IMPLICATIONS OF 9/11 FOR THE UNITED STATES’ RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1. INTRODUCTION 3
2. THE COLD WAR 5
   2.1. DETENTE 5
   2.2. CONFRONTATION 7
3. THE PERIOD OF 1990 TO 2002 9
   3.1 PRIOR TO 9/11 9
   3.2. THE AFTERMATH OF 9/11 11
      3.2.1. MOTIVES FOR RUSSIAN COOPERATION 12
      3.2.2. THE U.S. DOMINANCE 15
4. POST-9/11 19
   4.1. CHECHNYA 20
   4.2. IRAQ 21
   4.3. NEW DIFFICULTIES 23
5. CONCLUSION 28
REFERENCES 29
RESÜMEE 33
1. INTRODUCTION

Unexpected terrorist attacks against United States have made scholars debate about the implications of September 11th in 2001 (9/11) for the United States’ relations with Russia. The hasty speculations that the tragic events changed the relations between the United States and Russia have been affected by the fact that too little time has passed since 9/11 to make rational and reliable generalizations. Even though terrorist attacks against America and consequent war on terrorism have been in the agenda of international relations for nearly eight years, their impact on relations between the United States and Russia has not got enough analytical attention.

The author hypothesises that relations between the United States and Russia have not changed significantly after 9/11. The conventional wisdom after 9/11 was that the threat of terrorism combined with weapons of mass destruction was the motive to build friendship between the United States and Russia. The assumption that the 11 September opened up a new era of cooperation is largely under doubt and is considered by the author to be too superficial. U.S-Russia relations have been in constant flux during the Cold War and the post-Cold War period – both states have been in the environment of restrained cooperation.

During the Cold War period competition in the divided bipolar world between the United States and Russia made it difficult to maintain a stable relationship. After the collapse of one ideology Russia was incapable to find its lost identity – Russia’s policy was ambiguous and was mostly acquiesced to the U.S. predominance. 9/11 terrorist attacks against the United States created an assumption of the U.S.-Russian friendship and cooperation, but in reality made the U.S dominance even more apparent. The cooperation between the United States and Russia was based on a mutual enemy which was not necessarily a strong basis for a stable and predictable relationship.

In order to support the hypothesis, the author finds it relevant to analyse (1) relations between the United States and Russia during the Cold War and in the period of 1990 to
2002, and (2) factors that have influenced their relations in the post-9/11 period. Analysing each, it becomes evident that the U.S.-Russia relationship has not really changed in a positive direction. In the end it becomes clear that at the same time when the United States is pursuing its foreign policy goals concerning war on terrorism, Russia is struggling to find its post-Soviet Union identity by showing off its power ambitions, which makes no threat to current balance of power.

According to the abovementioned research tasks, this paper is divided into three main chapters. In the first one, the author analyses the U.S.-Russia relations during the Cold War period, and in the second one, the author does the same for the period of 1990 to 2002. In the last chapter, the author deals with the aspects of the post-9/11 period starting from the year 2002 until today and explores resemblances between earlier periods.

The paper is based on empirical articles and books found from various international databases. Despite the fact that there are many articles available, it is difficult to find up-to-date analyses (as this is an important matter) on this subject and therefore drawing fair conclusions poses a challenge. The author uses the theoretical framework that best describes either the post-9/11 foreign policy of the United States and that of Russia. In this case the paper is built up on theories of neoconservatism and realism accordingly. The political theory that Russia follows is realism, which focuses on the shifting distribution of power among states. Neoconservativism, which is closely linked with liberalism, includes persuasive ideas, collective values, and culture as its core beliefs; and is a part of the present approach to foreign policy in the United States, which is promoting democratic ideas and freedom.
2. THE COLD WAR

The Cold War dominated international relations for forty-five years (1945-1991). Understanding the Cold War is not only essential for understanding the history in relations between the United States and Russia, but is important for analyzing international relations in general. This period is characterised by a high degree of tensions between two of the world’s superpowers – the Soviet Union and the United States (U.S.). Costly and unsafe arms race, economical competition and conflicts in the Third World made the bipolar world even more divided than it had been ever before.

2.1. DETENTE

The first two decades of the Cold War were characterised by intense hostility between the two superpowers. After the Soviet economy’s stagnation and the rift with China in the late 1960s, the Cold War went through a period of relative relaxation that is known as détente. “President Nixon declared in his inaugural address in January in 1969 that “after a period of confrontation we are entering an era of negotiations””1. It would be a mistake to assume that by regulating their relationship, Moscow and Washington would understand détente in the same way. A series of meetings were held with the intention to sign The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I) that began in 1969 and ended in 1972 with the failure of reaching a comprehensive agreement limiting strategic weapons2. Although other smaller agreements were achieved, it was not enough for imposing sufficiently severe limitations on the United States and the Soviet Union. As a result, what seemed to be an improvement in the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union began to unravel in reality3. Michael Mccgwire argues that the United States would raise demands or impose conditions that guaranteed rejection by the Soviets. He states that strategic arms reductions clearly aimed to embarrass Moscow and was successful in preserving the U.S. preponderance,

2  Ibid., pp. 52.
rather than reaching agreement on reducing the level of armament. Conversely to Mccgwire, Mason concludes that detente was not intended to end the arms race nor eliminate Soviet-American rivalry in the Third World, but nevertheless believes that detente did score some achievements in U.S.-Soviet Union relations. Weber, who is not so modest, thinks that SALT agreements represented an unprecedented level of cooperation in the U.S-Soviet security relations.

In Henry A. Kissinger’s point of view the most successful U.S. President in dealing with the Soviet Union was Richard Nixon, who, not being convinced of the permanent good will of Americans, was not about to trust the Russians. The main problem facing Nixon’s administration was how to retain the United States’ global role and compete with the Soviet Union. The story of the Soviet Union in the 1970s, certainly from the American perspective, was of an expansion of power and influence abroad. Nixon supported the idea of preserving the Soviet Union’s domestic stability in terms of geopolitical stability. The Soviet Union presented a geopolitical and strategic problem with its size, its extent and its power for the government of the United States no matter who governed it.

Due to the reason that both superpowers placed the burden of fulfilment of high expectations on the other side and that the both countries’ foreign policy was purposeless or without clear vision, détente soon found its end. The important element in the decline of détente in the United States was the growing fear that the Soviet Union was gaining and the United States losing in the strategic arms competition. Although detente may appear as a period of warmth in U.S-Soviet relations, it served the mere task of avoiding nuclear war.

---

2.2. CONFRONTATION

Détente was not able to slow down the nuclear arms race, nor stop deepening rivalry between the two superpowers in the Third World, nor foresee the forthcoming events – there were difficulties in maintaining a stable relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States.

It was a time when Soviet-American relations were at a worse position than twenty years ago and it seemed like the Soviet Union had actually gained in military superiority\textsuperscript{13}. The election of Ronald Reagan brought some hope to confront the Soviet Union in an ideological way\textsuperscript{14}. His policy reflected “a profound sense of threat that was deeply rooted in his firm convictions about the nature of communism in general and the Soviet Union in particular”\textsuperscript{15}. He saw the Soviet Union as the global threat and therefore clearly pressured the support to anti-communist movements in the Third World. In the end, it is arguable whether it was beneficial but it surely caused enormous budget deficits for the United States. Since the START negotiations and the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) talks broke down at the same time when the United States announced their Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), a question, whether the arms race got a new breathing, arose.\textsuperscript{16} Reagan was not interested in competing in the arms race, but instead wanted to dominate over Russia in the field of technology, which was supposed to be the role of SDI. Conversely, Barbara Farnham clarifies that the Soviet Union was exceedingly dangerous – in part because of American shortcomings – Soviet threat was magnified by the U.S. military weakness and a loss of resolve that could only be cured by an American military build-up\textsuperscript{17}. With economical sanctions against the Soviet Union on the one hand and economical assistance (i.e. Poland) on the other, the goal of the United States was to weaken Soviet economy\textsuperscript{18}.

While the first half of the 1980s was dominated mainly by the United States, in the last decade the Soviet Union was in the more active position with Mikhail Gorbachev, who

---

\textsuperscript{13} J. Mason 1996, pp. 60.  
\textsuperscript{14} R. Crockatt 1996, pp. 305.  
\textsuperscript{16} J. Mason 1996, pp. 61.  
\textsuperscript{17} B. Farnham 2001, pp. 229.  
came to power in March 1985. Gorbachev focused first on arms control and came to the conclusion that a limited number of nuclear weapons provided sufficient security or could even reduce tensions with the West. For that reason, Gorbachev and Reagan met in four summits from 1985 to 1988. Contrary to each other’s expectations, the meetings (especially the agenda at Reykjavik) turned out to be not about arms control, or even arms reduction, but about the most implausible achievement of the nuclear age – complete disarmament. It was an all-or-nothing package – so it was difficult to fulfil both the demands of the United States and of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the arms control agreements demanded more cuts on the Soviet side than the United States.

The American leaders believed that the fact that the Cold War was ending corresponded most closely with domestic-ideological and institutional changes in the Soviet Union, and not with changes in Soviet power or international policies. Farnham adds that Ronald Reagan was able to perceive change in the Soviet Union and revise his perception of the Soviet threat accordingly. Moreover, his interpretation was supported by contemporary observers like Shultz and Matlock, as well as the verdict of later analysts. It can be argued either that the Soviet Union was trapped in the corner, forced to follow the rules that were set by the United States, and found that this war was not worth fighting; or there were other reasons why the leaders of the Soviet Union switched the orientation of their foreign policy.

---

19 Ibid., pp. 104.
21 J. Mason 1996, pp. 64.
3. THE PERIOD OF 1990 TO 2002

At the end of 1991, one pole in this bipolar, ideologically divided system collapsed\(^{24}\). Every issue in the world was seen through the prism of the Cold War and rivalry between two superpowers. After the Soviet Union had lost the Cold War, many international relations scholars and politicians favoured Russia’s pro-American foreign policy\(^{25}\). Nevertheless, this pro-American foreign policy was Russia’s only way to continue searching for their lost identity, and therefore from the Russian side, U.S.-Russian relations were indefinable and this state lasted from 1990 to 2002. In this chapter, the author analyses the aspects of post-Cold War Russian identity problems, motives for Russian cooperation, the United States’ foreign policy, and other issues that affected relations between the United States and Russia in the period of 1990 to 2002.

3.1 PRIOR TO 9/11

John M. Owen describes that the Soviet Union suddenly disappeared in 1991 and the United States was left as the only pole – this uneven growth ensured unipolarity\(^{26}\). Conversely, Ken Aldred claims that the term “unipolar” does not accurately describe the post-Cold War world, however. This is because the U.S. was more constrained by the agendas of other important countries and international centres of power, as well as by its own position and roles in international economic, commercial and security institutions, than the idea of a single dominant power allows for\(^{27}\). Instead Samuel P. Huntington added another alternative approach to the unipolar world system with the phrase “uni-multipolar”\(^{28}\).


In the first half of the 1990s, Russia’s foreign policy was not directed toward supporting the balance of power in international relations, and realism was not dominant in Russian foreign policy discussions\(^{29}\). Allen C. Lynch promotes the mainstream idea that “post-Soviet Russian foreign policy has tended to settle on a number of propositions: (1) profound crisis of political and national identity, (2) disintegration of the classical sinews of international power, and (3) decision-making in the foreign and security policy area was highly amorphous, unstructured and frequently incoherent”\(^{30}\). Similarly, other international relations theorists and foreign policy analysts, like Peter Shaerman, find that identity and ideational factors are key determinants for any understanding of contemporary Russia’s foreign policy and relationship with the United States\(^{31}\). Crucially, Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov identified a close linkage between Russia’s status as a great power and its obligation to fulfil a global counterbalancing role\(^{32}\). The post-Cold War period was mainly Russia’s struggle to find its position in relation to the United States. It is sure that Russia’s Communist and czarist past influenced the need to go back to its earlier imperial ambitions. Henry Kissinger supports the idea with the assumption that somehow these historical roots will result in a missionary and imperial foreign policy orientation\(^{33}\). Nevertheless, the foreign policy was fragmented and there was hardly any consensus at all – Russia was without a clear vision and almost stood in one place. “Russia’s experience during the 1990s was not so much one of emergence as one of confusion, retrenchment and decline”\(^{34}\).

According to James M. Goldinger, who states that although by the end of the 1990s, the mood in U.S.-Russian relations had more affinity with the old Cold War era than with the more optimistic times in 1991, many Russians were still suspicious of the actions of the

\(^{29}\) A. D. Bogaturov 2004, pp. 38.
\(^{33}\) Peter Shearman 2001, pp. 253.
\(^{34}\) Neil S. Macfarlane, "The 'R' in BRICs: is Russia an emerging power?" *International Affairs*, Vol. 82, Number 1, January 2006, pp. 44.
United States\(^{35}\). James M. Goldinger claims that the United States believed that market-oriented and more democratic Russia would no longer threaten the United States; and due to that, there were two different strategies under discussion: helping the internal transformation of Russia or retaining the balance of power between the United States and Russia\(^{36}\). According to Stephen F. Cohen, the real U.S. policy was different – “a relentless, winner-take-all exploitation of Russia's post-1991 weakness”\(^{37}\).

All in all, as Owen puts it – post-Cold War Russia's policy was ambiguous, and was mostly accepted with the U.S. predominance\(^{38}\). Russia’s weakness allowed the U.S. to dominate and set the international relations order – Russia was no match to the U.S. and thus had to act as a cooperative partner during the 1990s. Prior to 9/11 Russia’s desire to be viewed as an equal partner with the West, expressed in the Foreign Policy Concept of 2000, was patently unrealistic\(^{39}\).

### 3.2. THE AFTERMATH OF 9/11

It is certain that September 11 changed the manner in which the United States viewed security within the country and how it has manifested itself in their foreign policy. In spite of that there are differences in discussion about how much terrorist attacks against the United States changed the relations between the U.S. and Russia. September 11 gave George W. Bush the discretion and authority that his predecessor lacked. The attacks of 9/11 provided the alarm call that pushed “national security” back to the top of the American political agenda, where it had been during the Cold War\(^{40}\).

---

36 J. M. Goldgeier 2003, pp. 5.


3.2.1. MOTIVES FOR RUSSIAN COOPERATION

Neal Kumar argues that since the Cold War, the times when the U.S.-Russian relations could be thought of as cooperative were (1) the détente in the 1970's and (2) after the collapse of the Communist regime when the Yealtsin-Clinton partnership was hoped to lead the United States and Russia to stronger friendship. Nevertheless, as the author analysed in the previous chapter, the cooperation between the United States and Russia was ambiguous. Moreover these optimistic periods did not result in more sustainable relations because of misperceptions about the meaning of 'cooperation' from both sides, and their practical ambitions of achieving their own foreign policy ends. In the aftermath of 11 September 2001, the United States and Russia found themselves in front of the opportunity to build up their relations on the mutual enemy that created fear in both state leaders.

American and Russian strategic interests seemed to become more aligned with each other after September 11. Instead, the 9/11 attacks provided a further impetus for Putin to seek a pragmatic relationship with Washington. The Russian President Vladimir Putin called George W. Bush immediately after the tragic events occurred to give his full support to the United States and the American people. The Russian Federation, he stated, “has been fighting international terrorism for a long time” and “has repeatedly urged the international community to join efforts.” Putin expressed sympathy as a leader of a country that had also suffered from acts of terrorism against civilians in the capital. He even offered a support plan to the United States including humanitarian as well as military assistance. Russian intelligence forces cooperated closely with Americans in strengthening the position of the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan. Russia also accepted the creation of American military bases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in support of combat operations in Afghanistan. Nobody could have predicted that the newfound spirit of friendship between

45 N. S. Macfarlane 2006, pp. 50.
Russia and the U.S. would amount to such a breadth of cooperation, especially considering the previously traded harsh words. According to MacFarlane, Russia had no reasons not to be cooperative, otherwise it would have had damaging repercussions in Washington, with which Russia had a much broader agenda. At the same time Ted Hopf found in the “Moscow Declaration on New Strategic Relations between the Russian Federation and the United States”, a document borne out of the closer relationship developed between Washington and Moscow after 9/11, that there is not a single reference to any shared identity between Russia and the United States. Besides that MacFarlane is right by saying cooperation in America’s ‘war on terror’, in contrast, carried some potential for gain on other issues on which U.S.-Russia relationship impinged strongly, such as Chechnya, integration into the world economy, and the maintenance of strategic deterrence and arms control regimes.

Reasons why Russia was so complying do not lie only in the moral fight against terrorism or as the U.S put it - ‘war against terrorism’. In order to understand the underlying reasons for this shift in President Putin’s policy, one must go back to the time before 9/11. The basis for Putin’s negotiations with the U.S. is believed to be in his November 2000 declaration, in which he first publicly hinted at his willingness to discuss missile defence with the U.S. Later, at two summit meetings between Russia and the U.S. in June and July prior to the 9/11 attacks, Russia again indicated willingness to cooperate and agreed to comprehensive discussions about the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and a reduction of strategic forces. Looking at the positive cooperation momentum achieved with combating with terrorism, one could have believed that other problematic issues between the two states could be resolved thereafter; Bush committed to cutting the stockpile of the States to 1,700-2,200 warheads, and Putin responded with his commitment to reduce Russia’s arsenal by

---

47 N. S. Macfarlane 2006, pp. 50.
49 N. S. Macfarlane 2006, pp. 50.
two-thirds. Without reductions in the U.S. strategic forces, Russia could not maintain nuclear parity with the U.S. Russia wanted to maintain at least the illusion of nuclear parity with the U.S., and thus needed the U.S. to guarantee its position as a nuclear power.

Four other issues, which affected Moscow’s dialogue with Washington, can be underlined. Firstly, Putin argued that Russia must be a partner in the international war on terrorism while it fights its own domestic terrorism in Chechnya. Secondly, Putin’s pro-western line was founded in shared vulnerability to Sunni Islamist extremism and terrorism. Thirdly, Russian economy was in desperate need for Western investments. Integration into the world economy had long been seen as an important goal for Russia. Fourthly, there was a very powerful strand in Russian thinking, which desired that Russia be accepted as a fully 'European' country as part of integration to the West. Putin believed that such support could be used to both strengthen Russia's international position, which had been on the decline, and help to force integration into the West through acceptance to multilateral institutions such as the G8 and WTO. In May 2002 President Bush acknowledged that Russian accession to the WTO was a matter of national interest for the United States. Furthermore, the Russian Federation completed its accession to full membership of the G8 at Kananaskis in 2002.

The rapprochement between Moscow and Washington – that seemed to have given post-9/11 U.S.-Russian relations the character of a long-term, strategic partnership that could be seen as unprecedented since the end of World War II. The author of this paper argues that the relations between the United States and Russia were not unprecedented when

51 T. L. Trayer, pp. 16.
52 K. Kakihara, pp. 9.
53 V. Kolossov 2004, pp. 25.
55 N. S. Macfarlane 2006, pp. 50.
58 N. S. Macfarlane 2006, pp. 51.
elaborating the motives for their actions. Russia’s continued pursuit to find its lost superpower motivated Russia to find fields of cooperation - 9/11 fulfilled that criterion.

### 3.2.2. THE U.S. DOMINANCE

At the end of the Cold War, the U.S. was in the unique position to participate in global events through a more multilateral approach in its foreign policy. Nevertheless, post-9/11 American foreign policy appears to have taken a sharp unilateral turn, where there is no place left for Russia searching for its identity. Prior to 9/11, there was a half of a century of the U.S. leadership in constructing an international order around multilateral institutions; rule-based agreements and alliance partnerships gave way to unilateralism⁶⁰. The terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001 were a defining moment for the United States – instead of leading America to isolationism, Bush’s administration was determined to seek out and destroy the al-Qaeda network that resulted also in the withdrawal from global and bilateral treaties, such as the ABM treaty. According to Francis Fukuyama:

> ‘the United States is likely to emerge from the attacks a different country, more unified, less self-absorbed, and much more in need of help from its friends to carry out a new national project of defeating terrorism. And it may also become a more ordinary country in the sense of having concrete interests and real vulnerabilities rather than thinking itself able unilaterally to define the nature of the world it lives in.’⁶¹

Since the Foreign Policy Concept of 2000, Russia has identified American unilateralism as a threat to achieve a multipolar system in international relations⁶².

The Bush administration expressed the view that the stamping out of terrorists in Afghanistan is no more than the first step in a long-term war on terrorism⁶³. Within three months, the Taliban had been ousted, and even though Osama bin Laden had not been

---


⁶³ K.Kakihara, pp. 9.
located, some success had been achieved in ‘war against terrorism’, but the war was far from its end. This success was not just military, but also helped to overcome old, Cold War mentalities by effectively cooperating with the allies. Success in the Afghan war boosted the U.S. confidence, amplified the bandwagon effect, and at the same time brought accusations of returning to unilateralism. Until Putin’s defining policy statement there was considerable public debate among his advisers on how to respond to an American-led campaign against the Taliban in Afghanistan. Except for Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov, who saw ‘absolutely no basis for even hypothetical suppositions about the possibility of NATO military operations on the territory of Central Asian nations’, there was general scepticism over the U.S. presence in Central-Asia.

Almost immediately after 9/11 G.W. Bush began to believe that the United States had to go on the offensive and remake the world into a safer place. Instead of seeking to preserve the balance of power in the international system, Bush decided to remake the balance of power. Doing so required a regime change - democratic regime change – in those countries (i.e. Iraq) most threatening to American national security interests. President George W. Bush’s 12 September 2002 speech to the U.N. General Assembly made clear that the United States would intervene in Iraq either with or without the United Nations - it met with a negative response in Russia. Russia was, incontrovertibly, opposed to the use of force in Iraq. However, American resolve was reasonably clear; Russia did what it could to keep the decision-making process within the UN framework. Initially Moscow indicated that it would support the United States in the Security Council for a price: post-Saddam Iraq would honour Russian oil contracts and repay past debts to Moscow, the United States would drop objections to Russian atomic energy sales to Iran, and the United States would give Moscow a “free hand“ to intervene in Georgia. The United States, though, refused to make any concrete commitments and secret deals.

64 T. L. Trayer, pp. 13.
65 K. Kakihara, pp. 10.
66 V. Kolossov 2004, pp. 10.
67 J. M. Goldgeier, pp. 315.
68 M. N. Katz, “Playing the Angles: Russian Diplomacy Before and During the War in Iraq” Middle East Policy, Vol.10, Number 3, September 2003, pp. 44.
69 N. S. Macfarlane 2006, pp. 51.
70 M. N. Katz 2003, pp.46.
Since 11 September it is clear – on the part of most of the Bush administration, at least – that the attacks imply no greater desire for genuine international cooperation, except in the field of anti-terrorism, and no willingness to sacrifice any real or perceived the U.S. interests for the sake of such co-operation which will in any way limit the U.S. freedom of action71. The Bush Administration’s foreign policy is echoed in The National Security Strategy of the United States, which is also called the “Bush Doctrine”. It clearly states that the United States reserves the right to pre-emptive and independent action in the war on terrorism72. In other worlds, the attacks of 11 September in 2001, and the American and international response to them, gave the United States a new chance to act as consensual hegemony73. Furthermore, in September of 2002 Bush revealed the National Security Strategy statement that mainly focuses on unilateralism and hegemony74. S. R. Dockrill adds controversy by stating that the Bush Doctrine does not necessarily reject multilateralism, the need for allies, and deterrence. Dockrill also draws similarities between the Bush Doctrine and examples that can be found in the Cold War years, when the United States was facing growing Soviet nuclear capabilities75. The remarkable fact that the Bush Doctrine is, essentially, a synonym for neoconservative foreign policy marks “neoconservatism’s own transition from a position of dissidence”76. In the aftermath of 9/11, President Bush adopted many of these ideas, arguing that a world of democratic states will be more peaceful and less likely to produce terrorism77.

In conclusion, the end of the Cold War was announced many years ago when one of the ideologies found its end. Despite that the thinking and mentality of the Cold War era within the United States’ and Russia’s foreign policy are still affecting their relations after 9/11. The forgotten Cold-War and post-Cold War challenges continue to appear in their relations

72 K.Kakihara, pp. 6.
75 Ruth S. Dockrill 2006, pp. 347.
with the addition of problems posed by the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the United States. Relations from 1990 to 2002 were characterised by Russia’s incapability to find its lost identity, 9/11 terrorist attacks, that created an assumption of U.S.-Russian friendship and cooperation, but actually defined the U.S. as the world hegemony.
4. POST-9/11

The Russian-American bilateral relationship exhibits little of the optimism and enthusiasm expressed about common struggles, new alliances, or shared values immediately after September 11 in both countries. This reversal of the hopeful trend toward partnership after 9/11 was not precedent in U.S.-Russia relations in the post-Cold War era. For twelve years the state of relations between the two has fluctuated and has fluctuated more radically during the Cold War period. The result has been that the relationship at the moment is markedly less warm than it had become in the aftermath of 9/11. In this chapter, the author analyses how and why U.S.-Russia relations have gone worse? The author discusses the issues of Chechnya, the U.S. invasion into Iraq, the U.S. plan to deploy missile defence (MD) elements in Poland and the Czech Republic; and other new distinctive difficulties in the U.S.-Russia relations.

The strength of U.S.-Russian bilateral relations was questioned when Washington revealed its fears about Russia’s partnership with Iran for building a nuclear reactor. These fears grew bigger when plans to finish the Iranian reactor were speeded up in December 2002, and when Putin declared that they are not stopping that process. There was still hope that Putin could help avert a clash with Washington on this issue. After that, in 2005 Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov stated, “No one,” Lavrov added, “including the United States, will challenge our right to continue building the atomic electricity station in Bushehr.” Russia’s firmer tone on Iran shows that Moscow intended to act with even less regard to the United States.

79 T. L. Trayer, pp. 19.
81 Bigg, Claire. “Russia/Iran: Moscow Takes Tougher Stance On Iran Nuclear Issue” http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/10/0FD0E3BE-D76D-4435-82B7-1AA4D8D3954F.html (12.05.2008)
4.1. CHECHNYA

As the images from 9/11 were broadcast in Russia, they were instantly contextualised and interpreted within the history of Russia’s recent war against Chechen terrorism. The post-September 11 developments in the United States have marginalized all the critics of the Russian government’s excess in Chechnya. The world wide war with terrorism have allowed Putin to label Chechens as terrorists and carry out actions, that he could not justify under regular conditions. Putin stated that these bombings “bore the same signature” as the Moscow apartment bombings of 1999. Russia's own experience with urban terrorism rendered 9/11 an overseas instance of the same phenomenon they themselves faced: 9/11, in short, was domesticated in Russia as a “global Chechnya”. Since Chechen terrorists held hundreds of Moscow theatre-goers hostage in late 2002, the Putin administration has appeared unequivocally opposed to talks with the rebels and more dedicated to establishing a pro-Moscow government in Chechnya.

Russian leaders tried to find as much similarities between Chechnya and 9/11 in the United States as possible. Russian officials have talked about Osama Bin Laden’s direct link with Chechnya; and about the fact that the Taliban regime was the only 'state' to have recognized Chechen independence. International Sunni Islamist volunteers allied to Al-Qa'ida and backed by the Taliban play an important part in the Chechen resistance. In other words Russian intervention in Chechnya can be understood as the United States` war with Iraq.

The West tended to view the Chechen conflict as an ethno-political struggle disguised as an anti-terrorist campaign. In the short run, the United States government, as well as European leaders, have toned down their criticism and appear to be giving President Putin’s views of the situation in Chechnya more credence than in the past. Despite that, in the United States, most policymakers, politicians, and pundits believe that the increased rockiness

82 “Russia and USA After the 11th September – Partnership of Perpetual Distrust?” http://www.kristiantakac.net/RUSSIA%20AND%20USA%20AFTER%20THE%2011th%20SEPTEMBER.pdf, (15.05.2008), pp. 3.
83 V. Kolossov 2004, pp. 7.
owes to Putin leadership’s steady movement away from democratic norms. The United States urged dialogue between Russia and mainline Chechen groups, promoted free and fair elections and stated that human rights violations could ultimately harm their relations. Besides influencing Putin, the United States can do very little to change the Russian policy towards Chechnya.

Chechnya’s role in U.S.-Russian relations has two interesting sides. Firstly, the United States has no vital interests at stake on the Russian periphery, and the U.S. engagement does not place Russian interests at risk. Secondly, the U.S. national security adviser under the Carter administration Zbigniew Brzezinski commented about the possibility of the new cold war, “There can be no cold war because Russia is in no position to wage either a hot or a cold war. It's a brutal effort to wage war in Chechnya which verges on genocide; it's at the same time a testimony to the incompetence of the Russian military.” It can be concluded that the United States has few options and little interest to affect Russian policy towards Chechnya. This shows Russia’s actual military incapability to effectively intervene in Chechnya. This is important because it reveals that Russia is not becoming the superpower, who would fill the balancing power role against the United States.

4.2. IRAQ

“After the Kremlin’s cooperation in the war in Afghanistan, Russia’s assertive opposition to the U.S. war against Saddam Hussein came as a particular shock to many in the United States (and confirmed the suspicions of those who were not shocked)” Once the war began in March 2003, President Putin harshly criticized the American policy by

87 “U.S.-Russian Relations: An American Perspective”
http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/printver/1074.html (12.05.2008)
88 Jim Nichol, “Bringing Peace to Chechnya Assessments and Implications”
89 Nation, R. Craig, “Russia, the United States, and the Caucasus”
90 “U.S./Russia: Zbigniew Brzezinski Assesses U.S.-Russia Relations”
http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/05/b62307e1-832c-4fbc-ab91-ba8fa7a0eb24.html (14.05.2008)
http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/3448651.html (02.05.2008)
saying, “The U.S. invasion could not be justified by anything… [It] is a great political mistake”, but nevertheless stated that Moscow wanted the Russian-American cooperation to continue 92. This was due to the reason that Iraq had outstanding debt of over $8 billion owned to Moscow. The possibility of losing everything made Russia cautious whether to demand payment and losing all access in future to Iraq oil industry or not to demand payment and have possibility to have access to oil 93. Russia needs and wants oil prices to stay high. It is estimated that each $1 decrease in the price-per-barrel translates into a billion-dollar loss for Russia’s state budget. A price collapse would devastate Russia’s fragile economy 94. Despite that Putin helped to lead international protests against the U.S.-led war in Iraq that could be also seen as strengthening his own position among Russian politicians 95.

The U.S. strategy towards Iraq is also linked to the legally and diplomatically complex issue of the right of sovereign states to possess nuclear weapons, and how to limit or at least supervise the spread and the threats posed by them 96. The United States military intervention gave a signal to Russia about their supremacy and, all in all, surprised Russian leaders how effectively the U.S. was capable of carrying out military actions in Iraq. Putin probably realised that the invasion into Iraq demonstrated not only that unilateralism would continue but that, in all likelihood, it would be intensified.

Kari Roberts goes further and writes that in many ways the dispute over the war in Iraq perfectly illustrated Russia’s apparent desire to assert power in the post-Cold War era 97. The author of this paper supposes that this desire is part of Russia’s power policy, but it has more to do with the threat coming from the U.S. power. Pro-Russian Richard Sakwa gives evidence in support of this argument: “President Putin expressed serious concern over Washington’s adoption of the concept of limited sovereignty as the basis for the Bush

93 M. N. Katz 2003, pp.50.
94 Michael D. Tandt, “Iraq puts chill on U.S.-Russia relationship” http://www.cdi.org/russia/252-5.cfm (05.05.2008)
Doctrine”\(^{98}\). It can be even said that President Bush’s foreign policy priorities today do not include Russia. He and his foreign policy team are focused first and foremost on stabilizing Iraq, fighting terrorism\(^{99}\).

After 9/11 Russia has emphasized multilateral action within those organisations in which it possesses influence and power. This was notable when the U.S. intended to intervene in Iraq, and Russia wanted to stay within the United Nations framework as the author wrote in the previous chapter. This was only one of the few options available to Russia to express any effect to the United States.

### 4.3. NEW DIFFICULTIES

Nearly two decades after the fall of Communism, the United States and Russia have once again entered a period of suspicion and distrust\(^{100}\). Surely the distrust was the main cause that led to the Cold War in the first place and dangerous nuclear arms race that made the situation even worse. In the post-9/11 period the United States unilateral actions combating with terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq, plans to deploy elements of missile defence in Poland and the Czech Republic, and other such issues have made Russia more suspicious than it ever was after the Cold War. During the post-9/11 period, the United States have pursued their foreign policy with less regard for Russian reactions and deepened distrust between both states. From the United States point of view, Russia’s attempts to restore its power by extending its economical and political influence in nearby states, and human rights violations in Chechnya have created more suspicion in Russia. According to Nancy E. Soderberg, who says that without trust, states will be prone to act alone and to deceive others about their actions and in tensions, further fuelling mutual distrust and suspicion\(^{101}\), it should be clear that after 9/11, both sides – the United States and Russia – have not made

---


\(^{100}\) R. Sakwa 2008, pp. 266.

it possible to develop stronger trust in their relationship.

Unilateral American actions after 9/11 such as the withdrawal from the Kyoto Treaty (March 2001) and America’s unilateral abrogation of the 1972 ABM treaty in 2002 heralded a new instability. Russian policy-makers avoided any spillover from disagreement on this issue into the larger relationship. The Americans clearly indicated that they do not plan to extend the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) beyond its expiry date of 5 December 2009. The Russian Government, on the other hand, had long been unhappy with American ‘unilateralism’. One of the cornerstones of Russian foreign policy from the middle Yealtsin years up to the present has been the creation of a ‘multipolar’ world that would contain American ‘hegemony’. Nevertheless, the earlier embrace of multipolar balancing has disappeared more and more from Russian policy practice, and is now rarely encountered in official discourse and replaced with Westphalian model of a pluralist system based on sovereign equality.

At one point during the Cold War, the nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union had grown so large and sophisticated that neither country could entirely destroy the other's retaliatory force by launching first, even with a surprise attack. Regulating nuclear arms race did lead to more secure international relations environment, but made a mistake by assuming that regulating the Soviet Union and the United States relations would lead to mutual understanding about cooperation. The post-9/11 period has led to the U.S. plan not to continue with START I after 2009, President Putin’s recent threat to abrogate the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty and the United States plan to implement the missile defence program in East-Europe – it can be concluded that a new phase of nuclear armament has started. It can be argued that it would be the initial point of a new arms race.

---

102 N. S. Macfarlane 2006, pp. 51.
104 M. N. Katz 2003, pp.44.
105 N. S. Macfarlane 2006, pp. 56.
in Europe; others fear the political consequences in regard to the harsh Russian criticism\textsuperscript{107}. It also raises the question whether the absence of the 9/11 terrorist attacks would have prevented today’s rearmament or not? The author supports Sakwa’s idea that paradoxical situation where the security of the continent is now imperilled by precisely the hypertrophy of the security structures that were created to ensure that security\textsuperscript{108} and that 9/11 has lead to that paradoxical situation.

With NATO and the United States increasingly engaged with republics on the Russian border from Ukraine to Georgia, it is hardly surprising that Russian leaders are feeling uncomfortable or unstable\textsuperscript{109}. At the Munich Security Conference, the Russian President Vladimir Putin accused in his speech the United States in destabilising the international system by unilaterally pushing forward the build-up of missile defence sites in Poland and the Czech Republic\textsuperscript{110}. Nevertheless, the Russian reaction to the development of MD installations was more sceptical than hysterical: instead of overreacting they offered Gabala radar base in Azerbaijan for MD installations and creation of joint missile defence system with the U.S. and NATO participation\textsuperscript{111}. All these plans were rejected by the Americans. Sakwa states that the whole affair is a classic case of action and reaction as the conflict over motives and intentions escalated, but mainly it is the failure of the U.S. to understand the perspective of others that is one of the country’s greatest failings in the post-Cold War era\textsuperscript{112}

The attacks against the U.S. in September 2001 and the ensuing ‘war on terror’ accompanied by a broader disruption in world affairs have distracted attention from perhaps the most important problem of our era: integrating Russia into an expanded global consensus\textsuperscript{113}. It is important to notice that after the bipolar Cold-War Soviet Union

\textsuperscript{107} Thomas Bauer, “Missile Defence – The debate in Germany”

\textsuperscript{108} R. Sakwa 2008, pp. 256.
\textsuperscript{109} R. Sakwa 2008, pp. 255.
\textsuperscript{110} Thomas Bauer, “Missile Defence – The debate in Germany”
\textsuperscript{111} R. Sakwa 2008, pp. 255.
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., pp. 256.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., pp. 266.
collapsed and during the post-Cold War period, Russia struggled to find its new identity and position in the global arena. The broad focus on ‘war on terrorism’ has changed especially the United States foreign policy priorities, whereas Russia’s goals to achieve acceptance of the West have stayed put and it has not gained noticeable acceptance from the United States. Putin’s willingness to co-operate with the West to the extent of raising no objection to the deployment of the U.S. forces in Central Asia has been seen as consistent with his ‘Western-centrism’ (Duncan, pp 293)\textsuperscript{114}. This America-centric worldview remains active as long as similar challenges and threats remain.

In many ways, Putin’s dual impulses of seeking ways to integrate into the West and seeking ways to balance against the West reflect Russia’s long-standing love-hate relationship with the West\textsuperscript{115}. Zbigniew Brzezinski stays rather neutral describing U.S.-Russia relations as follows: “It's a mixed relationship. There are some elements of cooperation, but also there are some significant disagreements. Russia is still motivated by nostalgia for the past, which is unrealistic and counterproductive”\textsuperscript{116}. Despite the facts that the United States and Russia renewed the umbrella document governing the bilateral Cooperative Threat Reduction, and economic ties between the two countries continue to deepen\textsuperscript{117}, small positive trends do not play a considerable part in U.S.-Russia relations. The author agrees with O’Loughlin, who argues that “the fact that the United States and Russia worked from a mutually implicated script after the 9/11 attacks does not make their interests coincident nor was it necessarily a strong basis for a stable and predictable relationship”\textsuperscript{118}.

Despite the fact that there are arguments saying that “the neoconservative experiment for radical transformation through unilateralism has ended in failure”\textsuperscript{119}, John M. Owen

\textsuperscript{115} J. M. Goldgeier, pp. 314.
\textsuperscript{116} “U.S./Russia: Zbigniew Brzezinski Assesses U.S.-Russia Relations“ http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/05/b62307e1-832c-4fbc-ab91-ba8fa7a0eb24.html (14.05.2008)
\textsuperscript{118} V. Kolossov 2004, pp. 15.
\textsuperscript{119} Bill Richardson, “A New Realism Crafting a US Foreign Policy for a New Century” http://www.harvardir.org/articles/1630/ (17.05.2008)
indicates that globally, antiliberal actors are weak enough not to threaten the U.S. primacy but strong enough to enable its continuance. Russia’s rather pragmatic stance in relation to the U.S. post 9/11 actions and its own domestic war in Chechnya refer to the re-emergence of Russia as an assertive global and regional player, tempted by militant nationalism.

5. CONCLUSION

Relations between the United States and Russia have gone through periods with different characteristics affecting their relationship. During the Cold War, tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union went through some critical moments, mainly created by nuclear arms race. Today, Russian Federation does not play the same role as the Soviet Union did during the Cold War. Prior to the 9/11, U.S.-Russia relations were altered by Russia’s ambiguous policy to find its identity in international relations environment. The terrorist attacks immediately created a feeling of positivism in their relations. The assumption of longer cooperation that was based on the mutual enemy did not last long – only until Russia began to see the U.S. and its influence as a threat to their security and pursue pragmatic foreign policy.

The paper argues that U.S.-Russia relations have not really changed significantly since 11 September 2001. Instead, relations since the Cold War have never been friendly, nor have they been remarkably hostile in the post-Cold War period. The relationship between the two states has always been fluctuating, with its ups and downs. The United States is the only real and active global superpower, which means that America has the necessary resources and possibilities to fight its “war against terrorism”, promoting neoconservative ideas, whereas Russia lacks military and economical resources to implement their foreign policy based on the competition for power. In one important sense, Russia brought the use of force back to the picture of and thus reinforced those who see the world through realist eyes. The result has been that due to the addition of problematic issues and new distinctive difficulties separating the United States and Russia have at the moment made the relationship markedly less warm than it became in the aftermath of 9/11.

Another conclusion is that 9/11 and the fight against terrorism have strengthened the U.S. domination in the world scene, and made their foreign policy have less regard to the reactions of Russia. It is hard to see Russia fulfilling the counterbalancing role against the United States in nearby future and therefore the U.S. is the dominant side in the relationship between the United States and Russia.
REFERENCES


Bigg, Claire. “Russia/Iran: Moscow Takes Tougher Stance On Iran Nuclear Issue” http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/10/0FD0E3BE-D76D-4435-82B7-1AA4D8D3954F.html (12.05.2008)


Macfarlane, S. Neil. "The `R' in BRICs: is Russia an emerging power?" International Affairs, Vol. 82, Number 1, January 2006.

Mankoff, Jeffrey. “Vladimir Putin and the Re-Emergence of Russian Foreign Policy” http://www.yale.edu/macmillan/iac/security_papers/mankoff.pdf (17.05.2008)


Richardson, Bill. “A New Realism Crafting a US Foreign Policy for a New Century” http://www.harvardir.org/articles/1630/ (17.05.2008)


“Russia and USA After the 11th September – Partnership of Perpetual Distrust?” http://www.kristiantakac.net/RUSSIA%20AND%20USA%20AFTER%20THE%2011th%20SEPTEMBER.pdf, (15.05.2008)
Sakwa, Richard. “‘New Cold War’ or twenty years’ crisis? Russia and international politics” International Affairs, Vol. 84, Number 2, March 2008.


RESÜMEE

11 septembri terrorirünnakute mõjud Ameerika Ühendriikide suhetele Venemaaga

11. septembril 2001. aastal Ameerika Ühendriikide (USA) vastu suunatud terrorirünnakud on tekitanud politoloogide seas diskussiooni selle mõjudest USA suhetele Venemaaga. Spekulatsioonid, nagu toonuks traagilised sündmused kaasa muutusi USA ja Venemaa vahelistes suhetes, on olnud mõjutatud asjaolust, et usaldusväärsede ja ratsionaalsete järelduste tegemiseks ei ole terrorirünnakute mõõdunud piisavalt palju aega. Hoolimata sellest, et terrorirünnakud ja sellele järgnened terrorismivastane sõda on rahusvaheliste suhete agendas olnud täna aegu kaheksa aastat, ei ole nende sündmuste mõjutused USA ja Venemaa vaheliste suhetele saanud piisavalt analüütilist tähelepanu.


Antud bakalaureusetöö ülesandeks on analüüside (1) USA ja Venemaa vahelisi suhteid Külma Sõja ajal ning perioodil 1990-2002; (2) faktoreid, mis mõjutasin USA ja Venemaa vahelisi suhteid 11. septembri järgsel perioodil.