- *Reducing management overhead.*
- *Reducing or getting rid of organizations and systems that overlap too much.*

- *Getting rid of unnecessary property and infrastructure* (Langie, 2016).

The United States Defense Strategy has been summarized by the United States Department of Defense through the following picture:

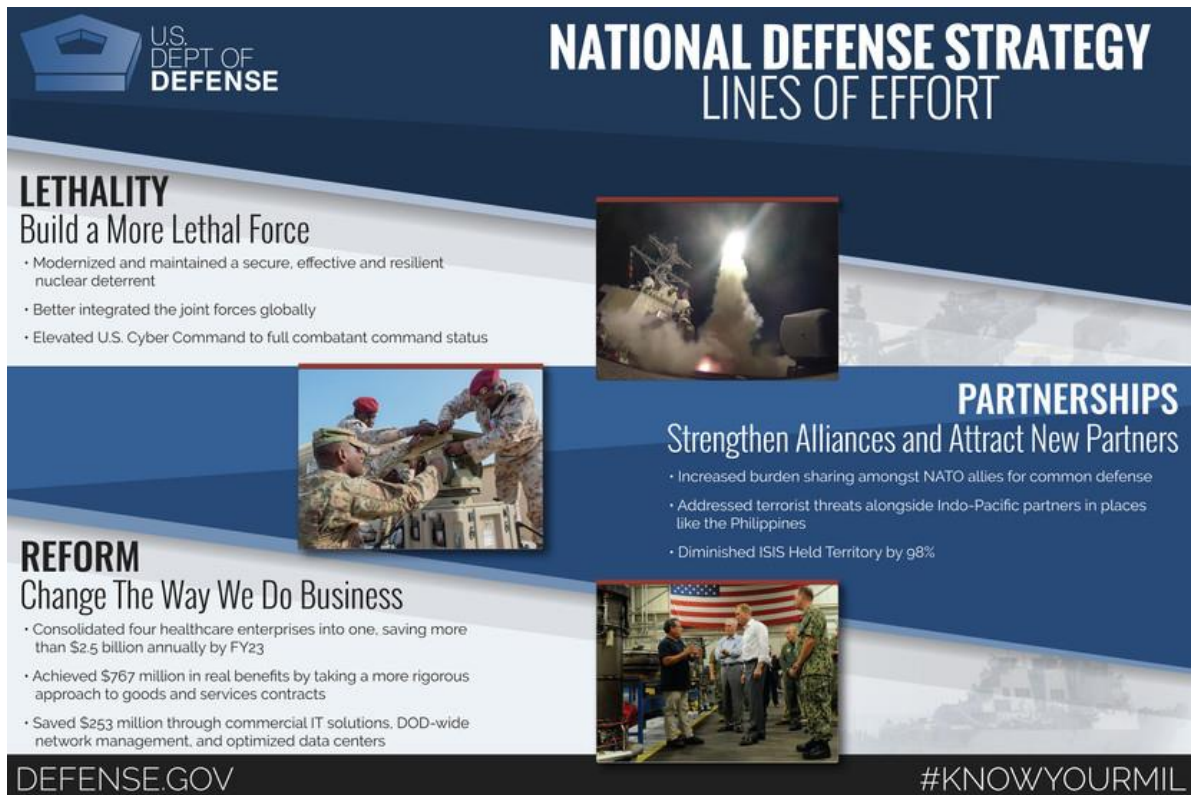


Figure 3: National Defense Strategy lines of effort graphic (Ali, 2016).

The logic is, the stronger a country (relative to each of its competitors), the less likely the survival is threatened. For example, no Western country dares to attack the United States, because the country is too strong compared to any of its neighbors. The reason is to be able to move the things that exist in the world and prevent other countries from having great power too. The goal is hegemon, which is the only greatest power in the system (Mearsheimer J. J., Structural Realism, 2006). Whatever is applied by the United States in its national interests or in its foreign policy, certainly is a form of achieving the survival and purpose of the United States.

I.6.3 Foreign Policy towards Syria

Offensive realism describes the United States as a force of hegemony whose foreign policy goals are to maintain the status quo of the international system and prevent the emergence of hegemony in other countries. The main objective is to promote peace and stability in the world (Prifti, 2014). On April 30th 2013 at the White House, the United States former president, Barack Obama confirms that Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad must step down to stop the conflict in the country. According to Obama, this is the only way to end the Syrian war. As mentioned in the conference;

“My policy from the beginning has been that (Syrian) president had lost credibility that he attacked his own people, has killed his own people unleashed their military against innocent civilians and that the only way to bring stability and peace to Syria is gonna be Assad to step down,” (Obama B. , 2013)

On September 11st 2013, Obama gave nationally televised speech stating the case for United States action in Syria. The contents of the speech are as follows;

“My fellow Americans, tonight I wanna talk to you about Syria. Why it matters, and why we go from here. Over the past two years, what began is a serious and peaceful protest against the oppressive regime of President Bashar Al-Assad is turned into a brutal civil war. Over 100,000 people have been killed. Millions have fled the country. In that time, America’s worked with allies to provide humanitarian support to help the moderate oppositions and shape political settlement, but I have resisted calls from military action because we cannot resolve someone else’s civil war through force, particularly after a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. The situation profoundly changed, though, on August 21st when Assad’s government gassed to death over 1,000 people including hundreds of children. What kind of world will we live in if the United States sees a dictator brazenly violate international law with poison gas, and we choose to look the other way? (Obama B. , President Obama full Syria's speech, 2013)”

“We would have preferred Assad two years ago, last year, six months, two months, ago. Now there are while range of option that the United States is already engaged in, and I preserve the options of taking additional steps, both diplomatic and military, because those chemical weapons inside of Syria also threaten our security over the long term as well as our allies and friends and neighbours (Joyner, 2013)”

During his reign in the second period, President Obama tried to attract the United States from the threat of war in Syria. Obama was tired of the war and recalled resistance from Democrats and Republicans to added commitment in the Middle East, then he supported rebels fighting the government of Bashar Al-Assad's regime because Obama considered Assad had violated his 'red line'. One assumption that Assad had crossed the line was because Assad used chemical weapons against civilians (Nelson, 2018)

There are three broad outlines of foreign policy instruments that make the foreign policy move, namely diplomacy, foreign aid and the military movement. In the years following the Cold War, ideas about foreign policy were questioned. Everyone has different opinions about the United States must consider the right approach with the countries that are associated with it and its foreign policy on a global scale (Weltman-Fahs, 2017). One of the instruments of foreign policy that the United States applied to Syria was the military. This was done at the administration of President Obama to help the rebels have enough ability and equipment to rebel.

United States foreign policy determines how the United States relates to other countries, designed to seek strength to protect its national interests (CRF, 2019). For Syria, the United States determines its foreign policy by applying military force. It is evidenced by Obama's statement that formally blamed the Syrian government and requested congressional approval to move the military in Syria (Inskeep, 2016). United States foreign policy to Syria was first initially scheduled by diplomacy (Mir H. Sadat, 2017), but Obama assumed that Assad had passed the 'red line' which required him to make a decision to deploy his military intervention to Syria (Goldberg, 2016). So Obama applied his foreign policy through defense policy, due to his foreign policy using military forces. The United States defense policy is the choice to use force to prevent some groups from using deadly methods of destruction in order to change the political behavior of these groups (History, 2003).

I.6.4 Military Intervention

Realists assume that the state system in the international world is anarchic, so no one can control a country regarding these national obligations. States will act as they please to protect their national interests and security (Roche, 2018). They only pursue their own national interests, and those national interests become the interests of their citizens. Military intervention sometimes even takes the name of humanitarian intervention so that the action to intervene in other countries makes more sense (White L. , 2015).

Offensive realism focuses on big powers such as the United States and Russia. The reason is because the wealth of all countries is determined by a country that has the greatest strength. Great power is judged from a country that has adequate military capability to fight a strong state. No need to win but must be able to change conflicts that weaken the power of leaders (Mearsheimer J. , *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 2001). An example is by conducting international military intervention described by the deployment of troops from one country to another in the context of disputes or political problems (Pearson, 1987).

The United States intervened in the Syrian conflict by deploying military forces and providing financial assistance to the rebels to undermine the regime of Bashar Al-Assad. This is because of fulfilling its national interests. Another example is when European countries intervene militarily to Libya, the European countries fear Gaddafi will win. If that happens, the natural resources possessed by European countries will disappear and be controlled by mastering chemical weapons (Kazianis, 2011). In addition to carrying out attacks on Syria directly, the United States also carried out military assistance to non-state actors, namely rebel groups as their military intervention. The reason the United States can be justified is to carry out counterterrorism actions such as fighting ISIS and protecting civilians (Watson, 2018).

There are several assumptions from structural realists, one of which is the assumption that all countries have offensive military capabilities. Every country has the power to cause harm to other countries (Mearsheimer J. J., 2006). In this case we can see that military intervention by the United States to Syria could endanger

Syrian security. The United States clearly uses weapons to help rebels fight the Syrian government and carry out military attacks.

And from offensive realism there is also the argument that the state must always look for opportunities to gain more power. The state must maximize power to achieve hegemony, because it is the best way to maintain survival (Mearsheimer J. J., 2006). If not diplomacy, the decision to use military power is carried out on the Syrian battlefield to prevent any influence and achieve hegemony in the Middle East (Pecastaing, 2018).

The theory put forward by Mearsheimer can explain also on why did the United States always sent troops to fight in Europe and Asia. Because every time a competitor has a potential power in the region, the United States tries to check and maintain its position as the only regional hegemon country in the world (Lieber, 2002). For example, the United States had provided weapons assistance to mujahideen in Afghanistan in the 1980s. It aims to provide protection for Afghans from attacks by Soviet forces. With this, the United States was able to weaken the rival superpower until the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan ten years later (Watson, 2018). In 2017 it has been counted for 14 years since the United States launched a military invasion by reason of weapons of mass destruction and massacres of people in Iraq. Not only Iraq, Libya and now Syria are the same place to launch military action. The United States government plans another military action in the Middle East to secure US hegemony in the region and to hit back on its regional rivals, Russia and Iran (North, 2017).

The same case happened in Syria, when there were several countries that helped Bashar Al-Assad to survive, one of which was Iran. With its military intervention in Syria, the United States has the opportunity to reduce Iran's influence in Arab countries (Michael Doran, 2012). The main goal of the United States in Syria has become more extensive and complicated, which was to keep its allies on the battlefield. This led to a direct conflict with other forces, such as Russia. The proof is that the United States has killed dozens of Russian military contractors in air strikes (Hill, 2018).

I.7 Scope and Limitation of Study

This thesis will primarily focus on the United States military intervention to Syrian war in how did its military interfere Syria as its national interest. And hence the research will have several limitations:

1. The research will emphasize on the United States and Syria as the main actors based on the view that both countries are the actors that mobilize each military forces in the same region, while ISIS and Free Syrian Army (FSA) as the secondary actors that become United States' foreign policy and national interest as it supported FSA in troops equipment and taking a military action to Syria.
2. The research will be limited within the time frame of 2011-2017. This time was when United States former president, Barack Obama made policy to attack Syria during Bashar Al-Assad's administration.

I.8 Structure of the Thesis

1.8.1 Chapter I – Introduction

Chapter I aims to introduce the thesis to readers by providing the background, identification, and also focus of the problem. This chapter is the foundation of the further discussion in the next chapters, and hence readers are expected to be able to catch a preview of what is being discussed in this thesis from this chapter.

1.8.2 Chapter II – The War Situation in Syria (2011-2017)

This chapter discusses the conflict in Syria where Syria is also affected by the Arab Spring that has hit several Arab countries and how the Syrian government is facing and overcoming Syrian protests. The writer examines the issue of Syrian war under Bashar Al-Assad's administration as well as the United States under Barack Obama's administration as both of countries leader were in office in the limitation year 2011-2017.

1.8.3 Chapter III – United States’ Foreign Policy and Defence Policy in Syrian War and Its Relation to Syrian Government

This chapter discusses United States’s foreign policy in the Syrian civil war. The writers explores the foreign policy of United States to Syrian civil war on what is the main purpose of the foreign policy and how did United States apply it to Syrian war during Bashar Al-Assad’s administration.

1.8.4 Chapter IV – United States Military Intervention in Syrian War during the Regime of Bashar Al-Assad

This chapter aims to discuss military intervention of United States to Syrian civil war which became a new case that the United States could mobilize its military forces to impress. This chapter asseses the activities of United States military forces in Syrian civil war started in 2011 until 2017.

1.8.5 Chapter V – Conclusion

This chapter serves as the conclusion ans the summary of the research in this thesis.

CHAPTER II

The War Situation in Syria

II.1 The Beginning of War

The conflict and war in Syria was originated from the Arab Spring wave which has deposed several leaders of countries in the Middle East. Arab Spring or Arab Awakening is a wave of revolution that occurred in 2010 to 2011 in several North African and Middle Eastern countries which were regulated to depose strong regimes in their respective countries. The regime had the power to lead the country for quite a long time. Countries that were experiencing the wave of the Arab Spring revolution were Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Syria. The government's reaction to the demonstration is divided into three forms, namely the first is to resign from the chair of the state leader, the second is to carry out social, economic and political reforms and the third is using violence in the hope the people will stop the protest (Marian Zuber, 2018).

Starting with a fruit seller in Tunisia named Mohammed Bouazizi who on December 17, 2010 was selling fruit. But by local government officials, he was considered to be selling illegally. Because of the economic problems that hit, he was frustrated and burned himself to death (Abusharif, 2014). There were several reasons why the demonstrators wanted him to step down. Among them was the problem of unresolved unemployment and the luxurious lifestyle of Zainal Abidin bin Ali in the midst of the economic condition of Tunisia which was in a downturn (Asadaf Farooq, 2017). In January 14th 2011, Zainal Abidin bin Ali was forced out from the chair of Tunisian president (Davies, 2014).

The same thing happened in Egypt, Libya and Yemen. Hosni Mubarak had to step down from Egypt's presidency after taking office from 1981. Likewise with Libyan state leader Muammar Gaddafi who was even killed on October 20, 2011 during the Battle of Sirte by the National Transitional Council (NTC) militant. Until

Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had ruled Yemen for 33 years, had to hand over power to vice president Abdrabuh Mansur Hadi (Marian Zuber, 2018).

Residents expressed dissatisfaction with the government through demonstrations taking to the streets and enlivening social media such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter so they could communicate easily. This can create awareness of other net citizens so that they participate in this movement (E, 2015). The Arab Spring made a rock revolutionary movement, using the internet and social media to spread and promote the rebel agenda. Social media that are able to influence public opinion, spread messages quickly, and be able to obtain international support, become a new phenomenon for the revolutionary movement (Lindsey, 2019). The network of groups formed online plays a very important role, especially when there were protests in Egypt (Sahar, 2011).

Social media, the internet and cellular technology were encouraging mass protest and voicing demands to be heard globally, pioneering citizens, the mass media and activists for freedom of expression. Middle Eastern countries at that time were facing opposition criticism, activists and citizen journalists who emerged after decades of authoritarian rule (Ghannam, 2015). When news of the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt spread to Syria, activists looked for ways to get the Arab Spring wave to reach Syria. Senior intellectuals think that this is too early, but the youth believe this is their only chance (Hanano, 2012).

In recent years, the government of Bashar Al-Assad tried to carry out economic, political and institutional reforms. But the reform was failed. At that time more than 25% of youth were unemployed and as much as 40% of the Syrian population experienced poverty. That caused many Syrians to immigrate to neighboring countries to live better lives (Alrifai, 2017). The activist and critics determined it as a failure and wanted the fall of the regime.

Young activists and teenagers were inspired by the Arab Spring waves they heard from the media, then wrote graffiti on the wall that read "Freedom. Down with the regime. Your turn, Doctor," which refers to Bashar Al-Assad. Mouawiya Syasneh was a teenager who at that time wrote the graffiti (France-Presse, 2018).

Shortly after Syasneh wrote the graffiti, the Syrian military intelligence agency, Mukhabarat, came to their house. Syasneh and his friends were arrested who made people take to the streets demanding that they be released. After 26 days, they were sent home battered (Ensor, 2017). The teenagers who were tortured made people want to protest peacefully, but the action was responded to by government bullets and tear gas (Haboush, 2018). Security forces used tear gas so the protesters disperse. But they did not disperse and the security forces fired ammunition at the crowd (hrw, 2011).

In the summer of 2011, the opposition increasingly prepared itself. Resistance to the government using weapons was first carried out in June. According to the Institute for the Study of War, protesters set fire to a building in the city of Jisr al-Shughour, took over a police station and killed eight security officers. The Syrian government is trying to get the opposition out of the area using artillery and tanks, but the resistance from the opposition is still continued (The Week, 2019).

II.1.2 The Cause of War

The significant cause of the Syrian war is the different interests of countries which were involved in the war. The desire of the United States and its allies to depose Assad is not the same as Russia and Iran's desire to defend Assad. As an example, there are differences in the interests of the United States and Russia in this conflict. Russian interests are considered dangerous to the United States and its allies, and vice versa. The United States states that its interests in Syria are only to defeat ISIS, but apparently there are other interests that represent its national interests (Patty, 2018). The United States and its allies want Assad to step down, while Assad will not allow that to happen because he thinks Syria will never fall into the hands of the West to become a Puppet State (Al-Assad, 2013). Syria is very important for regional interests and it will make regional ambitions in the United States and its allies threatened (Bremmer, 2018).

The Middle East is a region rich in oil resources. Because the economy depends on fossil fuels, oil is therefore important in the economy. This can also explain the presence of the United States in the Middle East. Can be seen from

various regime changes in Middle Eastern countries directed by other countries, especially the United States (Shehzadi, 2017). Western countries have a gas pipeline called Arab Gas Pipeline. They aim to expand the pipeline to be able to bring gas from the Middle East to European countries. The gas pipeline will provide dominating power to the United States and its allies to the gas supply in the region (Minium, 2018).

Before to the war, two different gas pipelines were proposed by Iran and Qatar aimed at bringing gas through Syria to Europe. Qatar first proposed its plan in 2009, in which the gas pipeline will facilitate cheaper oil access to Europe. But Bashar Al-Assad refused the gas pipeline to pass through Syria (Engdahl, 2018). The gas pipeline will be built and is located 3000 meters below the Persian Gulf. Qatar has about two-thirds of its resources but cannot use it to the fullest because Qatar uses tanks to carry it to other countries, and this is what causes the price to be more expensive than resources from Russia (Chang, 2015).



Figure 4: Qatar pipeline (Chang, 2015).

Meanwhile, Iran proposed the construction of a gas pipeline from the Persian Gulf gas fields to Europe through Iraq and Syria under the Mediterranean

Sea. This plan provides benefits for Russia because it can have a major influence on the United States, Qatar and its allies. Assad signed the submission in 2012 but until 2016, construction was delayed due to the Arab Spring and the Syrian war (Chang, 2015).



Figure 5: Iran pipeline (Chang, 2015).

Conflicts occurred between countries that have different interests. Saudi Arabia, Qatar and other Gulf countries which are allies of the United States, want a regime change. These countries do not want Iranian influence in the strategic region and try to reduce Iranian hegemony (Rais, 2013). In an interview with a Russian newspaper called Izvestia, here is the statement of President Bashar Al-Assad to the parties in his opposition;

”To be very precise, I am referring to the West and not all world leaders, if these western leaders are looking to achieve their interests, they need to listen to their own constituents and to the people in this region rather than seeking to install ‘puppet’ leaders, in the hope that they would be able to deliver their objectives. In doing so, western policy may become more realistic in the region. Our message to the world is straightforward: Syria will never become a Western ‘puppet’ state. We are an independent country; we will fight terrorism and

we will freely build relationships with countries in a way that best serves the interests of the Syrian people (Al-Assad, 2013).”

II.2 Parties Involved in War

During the seven years of the Syrian war, the war has involved many countries. The countries involved gave weapons, bombing tools and mercenaries. The war became increasingly complicated over time which threatened the future of Syria, which was largely determined by parties outside the borders of the country (Kalamur, The Syrian War is Actually Many Wars, 2018). Russia, Iran, Hezbollah, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey were involved. The situation was getting worse because there were dozens of rebel groups fighting the Syrian government group, the Bashar Al-Assad regime (Zourthian, 2015). The parties involved explanation in this war are divided into state and non-state actors.

II.2.1 State Actors

The state actors in this war were other countries who came to be directly involved. A country or state is the control of a specified area or a sovereign territory. A country consists of executives, bureaucracies and other institutions. The important thing from a country is that the state operates military forces (GPF, 2005). Here are the countries directly involved in the Syrian war.

II.2.1.1 Russia

Russia owns and maintains a Soviet naval maintenance site near Tartus, a city on the Mediterranean coast of Syria, which is the only Russian military grip on the Mediterranean (Global Security, 2019). Since 1967, in the era of the Soviet Union, Soviet ships were placed along the Mediterranean sea and some other ships were placed in the Indian Ocean. But since the defeat of the Soviet Union, many of these ships have been returned to Russia (Al-Marhoun, 2014). Under the 1971 agreement, Soviet-era facilities were operated by Soviet personnel (Global Security, 2019).

Which led to the development of relations between the Soviet Union and Syria, one of which was the leadership of Hafez Al-Assad in Syria in 1970. After receiving his power, Hafez Al-Assad visited Moscow as his first visit to a foreign country on 1-3 February 1971. This visit became the key to the importance of

Soviet-Syrian relations. At that time, the Soviets and Syrians had 15 years of military and economic cooperation, but Hafez Al-Assad managed to increase cooperation between them to a higher level. Syria received a lot of military and economic assistance from Syria after Hafez Al-Assad came to power. Because Hafez Al-Assad understands Soviet interests in the Middle East, namely naval and air bases and hearing stations in the heart of the Middle East (Elvin Aghayev, 2012).

At the end of the Cold War, the Russian-Syrian partnership relationship was tenuous. However, after Russian President Vladimir Putin and Syrian president Bashar Al-Assad took office in 2000, Russia-Syria relations have returned tightly. At the start of his presidency, Putin closed Russian military bases in Vietnam and Cuba which made the military supply base in Tartus the only Russian military post outside of post-Soviet territory. The base is one of the symbols of diplomatic and military relations for the two countries (Florence Gaub, 2013).

On March 21, 2010, Russia and Syria signed a cultural cooperation program for the period 2010-2012. The cooperation program document was signed by Russian Minister of Culture Alexander Aydeyev and Naasan Aghna from the Suriha party based on the basic intergovernmental agreement on cultural and scientific cooperation in 1995. The then Russian president in 2010, Dmitry Medvedev, said that Russia and Syria must be more active in trade cooperation (Global Security, 2019). With the many collaborations carried out between Russia and Syria, proving that close cooperation relationships have been established from the Soviet Union.

Vladimir Putin has made his country one of the main actors of the Syrian war through military intervention and political maneuvering. Russian troops came to Syria in September 2015 to prevent regime changes by fighting opposition forces and to defeat ISIS. That year, Russian forces blocked all efforts by the United States, Saudi Arabia and others who wanted regime change and to defeat ISIS. Russian involvement then paid off after two years of fighting because Assad was still in power. But the war is still not over because of its focus on future political solutions (Trenin, 2017).

When he was asked about Russia's intervention in Syria, Bashar Al-Assad claimed that the Syrian government invited Russia to help fight ISIS and the opposition. As in an interview on NBC Nightly News with Bill Neely, the following answers were given by Bashar Al-Assad;

“They (Russia) are invited legally and formally by the Syrian government. It’s the right of any government to invite any other country to help in any issue so they are legal in Syria (Al-Assad, Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad: Exclusive Interview | NBC Nightly News, 2016).”

When the Syrian government lost much of its territory because it was captured by ISIS and opposition groups, Assad invited Russia to join the fight against ISIS and the armed opposition group (Habets, 2016). Homs was the first city in Syria that was successfully monitored by Russia. The rebels were brought to the north, to Ghouta, then the territory was captured. They used the same strategy in Aleppo and East Ghouta. Russia's firepower coupled with Syrian intentions helped to succeed in fighting over the territory (Alam, 2018).

II.2.1.2 Iran

Iran-Syria relations grow because they have a common goal. Since the Iranian revolution in 1979, regional powers from both countries have jointly gathered military resources and political influence to raise their positions, thwart enemy plans and build militia networks (Goodarzi, 2015). Relations between the two countries continue even though they have different ideologies. Many analysts are wondering how can an Iranian state which is a Revolutionary Islamic state be aligned with an Arab secular socialist country such as Syria. This difference does not seem to make their relationship shaky, as it is evidenced by more than thirty years of Syrian-Iranian relations that still survive today (Nasur, 2014). Syria is the first country in the Middle East to recognize the new government in Iran as the Islamic Republic as a positive development, especially if you see Iran's sympathy for Palestine. The same interests not only to Palestine, but also to Iraq and Lebanon, and opposition to Israel (Wastnidge, 2017).

In political and military developments in 2006, Iran and Syria formed a new military partnership to deal with threats from Israel and the United States. Najjar,

the Iranian Defense Minister said that Iran considers Syrian security as its own security. This means that Syria is a very important country for Iran in terms of geopolitics. The Revolutionary Guard commander, Iran's Armed Forces, argues the same as Najjar because if Terrorism is not eradicated in Syria, then terrorism will spread into Iran (Yolcu, 2016).

Iran provided political support to the regime of Bashar Al-Assad and ignored popular opposition from Arab Muslim countries. If Iran does not support Bashar Al-Assad's regime, Iran can not guarantee whether Syria is led by another, Iran-Syria relations are still going well (Nasur, 2014). Iran sent military equipment, billions of dollars worth of money and military advisers to protect Iran's interests in Syria. Iran created the National Defense Forces, a group of Shia, Alawite and people loyal to the regime of as many as 80,000 to help the Syrian army fight. The Bashar Al-Assad regime had suffered a setback in 2014 because extremist groups had sprung up, especially ISIS which succeeded in seizing Syria in the west and north. But Iran continues to support Syria because if Assad falls, Iran will find it increasingly difficult to fight its regional rival Saudi Arabia (Goodarzi, 2015).

II.2.1.3 United States

The United States is part of an international coalition that supports and provides weapons assistance to opposition groups that have the aim of ousting Bashar Al-Assad. The United States did this because they always lose when they were fighting against Assad's troops and ISIS. Even radical groups like ISIS could easily enter Syrian territory. The United States sent advisers to Syria aimed at supporting local allies who seized territory when ISIS was collapsing (National, 2018).

At the end of 2011 to July 2012, the United States had ordered diplomats and ambassadors to return home. A month later, Barack Obama said if the Syrian government uses chemical and biological weapons, the United States would reconsider its decision regarding military involvement in Syria. Obama announced he would ask Congress to choose military force by using what was right to respond to chemical weapons allegedly used by Bshar Al-Assad (Editor, 2017). In addition to fighting the Assad army, the goal of the United States to Syria is to fight ISIS in

Iraq and Syria. Barack Obama issued an air campaign in Syria one month after launching air strikes on Iraq. Then at the end of 2015, the United States Army was the first to emerge in Syria. What they were doing was organizing, recruiting and advising thousands of Syrian and Kurdish Arab fighters, also encouraging ISIS to be expelled from their fortifications (Press, 2018).

President Barack Obama based the legitimacy of the United States military offensive with the consideration of defending and protecting allied countries in areas close to Syria such as Jordan and Israel (Vyer, 2015). In December 2016, Obama said that the approach that the United States did to Syria was an action to end the conflict but was impossible without military intervention. The United States would continue to ask the UN Security Council to increase shipments of humanitarian aid to civilians in Aleppo and also to monitor the possibility of using chemical weapons in Syria (Roberta Rampton, 2016).

II.2.2 Non-State Actors

Non-state actors are defined as specialized organizations that are capable and willing to use violence and weapons to achieve their goals. They have a certain degree of autonomy related to the military, politics, infrastructure, and resources. These groups received support from state actors quietly or openly, as happened with militias, mercenaries and paramilitaries (Claudia Hofmann, 2011). Here are non-state actors involved in the Syrian war directly.

II.2.2.1 Hezbollah

Hezbollah is a Shia Muslim political party and militant group from Lebanon. The United States and the European Union consider this as a terrorist group. Hezbollah gained support from Iran and Syria so as to be able to maintain a broad security task, maintain political organizations and maintain social service networks in Lebanon (Jonathan Masters, 2014). The name Hezbollah became increasingly known when it succeeded in preventing the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 2006. Hezbollah could also be regarded as a political and military organization but its affiliates were also strong as Shiite Islamic religious organizations. Since the spring of 2013, Hezbollah has fought in Syria on the side of the Syrian government. If the Syrian government changes, this is a worrying important factor for Hezbollah. If the

Syrian government falls, the new ruler who will replace the government in Syria which is potentially formed from the opposition cannot be guaranteed to support Hezbollah. This was clear because opposition leaders condemned the Iranian and Hezbollah movements in Syria (Tokmajyan, 2014).

Sitting quietly and doing nothing when Bashar Al-Assad was threatened by extremist groups and rebels, for Hezbollah it was not their choice. Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah said,

” Syria is the backbone of the resistance, and the support of the resistance. The resistance cannot sit with its hands crossed while its backbone is made vulnerable and its support is being broken, or else we will be stupid (Pollak, 2016).”

In 2016, Hezbollah forces accounted for 7,000 plus a reserve army of 20,000. The group has several types of weapons, for example Ktyushas, which are long-barreled missile launchers and long-range missiles. The missiles are made in Iran, for example Fajr-3 which can reach 45 kilometers, Fajr-5 which can reach as far as 75 kilometers and Zelzal-2 can reach as far as 200-400 kilometers equipped with high-strength warheads weighing 600 kilograms (Janabi, 2016). In addition to the weapons already mentioned, Hezbollah also has guided missiles called the Fateh-110 / M-600, Shahab-1 and Shahab-2 short-range ballistic missiles, chemical weapons, Toophan anti-tank missiles and unmanned armed Karrar drone missiles. Apart from being sent to Syria, these weapons have the potential to be produced to Syria which will make Syria an important transit country (Jones, 2018).

Hezbollah forces increased operational combat capability in mid-2014 because it faced another dilemma, the rise of ISIS. At that time Hezbollah expanded its area of war against ISIS and deployed its forces to the northern part of Syria, namely Aleppo. The group declared war on ISIS on 10 June 2015 through a statement put forward by Nasrullah (Suechika, 2018). Hezbollah with support from the Russian artillery battalion against ISIS in the southern villages of the city of al-Bab and in the northeast of Aleppo. Hezbollah forces, Russia and Syrian government forces succeeded in seizing control of Aleppo in al-Raqqa in early 2017 (syriahr, 2017).

II.2.2.2 Free Syrian Army

The Free Syrian Army (FSA) was led by Colonel Riad Al-Assad and was formed in August 2011 by defectors of the Syrian government based in Turkey. After the FSA was formed, armed groups began to emerge from other countries. But at the beginning of the formation of the FSA, its leaders did not have any control in any region in Syria. The FSA began to get support from opposition Western and Gulf Arabs in December 2012 with support for FSA leaders and the Supreme Military Council (SMC) was formed (Editor, Guide to the Syrian rebels, 2013). Brigadier General Salim Idriss, who served as chief of staff of the FSA and SMC until February 2014 was replaced by Brigadier General Abdullah al-Bashir but since that change, there was a split in the FSA. Some FSA members still want to follow General Idriss while some of them support General al-Bashir (START, 2015).

Their numbers were increasing because they were added by thousands of volunteers. Some of them defend their city from regimes that they consider as brutal government and some of them were also motivated by the ideology of opposition that is different from the secular Bashar Al-Assad (Manfreda, 2019). To fight Assad forces or the Syrian government, the FSA uses a guerrilla military strategy that targeted the control, logistics and command of the Assad forces (START, 2015).

The FSA also got weapons and financial assistance from other countries such as United States and Saudi Arabia. In 2012, Saudi Arabia stated that providing weapons assistance to the Syrian government opposition group was a good idea, followed by Qatar and Kuwait who agreed to provide weapons as assistance for the Syrian opposition (Pike, 2017). Saudi Arabia understood how to get weapons and move it, and Saudi Arabia also had enough cash. If Saudi Arabia wants to give weapons to opposition groups, which would be easy to do (Schanzer, 2012). In the winter of 2012-2013, the FSA managed to win against Assad's forces because at that time Assad's troops were lacking in labor which caused their performance to be not optimal on the battlefield. The SMC gives command to all scattered FSAs to maximize air power to defeat the Assad regime (Lister C. , The Free Syrian Army: A decentralized insurgent brand, 2016).

II.2.2.3 Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is a terrorist organization which located and centered in the Middle East. This group, which can be called by other names, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), has the aim of establishing a caliphate in the world. ISIS gained worldwide attention because it succeeded in conquering several territories in Syria and Iraq through tactics using violence. Some terrorist groups, for example, Abu Sayyaf from the Philippines, are willing to be loyal to ISIS (Galang, 2015).

ISIS was given the title of terrorist groups by the United States, Saudi Arabia, the European Union, the United Nations and others. This group was led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, whose real name was Awwad Ibrahim al-Badri al-Samarrai. He had studied at the University of Baghdad and was registered as a terrorist by the United Nations in 2011 (Kumar, 2015).

ISIS members have skills in the IT field. By using videos to promote their groups, they show their operations throughout the world. ISIS members are active on Facebook and Twitter and use the hashtag features, images and links so that their promotions are widely spread. One way is to make video interviews with their prisoners so that people believe that their group is not a blood group. Many ISIS members are able to speak many languages, for example Arabic, English, German and French (Luna Shamieh, 2015).

ISIS relocated their forces to Syria to take advantage of the chaos in Syria. Some areas were successfully controlled by ISIS. The first area was on the border of Iraq and Syria in the city of Mosul, the third largest city in Iraq. ISIS forces roared along the Euphrates river to the Turkish border and took control in the southern city of Raqqa. This proves that fighting ISIS is not easy (Shapiro, 2018). The ISIS military had succeeded in making changes in the Middle East and giving encouragement to other radical groups to exploit and expand regional influence. One of the factors that helped the success of ISIS and other jihadist organizations, was the weakness of the network structure that made ISIS easy to move and operate (Kobi Michael, 2014).

In the source of income, ISIS obtained money from oil, kidnapping, extortion, taxation and smuggling became their financial resources. Controlling gas and oil is a potentially high income for ISIS. In 2015, ISIS took over the main oil controls in Syria and Iraq, for example the Jafra, al-Omar, Ajil in Iraq and Jeribe regions in Syria (Saphiro, 2015). ISIS finance relies on conquered territory and exploits its natural resources. ISIS describes its financial strategies as follows: “The wealth of the State is the principal component and source of financing for all internal and external operations, and the existence of secure financial resources whose value does not change in every time and place is a must (CAT, 2015).”

The battle against ISIS had become increasingly complicated since the end of 2014. The United States is leading an international coalition against ISIS. The international collision consists of 60 countries. The actions taken include blocking and flowing funds from foreign fighters from other countries. Several countries such as France, Britain, Australia, helped launch air strikes on Iraq and Syria. There were also those who provide humanitarian assistance and bring refugees to safer places, and provided weapons or training to fighters in Iraq and Syria (Boghaani, 2016).

II.3 Cities that Flared Up during War

Damascus, Homs, Aleppo and other cities in Syria have become battlefields for the opposition and the government which caused the human tragedy to be brought to its population. The consequences of war include the destruction of residents' dwellings, as well as markets and public services. Not a few people left their homes to flee to other countries. The consequences of the war are clearly significant (Grunewald, 2013). The following will explain which cities are the battlefield in the Syrian war.

II.3.1 Homs

Homs is the third largest city after Damascus and Aleppo. Homs is located in the west of Syria which is central and connects North and South of Syria. The city is close to the Mediterranean and Lebanon. Homs was dubbed the "House of Peace" and "City of Khalid bin al-Walid", namely an important Islamic religious leader (Azzouz, 2018). Before the war, Homs had a population of around 700,000 (BBC, Homs: Syrian revolution's fallen 'capital', 2015).

Protests took place for the first time in Homs a few weeks after protests in the city of Daraa in March 2011. Syrian government security officers built a blockade so that the street march of the demonstrators failed to take place. Then people tore up posters that displayed portraits of Bashar Al-Assad and his father, Hafez Al-Assad, in downtown Homs (Sam Dagher, 2014). Thousands of Homs residents demonstrated in April 2011 but received reprisals, namely physical actions by security officers killing dozens of people. A month later, tanks arrived at Homs and this was the first time the opposition in the city of Homs held a weapon to avenge the treatment of security officers from the government and attack them. In February 2012, Syrian government forces launched an operation to destroy resistance in Homs. One of the districts in Homs, Baba Amr, became a battlefield of bombings during the war for one month without stopping. At that time an estimated 700 people died (BBC, Homs: Syrian revolution's fallen 'capital', 2015).

65% of the population of Homs are Sunni, 25% are Alawites and the rest are Christians (BBC, Homs: Syrian revolution's fallen 'capital', 2015). Religious divisions made some people join different side. The position of the Assad regime is the Sunni majority, which also constitutes the majority of the beliefs held by the Syrian people. Assad himself is an Alawite, a minority religious group but has been able to dominate Syria for four decades. The Assad regime said that the violence that occurred in Homs was caused by extremist groups, while the rebels and activists said it was the actions of the regime (Sam Dagher, 2014).

II.3.2 Aleppo

Aleppo is located northwest of Syria, about 50 km south of the Turkish border. The city became the intersection of large commercial routes namely the Mediterranean on the west and the Euphrates river on the east (Editors, 2017). Aleppo is a central economic city that is very important for culture and history in Syria. Aleppo is famous for its fortress which has been registered with UNESCO, and is well-known for its soap and textile craftsmen (Barrington, 2016). Aleppo is the center of the sale and purchase of agricultural products in its area which produces vegetables, wheat, cotton, sesame, beans and fruit. Aleppo is also well-known as a

producer of pistachios, which are plant seeds grown in dry areas, to be exported globally (Editors, 2017).

When Aleppo was starting the conflict, the same scenario with other cities took place happened. Many villages with residents joined the opposition and formed armed groups in cities such as Tal Rafat, Mare 'and Azaz. The first attack took place in February and March 2012. The Azaz-Aleppo highway was largely controlled by the opposition. They collected weapons and government facilities by seizing and receiving weapons through Turkey which was coming from opposition supporters. This was done so that they were ready to carry out attacks in the city (Tokmajyan, 2016).

In early 2013, rebels cut the highway from Aleppo to the south so that government forces had to use an alternative route further to get to the capital. But the western part of Aleppo is controlled by government forces. Then in the month of April 2013, the 1,000-year-old tower of the Umayyad mosque in Aleppo collapsed after being hit by war attacks. The government began to use air power to fight the rebels in 2014 (Barrington, 2016). After that, in January 2015, the rebels seized the Majbal area, a sawmill in al-Brej and forced government forces to retreat north. The rebels tried to advance to take control of the al-Brej hill so they could seize the military supply road, which is located along Aleppo Central Prison, Handarat area to the al-Mallah area. At the end of January, the rebels succeeded in seizing control of some places on the al-Brej hill (Revolv, Battle of Aleppo (2012-2016), 2017).

The assault of rebels that increasingly made government forces became under pressure in Aleppo. But in October 2015, the Russians first carried out an airborne attack which rebelled the rebels to become retarded instantly (Barrington, 2016). Russia then intensified air bombing in Aleppo to a wider area in July 2016. Then foreign fighters from Hezbollah, military advisers from Iran and Syrian Special Forces arrived as aid for the Syrian government's regular forces. With support from Russia and Iran, government forces achieved significant progress in January and February 2016 (Lund, 2016). Government forces were taking back the

north from rebels, which means it was progress for government forces. Another progress achieved by government forces is the success of taking the Al-Shaar district and historic old cities in Alepoo in December 2016 and causing besieged rebels in the south (Barrington, 2016).

II.3.3 Damascus

On July 15 2012, armored vehicles were known to enter Midan, an area where war broke out between government forces and the FSA. Residents of the Midan district said that their roofs were a place for snipers. Then more clashes took place in the districts of Tadamon and Zahera because government-owned tanks operated on city roads. The rebels took action by taking refuge in narrow alleys so that the tank cars could not follow them (Osborn, 2012).

Tadamon was controlled by rebels, where the district is adjacent to the largest Palestinian neighborhood in Syria. Because it was controlled by rebels, Tadamon was the target of a massive attack by government forces. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that government forces used armored, mortar and helicopter vehicles to fight the rebels. But the rebels succeeded in destroying four government-owned armored vehicles (Damien Cave, 2012).

On July 18, 2012, an explosion occurred at a National Security headquarters in Damascus in which several members of the National Security Council were meeting. The blast killed General Daoud Rajha (Syrian Defense Minister), General Assef Shawkat (Deputy Minister), and General Hassan Turkmani (Assistance Vice President of the Republic). The explosion was allegedly carried out by suicide bombing. The United States hoped that with the reduction of Syrian government military officials, it would cause senior officers to defect accompanied by carrying their units. Bashar Al-Assad immediately signed a decree that appointed a replacement for deceased military officials. Venezuela, Iran and Russia, sent condolences to Syria and stressed that the attack was sponsored by the West. Russia also stressed that sanctions from the UN Security Council for Syria were tantamount to providing political support to terrorists (Meysan, 2012).

The rebels took control of the Syrian border and neighboring countries and then managed to set fire to a large police headquarters located in the heart of Damascus. The rebels continued to move forward after the lieutenant who was close to Assad was killed. Damascus residents testified that the presence of government forces was decreasing. Officials in neighboring Iraq, confirmed that rebel groups managed to wrest control at the checkpoint on the Abu Kamal border, on the Syrian side. The number of victories which was achieved by rebel groups was caused by the Syrian government that had not recovering yet from a bomb blast which killed Assad's military officials. Assad later appeared on television a few days later and vowed that his strength evaporated after his defense minister was killed (Khaled Yaqoub Oweis, 2012).

II.3.4 Idlib

The rebel forces involved in Idlib are Islamic groups with several moderate groups but their roles are lower. The most significant rebel groups were Jabhat Al-Nusra and other groups namely Jund Al-Asra, Failaq Al-Sham, Ahrar Al-Sham and Liwa Al-Haqq. To seize Idlib, the rebel groups attacked defenses outside government forces, reducing the government's point of strength and seizing their facilities (White J. , 2015).

Rebel groups attacked Idlib from all sides of the city in October 2014, according to a report from the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR). The SOHR said that government forces had carried out 600 air strikes a week, including the use of helicopters to drop barrel bombs (BBC, 2014). In March 2015, Jabhat Al-Nusra, the Al-Qaeda group in Syria, along with Harakat and Ahrar Al-Sham attacked on a large scale in the capital Idlib. Two Jabhat Al-Nusra members went east of Idlib in their vehicles and carried out suicide bombings so that their other members could cross the line to take control of the Sadkop Factory in the industrial district. Jabhat Al-Nusra attacked several National Defense Forces (NDF) checkpoints or Syrian pro-government militias. But the success did not last long because the NDF succeeded in recapturing the checkpoint (Aboufadel, 2015).

II.3.5 Latakia

According to a report from Human Rights Watch (HRW), in October 2013, rebels killed 190 civilians and held 200 hostages during their operations in Latakia. HRW informed that most of the people killed were executed by militant groups some of whom were linked to Al-Qaeda (Holmes, 2013). At the start of the attack, the rebels entered the Sheikh Nabhan area in Barouda guarded by government forces. According to a government soldier who was on duty there, the rebels stormed government forces which left 30 soldiers dead and wounding many. After successfully attacking the position of government forces, the rebels entered the villages of Aramo, Esterbeh, Beyt Shakouhi, al-Hamboushieh, Barouda, Abu Makkeh, Nbeiteh, Obeen, Kharata, and Bremseh. A few days later, the rebel group succeeded in mastering Talla, Kafraya and Qal'ah (HRW, 2013).

Rebel powers flooded ahead in the northwestern area of Latakia, home to Bashar al-Assad's genealogical town of Qardaha. Resistance powers caught the Kasab outskirts crossing, which had been the last routine controlled point among Syria and Turkey, and proceeded onward to encompassing key focuses. Despite the fact that restriction powers had endeavored a comparative hostile last August, the recharged push could see startling radical successes in the Alawite heartland (Gebeily, 2014).

In March 2014, Syrian government forces tried to block the movement of rebels in Latakia and its capital located in western Syria. Government forces bombed the city of Salma, a city in Latakia province, and opened fire on positions where the rebels were located. Since the attacks carried out by rebel groups, they have taken control of the Kassab crossing, the only Turkish and Syrian border left in the hands of the Syrian government. Then the rebels managed to reach the Mediterranean, and that's where they first saw the sea since the Syrian conflict. They claimed that they killed as many as 500 Syrian soldiers, including Hezbollah, seized five government-owned tanks and anti-aircraft guns (Lucas, 2014).

F-16 fighter jet from the Turkish Air Force shot a Syrian fighter plane until it fell on March 23, 2014. The aircraft was thought to have bombed rebel posts on the border. According to a military spokesman in Syria, the pilot who was driving

the aircraft survived and confirmed that the plane was still on Syrian territory, but Turkish officials denied saying the plane violated Turkish airspace. While in Al-Mur village, the rebels surrounded 20 government troops after being surrounded for three hours (Revolvy, 2014 Latakia Offensive, 2014)

II.3.6 Raqqa

ISIS first gained control of Raqqa in northern Syria in 2014 and quickly became the de-facto capital of ISIS (Taylor, 2017). Raqqa was the only last city that could still be controlled by ISIS. For ISIS, Raqqa was a city that was significantly important because the city was the coordinating center of ISIS for terror attacks abroad. But apparently ISIS suffered a setback because Raqqa was attacked using air strikes for months. The attack was carried out by rebel groups supported by the United States. On June 6, 2017, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) mobilized the final stage of their offensive so that ISIS could be expelled from Raqqa (Lister T. , 2017).

SDF asked the international community to provide funds to finance the incoming civilian council and to restore the city to become livable. The total cost which was required by Raqqa to reconstruct buildings in the city was unknown and the donors that was coming from the international community were only for short-term projects. As many as 270,000 residents of Raqqa had left the city since June 2017 and many of them lived in refugee camps because they have no place to live (Loveluck, 2017).

II.4 The Number of Victims Caused by the War

Syrian war victims are increasing year by year. Starting from the protesters who were killed only a handful of people to hundreds of thousands of people were killed. The war is prolonged and more complicated so that it makes it difficult for many international institutions to make observations (admin, 2018). The following is a description of the number of dead and refugees from Syria.

II.4.1 Death Toll

The following table shows the number of deaths caused by the Syrian war based on data which is obtained from the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) and the other sources from the period 2011 to 2017.

Time Period	Pro-government forces	Anti-government forces	Civilians	Total (including unidentified)
2011-2012	52,290 (Kalin, 2013)	29,083 (Kalin, 2013)	46,266 (AP, 2013)	127,639
2013	30,239	18,182	22,436	73,447 (Gladstone, 2015)
2014	25,160	32,726	17,790	76,021 (SOHR, 2014)
2015	17,686	24,010	13,249	55,219 (SOHR, 2015)
2016	14,192	21,467	13,617	49,742 (SOHR, 2016)
2017	8,813	13,955	10,507	33,425 (SOHR, 2017)
Total				415,493

Table 1: Syrian war death toll.

The death toll with the identity of troops supporting the Assad regime was 52,290 in 2011. The number included dead fighters from Hezbollah, which amounted to 286 people (Kalin, 2013). Whereas a total of 46,266 were civil society (AP, 2013). The total fatalities in 2011 and 2012 were 127,239 fatalities. Whereas in 2103, the SOHR recorded as many as 73,447 deaths and in 2014 it increased to 76,021 fatalities. This figure includes 3,051 dead children and 17,790 civilians. The rest were soldiers of government forces, rebel groups and militant members of the jihadists (Gladstone, 2015).

The total death toll in 2015 was 55,219, including 1,944 women aged over 18 and 2,574 children. SOHR said this war crime caused thousands of children to be orphaned and displaced more than half of the Syrian people (SOHR, 2015). And in 2016, the SOHR recorded deaths from 1 January to 31 December 2016 and counted 49,742 people died. In that number there are 2,885 children and 1,855 women aged 18 years. The cause of death was due to missile and bullet attacks and

air strikes (SOHR, 2016). Whereas in 2017, the total deaths recorded by SOHR were 33,425 including 2,109 children, 4,435 NDF troops and 1,492 women aged over 18 (SOHR, 2017).

II.4.2 Refugee Crisis

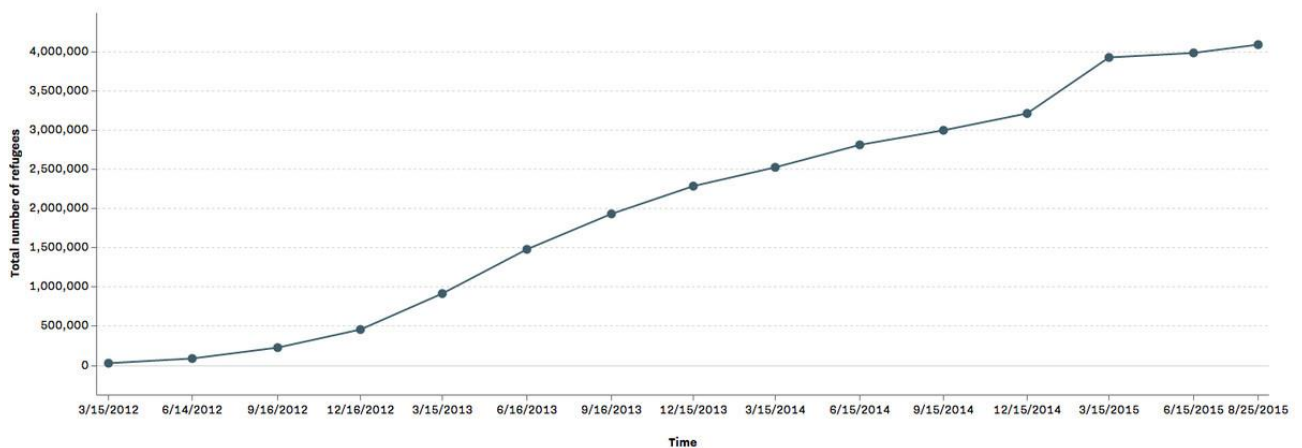
Instead of achieving the objectives of each party, it actually caused many victims, namely innocent civilians. It is unlikely to save themselves in the midst of a war filled with bombs, chemical weapons and shots. Millions of Syrians save themselves by leaving their homeland by taking their families with them, they try to enter other countries to secure themselves from war that threatens their lives. More than 5.6 million people have fled Syria since 2011, escaping to Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and other countries. While millions of other Syrians were displaced in some areas of Syria (UNHCR, 2018).

In Lebanon, life is a day by day battle for in excess of a million Syrian refugees, who have next to zero budgetary assets. Around 70 percent live underneath the destitution line. There are no formal outcast camps and, accordingly, Syrians are dissipated all through in excess of 2,100 urban and provincial networks and areas, frequently imparting little essential lodgings to other displaced person families in stuffed conditions. In Jordan, more than 655,000 men, women and children are as of now caught in a state of banishment. Roughly 80 percent of them live outside camps, while more than 139,000 have discovered asylum at the camps of Za'atari and Azraq. Many have touched base with constrained intends to cover even essential needs, and the individuals who could at first depend on reserve funds or support from receiving families are presently progressively needing assistance. It is evaluated that 93 percent of displaced people in Jordan live beneath the destitution line. Iraq has additionally observed a developing number of Syrians arriving, facilitating more than 246,000, while in Egypt UNHCR gives security and help to more than 126,000 (UNHCR, 2018).

Humanitarian needs in Syria increased dramatically from the beginning of the crisis. Some 13.5 million people need humanitarian assistance, including 6 million children. Some 400,000 people have lost their lives and more than 1 million have been injured since 2010. 6.3 million people have been displaced domestically

and nearly 4 million people have been registered as refugees in neighboring countries. An estimated 4.53 million people need humanitarian assistance, but it is very difficult to reach because they are in a besieged area. The neighboring countries they are aiming for are Egypt, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. The number of refugees accommodated by Egypt is 122,000 people with UNHCR assistance, Turkey accommodates more than 2.9 million people, Jordan as many as 660,000 people, Lebanon receives refugees of more than 1 million Syrians and those in Iraq as many as 241,000 people (UN, 2017).

Total number of Syrian refugees, March 2012 to August 2015



Source: UNHCR

Wax

Figure 6: Syrian refugee growing chart (Source: UNHCR).

The above chart shows an obvious escalation: The Syrian war has been driving regular citizens out of the nation for three and a half years, and particularly quickly since the start of 2013, when the war turned out to be much more terrible than it had just been.

II.5 The Cost Incurred and Economic Consequences of the War

Making money and producing war are two interconnected activities. Forcibly taking items in weapons factories and looting soldiers to take advantage is nothing new in war. Although some wars began with religious and ethnic clashes,

there were wars which had strong commercial elements. The war can be a source of wealth, for example being a mercenary or doing business in the arms trade (The Economist, 2000). But instead of profits, the war that took place in Syria suffered significant losses.

Iran provided funds to the Assad regime of \$ 6 billion every year, coupled with Iran is also trading with the Syrian government which generates \$ 1.6 billion per year. The way Iran was helping the Syrian government didn't stop that way, but Iran was also carrying out non-military civilian aid estimated at \$ 2.8 billion per year. According to a report by Nadim Shehadi, an economics teacher at US-based Tufts University, Iran spent \$ 15 billion on Syria in 2012 and 2013 and it was concluded that Iran spent an average of \$ 10-15 billion in Syria each year (Wasl, 2018).

Russia also incurred significant costs in their involvement in the Syrian war. After the 137th day of his involvement in Syria, Russia has already spent \$ 3-4 million per day. This figure is calculated by IHS Jane, which is a defense analysis group. IHS estimates that these costs could be greater because they were not included in the missile attack. In 2016, it was noted that Russian involvement cost \$ 498 million. This figure was relatively smaller compared to Russia's defense budget of \$ 50 billion (Tomkiw, 2016).

Unlike Russia, the United States has never developed a convincing method for reporting the costs of war and its estimates have only become a confusing pile of different agencies, departments and government reports. This made a big gap on FY2001-FY2019 (Cordesman, 2019). FY is a Fiscal Year, which is a calculation in a period used by the government or company to calculate objectives and prepare financial statements (Klenton, 2018). The FY never provides useful estimates of costs for the future. It failed to find a way to estimate the costs incurred for military and civilian activities (Cordesman, 2019). But State Department authorities of the United States said the measure of U.S. financing pulled back had just been balanced by \$300 million in commitments from U.S. partners, including Saudi Arabia. The

United States is still giving compassionate funding to Syria, with about \$8 billion spent since the war began in 2011 (Kalamur, 2018).

Despite getting assistance from other countries, Syria still suffered significant financial losses significantly. The social and economic impacts of this war are significant and will continue to grow if the war continues. Poor access to education, food, health and shelter makes the impact worse. This can push the Syrian people into unemployment and poverty. In addition, the decline in the oil trade and other trade put pressure on Syria's external economy (The World Bank, 2018). The Syrian war caused infrastructure destruction and made suffering for workers in Syria which had the effect of destroying the country's economy. Even the losses earned by the Syrian people with their per capita income were 1.5% lower than they should have been. Not only income, the problem of unemployment also hit Syrian refugees, especially women. In 2016, around 92% of Syrian refugees in Lebanon did not have work contracts (The World Bank, 2016).

The World Bank conducted a study to assess the economic and social consequences of the Syrian war in 2017. Damage occurred in the Syrian Arab Republic's physical capital stock, which amounted to 7% of housing or house supplies destroyed and 20% damaged, requiring residents to move. From 2011 to the end of 2016, the cumulative loss of gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated at \$ 226 billion, of which four times the GDP of Syria in 2010. An estimated 27% of the stock of housing in Syria was destroyed and half of the medical facilities and schools were also destroyed. The estimate is based on satellite imagery. The World Bank also noted that losses of \$ 226 billion included around 538,000 people lost their jobs every year in 2010-2015. About 7.7% or as many as 9 million people are not involved in the country's economic generation. A total of 2.9 million people are unemployed and 6.1 million people are not active. Even in 2015, the unemployment rate reached 78%. (The World Bank, 2017).

The effect of the Syrian emergency has been significance in Lebanon and Jordan, where conservative evaluations put the extent of Syrian refugees at 25% and 10% of the nations' populaces separately. The World Bank provided support costs

of US \$ 3 billion in projects in Jordan and Lebanon to deal directly with the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis and help the local community. It handles education, health, employment, social, infrastructure and economic opportunities. This was done because there has been a disruption in economic organizations, in addition to damage to infrastructure and buildings. The war has disrupted the Syrian economy by cutting off networks and supply and reducing economic connectivity. The disruption of economic activities can reduce investment significantly (The World Bank, 2018).

CHAPTER III

United States Foreign Policy and Defense Policy in Syrian War (2011-2017)

III.1 United States National Interest to Syria

A research center named Belfer Center at Harvard University sponsored a bipartisan group that gathers to discuss the main United States foreign policy challenges. This was because they worried that the United States would lose direction in the post-cold war era. The group numbered 23 people who were academics, former government officials, think tank analysts and senators which included Pat Roberts, Senators Bob Graham and John McCain. They made the national interest of the United States to the state's direction (BELFER CENTER , 2019). This national interest was then made in 2002 and written on the official website of the United States government. The national interests of the United States include:

"National Security - to protect vital interests and secure peace; deter aggression; prevent, defuse, and manage crises; halt the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and advance arms control and disarmament (U.S. Department of States, 2002).

- *Regional Stability - Ensure that local and regional instabilities do not threaten the security and well-being of the United States or its allies.*
- *Weapons of Mass Destruction - Reduce the threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction.*

Economic Prosperity - To expand exports and open markets, assist American Business, foster economic growth, and promote sustainable development.

- *Open Markets - Open world markets to increase trade and free the flow of goods, services and capital*
- *U.S. Exports - Expand U.S. exports to \$1.2 trillion early in the 21st century.*
- *Global Economic Growth - Increase global economic growth and stability.*

- *Economic Development - Promote broad-based, sustainable growth in developing countries and transitional economies.*

Law Enforcement - To combat international terrorism, crime, and narcotics trafficking.

- *Countering Terrorism - Reduce international terrorist attacks, especially on the United States and its citizens.*
- *International Crime - Minimize the impact of international crime on the United States and its citizens.*
- *Countering Illegal Drugs - Reduce the entry of illegal drugs into the United States.*

Democracy - To support the establishment and consolidation of democracies, and uphold human rights.

- *Democracy & Human Rights - A worldwide community of democracies where human rights, including worker rights, and religious freedom are universally respected.*

Humanitarian Response - To provide humanitarian assistance to victims of crises and disaster.

- *Humanitarian Assistance - Prevent or minimize the human costs of conflicts and natural disasters.*

Global Issues: Environment, Population and Health - To improve the global environment, foster a healthy and educated world population, and protect human health.

- *Environment - Secure a sustainable global environment to protect U.S. citizens and interests from the effects of international environmental degradation.*
- *Population - Achieve a healthy and educated world population.*
- *Health - Improve global health for a more secure world (U.S. Department of States, 2002)."*

In the first part of the United States National Interest, written on national security reads as follows:

"National Security - To protect vital interests and secure peace; deter aggression; prevent, defuse, and manage crises; halt the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and advance arms control and disarmament.

- *Regional Stability - Ensure that local and regional instabilities do not threaten the security and well-being of the United States or its allies.*

- *Weapons of Mass Destruction - Reduce the threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction* (U.S. Department of States, 2002).”

United States national security officials make decisions based on the assumption that every corner and gap in the world is strategic, and there are threats to the interests of the United States everywhere (Mearsheimer J. , *America Unhinged*, 2014). The Arab Spring events in the Middle East have shown regional instability and the United States feels it must be present to mobilize diplomatic, economic and military assets. The United States leads an international coalition against ISIS. The regional security arrangements led by the United States are threatened because of the emergence of ISIS, while Iran has succeeded in developing rapidly with support from Russia. These two threats are interrelated. Iran has benefited from ISIS-controlled territory by operating in the region to counterterrorism. When the United States failed to arrest Iran, Sunnis took refuge by embracing ISIS and Al-Qaeda (Jeffrey, 2017). Whereas the United States action in destroying Syria's chemical weapons inventory (Mearsheimer J. , *America Unhinged*, 2014), is part of the United States' interests in the Weapon of Mass Destruction in reducing the threat of weapons of mass destruction.

From the beginning of 2011, the political movements in Syria and Egypt repeatedly attracted the attention of the United States foreign policy department. The Obama administration was trying to mobilize Egypt's political shock after the Mubarak era and the United States was also increasingly entering the Syrian war. The United States helped the Syrian government rebel forces by providing weapons and even almost used chemical weapons in August 2013. But after seeing the events in August 2013, it has been shown that morality is not America's main motivation for Syria (Issa, 2016). This illustrates that the both countries are very strategic and important for the United States. There were fears that were evident that if the Obama administration did not address problems in these countries, the vital interests of the United States will be damaged. In addition, the United States has strong moral reasons for its involvement in Syria, namely the death of civilians. The United States also has the ability to influence Egyptian and Syrian politics by

ensuring the right people were serving in the Cairo and Damascus governments (Mearsheimer J. , America Unhinged, 2014).

With its military presence, the United States maintains global security everywhere. But Russia's arrival in Syria for military intervention was a challenge to the strength of the United States. In managing global security and maintaining a monopoly on the use of force. If the United States did allow Russia to dominate Syria, then chances will be happened again elsewhere. In terms of global security and large state power, Syria is significantly important for the United States (Issa, 2016).

According to John Mearsheimer, military intervention by the United States to Northeast Asia, Europe and the Persian Gulf need to be limited. The use of the term "Persian Gulf" is indeed practical, rather than using the term "Middle East" because Mearsheimer believes that the main interests of the United States are in the eastern Mediterranean stretching to the Arabian Sea. At that location, it was ensured that there was an oil source that flowed freely from the Gulf which made the United States prevent any country that could control the oil source. And even though countries like Egypt and Syria have no interest in the Gulf, their borders are in the interests of the United States (Cassidy, 2015). Europe and Northeast Asia have the world's great powers and countries in the region have the ability to give the United States a serious threat. Therefore, the United States made the policies contained in it a strong interest in preventing other great powers from reaching regional hegemony in Europe and Asia (Mearsheimer J. , America Unhinged, 2014).

The United States has personal interests in Syria. Large oil producing countries which close to the Persian Gulf have important meanings for the United States. Kuwait, Iraq, Iran, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are important to the United States because the United States must ensure that their oil flows are not disrupted to world markets. Syria is not included in the country with this strategic meaning, so it makes no sense if the United States is worried about Syria in case of oil resources. But there are some things that make Syria important for the United States. One of them is if Assad falls, Hezbollah and Iran will

experience a shock (Mearsheimer J. , *America Unhinged*, 2014). King of Saudi Arabia in 2011, King Abdullah, was convinced that regime change in Syria would bring benefits to the Saudi which is United States' ally, especially in terms of threats from Iran. King Abdullah said;

“Nothing would weaken Iran more than losing Syria (Hannah, 2011).”

And then in the part of countering terrorism, it is written in its national interest as well, as follows:

Countering Terrorism - Reduce international terrorist attacks, especially on the United States and its citizens (U.S. Department of States, 2002).

Since the rise of ISIS in 2014, the United States has approached a strategic axis of fighting against these terrorist groups for their actions in terrorist jihad. Although it is uncertain when ISIS can be defeated, the biggest possibility of an attempt to defeat it is military action (Feaver, 2017). On his visit to MacDill Air Force Base in Florida on December 6, 2016, President Obama spoke about counter-terrorism in his government. Over the past eight years, as described by Obama, that the United States has built counter-terrorism capabilities for terrorist networks. This is done in collaboration with partner countries of the United States, carrying out air strikes and drones targeting the places where terrorists take refuge (Bertrand, 2016).

The vital interest of the United States of America in Syria is reflected in the statement of President Barack Obama in the 2011. The chaos that occurred in Syria involving chemical weapons and the fall of innocent civilian victims became the United States' basic reference for President Assad to step down. President Obama at the time mentioned that if President Assad did not step down, there would be no peace in Syria. The following is Obama's first statement which emphasizes that President Assad resigned for peace in Syria.

“The future of Syria must be determined by its people, but President Bashar al-Assad is standing in their way. For the sake of the Syrian people, the time has come for President Assad to step aside (Obama B. , 2011).”

Another statement mentioned by President Obama at the White House in 2013 is as follows:

“Moreover, we know the Assad regime was responsible. In the days leading up to August 21st, we know that Assad’s chemical weapons personnel prepared for an attack near an area they where they mix sarin gas. They distributed gas masks to their troops. Then they fired rockets from a regime-controlled area into 11 neighborhoods that the regime has been trying to wipe clear of opposition forces. Shortly after those rockets landed, the gas spread, and hospitals filled with the dying and the wounded. We know senior figures in Assad’s military machine reviewed the results of the attack. And the regime increased their shelling of the same neighborhoods in the days that followed. We’ve also studied samples of blood and hair from people at the site that tested positive for sarin. When dictators commit atrocities, they depend upon the world to look the other way until those horrifying pictures fade from memory. But these things happened. The facts cannot be denied. The question now is what the United States of America and the international community is prepared to do about it, because what happened to those people, to those children, is not only a violation of international law, it’s also a danger to our security (Obama B. , 2013).”

III.2 United States’ Foreign Policy to Syria

United States relations with Syria are written on Fact Sheet by Beureau of Near Eastern Affairs, United States Department of State, which is written as follows;

“The United States established diplomatic relations with Syria in 1944 following U.S. determination that Syria had achieved effective independence from a French-administered mandate. Syria severed diplomatic relations with the United States in 1967 in the wake of the Arab-Israeli War. Relations were reestablished in 1974. Syria has been on the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism since the list's inception in 1979. Because of its continuing policies in supporting terrorism, its former occupation of Lebanon, pursuing weapons of mass destruction and missile programs, and undermining U.S. and international efforts to stabilize Iraq. Syria is subject to legislatively mandated penalties, including export sanctions under the Syrian Accountability Act and ineligibility to receive most forms of U.S. aid or to purchase U.S. military equipment. Following events in Syria beginning in March 2011, subsequent Executive orders have been issued in

response to the ongoing violence and human rights abuses taking place in Syria (Beureu of Near Eastern Affairs, 2018).

During 1990-2001, the United States and Syria cooperated to a degree on some regional issues, but relations worsened from 2003 to early 2009. Issues of U.S. concern included the Syrian Government's failure to prevent Syria from becoming a major transit point for foreign fighters entering Iraq, its refusal to deport from Syria former Saddam Hussein regime elements supporting the insurgency in Iraq, its interference in Lebanese affairs, its protection of the leadership of Palestinian rejectionist groups in Damascus, its human rights record, and its pursuit of weapons of mass destruction. In early 2009, the United States began to review its Syria policy in light of changes in the country and the region, leading to an effort to engage with Syria to find areas of mutual interest, reduce regional tensions, and promote Middle East peace (Beureu of Near Eastern Affairs, 2018)."

The United States felt that Syria was involved in the Iraqi conflict and accused Syria of helping Saddam Hussein's loyalists to hide and allowing them to cross the Iraqi border in order to fight a coalition led by the United States. But Syria denied these allegations by saying that the United States made it a scapegoat because the United States failed in its action to stop the Iraqi rebellion. As attached to the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, the United States considered Syria to sponsor acts of terrorism. But the United States maintains its diplomatic relations with Syria because the United States needed Syria to solve the Palestinian-Israeli problem (Crane, 2005).

Relations between the United States and Syria were filled with disagreements, beginning in 2008. The disagreement was seen as very significant in policies against Lebanon, Israel and Iraq. In the eyes of the United States, Syria is a country led by an ambitious, unreliable leader, wants to dominate its neighboring Lebanese state, protect Palestinian terrorists and establish good relations with the enemies of the United States, Iran. Because of this situation, the Syrian opposition was being an adequate justification for the United States was on the side of the opposition to isolate the Syrian government (Indyk, 2008).

After six months of his inauguration as president, in June 2009, Obama did a visit to Cairo University to announce his relationship with Muslim-populated

countries. In his "A New Beginning" address, Obama wanted the United States to improve relations with the Muslim world after the end of the George W. Bush administration. Obama said that the United States was willing to protect individual freedom and political freedom. He also said the United States would commit to a government based on the will of the people, but he also said there was no government system that had to or could be imposed on one country by another (Faisal Itani, 2018). The Obama administration would be happy if liberal democracy exists in the Arab world (Agencies, 2016).

III.2.1 Barack Obama's Foreign Policy to Syria in Responding to the Syrian War

United States political leadership has implemented slogans such as "war on terror" to legitimize the use of military power as a means to achieve its foreign policy goals. Before being elected president, Obama promised that he would use all elements of national power, not just military power. One of the first agendas in the Obama administration was the United States foreign policy to Syria. Initially, the Obama administration established diplomatic relations with Syria, as evidenced by the Executive Branch representatives meeting with Syria's foreign minister, Walid al-Muallem and presidential adviser, Bouthaina Shaaban (Mir H. Sadat, 2017). When the conflict started in 2011, the United States was no longer using its democracy promotion to Syria (Faisal Itani, 2018), which Syria is including to the Arab world.

When the Syrian conflict began to burn, apparently the conflict attracted the attention of the United States in 2013 which at that time Obama held a speech at the White House asserted that Assad must step down from the presidency. Military attacks can occur if the diplomatic resolution is deadlocked (Lewish, 2013). In April 2013, President Barack Obama declared the United States foreign policy towards Syria and its president, Bashar Al-Assad through a press conference at the White House. Here is a statement from Obama;

"My policy from the beginning has been that (Syrian) president had lost credibility that he attacked his own people, has killed his own people unleashed their military against innocent

civillians and that the only way to bring stability and peace to Syria is gonna be Assad to step down,” (Obama B. , 2013)

Obama clearly stated the statement that Assad should be resigned, along with other world leaders who wanted Assad to resign from the post of Syrian president (Feller, 2011). When the war began to break out in 2011 and heats up in the following years, Syria became a concern and priority for US foreign policy for the umpteenth time. Obama stressed that Bashar Al-Assad must be responsible for a series of sanctions. But at the same time, he took a diplomatic step by sending an American ambassador to Damascus in 2013. Hillary Clinton, who at the time served as the United States Secretary of State, had claimed that the United States would not take military action. But in the same year, the United States began to support the rebels by giving them weapons, for fear of chemical weapons by the Syrian government (Koschyk, 2017).

“We would have preferred Assad two years ago, last year, six months, two months, ago. Now there are while range of option that the United States is already engaged in, and I preserve the options of taking additional steps, both diplomatic and military, because those chemical weapons inside of Syria also threaten our security over the long term as well as our allies and friends and neighbours (Joyner, 2013)”

Sarin gas attacks occurred in eastern Damascus in August 2013. Even the United Nations has confirmed that this attack was the worst chemical weapons attack in the last 25 years. The UN report did not mention who was using the sarin gas, but the United States, France and Britain said the Assad regime was responsible for this attack (Borger, 2013). When there was a sarin gas attack in 2013 on the outskirts of Damascus, Obama considered this violating his "red line". The use of chemical weapons has been a mass murder that cannot be tolerated. Russia also offered an agreement to dismantle the Syrian government's chemical weapons program which was later approved by the United States. But apparently this agreement did not stop the Syrian military from using chemical weapons (Faisal Itani, 2018).

”I welcome the progress made between the United States and Russia through our talks in Geneva, which represents an important, concrete step toward the goal of moving Syria's

chemical weapons under international control so that they may ultimately be destroyed. This framework provides the opportunity for the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons in a transparent, expeditious, and verifiable manner, which could end the threat these weapons pose not only to the Syrian people but to the region and the world. The international community expects the Assad regime to live up to its public commitments (Obama B. , 2013).”

In his weekly speech on September 7, 2013, Obama made a decision for Syria. The decision was a limited United States military action to be launched into Syria aimed at holding President Bashar Al-Assad accountable for violating international norms for the use of chemical weapons.

“I announced that as Commander of Chief, I decided that the United States should take military action against the Syrian regime. This is not a decision I made lightly. Deciding to use military force is the most solemn decision we can make as a nation. As the leader of the world's oldest Constitutional democracy, I also know that our country will be stronger if we act together and our actions will be more effective. That's why I asked Members of Congress to debate this issue and vote on authorizing the use of force (Obama B. , 2013).”

Bashar Al-Assad then admitted that he had a chemical weapons program in October 2013. He agreed that the program be handed over to international police to be destroyed. This is one example of coercive diplomacy, namely threats by using force to get the desired result. The threat of military actions and Russian actions that offered an agreement to destroy chemical weapons, made a success, namely the Syrian chemical weapons totaling 1,300 tons were destroyed. But the decision of the United States military action was viewed accordingly as Obama took the opportunity to show the determination that this military action was used to maintain the credibility of the United States (Cholet, 2016).

III.3 United States Defense Policy under Barack Obama (2011-2017)

The Department of Defense becomes the first source of the president of the United States to get advice on military policy. The United States Department of Defense's headquarters is in the Pentagon, which is a pentagon-shaped building

located in Virginia. Regarding its policy, the president leads the defense policy because the president was the commander in chief of the armed forces. The president has the power to govern surreptitious operations to avoid full military involvement, as Obama did to Syria. If the covert operation is not successful, the president can try coercive action, which is discussed and uses congressional voting. This is done so that other countries do what the United States wants (ushistory, 2008).

If needed, United States defense policies and strategies must take into account factors and apply many competing elements. Defense policy must involve the interests of the state, territorial security, war plans, and overall strategies. For defense strategies, competitors who have the potential to fight the United States must also be taken into account. In the end, these policy makers must carefully consider the personnel system, its acquisition and strategic planning (Hoffman, 2016).

In 2009 to 2011, in the first three years Obama took office, the defense policy applied by Obama was still a lot that was inherited from the previous president, George W. Bush. Obama first launched Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) in 2010 whose writing was directly watched by Obama. The QDR contains that the United States is still at war with Al-Aqaeda in Afghanistan and Iraq (Overhaus, 2016). As a global power, the influence and strength of the United States of course relates to international systems such as multinational institutions, partnerships and alliances, which are assisted by the United States for more than sixty years. According to QDR, the US military must be prepared to support and achieve its national goals to promote stability in important regions of the world, promote goodness to be together and provide assistance to countries in need (DoD, 2010). In the QDR 2010, written as follows:

“Furthermore, as a global power, the strength and influence of the United States are deeply intertwined with the fate of the broader international system—a system of alliances, partnerships, and multinational institutions that our country has helped build and sustain for more than sixty years. The U.S. military must therefore be prepared to support broad

national goals of promoting stability in key regions, providing assistance to nations in need, and promoting the common good. With these realities in mind, the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review advances two clear objectives. First, to further rebalance the capabilities of America's Armed Forces to prevail in today's wars, while building the capabilities needed to deal with future threats. Second, to further reform the Department's institutions and processes to better support the urgent needs of the warfighter; buy weapons that are usable, affordable, and truly needed; and ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and responsibly (DoD, 2010)."

In its operations, Obama has tended to exceed the previous president since he used unmanned aircraft and conducted special spatial temporary operations in the fight against terrorism (Sanger, 2012). There has been a drastic increase in the use of drones in Yemen and Pakistan since Obama took office in his first years (Peter Bergen, 2013). The practice of the attack made the world criticize the United States which made Obama order a policy revision in 2013 (McNair, 2013).

In addition to issuing QDR, the United States Department of Defense also issued a National Military Strategy in 2015 as a form of defense policy. The NMS is a military strategy that is part of the United States defense policy. This strategy was updated to understand the new global security situation, where the United States faces enemies such as China and Russia simultaneously and must eradicate militant groups namely ISIS (Mehta, 2015). Along with the challenges that continue to come, Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) led by Al-Qaida and ISIS are working to attack the security of state envoys, especially in the Middle East and North Africa. The group aims to spread violence, radicalize population and force their visions to society (DoD, 2015).

In April of 2009, President Barack Obama revived the international consideration and discussion on the plausibility and allure of a world without atomic weapons by conveying his now-well known Prague Speech. In the discourse, Obama enunciated "America's pledge to look for the peace and security of a world without atomic weapons" and in this way set an agreeable tone for a bustling year of worldwide commitment on restraint and nuclear security issues.

Nuclear Posture Review 2010 was released to form a framework for how this effort will be undertaken (Kallmyer, 2011).

NPR 2010 explained the Obama administration's approach to promoting Obama's agenda in reducing the adverse effects of nuclear weapons and achieving goals without the use of nuclear weapons, together with advancing US security interests. NPR 2010 is also a reflection of President's national security interests and defense strategy supporting QDR 2010 (Department of Defense, 2010). NPR 2010 focuses on the five main objectives of US nuclear weapons policy, namely:

1. *Preventing nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism;*
2. *Reducing the role of U.S. nuclear weapons in U.S. national security strategy;*
3. *Maintaining strategic deterrence and stability at reduced nuclear force levels;*
4. *Strengthening regional deterrence and reassuring U.S. allies and partners; and*
5. *Sustaining a safe, secure, and effective nuclear arsenal* (Department of Defense, 2010).

And then in 2015, Obama releases NMS 2015. This strategy provides a broad outline of US military use in the years to come. This strategy provides a reasonable argument about threats in the years to come that is greater than the threats that existed in the past. Therefore, the United States will use more military power (Kidder, 2015). The 2015 NMS document observed that hybrid warfare tactics were very useful for battlefield attackers. This strategy is good for overcoming the placement of advanced military input positions and for allowing faster reactions (Davidson, 2015). But the 2015 NMS document did not include that the strategy used would require more resources, which caused the US military to lack its resources to implement the strategy. After less than a week after its release, the Army planned to reduce its army force by 40,000 troops. This step is done to overcome budget constraints. Because of this cut, the strategy becomes less than optimal (Kidder, 2015).

Obama also released the National Security Strategy (NSS) in February 2015. The 2015 NSS outlined the broader vision of the United States strategy, which aims to create greater peace and new prosperity set by the United States as a principle and priority. The 2015 NSS focuses on long-term challenges such as global health, energy security and cyberspace security. This strategy also explains the United States' commitment to stabilize Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa, strengthen relations with allies, especially NATO, encourage nuclear non-proliferation, maintain multilateral partnerships and strengthen / renew international norms and institutions (Gadi, 2015).

It elucidates the reason and guarantee of American power. It expects to propel our interests and qualities with activity and from a place of solidarity. We will hinder and crush any enemy that compromises our national security and that of our partners. We certainly welcome the quiet ascent of different nations as accomplices to share the weights for keeping up an increasingly serene and prosperous world. We will keep on teaming up with set up and developing forces to advance our mutual security and guard our normal humankind, even as we contend with them in monetary and different domains (Department of Defense, 2015).

III.3.1 United States Defense Policy to Syria under Barack Obama (2011-2017)

In QDR, NMS, NSS and NPR, there is no mention of the existence of policies against the Syrian government. These documents only describe the focus on US policies and strategies for terrorism. United States policy towards the Syrian government or the regime of Bashar Al-Assad was presented by Obama and officials of the United States government in their speech. Obama's foreign policy focused on the United States response to chemical weapons used by the Syrian government through United States defense policy since it used military action and then the defense policy itself was focusing on defeating ISIS.

The United States Ambassador who served at that time, Samantha Power, speaking in front of the audience at the Center for American Progress that Syria is located at the heart of an important region for the United States, namely the region where the United States's closest friends and allies (Pellerin, 2013). The United

States has assets in Middle East (Parrish, 2013). If America does not take action against the Assad regime, then the risk will be greater. Power said that the Assad regime had chemical weapons supplies and the United States would not allow such chemical weapons to fall into the hands of terrorists. This is due to the Assad regime working with Iran and Hezbollah, which the United States considers an extremist group (Pellerin, 2013). As explained by Samantha Power as follows:

“Notwithstanding these complexities, notwithstanding the various concerns that we all share, I’m here today to explain why the costs of not taking targeted, limited military action are far greater than the risks of going forward in the manner that President [Barack] Obama has outlined. Obama, Secretary of State John F. Kerry and many members of Congress have spelled out the consequences of failing to meet this threat. If there are more chemical attacks, we will see an inevitable spike in the flow of refugees on top of the already 2 million in the region, possibly pushing Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey or Iraq past their breaking points (Pellerin, 2013).”

Before giving orders for the United States attack on Syria, Obama asked Congress to discuss and gather votes about the United States reaction to chemical weapons possessed by the Assad regime (Parrish, 2013). In 2014, the United States Department of Defense received orders from Congress to train and provide weapons assistance to moderate opposition in Syria as one of the efforts to fight against ISIS. During this period, the United States Department of Defense through its army forces, encouraged opposition groups to seize territory controlled by ISIS. For example, United States forces support the opposition in Kobane, helping to take over key border areas (Department of Defense, 2015).

Samantha Power acknowledged that many people are wondering why the United States should be the world's policeman in this situation (Pellerin, 2013). This reasoned about humanitarian issues and national security concerns, so that the United States must act as a global police officer (Spatelnick, 2013). During a meeting with Baltic leaders at the White House in August 2013, Obama explained to reporters that the United States did not want the world to be paralyzed by the Syrian war with the use of these chemical weapons. Many people think that

something must be done to end this, but no one wants to do it (The White House, 2013).

The Obama administration was experiencing tension to increase America's effort against Islamic State, and following the disappointment of a United States military program to prepare and arm a large number of Syrian rebels. The arranged sending adds to an increasingly unstable clash in Syria, where Russia and Iran have expanded up their military help for President Bashar al-Assad's battle against agitators in the four-and-a-half year common war. Russia said when it started air strikes that it would likewise focus on the Islamic State militant group, however its planes have hit other opposition group contradicted to Assad, including rebels group backed by the United States (Arshad Mohammed, 2015).

CHAPTER IV

United States Military Intervention to Syrian War during the Regime of Bashar Al-Assad

IV.1 Supporting Syrian Government Opposition as United States Military Intervention to Syrian War

There are two main reasons that make the country prefer arming rebels rather than direct military action. First, the cost of arming rebels is cheaper compared to direct military action. Secondly, arming rebels can be carried out clandestinely without the public and the international community discover (Pattison, 2015). Support for Syrian rebels was given for several reasons. One of them was to pressure the regime to negotiate political changes to end the war, or for some funders, support for the rebels was only to bring down the regime directly (Hilterman, 2018).

The training program for Syrian rebels was divided into two. The first was run by the CIA to fight Bashar Al-Assad and the second was run by the Pentagon to defeat ISIS (Mark Mazzetti, 2016). The New York Times which is usually regarded as a media of American propaganda (Newman, 2012), revealed that the CIA played a role in the Syrian war. Members of the Obama administration told the media that Saudi Arabia had sponsored the program unnoticed and without notified abroad so the program could continue (Berger, 2016).

Most of the funding for rebel groups was given directly and continuously by the United States even though what the groups do violates human rights. One such program was called the Timber Sycamore operation, which was an a secret program operation authorized by President Barack Obama run by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (Tuberville, 2018). Various Arab intelligence services, especially Saudi Arabia, support and participate in financing this covert operation. Since its planning in 2012, the program has supplied weapons, training and money to rebel forces in order to defeat Bashar Al-Assad's forces. Obama secretly allowed the CIA to start arming them since 2013 (Initiative, 2018).

In early 2012, the CIA only helped organize the purchase of weapons for the rebels along with their allies, namely Saudi Arabia, Qatar and other Gulf countries which directly distributed weapons to rebel groups (Hammind, 2016). Qatar had secretly sent Chinese FN-6 missiles that sent over the border from Turkey (Tuberville, 2018). This distribution of weapons actually had been risky at falling into the hands of extremist groups but the distribution of these weapons continues. No need to wait for months, Obama finally agreed that the CIA start directly arming and training rebels from a base located in Jordan (Hammind, 2016). This direct assistance was carried out because it was difficult to monitor military activities within national borders. Assistance was also in the form of examining each member of the rebel group and if it was done indirectly, it would be complicated (Hilterman, 2018).

In September 2013, President Obama held a meeting with Senator John McCain to talk about United States support for the Syrian opposition. For the very first time, a total of 50 men who were crossing the border to Syria at that time were trained by United States special forces in Jordan (Sanchez, 2013). Then in 2014, the United States provided TOW (Tube-launched, Optically-tracked, Wine-guided) anti-tank missiles. The supply of anti-tank missiles was increasing US support for the rebels (Austin Carson, 2016).

Professor Jeffrey Sachs, who is world-renowned professor of economics, leader in sustainable development, senior UN advisor, bestselling author, and syndicated columnist whose monthly newspaper columns appear in more than 100 countries (Columbia, 2016), explained what was happening behind the Syrian war which was included United States, particularly the CIA. In an interview on the MSNBC television station live at April 12nd 2018, he was asked about the Syrian war which was not only a war involving two countries but a war that was increasingly complicated so that it could not be controlled and this situation could increase. Following are the answers outlined by Professor Jeffrey Sachs;

“And we know they (United States) sent CIA to overthrow Assad, the CIA and Saudi Arabia together in covert operation try to overthrow Assad. It was a disaster, eventually it brought in both

ISIS as a group of jihadist as a splinter group to the jihadist that went in. It also brought in Russia. So we have been digging deeper and deeper and deeper. So what we should do now is get out and not continue to throw missiles, not have a confrontation with Russia. Seven years has been a disaster under Obama, continuing under Trump (Sachs, 2018)."

Responding to Professor Sachs, Admiral James George Stavridis assumed that the United States must take action in this war. He said that the United States could not withdraw because the use of chemical weapons in Syria received many responses in the international community. To understand this situation, according to Adm. Stavridis, we must look back on the Balkan war that took place in the 1990s where the situation was similar to Syria at the present time. At that time, there was an international solution involving the United States and Russia working together. If the United States of America leaves Syria even though it will look attractive, this step is not the right step for the country and internationally (Stavridis, 2018). Professor Sachs then mentioned the Timber Sycamore program run by the CIA could create chaos (Sachs, 2018).

"I don't think it (ending the support to the rebels) is attractive but I think we have to understand how this happened. This happened because of us. These 600,000 (death toll) not just incidental. We started a war to overthrow a regime. It was covert. It was Timber Sycamore. People can look it up to CIA operation together with Saudi Arabia, still crowded in secrecy which is part of the problem in our country. A major war effort shrouded in secrecy, never debated by Congress, never explained to the American people, signed by President Obama, never explained. And this created chaos and so just throwing more missiles in right now is not a response. We need to go. It's by the way not to walk away to go to the UN Security Council as the Admiral says to agree with Russia on strategy for ending the fight. But ending the fight means that we stop trying to overthrowing the government (Sachs, 2018)."

Moreover, the United States Army had provided millions of dollars in fees to private intelligence contractors. This was the first time the Pentagon had admitted that there were private contractors involved. This also indicated that, as Professor Jeffrey Sachs had said, the United States military increasingly deepened its involvement in the Syrian war. He argued that the United States government would

not tell the truth to the public because Americans would voice peace and do not want to be involved in war (Berger, 2016).

IV.1.1 Financial Support

The ally of United States and Saudi Arabia, Qatar, helped in providing funds for training and was willing to make the base in its country serve as a training location. But according to United States officials, the biggest contributor to the Timber Sycamore operation was Saudi Arabia (Tuberville, 2018). Beginning in 2012, Saudi Arabia and Qatar paid rebel forces which was fighting against the Bashar-Al-Assad army and the payment was considered as salary. A payroll agreement was made on April 2, 2012 with a logistics organization in Turkey, where several groups from the FSA were based (Alsharif, 2012). The total costs incurred from the United States were never known because the CIA did not want Americans to know where their tax money had gone (Tuberville, 2018). But Donald Trump during the 2016 United States presidential election debate, stated that the United States provided funds of 1.7 billion dollars to rebel groups (Trump, 2016).

“Take a look at Aleppo. It’s so sad, we see what’s happened. And a lot of these is because of Hillary Clinton, because what’s happened is by fighting Assad who turned out to be a lot tougher than she thought. And now she’s gonna ‘Oh, he loves Assad’. He’s just much tougher and much smarter than her and Obama. And everyone thought he was gone two years ago, three years ago. He aligned with Russia, he now also aligned with Iran who we made very powerful. We give them (rebels) 150 billion dollars back. We give them 1.7 billion dollars in cash. I mean, cash. Bundles of cash as big as a stage. We give them 1.7 billion dollars. Now they (Syria) have align, he has aligned with Russia and with Iran. They don’t want ISIS but they have other things because we’re backing. We’re backing rebels. We don’t know who the rebels are (Trump, 2016).”

The House of Intelligence Committee was concerned about illegal trade in weapons to help the rebels. In 2015, the House Intelligence Committee decided to cut funds to provide the program with 1 billion dollars. According to The Washington Post, from every 15 dollars, 1 dollar would be donated from the entire CIA budget (Austin Carson, 2016). The Washington Post estimated as much as 100,000 dollars for every rebel who has passed the CIA training program

(Krumhoiz, 2017). In an effort to form an opposition to become a coordinated body, the United States replaced the Syrian National Council to become the Syrian National Coalition and provided 287 million dollars in funding so that the coalition could work outside Syria (Rogin, 2012).

IV.1.2 United States' Weapons Assistance for Syrian Rebels

Hillary Clinton and David Petraeus, who was still the director of the CIA, worked on plans for United States support for Syrian rebel groups. After that, they presented it to President Obama. In her book, "Hard Choices", Clinton wrote that President Obama was worried that the program would not depose Assad, but Syria would become a new Afghanistan (Kaplan, 2015). She mentions in her book as the following;

"These were very reasonable concerns, but Petraeus and I argued that there was a big difference between Qatar and Saudi Arabia dumping weapons into the country and the United States responsibly training and equipping a nonextremist rebel force (Clinton, 2014)."

To arm rebels, the United States cooperates with a secret command center operated by Turkey. To direct the supply of weapons to rebels, the United States and Turkey uses an American air base in Turkey, namely in the city of Adana (Hosenball, 2012). National Security Action chairman Ben Rhodes said that military assistance to rebels was different from the previous one. United States intelligence officials believe that Assad used chemical weapons so Obama made a decision to increase aid to rebel groups (Marcus, 2013). The list of weapons supplied by the United States to Syrian rebels is as follows:

Model	Type	Origin	Weight
MANPAD	Anti-aircraft missiles	United States	30-40 lb
9M111M Faktoria	Anti-tank missiles	Bulgaria	21.693 kg/47.827 lb

PKM	Machine gun	Soviet Union	6.340 kg/13.9777 lb
RPG-7	Anti-tank grenade	Soviet Union	4.120 kg/9.083 lb
AK-47	Assault rifle	Soviet Union	4.2 kg
DShK	Machine gun	Soviet Union	34 kg
7.62x39 mm	Ammunition	Soviet Union	18.2 gram
7.62x54 mm	Ammunition	Soviet Union	11.7 gram
14.5x114 mm	Ammunition	Soviet Union	60.5 gram

Table 2: List of weapons the United States gave to Syrian rebels.

President Barack Obama then first gave a secret order to support the rebels in 2012. In the same year, the FSA received a land-to-air missile of nearly two dozen used to attack fixed-wing aircraft and Assad army helicopters. According to the NBC News report, the rebels received man-portable air-defense system (MANPAD), a missile fired over the shoulder. MANPAD delivery was carried out by the United States and allies through Turkey (Hosenball, 2012).



Figure 7: MANPAD (Harris, 2016).

Gun shipment details were written by IHS Jane 360 based on the United States government Federal Business Opportunities (FBO) website in December 2015. The FBO released two requests to find a shipping company that could send explosives to a port in Jordan called Aqaba, on behalf of the United States Navy's Military Sealift Command. What would be sent was then updated to the weight of 994 tons containing versatile PKM shots, RPG-7 rocket launchers, AK-47 rifles, and 9G111M Factoria anti-tank guided weapon (ATGW) systems (Nimmo, 2016).

One of the weapons included in the shipment was the 9M111M missile, the wire-guided anti-tank facility. This missile can reach as far as 1.6 miles and can penetrate the tank protector. The total weight is 21,693 kg or 47,824 pounds (Bender, 2016). Missiles are produced as needed under the license of the Bulgarian Vazov Engineering Plant. Countries that import these missiles are kept confidential (Army Guide, 2015). The ammunition for 9M111M missile is designed to destroy moving targets, stationary armored targets and other targets on the ground. Sidtem owned by this missile is called 9K111 which is suitable for use in all seasons, climate and weather, including mountainous areas or tropical places. This missile can also be carried with a waterproof bag so that it can float well (bulcomersks, 2014).



Figure 8: 9M111M Faktoria (Bender, 2016).

After that, there was a gun in the form of a gun named PKM. PKM is a machine gun that is using gas and is cooled by air. PKM can only shoot in automatic mode. In combat usually uses a firing rate of 250 rounds per minute and PKM is capable of shooting with a maximum of 650 rounds per minute (Weapon System, 2014). In 1969, PKM was first launched after the previous version, PK. PKM can be used as a lightweight anti-aircraft weapon, PK function that is still applied in PKM (GunWiki, 2017). This weapon can be installed in a vehicle (Bender, 2016).



Figure 9: PKM (Bender, 2016).

The next weapon is RPG-7. The RPG-7 is a Russian-made anti-tank grenade launcher. The RPG-7 is a remarkably simple weapon; its most complex components are its ammunition and optical sight (Recognition, 2019). The United States sent RPG-7 along with ammunition for rebels used against tanks. This launch rocket weighs 4,120 kg or 9,083 pounds (Bender, 2016). Talking about the truth and its performance on the battlefield, Rocket Propelled Grenade or RPG-7 is the best for rebel groups, militias or even terrorist groups. In addition to its simple working system, the RPG-7 is also easy to maintain and has the flexibility of warheads (Pamungkas, 2014). The RPG-7 is a remarkably simple weapon; its most complex components are its ammunition and optical sight. Simplicity means low cost, rapid production, ease of maintenance in the field, ease of training and operation, and, most importantly, high reliability and lethality (Recognition, 2019).



Figure 10: RPG-7 (Bender, 2016).

Then there were AK-47 and DShK rifles. Several different types of weapons were registered in combination because of the United States accounting method in shipping weapons. The AK-47 is a weapon known for being sturdy and easy to use. The AK-47 is a Russian-origin weapon found by Mikhail Kalashnikov (Mukhti, 2017). And the DShK is a heavy infantry machine gun. Like many Soviet-made weapons the Degtyarev Shpagin Krupnokalibernyi (DShK) has proven tough, powerful, and blessed with longevity. But its critics deride it as cumbersome, antiquated, and unreliable in rugged conditions (Miranda, 2019). The total weight of these two weapons is 12,250 kg or 27,006 pounds (Bender, 2016).



Figure 11: DShK (Bender, 2016).

For the ammunitions, there was 7.62x39 mm. It was the first ammunition produced by the Russian empire. This aminition can be used in various types of weapons (Bender, 2016). An example of a weapon that can use this ammunition is the AK-47. In its use on the AK-47, 7.62x39 mm has a muzzle velocity of 710 m / s. At a distance of 400 meters, the speed decreases to 400 m / s (System, 2014). The use of 7.62x39 mm is for a series of infantry weapons such as semi-automatic rifles and submachine guns. This ammunition was first used in Ruchnoy Pulemyot Degtyaryova (RPD). After being used on AK-27 rifles, this ammunition gained fame (Carter, 2018).



Figure 12: 7.62x39 mm (Carter, 2018).

Next ammunition is 7.62x54 mm. This Ammunition was first designed by the Russian Empire in 1891. At the start of its launch, this ammunition was intended for Mosin-Nagant rifles. But now this ammunition is used for PK / PKM machine guns and SVD sniper rifles. During World War II, the Soviet Union began exporting weapons that it had manufactured to countries under its influence, including 7.62 x 54mm ammunition. Domestic production has been carried out in Bulgaria, Poland, China, Egypt, Hungary, Romania, Egypt and Iraq. This ammunition was also sold to the United States under the Winchester brand (Guns Fandom, 2019).



Figure 13: 7.62x54 mm (Guns Fandom, 2019).

The next ammunition is 14.5 x 114 mm, which is ammunition for anti-material rifles. The country that first used this ammunition was the Soviet Union. Ammunition coated with steel casing. Countries that have produced 14.5 x 114 mm are Egypt, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, China, North Korea, Iraq and Russia (revolv, 2018). The development of this ammunition was influenced by the need to fight light and armored tank vehicles (gunrf, 2018).



Figure 14: 14.5 x 114 mm (gunrf, 2018).

Idlib-based rebel members conducted training there and received weapons supplies on the Turkish border, because Idlib is located on the Syrian and Turkish

borders. There they received ammunition provided by the United States. The Americans asked them to bring a truck so that they could carry the supplies of weapons that were provided (Muhammad Ali, 2014). The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) and the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) reported that the Pentagon had provided Soviet-made weapons to Syrian rebels (Dubin, 2017).

From the weapons that had sent to rebel groups, apparently there were weapons that fell into the hands of ISIS. The Conflict Armament Research conducted a study which found that more than 40,000 weapons were taken by ISIS. The study explained in detail that for twelve times the United States bought weapons but ended up in the hands of ISIS. The United States has repeatedly diverted its supply of weapons to get into the hands of rebels but ISIS can quickly get prisoners and seize their weapons (Shelbourne, 2017). The program reportedly received much criticism because rebels trained by the United States had provided ammunition and vehicles to extremist groups (Marcus, 2015).

IV.1.3 The United States Special Forces in Carry Out Military Training to the Syrian Rebels to Topple Bashar Al-Assad

The strength of the opposition groups of President Bashar Al-Assad was initially very alarming. The group was weak, unorganized and even often quarrels with its own group. The weakness of the opposition group was a homework for the United States as its strategy. President Obama in his speech at the West Point cadet corps said that he would increase support for the rebels to "fight terrorists and brutal dictators" (Hardin Lang, 2014). The training of this program aimed to increase the strength of the rebels so they could put military pressure on the Assad regime. As such, Assad could step down and step aside as a result of this political settlement (Heller, 2017).

The CIA agents contacted FSA members after conducting research on the group. The United States had already known what profession they were engaged in and wanted to know more about the political tendencies of every member of the FSA. In addition, the United States also examined whether these rebel groups had any links with extremist groups (Muhammad Ali, 2014). The CIA has run a training

program for rebel forces located in Jordan, Turkey and Qatar. There was contractor for the Pentagon money involved so that they can train more rebels in combat skills. But apparently the Pentagon has its own plans in this war. The first plan was to send US troops directly to join the fiber in training, or the second plan was to train Jordanian soldiers so that later they would train Syrian rebels. This method is called "train the trainers" (Bowman, 2014). As of three years from 2013 until 2015, the United States has trained more than 5,000 rebels. Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey also offer their regions to be used as training locations. Rebel training was also held for the first time in Jordan in March 2013 (BBC, US to send 400 troops to train Syrian rebels, 2015).

While training in Turkey began in 2013. Each rebel was examined for training sessions not only in Turkey, but also in Saudi Arabia and Qatar. There were 200 to 300 people placed in each course to train rebels totaling 5,000 people. About 1,000 US troops would be placed in the course area to provide logistical items and oversee training (AFP, 2015). The total number of fighters assisted by the United States is as many as 20,000 fighters (Balanche, 2018).

The United States and Turkey signed an agreement to train Syrian rebels on February 19, 2013 after going through long negotiations that took months. This training involved people from the FSA who had been promised by Obama that military assistance would be expanded. From 2014, the United States special operations team chose people to be trained, while other American soldiers made regional supply lines or routes used to provide insurgents with non-lethal relief items, such as media, uniforms and radio assistance (David S. Cloud, 2013).

In October 2015, because of the many criticisms received because of the large number of weapons that fell into the hands of extremist groups, the United States no longer carried out checks on every individual in the rebel group. The examination was carried out only with the group leader but the examination was getting tougher (Marcus, US to abandon training new Syrian rebel groups, 2015).

IV.2 United States Led-Coalition Fight Against ISIS

The United States announced the formation of an international coalition to fight against ISIS on September 10, 2014. The Global Coalition was formed with a number of 79 countries that are committed to dismantling the ISIS network and defeating its global ambitions. The United States-led coalition is committed to preventing the current flow of people who want to join or want to launch their actions across borders, handle infrastructure and finance ISIS, defeat ISIS propaganda and restore public services to areas liberated from ISIS (Global Coalition, 2014). As written on the official website of the United States government as follows:

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has dramatically undermined stability in Iraq, Syria and the broader Middle East and poses a threat to international peace and security. ISIS continues to commit gross, systematic abuses of human rights and violations of international law, including indiscriminate killing and deliberate targeting of civilians, mass executions and extrajudicial killings, persecution of individuals and entire communities on the basis of their identity, kidnapping of civilians, forced displacement of Shia communities and minority groups, killing and maiming of children, rape and other forms of sexual violence, along with numerous other atrocities. ISIS presents a global terrorist threat which has recruited thousands of foreign fighters to Iraq and Syria from across the globe and leveraged technology to spread its violent extremist ideology and to incite terrorist acts. As noted in UN Security Council Resolution 2170, “terrorism can only be defeated by a sustained and comprehensive approach involving the active participation and collaboration of all States... which is why our first priority is to encourage others to join in this important endeavor (U.S. Department of State, 2014).”

The following are 79 members of the coalition consisting of countries and organizations in the world, led by the United States:

79 PARTNERS UNITED IN ENSURING DAESH’S ENDURING DEFEAT			
(Global Coalition, 2014)			
AFGHANISTAN	ALBANIA	ARAB LEAGUE	AUSTRALIA
AUSTRIA	BAHRAIN	BELGIUM	CHED

BULGARIA	CAMEROON	CANADA	CZHEC REPUBLIC
COMMUNITY OF SAHEL-SAHARAN STATES	CROATIA	CYPRUS	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
DENMARK	DJIBOUTI	EGYPT	ESTONIA
ETHIOPIA	FIJI	FINDLAND	FRANCE
GEORGIA	GERMANY	GREECE	HUNGARY
ICELAND	INTERPOL	IRAQ	IRELAND
ITALY	JAPAN	JORDAN	KENYA
KOSOVO	KUWAIT	LATVIA	LEBANON
LIBYA	LITHUANIA	LUXEMBOURG	MALAYSIA
MULDOVA	MONTENEGRO	MOROCCO	NATO
NETHERLANDS	NEW ZEALAND	NIGER	NIGERIA
NORWAY	OMAN	PANAMA	PHILLIPPINES
POLAND	PORTUGAL	QATAR	SERBIA
REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA	ROMANIA	SAUDI ARABIA	REPUBLIC OF GUINEA
SINGAPORE	SLOVAKIA	SLOVENIA	SOMALIA
NORTH KOREA	SPAIN	SWEDEN	TAIWAN
THE EUROPEAN UNION	TUNISIA	TURKEY	UKRAINE
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	UNITED KINGDOM	UNITED STATES	

The first United States strategy for ISIS was to consider the role of ISIS which continues to develop in its terrorist jihad in the global world. The second strategy was to balance the conflicting goals of the United States and extremist

groups, for example by tolerating ISIS to fight against the Assad regime. The lack of strategy was to accept the conditions in Iraq that were no longer the same as in 2007-2008 due to the rise of ISIS. The isolated Sunnis in western Iraq must be given rights because they began to support ISIS (Lynch, 2015). Some researchers from western countries agree that the United States has the right to use military force in its war against ISIS (Farrel, 2014). The Global Coalition's commitment to deal with threats made by ISIS, including preventing foreign fighters trying to join ISIS through national borders. The Netherlands, Turkey and the United States lead the Counter-Daesh Coalition Working Group on Foreign Terrorist Fighters which was passed in September 2014 in Resolution 2178 of the UN Security Council. This resolution aims to prevent foreign terrorist fighters from traveling (Global Coalition, 2014).

The air campaign against ISIS in Syria was first carried out by the United States in September 2014. Previously, the United States carried out air strikes on Iraq (The Associated Press, 2018). After holding a meeting with the National Security Official at the Pentagon building on August 4, 2016, President Obama held a press conference to discuss his campaign against ISIS. Until then, the United States had carried out 14,000 attacks. President Obama said that extremist groups used civilians as shields, but American soldiers continued to try not to harm civilians (Obama B. , 2016).

“Our air campaign continues to hammer ISIL targets. More than 14,000 strikes so far. More than 100,000 sorties --including those hitting the ISIL core in Raqqa and in Mosul. And in stark contrast to ISIL -- which uses civilians as human shields -- America’s armed forces will continue to do everything in our power to avoid civilian casualties. With our extraordinary technology, we’re conducting the most precise air campaign in history. After all, it is the innocent civilians of Syria and Iraq who are suffering the most and who need to be saved from ISIL’s terror. And so when there are allegations of civilian casualties, we take them very seriously. We work to find the facts, to be transparent, and to hold ourselves accountable for doing better in the future. We continue to take out senior ISIL leaders and commanders. This includes ISIL’s deputy minister of war, Basim Muhammad al-Bajari; a top commander in Mosul, Hatim Talib al-Hamdani; and, in yet another significant loss for ISIL, its minister of war, Umar al-Shishani. None of ISIL’s leaders

are safe -- and we are going to keep going after them (Obama B. , 2016). ”

It was still in 2014, when the United States has entered a new phase in fighting ISIS. This phase has entered the stage of bombing from Iraq to Syria and continues to be expanded. The facilities owned by ISIS in four provinces in Syria, including in Raqqa, the capital of ISIS de facto, were attacked by the United States through air strikes by the United States. In one day there were 14 military targets achieved by the United States (Farrel, 2014).

After the 96th day of the war against ISIS, the United States has spent an average of \$ 800 million in one day and spent \$ 300,000 per hour, according to a Pentagon report. Obama also submitted an additional fee from Congress of \$ 5.6 billion. This fee was to train and arm Kurdish and Iraqi soldiers and also give vehicles to them. In November 2014, the United States soldiers deployed to fight ISIS in Iraq were 3,100 soldiers (Friedman, 2014). As written on the official website of U.S. In the Department of State in strengthening efforts to defeat ISIS along with NATO partners, there are five efforts by the United States and the allies as follows:

1. *Providing military support to our partners;*
2. *Impeding the flow of foreign fighters;*
3. *Stopping financing and funding;*
4. *Addressing humanitarian crises in the region; and*
5. *Exposing true nature (U.S. Department of State, 2014).*

Twenty-three of the Coalition partners have deployed troops to Syria and Iraq as many as 9,000 troops. With this, the Coalition succeeded in making progress in reducing ISIS headquarters. The operation carried out by the Coalition succeeded in freeing 30% of Syria's territory from ISIS in 2017. ISIS declared the Caliphate in 2014, but in 2017 it dropped to its lowest level because many suffered losses (U.S. Department of Defense, 2017). In 2016, ISIS lost almost a third of the area claimed to be theirs in Syria and Iraq. The total area controlled by ISIS in January 2015 was around 90,800 km² then in October 2016, it fell to 65,500 km². At that time until 2016, ISIS controlled almost the same territory as the total territory of Sri Lanka. In July 2016, ISIS lost its territory again but on a small scale, namely 2,800 km². Their losses were mostly in the northern Aleppo region (Hutt, 2016).

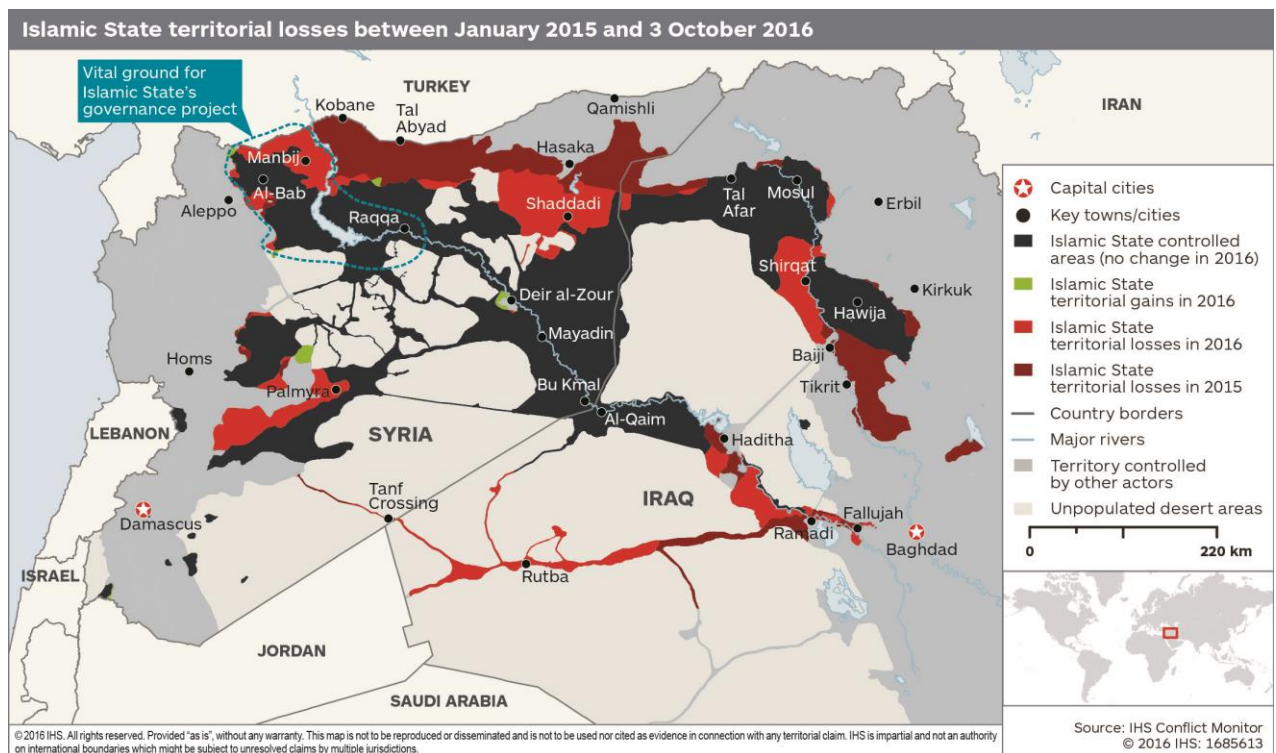


Figure 15: ISIS territory lost (Hutt, 2016).

In 2016, the United States focused on attacks on core areas controlled by ISIS. President Obama said that to defeat ISIS, the United States must target ISIS's central region. This was explained by the Presidential Envoy Special for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL / ISIS, Brett McGurk. The first is the Manbij region which is located 98 km from the Turkish border, because this region is the last post connecting ISIS with other countries. The second is Raqqa, because Raqqa is the capital of ISIS and their main headquarters. The third is the city of Al-Shadadi, then followed by the cities of Sinjar, Mosul, Tikrit, Ramadi, Haditha, Rutbah and the last was Palmyra (McGurk, 2016).

IV.3 American Airstrikes Operation in War (2014-2017)

President Obama reiterated many times that American troops would not set their feet on Syrian land. But apparently this was done by using airstrikes (Alcides Eduardo dos Reis Peron, 2018). Air strikes carried out by the United States focused on ISIS so that it did not attack Bashar Al-Assad's forces significantly. But to defeat Bashar Al-Assad's forces, the United States fought through support for rebel forces (Anne Barnard, 2014). President Obama authorized airstrike on Syria for the first

time in 2014. These air strikes targeted ISIS (Al-Jazeera, 2014). The US-led coalition began attacking ISIS in mid-2014. Until 2015, air strikes carried out by the United States and coalitions continued to increase so that rebel forces could regain strategic territory (Glenn, 2016).

In September 2014, there were a combination of aircraft, bombers, rebel forces and American soldiers working to carry out attacks with aircraft driven from long distances. They also used the Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles to attack as many as 14 attacks targeting ISIS. The attack damaged and even destroyed several ISIS headquarters in the cities of Raqqa, Al-Hasakah in northeast Syria and Kamal in eastern Syria. Some damaged and destroyed places are command and control facilities, financial centers, storage facilities, training systems and armed vehicles. The United States launched 47 Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles from the USS Philippine Sea and USS Arleigh Burke which were operating in the North Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea (U.S. Department of Defense, 2014).

Published by U.S. Department of State in early August 2015, Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve official reported that American and coalition forces continued to attack Syrian territory by targeting ISIS. The airstrikes was done by the United States and coalition forces managed to destroy the equipment that belongs to ISIS. This air strike included combat aircraft and bombers who carried out six air strikes on Syria, namely at the dean of Aleppo which destroyed two ISIS excavators and a tactical unit and ISIS staging area. The next attack near Dayr Az-Zawr was two attacks which hit the excavator. Then an attack was carried out near Ayn Isa which carried out one attack, destroyed the excavator and the last in the dean of Hasakah, destroyed the three positions of the ISIS battle and their tactical unit (U.S. Department of Defense, 2015).

In May 2017, the United States carried out air strikes against President Bashar Al-Assad's forces by deploying warplanes. This action was considered as a protective measure for his troops operating in the southern city of Tnf, Syria. When seeing bulldozers, tanks and other heavy equipment, United States commanders were worried because Syrian troops entered the area where American troops were

based (Hennigan, 2017). And in the same year, in November 2017, United States and coalition forces reportedly carried out 11 attacks. The attack was carried out five times near Hawl, an attack in Palmyra, two attacks in Dayr Az-Zawr, two attacks near Mar'a and another near near Hasakah. ISIS vehicles and equipment that were destroyed included bomb vehicles, tactical units, cranes and oil gas separation plants (U.S. Department of Defense, 2017).

In addition to deploying its warplanes, the United States also used new technology unmanned aircraft or drone which is developed by the United States Air Force (USAF). This drone is called the Predator MQ-9 Drone. The MQ-9 Drone was first sent to Afghanistan by the USAF in October 2007. The next operation was carried out in Iraq in July 2008. The drone can carry four Hellfire II and GBU-12 anti-armor missiles, namely laser-guided bombs. In addition, the MQ-9 Drone is also capable of carrying 500lb GBU-38 JDAM or a direct combination of ammunition attacks (Air Force Technology, 2019).

Previously, the United States had used drones to Pakistan (Alcides Eduardo dos Reis Peron, 2018). This drone has been the cornerstone of the United States air campaign against ISIS. Colonel Case Cunningham who was the commander of the Creech Air Force Base's 432nd Wing and 432nd Expeditionary Wing, said that since ISIS had increased, the demand for the operation of this drone had increased (Isinna, 2017). In 2014, Rear Admiral John Kirby told reporters that there were United States drones and aircraft to operate in the ISIS region. The operations numbered 60 flights (Biggers, 2015). Operations are controlled by data lines on location or with Ku-band satellite links to produce videos. The length of landing and take-off is an average of 2,000 feet (Air Force Technology, 2019).

IV.4 United States Ground Forces Operation (2016-2017)

In October 2015, President Obama gave permission to a group of American troops to be sent to North Syria. The army group number was no more than 50 people and aimed to help rebel and coalition forces fight against ISIS (Kristina Wong, 2015). This was stated by white house spokesman Josh Earnest (Barbara Starr, 2015). Even though before ratifying the sending of American troops to Syria,

President Obama said that American troops were consistent not to set foot on Syrian land. (Goldin, 2015).

“What we’re talking about is not an open-ended intervention. This would not be another Iraq or Afghanistan. There would be no American boots on the ground (Obama B. , 2013).”

President Obama believed that he was consistent in not fighting as the United States did in Iraq because it would not solve the problem (Goldin, 2015). But then in April 2016, Obama planned to send 250 US troops again to support the mission in Syria. The number of troops will be 300 after Obama previously sent dozens of troops to Syria. He claimed that this force would not participate in the fight, but only gave training (BBC, 2016). State Department spokesman John Kirby explained Obama's statement about "no boots on the ground". He said that the placement of the troops was not to participate in the fight, but only in the capacity to assist and advise local militias (Zaid Jilani, 2016). German Chancellor Angela Merkel when speaking to Obama in 2016 proposed that the parties involved in this war need to establish a safe zone for refugees. But Obama said that it was very difficult to build a safe zone without major military involvement (BBC, 2016). The following map is to describe in which parties control Syria’s territory.

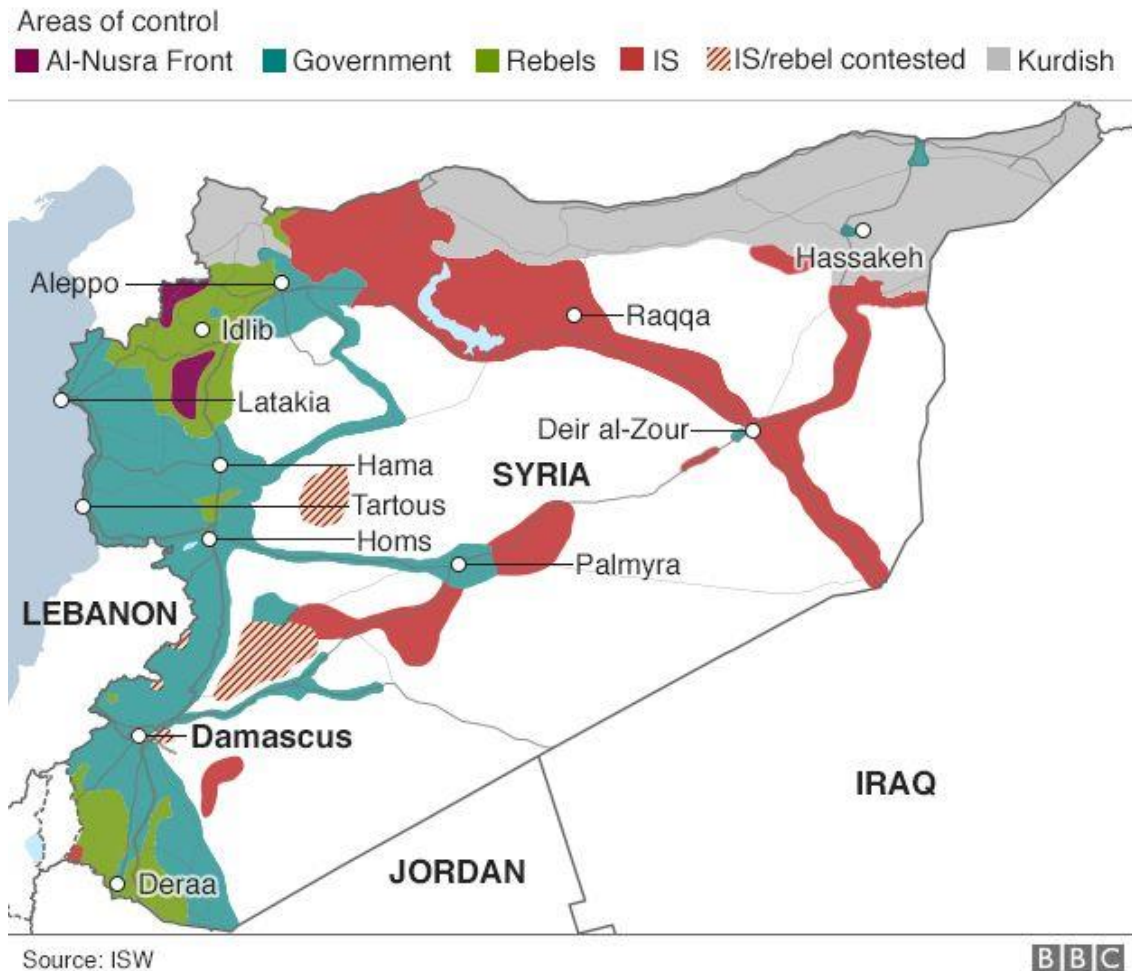


Figure 16: Syria control map (BBC, 2016)

United States forces have carried out open patrols in Manbij carrying armored vehicles and flying American flags in these armored vehicles in March 2017. According to a United States Navy captain, Jeff Davis, the operation was a warning if anyone tried to attack United States forces which caused its operations to fight ISIS to be disrupted (Browne, 2017). In October 2017, it was estimated that US troops operating in Syria had as many as 2,000 Army Rangers, Marines and special operations forces. While coalition army forces operated in remote posts in the cities of Tal Abyad, Manbij, Tabqa and Kobane. The involvement of United States forces and coalitions in the land of Syria was clearly seen with large convoys by trucks and supply of weapons to be given to SDF troops (Snow, 2017).

The United States-led battle against ISIS was carried out with his assistance to Kurdish or SDF militants. The Syrian, Iranian and Russian government forces

who also fought against ISIS were seen as disturbing by the United States so that American forces opened fire on pro-regime drones that would enter the territory where US forces were located. Not only drones, American forces also fired on Syrian manned aircraft to fall (McLaughlin, 2018).

United States forces also operated to maintain peace between Kurdish and Turkish militants. The military operation was carried out to maintain security so that there were no conflicts between the two parties. Whereas the United States Navy provided artillery support for all weather during the 24-hour for the rebel group. Jim Mattis, United States Secretary of Defense asked the Pentagon to review and find better ways for US forces to work outside the country to be more transparent to the public (Snow, 2017).

To build a fire base for the SDF, the United States sent artillery batteries from the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit for altitude Howitzer. M777 howitzers can shoot targets up to 20 miles. According to US military officials, SDF needs an increase in combat power to enter Raqqa (Luiz Martinez, 2017). The United States deployed a small army of troops to the northwest of the city of Manbij because the Pentagon was facing a threat of conflict between Kurdish and Turkish forces. It was feared they will attack each other. Although Manbij has been free from ISIS, the area remained where Kurdish and Turkish forces were experiencing tension. Turkey did not want to cooperate with Kurdish forces to take over Raqqa from ISIS (Luiz Martinez, 2017).



Figure 17: M777 Howitzer (Brown, 2018).

Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad did not expect the arrival of United States troops to Syria. According to him, United States forces assigned to Syria were invaders, whether they were Americans, Turks and so on. What was done by the United States did not help at all (Joe Sterling, 2017). As what was said by President Bashar Al-Assad as follows.

"Any foreign troops coming to Syria without our invitation or consultation or permission, they are invaders, whether they are American, Turkish, or any other one. And we don't think this is going to help. What are they going to do? To fight ISIS? The Americans lost nearly every war. They lost in Iraq, they had to withdraw at the end. Even in Somalia, let alone Vietnam in the past and Afghanistan, your neighboring country. They didn't succeed anywhere they sent troops, they only create a mess; they are very good in creating problems and destroying, but they are very bad in finding solutions (Al-Assad, President Al-Assad: "Foreign Troops Coming to Syria without Permission Are Invaders", 2017)."

For the problem of liberating the city of Raqqa and taking it from ISIS, the Syrian government was working on it. Raqqa was the main priority of the Syrian government and according to Assad, it was not easy because it would take months

to be able to seize Raqqa (Front, 2017). The statement from Bashar Al-Assad was a response to the existence of United States forces in Syria. The Marine Corps and Pentagon did not want to notify the distribution of troops to the public since the fear of security problems. But it was known that there were 100 Rangers in Manbij, Syria (Joe Sterling, 2017).

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

The United States is a superpower country since its victory in the Second World War so that it could easily make an influence throughout the world. Its influence is spread to achieve his national interests which benefited for the United States itself. It was intended that the United States could still maintain its position as the strongest superpower. But there are concerns about the emergence of new powers from other countries such as Russia, China and Iran. To continue to dominate the world, the United States must maintain its influence in any region.

The Middle East is an important area for the United States because there are several threats in the Middle East that could threaten global balance. These threats include the development of terrorist groups and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. Iran is one of the threats because the country produces nuclear weapons significantly. In addition to overcoming threats in the Middle East, the United States has interests there including maintaining Israel's power, regulating oil resources, and promoting democracy.

The Arab Spring wave that occurred in the Middle East do not escape the attention of the United States. Arab Spring which is the overthrow of the regime in several Middle Eastern countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria. The last country to experience the Arab Spring is Syria but Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad is not willing to give up his position as president. Apart from civilians, there are terrorist groups namely ISIS / ISIL / Daesh, which also wants the establishment of an Islamic state by overthrowing the Assad regime. Protests took place in several cities in Syria demanding that Assad step down but government forces responding with weapons aimed at dissolving the protest. But the rebels strengthened themselves by using weapons to attack government forces. Assad remained in his position as president because of political support from Russia and Iran.

This is a new threat to the United States because it can hinder its influence in the Middle East. United States President Barack Obama insisted that Bashar Al-

Assad step down from his position as president of Syria. Despite being criticized by the United States and western countries, Assad has not stepped down. The United States then carried out air strikes on Syria in 2013 and provided military support to the rebels in the form of war training and intake of weapons supplies. Fighting carried out by rebel groups was carried out against two parties, namely the Assad regime and ISIS extremist groups. Support to the rebels to surrender Assad to the United States secretly while fighting against ISIS was carried out openly with coalition countries.

President Obama said that his policy was to ask President Assad to step down but Assad could still not be deposed because he received support from within the country, the Syrian people, and he also received support from abroad, namely Russia and Iran. The United States then made foreign policy for Syria through defense policy, because the foreign policy used military action. Although President Obama has announced air strikes on Syria, he signed a secret military program named Timber Sycamore to train and arm Syrian rebels in order to oust President Assad. This secret program shows that there is a hidden United States interest behind the desire to overthrow President Assad. The weapons given to the rebels were not only rifles, but also missiles and MANPAD. Military training to rebel groups is carried out in neighboring countries of the United States, such as Qatar, Jordan and Turkey. In addition to providing training and arming rebel groups, American soldiers also participated in setting foot on Syrian land even though President Obama had said that his military intervention in Syria would be "no boots on the ground".

The evidence that there was action by the United States in supporting the rebels was training and arming them. Exercises for the rebel forces were carried out in Qatar, Turkey, and Syria borders. Whereas the weapons supplied by the United States were PKM, 9M111M Faktoria, RPG-7, AK-47, DShK, and the ammunitions for the weapons.

Before the United States began its military intervention into Syria, one of the United States allies, Qatar, submitted a proposal for the construction of an oil

pipeline to Europe that passed through Syria in 2009 but President Assad rejected the proposal. After that Iran submitted a proposal for a gas pipeline that would pass through Syria, where the pipeline would bring benefits to allies of Iran and Syria, Russia. President Assad immediately signed a pipe proposal submitted by Iran. The United States and allies then supported Syrian rebels to oust President Assad on the grounds that he had killed his own people and the use of chemical weapons owned by the Syrian government.

President Assad argued that he would not follow the will of the United States and allies because Syria could not be used as a western puppet to reach their interests. He also stressed that although the United States also fought against ISIS which was also the opposition of the Syrian government, the presence of the United States in Syria was never expected and considered illegal by the Syrian government. From this case, it can be seen that the United States wants control in the Middle East, especially Syria, to achieve its interests.

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