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The United States’ international influence, 1991–2011

STUDENTS WILL INVESTIGATE

In this chapter, students will examine the influence of the United States as the only world superpower remaining post-Cold War.

Aspects to be covered include:

- The United States after the Cold War
- Exercising ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ power in US foreign policy
- Supporters and detractors: US foreign policy in Europe, Asia and the Middle East



Modern History
syllabus

Then United States President-elect Barack Obama (left), and President George W Bush (right), in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, DC, 7 January 2009.



Introduction

By 1992, the United States was the world's only **superpower**. Soviet communism and the Eastern European bloc had collapsed with unexpected suddenness, Germany was reunified and Europe was replacing its communist institutions with new liberal democratic political and economic institutions. Yet the end of the Cold War had left American foreign policy makers without an enemy around which to shape their view of the world.

US political scientist Francis Fukuyama declared the 'end of history', stating that American **liberal democracy** represented the culmination of the development of Western political thinking, and President George HW Bush declared a 'new world order', in which the values of freedom and peace would be shared universally under American leadership. Others offered a more sobering view. Political scientist Samuel P Huntington suggested that, while the end of the Cold War might diminish old ideological and political rivalries, a 'clash of civilisations' between various religious and cultural groupings would shape future international relations.

It was not immediately obvious what the United States' role would be in the post-Cold War world. At least the Cold War bought with it a stability and certainty about geopolitics. The transition to a new **multipolar** world threatened to unleash instability and uncertainty. This uncertainty materialised in the challenges that came with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the civil war in Yugoslavia and the rise of China.

But perhaps the most far-reaching consequences of US foreign policy in the early 1990s were tensions in the Middle East. When Iraq, under President Saddam Hussein, invaded its tiny, oil-rich neighbour Kuwait, the US led a United Nations-backed force to expel Iraqi forces from the emirate. The consequences of that conflict still reverberate today. The American decision not to remove Saddam Hussein's regime from power led to a decade-long stand-off in which the United States attempted to curtail the development of chemical and nuclear weapons programs in Iraq.

Throughout the 1990s, America had to deal with the growing threat of Islamic militancy. Groups such as Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda resented the presence of a US military base in Saudi Arabia. As a result, a number of terrorist attacks on high-profile US targets, such as the American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in August 1998 and the USS *Cole*, docked in Yemen, in October 2000, made international headlines.

When President Bill Clinton was elected in November 1992, he did not have the kind of existential threat from communism that gave his predecessors a clear foreign-policy focus. He was even said to have uttered, 'Gosh, I miss the Cold War.' However, the central plank of the **Clinton Doctrine** was 'democratic enlargement'. This meant that the Americans tried to impose the kind of liberal democracy of their own institutions onto foreign soil, where it had no tradition or did not necessarily fit. Examples include China, the Middle East and parts of the Balkans and Russia.

But the big turn in global developments in the post-Cold War era was undoubtedly the events of 11 September 2001 – often referred to as '9/11'. One effect of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on that day was a profound shift in American foreign policy.

For George W Bush's administration, the world was clearly divided into two – the good and the evil. Bush declared that those who were not with the Americans were against them, and the administration acted to wage a 'war on terror' in Afghanistan and Iraq. These conflicts raged through the following decade, and international terrorist groups led by al-Qaeda took the fight to major Western cities, including London, Paris and Madrid, with bombings that targeted civilians.

These were the global challenges faced by the United States between 1991 and 2011.

superpower

A great power that dominates the international system, has global reach that is underpinned by a strong economy and possesses superior military capacity

liberal democracy

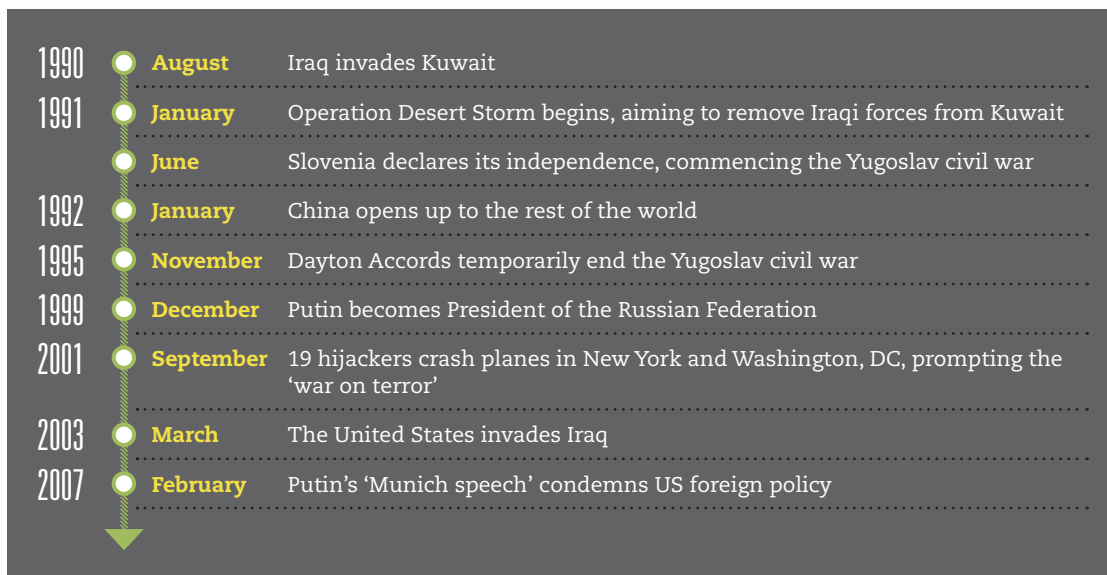
A broad political philosophy supported by institutions that guarantee the freedom of the individual

multipolar

A world in which there are multiple centres of power

Clinton Doctrine

US foreign policy of 'democratic enlargement', which sought to install American political and economic values across the globe



Nature of US foreign policy in the post-Cold War world, including the use of 'hard' and 'soft' power

In the United States, politicians, think tanks and political theorists grappled with the nature of the post-Cold War world. With only one superpower left in the world, what would the new world order look like? Fifty years earlier, Henry Luce had encouraged Americans to adopt a more **interventionist** stance in international relations, and it looked as though the end of the Cold War would not result in a retreat into isolation. A number of views emerged. These included:

- Francis Fukuyama's 'the end of history'
- Samuel P Huntington's 'clash of civilisations'
- George HW Bush's idea about a 'new world order'
- William Kristol and Robert Hagan's 'Project for a New American Century'
- Joseph Nye Jr's 'soft power'
- George W Bush's 'global war on terror'.

interventionist

Willingness (in the case of a powerful nation) to become involved in international affairs



Mind map:
US foreign policy
in the post-Cold
War world

The end of history

American political scientist Francis Fukuyama wrote an article in the *National Interest* in the summer of 1989 titled 'The end of history?' It was later published in long form and became a bestselling book. In it, he argued that the end of the Cold War seemed to have resulted in the 'unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism ...' and that humans had reached 'the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalisation of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.'





In writing about the end of history, Fukuyama was not suggesting that the currents of international affairs would be any less unpredictable than in previous eras. Rather, he was borrowing an idea, shared by both Karl Marx and Georg Hegel, that when people's needs are fully satisfied by the social system in which they evolve, then the political, social and economic institutions would have reached their zenith. For Marx, that final condition was the creation of a communist state, and for Hegel, it was a world in which liberalism dominated. By the time Fukuyama's book was released in 1992, the ashes of communism had settled and Western liberal democracy seemed to have met that criterion.

Fukuyama argued that liberal democracy, with its twin pillars of liberty and equality, had conquered the rival ideologies of communism, fascism, theocracy and military dictatorship. Communism had crumpled under the weight of its internal contradictions. Fukuyama argued that, while communism could handle the development of industrialisation, its central failure was its inability to adapt to a post-industrial world that would be characterised by information and technology.

A clash of civilisations

Another prominent view was that promoted by Samuel P Huntington. He believed that the post-Cold War world would be characterised by conflict between civilisations. Huntington argued that conflict among nations in the previous 300 years had been typically between Western powers, and in the next phase it would be between Western and non-Western civilisations. Huntington defined civilisations as the highest and broadest differences between peoples. For example, a resident of Paris might be said to belong to a number of cultural groupings that share broadly the same language, religion, traditions and geographic loyalties. He or she might be Catholic, French and European. This is significantly different from the Chinese, who share a different set of cultural identities based on language, history and Confucian ideas. These distinctions, Huntington claims, are basic, and they would inevitably form the basis of post-Cold War conflict.

Huntington cited eight different civilisations: Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and African. He said that they have fundamentally different views about the relationship between God and man, different social structures and different ideas about politics, liberty and progress – and therefore, according to Huntington, they are not easily reconciled. Moreover, the potential for conflict becomes greater with globalisation as interactions between cultures increase.

Huntington also argued that economic globalisation would weaken the nation-state as the dominant form of identity, and in its place, as Western power peaked, fundamentalist religion would increasingly fill the gap. Finally, Huntington said that economic regionalism is one of the main forces that reinforce these different cultural groupings.

“... the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.”

Samuel P Huntington, 'The clash of civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, 1993, p. 22



A new world order

President George HW Bush's State of the Union address before a joint session of Congress on 29 January 1991 raised questions about the future of American foreign policy in the post-Cold War world. Two weeks earlier, war had broken out in the Middle East as an American-led coalition set about freeing Kuwait from the invasion of Saddam Hussein's Iraq. President Bush declared that the end of the Cold War was 'a victory for all humanity' and credited American leadership with being instrumental in the freedom and reunification of Europe. He also used the term 'new world order' to link American values with universal aspirations. President Bush said:

“ It is a big idea: a new world order, where diverse nations are drawn together in common cause to achieve the universal aspirations of mankind – peace and security, freedom, and the rule of law. ”

In a similar vein to Fukuyama, the president celebrated the victory of American political values, saying:

“ The triumph of democratic ideas in Eastern Europe and Latin America and the continuing struggle for freedom elsewhere all around the world all confirm the wisdom of our nation's founders. ”

Importantly, Bush also signalled that Americans would not use the end of the Cold War to retreat back into isolation. He called on the United States to shoulder its burden of responsibility and sacrifice to maintain freedom in the world.

neoconservative

A political ideology characterised by free market economics and an interventionist foreign policy



SOURCE 3.1 Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld (left) and Vice President Richard Cheney (right) were signatories to the Project for a New American Century and became influential figures in the presidency of George W Bush (centre).

The Project for a New American Century

The Project for a New American Century was a **neoconservative** think tank set up by William Kristol and Robert Kagan in June 1997. It outlined a series of principles under which the United States should project power in the world amid criticisms of President Bill Clinton's foreign policy, which they dismissed as 'incoherent' and 'adrift'. The document was signed by a number of men who would later hold powerful positions in the administration of President George W Bush after the 2000 election, including Richard Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz.

The Project's 'statement of principles' argued that the US needed to consolidate its sole superpower status by building up the military to support its international interests. It should not shy away from identifying and

dealing with future threats. The statement celebrated the successes of the Reagan administration and said that the US needed to assume its responsibilities for global leadership.

The statement introduced a new way forward for American foreign policy. It read:

“ The history of the 20th century should have taught us that it is important to shape circumstances before crises emerge, and to meet threats before they become dire. The history of this century should have taught us to embrace the cause of American leadership. ”

PNAC Statement of Principles, 3 June 1997, <http://www.rojasdatabank.info/pfpc/PNAC---statement%20of%20principles.pdf>

The principles of the Project for a New American Century included the need to:

- increase defence spending significantly to carry out current American global responsibilities and modernise armed forces into the future





- strengthen ties with democratic allies and challenge regimes hostile to American interests and values
- promote the cause of political and economic freedom abroad
- accept responsibility for America's unique role in preserving and extending an international order friendly to American security, prosperity and principles.

The Project for the New American Century has been criticised for being funded by arms companies, and the concept of a pre-emptive war was controversial.

Hard and soft power

The manner in which power is exercised in the world has significant implications for the prospects of maintaining peace and security. Often, when conflict emerges, diplomatic solutions are pursued until military force is judged to be necessary. Economic sanctions might be used to convince rogue nations to suspend weapons programs. Theorists of international relations talk of 'realist' and 'idealist' approaches. Realist approaches consider that nations will pursue their own national interests above any other consideration, while idealists believe nations will act in ways that will abide by the shared principles of the international system, such as state **sovereignty** and **self-determination**. Victorious nations in a war talk of 'winning hearts and minds'. The point is that, in a globalised world that has diverse values, needs and goals, it is not always easy to maintain a peaceful balance.

In the 1990s and 2000s, the United States assumed leadership responsibility over a world in which it was criticised for not doing enough to prevent genocide in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, and criticised for doing too much when it bombed Serb positions in Kosovo.

Hard power

Hard power, as the name suggests, is the willingness to use military force rather than diplomacy to achieve international foreign policy aims. Since September 2001, there has been a decline in the use of soft power as the Americans have fought wars in Afghanistan and Iraq in the attempt to further their 'war on terror'. In the 1990s, the United States preferred to use intervention as part of a broader coalition – as part of a United Nations peacekeeping mission, or with NATO forces.

The Bush administration's use of **pre-emptive strikes** is one example of hard power. The thinking behind this is that it is better to deal with an enemy while they are still weak, and before they emerge as a real threat. This policy was announced in June 2002 at the West Point Military Academy, when President George W Bush said:

“ We cannot defend America and our friends by hoping for the best. We cannot put our faith in the word of tyrants who solemnly sign nonproliferation treaties and then systematically break them. If we wait for threats to fully materialize we will have waited too long ... Yet the war on terror will not be won on the defensive. We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans and confront the worst threats before they emerge. ”

George W Bush, June 2002, cited in <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/01/international/text-of-bushs-speech-at-west-point.html>

While the use of pre-emptive strikes in the 'global war on terror' is a prime example of hard power in action, it is not only limited to military action. Economic sanctions might be regarded as an expression of hard power because they coerce nations to act in line with international norms by restricting trade and stopping supplies. During the 1990s, the Iraqi government suffered under strict sanctions that led to the deaths of millions because the government could not get access to medicines.

Iran, too, has been the subject of strict sanctions in an effort to get the regime there to halt its nuclear development program. The tiny island of Cuba was the subject of US sanctions between 1961 and 2015. Other countries where sanctions or trade embargoes have been applied include Syria, North Korea and Russia.

sovereignty

The idea that all states should be free from outside interference to determine their own political future

self-determination

The idea that nations can freely elect their own governments without outside interference

pre-emptive strikes

The policy of striking potential enemies before they become powerful enough to challenge the dominant power



Soft power

Political scientist Joseph Nye Jr coined the term ‘soft power’ in 1990. Soft power refers to the idea of being able to attract states towards sharing your interests and values. Nye suggests there are three main categories under which soft power may be measured:

- the attractiveness of a culture, including education, technology and entertainment
- the virtue of political values
- exercising a fair foreign policy.

One of the most effective instruments of soft power is education. The United States is home to some of the world’s most prestigious universities, and America attracts more international students than any other nation. The country also wields soft power in the form of technology. From the mid-1990s, the US led the technology and Internet revolution as companies such as Microsoft, Apple, Google and Facebook dominated the world of technology. And, of course, Hollywood and US television dominate the world of entertainment on a global scale. For example, American television ‘normalised’ the image of the nuclear family, suburbia and consumption, and in turn fuelled the aspirations of the middle classes in Australia, Britain and other parts of the world to live similar lives. Therefore, it can be argued that the ‘American Dream’ as a brand is a powerful form of soft power. Other forms of American soft power include tourism and commercial products (such as Coca-Cola and McDonald’s).

Nye’s ‘second pillar’ of soft power is political values. These are most pointedly expressed during a time of great need, such as a humanitarian crisis resulting from a famine, earthquake or flood. American financial and humanitarian aid is an example of soft power. The Internet has also been seen as a repository of American political values – particularly the freedom of expression. The rise of social media was a significant factor in the 2011 Arab Spring, and American presidents have been critical of countries, such as China and Saudi Arabia, that attempt to curb Internet use for political purposes.

The ‘third pillar’ is the use of foreign policy in ways that are fair, moral and legitimate. The classic example of this is the Marshall Plan – the US\$15 billion American plan to help the European recovery after World War II. Without the assistance of the US, Europe was faced with the threat of grinding poverty and Soviet communism.



Newspaper search: hard and soft power

“ Think of the impact of Franklin Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms in Europe at the end of World War II; of young people behind the Iron Curtain listening to American music and news on Radio Free Europe; of Chinese students symbolizing their protests in Tiananmen Square by creating a replica of the Statue of Liberty; of newly liberated Afghans in 2001 asking for a copy of the Bill of Rights; of young Iranians today surreptitiously watching banned American videos and satellite television broadcasts in the privacy of their homes. These are all examples of America’s soft power. When you can get others to admire your ideals and to want what you want, you do not have to spend as much on sticks and carrots to move them in your direction. ”

Joseph Nye Jr, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, Hachette, UK ebook, 2009



Understanding soft power in US foreign policy

The ‘global war on terror’

The most significant shift in American foreign policy was association with the ‘global war on terror’ after the attacks on New York and Washington, DC, on 11 September 2001. This meant that the United States would use a combination of covert and overt military operations to chase those responsible for the attacks – particularly Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaeda network. The US announced that it would wage a war on terrorist groups and their networks across the globe.

On 20 September 2001, nine days after the attacks, President George W Bush addressed a joint session of Congress and the American people. He first directed his remarks towards the Taliban government of Afghanistan, which he accused of harbouring al-Qaeda leaders and allowing terrorist training camps to operate in the country. Bush demanded that the Taliban hand over all al-Qaeda





leaders, close the training camps and hand over terrorists. He then threatened, ‘The Taliban must act and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists or they will share in their fate.’

Bush warned Americans that the ‘war on terror’ would be different from the conflicts of the past. He said, ‘Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign unlike any other we have ever seen. It may include dramatic strikes visible on TV and covert operations secret even in success.’

It was at this point in the speech that he made the remarkable claim that countries are either for America or against them, saying:

“ And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation in every region now has a decision to make: Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.

George W Bush to Joint Session of Congress and the American people, 20 September 2001, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>

As part of the ‘war on terror’, the US went to war against Afghanistan in October 2001, and against Iraq in March 2003. These conflicts were highly ineffective, as a wave of sectarian violence and political unrest filled the power vacuum left by the removal of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein in Iraq. The justification for the US invasion of Iraq was the US belief that the Iraqis were developing a program of weapons of mass destruction – a claim that was later proven to be false. Moreover, the US accused the Iraqis of hosting al-Qaeda. However, it was clear that the secular Ba’athist regime in power in Iraq was at odds with the fundamentalist al-Qaeda movement. Eventually, in Iraq and Syria, these conflicts gave rise to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) – a Sunni sect that took its inspiration (and funding) from the Wahhabi clerics who were dominant in Saudi Arabia. This was complicated by the fact that most of the hijackers of 11 September 2001 were Saudis, and yet Saudi Arabia was the United States’ closest ally in the Middle East.



A coalition of the willing

The United States struggled to get the United Nations to support its intervention in Iraq in the lead-up to the Iraq War in 2003. The UN investigated American claims of an Iraqi weapons program throughout the final months of 2002 and declared that the program was non-existent. The US mobilised a ‘coalition of the willing’, which supported the US to disarm Saddam. Although 48 countries signed on, only the United Kingdom, Australia and Poland sent troops. It is notable that there were a number of states that did not sign on to the coalition, including France, Kuwait, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Another factor in the ‘war on terror’ was the use by the US of tactics that were largely outside the established rule of law. These included interrogation methods, such as waterboarding, that bordered on torture. In addition, the US was able to flout international laws protecting prisoners of war by labelling them as ‘enemy combatants’ and establishing a military prison at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba where, Bush said, ‘the worst of the worst’ were imprisoned. These prisoners went for long periods without any due process or rule of law, and this had a negative impact on the reputation of the US, even among other Western countries. No longer was the US the beacon light of democracy.



Getty Images/Shane McCoy/Mai

SOURCE 3.2 The detention camp at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba has been criticised by human rights lawyers around the world for the absence of due process and the rule of law. The United States is able to bypass laws governing prisoners of war by renaming its prisoners ‘enemy combatants’.

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- 1 What is the difference between idealist and realist views of international relations?
- 2 Outline the main points in Francis Fukuyama's 'the end of history' thesis.
- 3 Why does Huntington believe that post-Cold War foreign policy would revolve around a clash of civilisations?
- 4 What values does the term 'new world order' refer to?
- 5 Identify the key elements in the Project for the New American Century.
- 6 To what extent does the concept of pre-emptive strikes go against the values of the United Nations and traditional American foreign policy values?
- 7 Research an example of hard power.
- 8 Explain the concept of soft power.
- 9 What are the main values that underpin the 'global war on terror'?
- 10 Create a table like the one below and explain if each of the theories falls into the idealist or realist school of international relations.

THEORY	IDEALIST	REALIST
End of history		
Clash of civilisations		
New world order		
Project for the New American Century		
Hard power		
Soft power		
Global war on terror		

Supporters and opponents of American foreign policy in the post-Cold War world

American foreign policy in Europe

The United States' main foreign policy aim in Europe after the Cold War was to ensure the smooth transition to liberal democracies and market economies in Russia and Eastern Europe. America under President Bill Clinton set out to build a strong **bilateral** relationship with Russia, convinced that Russia's participation in the new order would benefit the security and strategic interests of the US. After all, there was still the matter of securing the former Soviet nuclear arsenal. After Putin came to power in 2000, relations between the two countries deteriorated and old Cold War tensions re-emerged.

The other big foreign policy item concerned the future of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). As the main security umbrella for Western Europe during the Cold War, some wondered if it was still relevant, while others believed that opening it up to new members would lead to a more unified and peaceful continent. The decision to open NATO up to new members in 1993 led to an expansion of the organisation that would eventually bring it into conflict with the Russian Federation, anxious to reassert its power in the region under Putin.

bilateral

A system or relationship, for example, involving two parties





The most alarming European foreign policy challenge in the 1990s was the war in the Balkans. The disintegration of Yugoslavia brought with it intense ethnic and national rivalries, which resulted in so-called **ethnic cleansing** by Serb nationalists against their Croat and Muslim neighbours. The push by Serbian nationalists to hold Yugoslavia together led to a breakdown between Muslims and Croats and other ethnic minorities on the continent. The US played a leading role through NATO's involvement as the conflict spilled into Albania and Kosovo.

ethnic cleansing
The mass expulsion or killing of members of one ethnic or religious group by another in a geographical area

American foreign policy and relations with Russia

When the Soviet Union suddenly collapsed in 1991, America had to adopt a different set of foreign policy aims towards Russia. Personalities played a significant part as the United States dealt with two presidents who had different foreign policy aims – Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin.

The 1990s started out on a note of optimism. US President Bill Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin developed a strong rapport and met on 18 different occasions during the 1990s. Clinton gave Yeltsin his full support in attempting to build democracy in Russia. Their first meeting took place in Vancouver in April 1993, only a month after the Russian parliament repealed Yeltsin's presidential decree rights. Russia was in the grip of an economic and political crisis that was quickly spiralling out of control. Despite this, Clinton believed that Yeltsin was Russia's best hope to build lasting democratic institutions.

Security also played a major part in the early relationship. The existence of Soviet-era nuclear weapons meant that Russia did not have full control over the arsenal, some of which were stored in other parts of the former Soviet state, including Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan. By 1994, after prolonged negotiations, the Americans had successfully negotiated these countries' agreement to destroy any remaining nuclear weapons or transfer them to Russia.

Despite largely cordial relations between Yeltsin and Clinton, there were points of disagreement. Clinton regarded the Russian war against Chechnya as unjust, while Yeltsin criticised the NATO bombing of Serbian positions during the Yugoslav civil war.

Clinton's achievements in Russia

A number of genuine accomplishments stand out, along with some clear problems and failures. The administration's achievements in denuclearization solved an extremely difficult and dangerous problem in Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Instead of three new nuclear powers with unstable and untried governments, the administration managed to return the weapons to Russia where they could be stored or dismantled ... President Clinton and his advisers believed that helping Russia become a working democracy with a market economy was the best way that they could advance the security interests of the United States ... Russia's integration into Western-inspired institutions such as the economic and financial Group of 7 or the World Trade Organization would help make the changes irreversible ... Governments changed and political power was transferred by elections in Russia, a rare accomplishment in Russian history.

P Edward Haley, *Strategies of Dominance: The Misdirection of U.S. Foreign Policy*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Maryland, 2006, p. 119

QUESTION

List the main accomplishments of Clinton's policy towards Russia.





A significant shift in US–Russian relations occurred when President Vladimir Putin came into office on 31 December 1999. His rise to power was initially met with optimism. US President George W Bush famously commented during their first meeting at the Slovenian Summit in June 2001 that he had ‘looked the man in the eye ... I was able to get a sense of his soul’. But over the following decade, Putin resisted the Russian drift towards Western-style liberal democracy as he sought to reassert Russian power in the region, leading to what many viewed as a renewal of Cold War tensions.

Perhaps it was inevitable that American and Russian foreign policies would clash, given their contrasting aims. The United States was leading a ‘global war on terror’ and acting in an increasingly **unilateral** way on the international stage. In March 2003, the Russians did not support the American invasion of Iraq. When the US threatened Iran with sanctions if it did not halt its nuclear development program, the Russians immediately forged closer ties with Iran.

In 2007 and 2008, tensions reach their highest level. When the US announced that it would install missile defenses in Poland and the Czech Republic, Putin publicly denounced the move and threatened to point missiles at the target.

On 10 February 2007, Putin gave his infamous ‘Munich speech’, in which, after warning his audience he would not be holding back, he lambasted American foreign policy. The speech is widely regarded as the turning point in US–Russian relations. It aired a range of complaints about American foreign policy in front of an international audience.

Putin starts by saying that security is equally about economic stability and about military and political stability. He then criticises the concept of a **unipolar** world as unacceptable, undemocratic and immoral, before arguing that the US has acted unilaterally and illegitimately. He accuses them of an ‘uncontained hyper use of force ... that is plunging the world into an abyss of permanent conflicts’. He says that international laws are not being followed, before naming the Americans. Putin says, ‘First and foremost the United States ... has overstepped its national borders in every way’. America’s actions, he argues, are making the world feel less safe and this is threatening to turn into another arms race.

In the next section of his speech, Putin argues that emerging economies such as China, India, Russia and Brazil will soon demand more influence on the international political stage, in a move that will strengthen multipolarity. He calls for a return to openness and transparency in international relations and says that only the United Nations should sanction the use of force. He is critical of the fact that the European Union and NATO presume to authorise force.

The speech demonstrated the tensions between the US and Russia, as Russia sought to reassert its role as an equal power in the world.

American foreign policy and NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established in 1949 as an alliance between Western Europe and the United States to counter the threat of the Soviet Union on the European continent. At the end of the Cold War, there was some debate about the future of the organisation. Would it now be a redundant force? Or should it be expanded further as an instrument of **collective security** on the European continent? As it happened, President Clinton decided to expand NATO into Eastern Europe, and this brought it into conflict with the Russians.

In the 1990s, NATO had some successes. Its intervention in Kosovo during the war in the Balkans helped to secure a peaceful end to the conflict in the region. At the time, Kosovo was facing a grave humanitarian crisis as forces from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia clashed with the Kosovo Liberation Army. NATO also helped to implement the peace accords in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the end of the same conflict.

But NATO’s expansion has come under criticism. According to US historian Michael Mandelbaum, the eastward expansion of NATO was the single most damaging factor in US–Russian relations in the

unilateral

Undertaken by one side only



Putin's Munich speech

unipolar

An international system that is dominated by one nation

collective security

The principle that an aggressor state should be opposed by the entire international community



post-Cold War period. By the end of 2011, NATO had invited many former Soviet satellite states into the alliance, including Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania and the Czech Republic, in addition to former Soviet Republics such as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Mandelbaum was critical of the expansion because the US had earlier made promises to the Soviet leadership that NATO would not be expanded and followed this up with the consistent message to the Russians that they would not be invited to join. Russian presidents Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin both publicly criticised the expansion. Putin's Munich speech accused the US of using NATO to box Russia in.

In 2008, US President George W Bush announced his support for Georgia and Ukraine to join NATO. Putin protested that admitting members that were located right on Russia's doorstep would lead to greater instability in the region, and the issue of NATO continued to be a thorn in the side of US–Russian relations.

US foreign policy and NATO

SOURCE A

By alienating Russia, NATO expansion undercut Western and American goals in Europe. It turned Russia against the remarkably favourable post-Cold War settlement. It made the almost automatic Russian response to any and all American international initiatives one of opposition. It squandered, in short, much of the windfall that had come to the United States as a result of the way the Cold War had ended and led, eventually, to an aggressive Russian foreign policy that brought the post-Cold War era to an end ... making NATO expansion one of the greatest blunders in the history of American foreign policy.

Michael Mandelbaum, *Mission Failure: America and the World in the Post-Cold War Era*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2016, p. 60

SOURCE B

Although the Soviet threat had subsided since the end of the Cold War, no one could be confident that Russia would become part of the new order and would not re-emerge as a threat to the West any time soon. As Secretary of State Warren Christopher observed, if Russian democracy collapsed Washington would face a very insecure future ... Thus, former Soviet republics perceived NATO membership foremost as 'an insurance policy against a resurgent Russia'.

Yanan Song, *The US Commitment to NATO in the Post-Cold War Period*, Palgrave, London, 2016, p. 66

SOURCE C

I think it is obvious that NATO expansion does not have any relation with the modernisation of the alliance itself or with ensuring security in Europe. On the contrary, it represents a serious provocation that reduces the level of mutual trust. And we have the right to ask: against whom is this expansion intended? And what happened to the assurances our Western partners made after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact? Where are those declarations today?

Russian President Vladimir Putin, 'Munich speech', 10 February 2007

QUESTIONS

- 1 According to Source A:
 - a What is the author's attitude towards the eastward expansion of NATO?
 - b What impact has it had on US–Russian relations?
- 2 Explain how Source B demonstrates either a negative or a positive attitude towards the expansion of NATO.
- 3 What was Vladimir Putin's fear about NATO expansion, according to Source C?

American foreign policy in the Balkans

When Yugoslavia was formed at the end of World War I, it brought together six federal republics, each with its own long history of ethnic and religious traditions. These states were Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia. Serbia was the dominant region and contained the capital, Belgrade. After the German occupation in World War II, Yugoslavia became a socialist state under the dictatorship of Josip Tito until his death in 1980, and communist rule kept a lid on ethnic tensions between the six states.

When communism fell in Europe between 1989 and 1991, Yugoslavia was not immune to the calls for change. The Republics of Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence and attempted to break away from the rest of Yugoslavia. The dominant Serbs rejected the move and a conflict broke out, which resulted in thousands of deaths, and an internal refugee crisis, before a ceasefire halted the war in 1992.

By then, the independence movement had gained pace. When Bosnia and Herzegovina declared its independence in May 1992, two months after a referendum to leave, the conflict became more complex. The mix of Serbs, Croats and Muslims in the Bosnian Republic split loyalties. Although the Bosnian Serbs were a minority, they were linked to their much larger neighbour. Still, Muslims and Croats persisted in their calls for an independent state. The Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić

was determined that Bosnia should remain in the Serb Republic, and Serb nationalists called for the development of a Greater Serbia. The President of Serbia, Slobodan Milošević, also helped to fan the flame of nationalism.

At this point, Muslims in Croatia were subjected to ethnic cleansing by extreme Serb militias. Bosnian Muslims were stuck in the besieged Bosnian capital of Sarajevo as Serb forces marched on the city. The siege of Sarajevo lasted three and a half years and cost the lives of 10 000 people as Serb forces bombed civilian areas using long-range missiles. The most infamous attack, on a market, in which 66 people were killed, took place in February 1994. In order to supply the city with food, medicine and other supplies, the United Nations implemented an airlift into the city.



SOURCE 3.3 The former Yugoslavia

United States foreign policy response

The United States government was deeply concerned about the behaviour of the Serb nationalists, and President Bill Clinton proposed bombing Serb supply lines. Clinton's Western European NATO allies were initially opposed to this solution. Eventually, however, after viewing some of the atrocities committed by Bosnian Serbs against Croat-Muslim civilians, they relented, and NATO began bombing Serbian supply lines and military targets.



In November 1995, Clinton succeeded in getting both sides to the peace table and the Dayton Peace Accords were signed. Bosnia was divided into two – a Bosnian Serb enclave and a Croat-Muslim Federation. NATO was sent in on a peacekeeping mission and also had a wider brief to hunt down war criminals. An uneasy truce held for a few years.

In 1999, the war in the Balkans took another turn. The small Serb-held area of Kosovo was peopled by ethnic Albanians, most of whom were Muslims. When they pressed for their independence from Serbia, Yugoslav Serb forces moved in to crack down. In response, President Clinton ordered NATO to commence a bombing campaign on Yugoslavia, which lasted from March until June 1999. This episode was perhaps the most controversial of Clinton's foreign policy because he did it without the approval of the United Nations.



Alamy Stock Photo/Alistar Picture Library

SOURCE 3.4 Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić waged a vicious war against Croats between 1992 and 1995 that included ethnic cleansing. In March 2016, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, in the Hague, sentenced him to 40 years in prison for war crimes.



Getty Images/Cynthia Johnson

SOURCE 3.5 Slobodan Milošević (left) was President of Serbia between 1991 and 1997, and then President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia between 1997 and 2000. He was indicted on war crimes at the Hague, and was found dead in his cell in March 2006, during his trial. Here he speaks with US President Bill Clinton (centre) in December 1995 in Paris.

9780170410151

NATO against Serbia

suzerainty

The exercise of control over a dependent state

SOURCE A

I will argue that Western intervention in Yugoslavia has not been benign but ruthlessly selfish, not confused but well directed, given the interests that the interventionists serve. The motive behind the intervention was not NATO's newfound humanitarianism but a desire to put Yugoslavia ... under the **suzerainty** of free-market globalization.

Michael Parenti, *To Kill a Nation: The Attack on Yugoslavia*, Verso, London, 2000, p. 2

SOURCE B

As the bombings accelerated and these same Serb people were starting to feel the impact with the loss of water and electricity, they shifted the blame to NATO, an organisation that appeared to them to be impervious to the loss of civilian life. Furthermore, NATO made bombing mistakes that were widely condemned in the West, they were dismissed by the Yugoslav people who, believing that NATO would not make targeting errors, saw these as deliberate attacks on civilian installations, such as hospitals. Finally, as the air campaign continued, it appeared Milosevic decided, correctly, that NATO would not send in ground troops but would continue to bomb.

Joyce P Kaufman, *NATO and the Former Yugoslavia: Crisis, Conflict and the Atlantic Alliance*, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., Maryland, 2002, p. 202

QUESTIONS

- 1 What does the author of Source A believe was the reason behind NATO's bombing of Serbia?
- 2 According to Source B, what was the attitude of ordinary Serb people towards NATO? Give detail in your response.

- 1 What was Clinton's attitude towards the reforms of Yeltsin in the early years of the transition to Russian democracy?
- 2 Outline the changes in American foreign policy towards Russia after Putin became president.
- 3 Identify at least five key points in Putin's 'Munich speech'.
- 4 To what extent was the eastward expansion of NATO responsible for the breakdown in the relationship between the Americans and the Russians?
- 5 Outline the key events in the breakdown of the former Yugoslavia.
- 6 Explain American foreign policy towards the Balkans.



US foreign policy in Asia

By far the biggest foreign policy challenge facing the United States is the rise of China and, more broadly, Asia as the new centre of economic power in the world. In the two decades from 1978, after China opened up to the world, that power was largely confined to the economic sphere. However, in the new century China has emerged as a political and military power to challenge the **hegemony** of the US.

hegemony

The dominance of a single power in a region or across the world

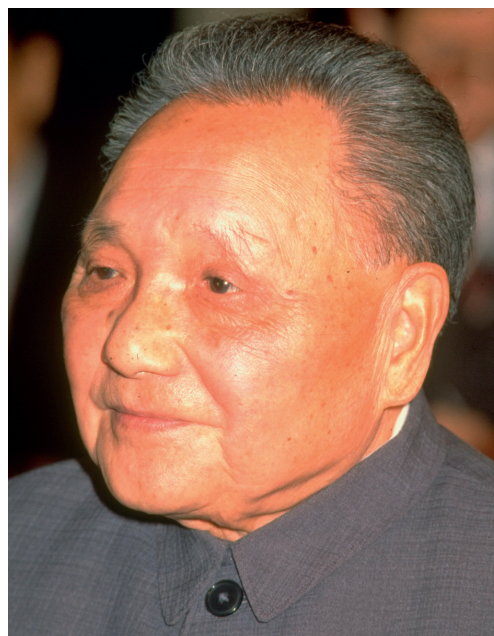
The rise of China

Over the last three decades, China has grown into the second largest economy in the world as it adopted economic reform at home and opened up to the world. This transformation has been driven by consumption, as US consumers have benefited from the manufacture of inexpensive Chinese goods, and American companies have taken advantage of low wages and manufacturing costs.

Yet, despite the economic benefits, China's human rights record has caused unease among American foreign policy makers. The near absence of political reform to accompany the economic transformation has meant that the Chinese Communist Party has kept a tight rein on the population. More recently, China has occupied a more prominent position on the international stage as a political and military power.

China opens up to the world, 1978–89

When Deng Xiaoping emerged as the leader of China in 1978, two years after the death of Mao Zedong, he set China on a course to become the second largest economy in the world. Derided by Mao as a 'capitalist roader', Deng believed in a different set of ideas to lead millions of Chinese people out of poverty. Deng had spent the Cultural Revolution in a tractor factory, having been expelled from the party amid accusations of capitalist sympathies. The experience left him bitter and made him question the wisdom of Mao's road to socialism. Deng came to understand that, if China were to overcome its endemic economic stagnation, this would mean the introduction of some market reform and opening up China to the world.



Getty Images/Forrest Anderson/The LIFE Images Collection

SOURCE 3.6 Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping steered China on a course to become the second largest economy in the world, while maintaining the tight political control of the Chinese Community Party.

In Deng's mind, there was no obvious conflict between his deep commitment to Marxist-style Chinese communism and an often-quoted remark he reportedly made in a 1962 address to the Chinese Youth Movement: 'It does not matter whether a cat is black or white. As long as it catches mice, it is a good cat'.¹

The term **socialism with Chinese characteristics** came to represent the China of the 1980s. Deng attempted to reduce the role of government in every enterprise and introduced the 'responsibility system', whereby industrial managers and agricultural workers were given greater autonomy, and workers more incentive, in the running of their operations. The Town and Villages Enterprises (TVE) schemes introduced private enterprise into the system and, throughout the 1980s, China seemed to be moving forward.

socialism with Chinese characteristics

Marxist-Leninist political doctrines that have been adapted to Chinese conditions

9780170410151



Getty Images/CNN



SOURCE 3.7 An unidentified student known only as ‘Tank Man’ halts a column of Chinese tanks during the Tiananmen Square protests in June 1989.

For Deng, however, the attempt to modernise the economy without compromising the Communist Party was central. The Chinese government’s brutal crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrations in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square in June 1989 would underscore that commitment.

Starting in April, as many as one million students, encouraged by the mass movements sweeping Eastern Europe and suffering with the previous year’s inflation, occupied central Beijing for six weeks. The Party leadership, with Deng at its head, was furious. In response, Chinese troops fired on demonstrators and jailed dissidents. An estimated 443 military personnel and civilians were killed in the crackdown. Footage of a lone protestor known as ‘Tank Man’ halting a column of Chinese tanks led news bulletins across the globe. The image became an enduring symbol for the

West of how far China had to go in developing its international citizenship. Foreign governments led protests about China’s human rights record and suspended talks that would lead to greater integration of China in the global economy.

The incident reinforced Deng’s refusal to entertain any hope of political or social change to accompany his economic reforms. As far back as 1978, Deng had made it clear that he would not tolerate ideas that would threaten the power of the state. He closed the so-called ‘Democracy Wall’ – a movement that had hoped for greater democratic freedoms in the wake of Mao’s death. For a while, it looked as though Deng might retreat from his reforms. However, developments around the world would soon force China’s hand.

China as a global power, 1992–2011

In 1989, Deng retired from office and was replaced by President Jiang Zemin. Jiang was not a particularly visionary leader, but he was politically astute and he steered China through the aftermath of Tiananmen Square. Importantly, he maintained the power of the Communist Party under the weight of international pressure for political reforms and a greater respect for human rights.

The real shift came in January 1992, when China opened for business with the rest of the world. Western companies, attracted by tax-free zones, cheap labour, modern infrastructure and ease of communications, flocked to build products stamped ‘Made in China’.

At the Third Plenum of the 14th Party Congress in 1993, the Communist Party signalled an even greater commitment to reform by announcing its intention to establish a ‘socialist market economy’. This announcement introduced a flood of foreign investment into the country. Foreign investment in China was US\$11 billion in 1992, US\$34 billion in 1994, US\$61 billion in 2004,² and US\$95 billion in 2009.

Another major turning point in China’s integration into the global economy was its joining of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. This was significant because, to join, the Chinese had to promise a level of economic transparency that was at odds with their political traditions. As confidence is the cornerstone of any business transaction, investors needed to be assured of Chinese adherence to international norms of doing business.





The lure of one billion consumers and the rise of a wealthy middle class have attracted Western businesses to China. As a result, the world's most populous nation has enjoyed economic growth at annual rates of higher than 10 per cent for much of the last three decades. It is also a global trading hub, with imports and exports both well exceeding US\$1 trillion every year since 2010.

With great economic power, eventually the Chinese would want to have a greater say in the region and the world. Thus, the United States had to construct a foreign policy that would maintain its own interests in the face of a rising political and military power.

America's response to the rise of China

The rise of China has been a significant foreign policy challenge for the United States. Since at least 1992, China has asserted its role, first, as an economic power, then as a political power. Increasingly, China has been flexing its military muscle against traditional rival Japan and in the South China Sea. Yet, despite continuing criticism of its political and human rights record, countries around the world are still willing to make trade deals with China.

American policy makers have been uneasy with some aspects of China's human rights record. The incident at Tiananmen Square rallied the US House of Representatives, which voted 403–0 to allow many of the 43 000 Chinese students resident in the US to stay permanently. In 1991, both Houses of Congress voted to link the 'most favoured nation' trading status afforded to China with its performance on human rights. Not wanting to hurt the relationship with China, President George HW Bush used his power to veto the legislation.

China's human rights record was a populist issue that was taken up by politicians, both Republican and Democrat. The fact that President Bush vetoed the bill led the 1992 Democratic nominee for president, Bill Clinton, to take it up as a political issue for the election in that year. When Clinton came to power in January 1993, he pushed forward with linking trade opportunities with the US to China's human rights record by issuing an executive order. But the Chinese would not be bullied.

When Clinton sent his Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, to China in March 1994 to convince the Chinese to comply with the executive order, they resisted. The Chinese leadership told Christopher that they would never accept an American version of human rights, and denounced the American policy towards China. To add insult to injury, the Chinese arrested 13 pro-democracy activists on the very day that the Americans arrived in Beijing. The visit underscored China's commitment to its political system – even at the expense of economic progress. By May, Clinton was forced to abandon his ultimatum.

In June 1995, relations between the US and China were further strained when Clinton invited the President of Taiwan, Lee Teng-hui, to visit Washington. Taiwan was established by the defeated Nationalists after the Chinese civil war ended in 1949, but the Chinese communists always regarded Taiwan as still part of mainland China. In response to the visit, the Chinese conducted missile tests near the coast of Taiwan throughout 1995 and 1996.

In May 1999, the American-led NATO mission in Yugoslavia resulted in the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade. This left three Chinese diplomats dead and prompted Chinese accusations that the bombing was deliberate. Two years later, a US surveillance plane collided with a Chinese military plane. The US plane made an emergency landing and the Chinese held the plane and its crew for 11 days.

During the **global financial crisis (GFC)** of 2008, the economic relationship between the two nations came into sharp focus when it was revealed that China was owed US\$684 billion by the USA. In many ways, the GFC was a turning point in China–US relations. The Chinese came out of the crisis in a stronger position and since then have increasingly asserted their global leadership – particularly in the Asia–Pacific region. In February 2011, China officially became the world's second largest economy, overtaking Japan.

global financial crisis (GFC)

Near collapse of the world's financial system, triggered by the failure of investment banks, insurance companies and mortgage banks in the US and Europe

US–China relations

SOURCE A

No bilateral relationship is more important to the future of humanity. How America and China choose to cooperate and compete affects billions of lives. We need to understand better how each side views the promise and perils of their relationship because steady, clear-eyed, workaday bonds can be a force for global stability and prosperity while intermittent, fear-based, and confrontational ties will lead to a darker future.

Nina Hachigian (ed.), *Debating China: The US–China Relationship in Ten Conversations*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014, p. xi

SOURCE B

With the rapid growth of China's power, influence, and prestige in global affairs, its political elites have gained a great deal of national pride, confidence, or – as some outsiders put it – arrogance. If China's relationship with the United States in the past was based on an asymmetry of power in favour of the Americans, the relationship today should reflect the resurgence of China and increasingly be based on equality ... its policy toward the United States in particular should be more assertive ... [Chinese policy makers] strongly suspect that the Americans are quietly backing those competitors of China to weaken its international position.

Wang Jisi from Peking University in Nina Hachigian (ed.), *Debating China: The US–China Relationship in Ten Conversations*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014, p. xi

SOURCE C

The problem, however, is best summed up by Hillary Clinton when she stated in 2012 that 'we are now trying to find ... a new answer to the ancient question of what happens when an established power and a rising power meet.' This is a reference to Organski's well-known observation that historically, where a rising power is confronted by a dominant power, war almost inevitably results, since the dominant power is not likely to easily yield its position to the challenger.

Andrew TH Tan (ed.), *Handbook of US–Chinese Relations*, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, 2016, p. xv

QUESTIONS

- 1 Why does the author of Source A believe that the relationship between America and China is the most important one for the future of humanity?
- 2 Explain the argument of the author in Source B.
- 3 According to Source C, what problem must be overcome for a global peaceful future?

Asian economic strength

During the 1980s, Japan enjoyed strong economic growth. Its advanced manufacturing industries produced a thriving export market for its electronics goods and motor vehicles. Japanese companies such as Sony and Toyota were household names in American homes. But at the beginning of the 1990s, a bubble in asset prices had such a negative impact on the Japanese economy that, when it burst, it ushered in a so-called lost decade. In fact, this 'decade' ended up stretching into the 2000s. As well as a collapse in asset prices, Japanese people had to deal with falling wages and living standards. In addition, other East Asian economies such as South Korea made strong productivity gains and built up their export markets.



America in Asia



Like Japan, South Korea has relied for its prosperity on a strong export market. It embraced high technology for its manufacturing, and the Hyundai car brand is one of its most well-known exports. South Korea was one of the so-called East Asian Tigers – a term used initially to group four economies with a rapid rate of growth: South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Second-tier countries such as Vietnam and Thailand have more recently followed the path of the East Asian Tigers as cheap labour and liberalised economies have attracted greater levels of investment.

- 1 Outline the changes Deng Xiaoping made within China between 1978 and 1989 to prepare China for its increased global integration after 1991.
- 2 Define 'socialism with Chinese characteristics'.
- 3 Why did the Chinese Communist Party resist political reform during its liberalisation of the economy?
- 4 What was the Party's response to the demonstrations at Tiananmen Square?
- 5 Why was China attractive as a destination for foreign investment after 1992?
- 6 Explain why China's admission into the World Trade Organization gave investors much more confidence.
- 7 To what extent was the United States successful in getting the Chinese to improve their human rights record?
- 8 Identify at least three incidents that strained the relationship between China and the Americans after 2000.

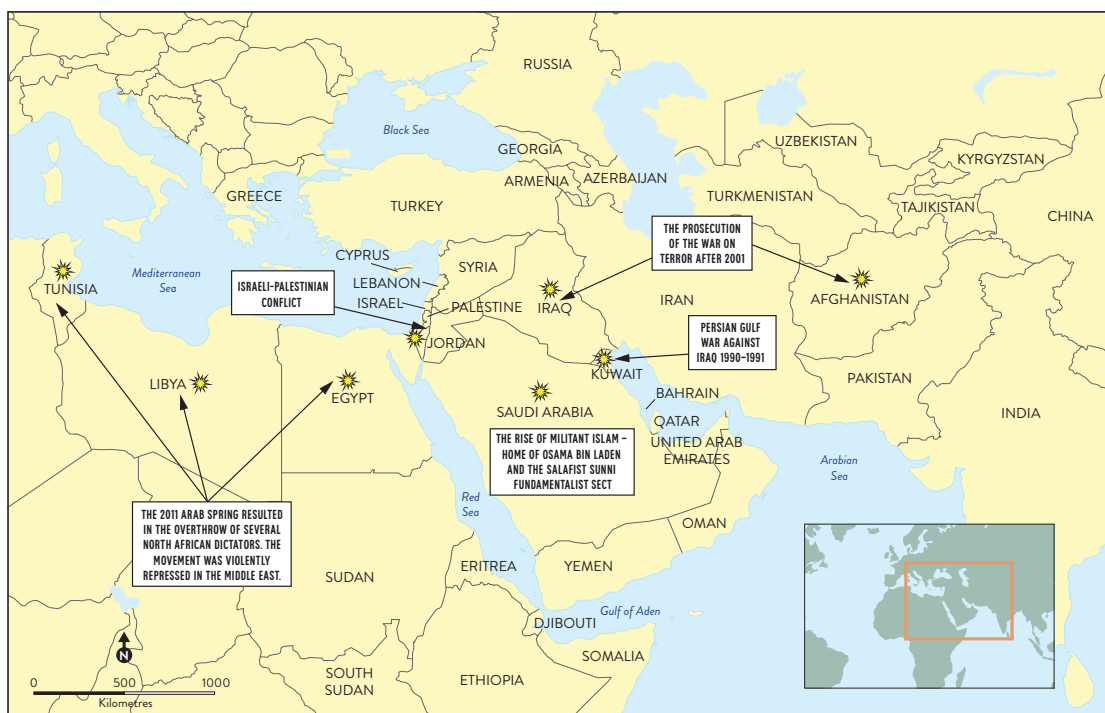
United States foreign policy in the Middle East

One of the most significant American foreign policy challenges in the two decades since the end of the Cold War has been the attempt to bring stability to the Middle East. The intractable problems associated with the Arab–Israeli conflict, the rise of militant Islam, the presence of rich oil resources and the political instability of the region have since given rise to a number of costly wars.

There were a number of events in the period that were challenging to American foreign policy makers:

- the Persian Gulf War against Iraq in 1990–91
- the Israeli–Palestinian conflict
- the rise of militant Islam
- the 'war on terror' and the attacks of 11 September 2001
- the war in Iraq
- the Arab Spring.





SOURCE 3.7 The Middle East today, showing major flashpoints

Alamy Stock Photo/Keystone Pictures USA



SOURCE 3.8 Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein ruled Iraq with an iron fist, suppressing ethnic and religious dissent. In August 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, and for the next decade and a half Saddam's regime was subject to UN sanctions.

The Persian Gulf War

On 2 August 1990, Saddam Hussein's forces invaded Kuwait. The Iraqis were making a historical claim on their tiny, oil-rich neighbour, to which they owed US\$30 billion. When they formally annexed it on 8 August, they declared Kuwait the 19th province of Iraq. Two days earlier, on 6 August, the United Nations had ordered economic sanctions and a ban on trade with Iraq in response to the invasion.

Fearing that Iraqi aggression would spread in the region, Saudi Arabia's King Fahd requested military assistance from US President George HW Bush and his Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney. The Americans responded over the following months by providing 540 000 of the 700 000 troops of an international coalition that included Britain, Australia and Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria. The

Iraqis were significantly outdone in military technology by the Western powers, led by the United States, and also in sheer numbers. The Iraqi military presence in Kuwait numbered only 300 000 men.

In late November, the UN authorised the use of force if the Iraqis did not withdraw from Kuwait by 15 January 1991. When the deadline came and went, the US-led bombardment called Operation Desert Storm commenced in the early hours of 17 January. A ground invasion commenced on 24 February, and the Iraqi forces were defeated within three days and Kuwaiti sovereignty was restored. Retreating Iraqi forces set fire to oil wells.

Attempting to split the Arab coalition amassed against him, Saddam tried to draw Israel into the conflict by firing cruise missiles into the country and demanding that Israel withdraw from





Palestine. He calculated that Arab forces would not align against an Arab neighbour when Israel was in the conflict. Despite the bombardment, the Americans managed to keep the Israelis out.

US President George HW Bush decided against attempting to remove Saddam Hussein from power and declared a ceasefire on 28 February 1991. The terms of the ceasefire meant that Iraq had to abandon its weapons development program.

The Persian Gulf War was significant for American foreign policy for a number of reasons:

- It was the first major post-Cold War international conflict and it demonstrated the willingness of the United States to behave in an interventionist manner.
- It commenced a decade-long period of economic sanctions against the Iraqi government, which crippled the economy.
- The peace settlement banned Iraq from developing weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, gas and biological weapons, and the continuing cat-and-mouse game between United Nations weapons inspectors and Iraqi authorities became a source of tension.
- The conflict sparked religious and ethnic rivalries in the country – in particular, the uprising of the Kurds in northern Iraq and the Shi'ites in the south. Saddam Hussein's brutal crackdown on political opposition included the use of poison gas against rebellious Kurds.
- The continued military presence of the US in Saudi Arabia – home to Islam's two holiest pilgrimage sites, Mecca and Medina – caused controversy among strict fundamentalist Islamic groups. Opponents included Osama bin Laden, who would protest against it by using terrorism against American targets in Africa, in Yemen and, later, on American soil.



Alamy Stock Photo/ODD Photo

SOURCE 3.9 Retreating Iraqi forces set fire to Kuwaiti oil wells as retribution for their defeat by American-led forces.

The Israeli–Palestinian Conflict

The 1990s and 2000s saw renewed efforts to resolve the longstanding conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians. Israel had inherited its occupation of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and the Syrian Golan Heights from the wars of 1967 and 1973; these were mainly Israeli defensive positions against attacks by Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

The United States had been a supporter of Israel's right to exist since the establishment of the Jewish state in 1947 under the auspices of the United Nations – a position that was not shared by Israel's neighbours. The Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), led by Yasser Arafat, had been using terrorism in its fight for a Palestinian homeland since the 1970s, but in the early 1990s the PLO began to pursue a political solution.

Among the first major agreements to be struck were the Oslo Accords of 1994. In this agreement, Israel agreed to a military withdrawal from the occupied territories and the setting up of a Palestinian Authority. To mark the breakthrough, a ceremony was held on the White House lawn, at which Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat shook hands for the first time.

The elusive search for peace in the conflict often revolved around disagreements concerning the **two-state solution**, whereby Israel and Palestine could exist side by side. This idea had backing from all sides, including the UN; the major obstacle to achieving it has been the question of the location of borders. The Palestinians wanted to revert to the borders that were in place before the Six Day War in 1967; moderate Israelis who favoured this faced political opposition from ultranationalists who opposed yielding any land to the Palestinians.

two-state solution

The proposal that the Israel–Palestine conflict be resolved by establishing two political states



Despite the Oslo Accords, conflict in the region continued. In November 1995, Rabin was assassinated by an ultranationalist Israeli opposed to the accords. P Edward Haley wrote:

“The assassination of Yitzhak Rabin damaged the peace process so severely that it never recovered. The assassin, a Jewish religious extremist, took from Israel a warrior-president and statesman in whom most Israelis had complete confidence. The Palestinians lost a negotiating partner whom they respected and trusted to a degree not seen before or since.”

P Edward Haley, *Strategies of Dominance: The Misdirection of U.S. Foreign Policy*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Maryland, 2006, p. 122



Alamy Stock Photo/mark reinstein

SOURCE 3.10 One of the key challenges of United States foreign policy has been to establish peace in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. In 1994, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (left) and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat agreed to the Oslo Accords with a historic handshake on the lawn of the White House.



US position on Israel–Palestine relations

this was a visit by Israeli opposition leader (and later prime minister) Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount site in East Jerusalem with 1000 bodyguards. The subsequent wave of violence lasted until 2005.

intifada

The Arabic word for ‘shaking off’, used to describe the uprising against Israeli occupation of Palestine

jihad

An Arabic word meaning ‘struggle’, which extremists interpret as meaning violent action

mujahideen

An Arabic term for fundamentalist Islamic guerilla fighters

The rise of militant Islam

Another significant challenge for United States foreign policy in this period was the rise of militant Islam in the Middle East and other parts of the world. Undertaken primarily by non-state actors, organised terrorism has achieved enormous notoriety for its acts of violence on civilian populations at the heart of the Western world, including New York, London and Paris. And while the apex of terrorism can be found on the morning of 11 September 2001, one needs to look further back to understand the reasons that al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden sought to wage **jihad** against Western powers.

When Saudi Arabia called for US assistance against Iraqi aggression in 1990, it meant that the home of Islam’s holiest sites – Mecca and Medina – would serve as a base for an American military force. The Persian Gulf War ended inconclusively and an uneasy peace meant the US had to maintain its presence in the Saudi kingdom at the invitation of the regime.

Osama bin Laden was no stranger to the kind of political pragmatism that brought the Americans onto Saudi soil. It was no secret that his **mujahideen** were funded and trained by the US during the Afghan war against the Soviet Union during the 1980s. When the Americans failed to remove their military from Saudi Arabia at the end of the Persian Gulf War, however, bin Laden used that training against them. Over the next decade, bin Laden claimed responsibility for a number of high-profile bombings against US targets. The first of these was the coordinated bombing of the US embassies in



Tanzania and Kenya on 7 August 1998, in which over 200 people were murdered. On 12 October 2000, al-Qaeda operatives used explosives to blow a hole in the side of the USS *Cole*, a US warship stationed in Yemen. On both occasions bin Laden cited American support for Israel and its presence in Saudi Arabia as motives for the attacks.

On the morning of 11 September 2001, 19 terrorists – 15 of whom were from Saudi Arabia – boarded four airliners at airports across New York. Their targets were high-profile and symbolic, representing the economic, military and political hearts of American power. The twin towers of the World Trade Center represented America’s global economic dominance, the Pentagon represented its military might and the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania was probably headed for the White House.

In November 2002, bin Laden wrote ‘A letter to the American people’ in which he provided a wide-ranging explanation for attacking the US. The justifications he put forward included the unresolved conflict in Palestine, American support for Israel and a host of other recent conflicts, including those in Somalia, Chechnya, Kashmir, Lebanon and Afghanistan. He accused the US of economic exploitation by manipulating the price of oil, and of occupying Arab lands. He criticised UN sanctions against Iraq, which he said resulted in the deaths of 1.5 million Iraqi children. He condemned a range of behaviours, including the use of alcohol, gambling, homosexuality and usury. Bin Laden then went on to condemn the US economic, political and justice system as hypocritical – especially the existence of detention camps at Guantanamo Bay.

The religious authority for much of the terrorism came from a variety of Islam called Wahhabism – a puritanical, fundamentalist Sunni sect that is the dominant religion in Saudi Arabia. In nearly every respect, this religious movement – with its attitude towards Western morality, civil rights and the status of unbelievers – runs counter to American values. But the economic relationship between Saudi Arabia and the US was based on the trade in oil and arms, and the Americans have been criticised for turning a blind eye to human rights abuses in the Saudi kingdom in order to protect such trade deals.

One of the most challenging aspects for US foreign policy makers has been understanding the complex cross-section of national, ethnic, tribal and religious loyalties that exist in the Middle East. Knowing who are the supporters and who are the opponents of American policy has not been easy. The heady mix of military dictatorships, undemocratic autocrats, ancient tribal loyalties, Western-imposed colonial borders, ethnic and racial groupings, and fundamentalist religious loyalty to either the Shi’a or the Sunni sect led the Arab journalist Said K Aburish to open his 1997 book *A Brutal Friendship* with the words, ‘There are no legitimate regimes in the Arab Middle East’.³

11 September 2001 and the ‘war on terror’

The attacks on the morning of 11 September 2001 brought terrorism from the Middle East and Africa to the home soil of the United States. Nineteen hijackers, most of them Saudi nationals, boarded four airliners at airports in New York and targeted the twin towers at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and, presumably, the White House, although that plane crashed in Pennsylvania before it could reach its target.

The events of that morning would radically alter the direction of American foreign policy. In the days following, the US Congress granted the president extended powers to use ‘all necessary and appropriate force’ to bring those behind the attacks to justice – which many blamed on al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, even though he denied involvement in a 16 September broadcast on the Arabic news network Al Jazeera.



Getty Images/Stringer

SOURCE 3.11 Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden was responsible for a number of terrorist attacks against the United States.





REUTERS/Sean Adair



SOURCE 3.12 The second plane hitting the World Trade Center in New York on the morning of 11 September 2001 is among the most televised images in history.

One of the main criticisms of the United States' pursuit of the 'war on terror' has been the flouting of the rule of law, the cornerstone of liberal democracy. The USA PATRIOT Act, passed in October 2001, allowed authorities to detain suspects for an indefinite time if they were being held under suspicion of planning or carrying out a terrorist act. The Office of Homeland Security was also established at this time, and gave authorities unprecedented powers to monitor potential terrorist threats in the name of national security.

On 7 October, the US commenced a bombing campaign against terrorist training camps and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. This was the beginning of the global military action that accompanied the 'war on terror'. In the following months, Islamic militants responded to the US military action by kidnapping and killing Western journalists, contractors and aid workers. Many of these murders were recorded on video, and copies were delivered to television stations. Their bodies were dressed in orange jumpsuits similar to those worn by the detainees at the US military prison at Guantanamo Bay.

On 29 January 2002, President Bush delivered the State of the Union address. In it, he discussed the broad sweep of military action in Afghanistan and for the first time announced the so-called 'axis of evil', consisting of Iraq, Iran and North Korea. He signalled his intention to use pre-emptive strikes, saying, 'I will not wait on events, while dangers gather. I will not stand by, as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes

to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons.'⁴ In June, at the West Point Military Academy, he officially announced the policy of pre-emptive strikes.

The 'war on terror' soon turned to Iraq.

Iraq

From early 2002, the administration of President Bush wanted to draw a strong connection in people's minds about the relationship between Iraq, al-Qaeda and the development of weapons of mass destruction. The calls were loud and persistent, despite evidence to the contrary. Underlying the administration's claims was its policy of removing Saddam Hussein from power. There are various explanations for why President Bush was so insistent on removing Saddam. Firstly, he wanted to finish the job of his father, President George HW Bush, who in February 1991 decided not to send American troops to Baghdad and remove Hussein. Secondly, it would be a pre-emptive strike to remould the Middle East and install a US-friendly regime in Iraq. Thirdly, he hoped to secure the peace of Israel by establishing governments sympathetic towards the West across the Middle East. The most plausible explanation seems to line up with the neoconservative Project for a New American Century, in which American hegemony could be secured through taking action early.

Secretary of State Colin Powell and CIA Director George Tenet announced there were links to terrorist groups and accused the Iraqi government of developing weapons of mass destruction. On 5 May 2002, Powell told the ABC News network that one of the central foreign policy aims of the US was the removal of Saddam Hussein as leader of Iraq.

President George W Bush was the architect of the policy of removing Saddam Hussein, and made his case throughout 2002 and into 2003. His Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, also cited intelligence reports accusing Saddam of hosting al-Qaeda in Iraq, and Vice President Dick Cheney accused Iraq of attempting to dominate the energy-rich Middle East.





Weapons of mass destruction

Justification for a war against Iraq was based on the supposed existence of an Iraqi weapons program. Although the claim that Iraq had such a program was highly disputed and controversial, and despite evidence to the contrary, the Bush administration persistently repeated it. United Nations weapons inspectors, who had been active in Iraq during the 1990s, could find no evidence of a development program and said so publicly.

Between September 2002 and March 2003, the claims from the Bush administration that there was a relationship between Iraq, al-Qaeda and weapons of mass destruction were loud and persistent. In a press conference in September 2002, President Bush went ahead with his claims that, as far back as 1998, Iraq was six months away from developing a nuclear weapon. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice went on television the next day and said that intelligence services had intercepted 'aluminum tubes' used in the development of nuclear weapons. She then famously said, 'We don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud.'

The International Institute for Strategic Studies in London responded to the Bush administration's claims, saying that Iraq did not have the facilities to develop a nuclear bomb and was several years away from even getting such facilities.

Not to be undermined, President Bush addressed the UN on 12 September 2002, pressing his claims that Saddam was close to developing weapons. By late September, Donald Rumsfeld was declaring that the regime of Saddam Hussein represented the most significant threat to the security of the United States and that Saddam had to be removed. As the American campaign for regime change gathered pace, the UN arranged for its chief weapons inspector, Hans Blix, to go to Iraq in mid-October 2002.

When the British government released a paper claiming that Iraq had tried to obtain uranium from Niger, President Bush took the claims at face value. However, former US Ambassador to Niger Joseph C Wilson had already discovered that the allegations were false and he informed the CIA. On 26 September 2002, both Powell and Rumsfeld continued to make the link between Iraq, al-Qaeda and the development of weapons of mass destruction.

In November, UN weapons inspectors and a range of other agencies, including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), arrived in the Iraqi capital, Baghdad. They found no evidence of a weapons program, and at the start of December, Blix called on the American and British governments to reveal their intelligence to the inspectors. In late December, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan stated that Iraq had been cooperating fully with weapons inspectors and that he saw no reason for military action.

On 9 January 2003, after having been in the country for two months, the IAEA and the UN both declared that they could find no evidence of a weapons program. Despite these categorical denials, the White House press secretary Ari Fleischer flatly asserted, 'We know for a fact there are weapons there.' In February 2003, one month before the invasion, Blix repeated his findings that there was no weapons program.

At the end of January and in early February, Bush and Rumsfeld continued their persistent claims about a weapons program, and the Niger claim even made it into the State of the Union address – an assertion Bush retracted in July after discovering the documents were forged.

In January 2004, David Kay, a former head of the UN weapons inspectors, concluded that there were no nuclear or biological weapons to be found and that the intelligence to the contrary was 'almost all wrong'.



Alamy Stock Photo/jeremy sutton-hibbert

SOURCE 3.13 United Nations chief weapons inspector Hans Blix (pictured) spent two months in Iraq and declared that Iraq had no weapons program. The administration of US President George W Bush made repeated, loud and persistent claims to have proof of Iraq's weapons programs and of its relationship with al-Qaeda.



SOURCE 3.14 The removal of the statue of Saddam Hussein on 9 April 2003

a statue of Saddam Hussein. The toppling of the statue was a propaganda coup for the Americans, who could use the event as evidence of their support within the country. Over the following three weeks, a large-scale invasion of the country by American forces took place. Saddam was on the run. By 1 May 2003, aboard a US Navy boat on a secret mission to the region, President Bush declared 'mission accomplished'.

After the invasion

As history was to show, however, President Bush's declaration that major combat operations were finished was wildly premature. In the following months a series of suicide bombings, the arrival of Islamic militias and US military scandals brought increasing instability to Iraq. In December 2003, Saddam Hussein was captured near his home town of Tikrit. He was found in an underground hide-out and surrendered without a fight.

In 2004 there was an increase in sectarian violence in Iraq as ethnic and religious groups sought to fill the power vacuum left by the removal of Saddam. In February, 100 people were killed when a suicide bomber targeted a Kurdish political group celebrating the Muslim festival of Eid. But it was the depraved treatment of both Americans and Iraqis that was to capture the attention of the world and the militias.

On 31 March 2004, four US military contractors – American civilians – were captured in the Iraqi city of Fallujah. Militants murdered them before burning their bodies and dragging them through the streets. This led to one of the most violent battles of the war, known as the First Battle of Fallujah, as US forces attempted to capture those responsible.

In April, images surfaced that showed the treatment of Iraqi prisoners at the US military prison in Abu Ghraib. In them, Iraqi prisoners were seen being stripped naked, humiliated and tortured by young American soldiers. A US private was later sentenced to three years in jail for her role in the humiliation. A series of tit-for-tat atrocities started in the following month, beginning with the beheading of US contractor Nick Berg. This act was recorded on video and sent to international news outlets for broadcast. Over the following years, aid workers, contractors and journalists were captured by militant groups, paraded in orange jumpsuits similar to those worn by prisoners at the US military prison at Guantanamo Bay, and their beheadings filmed and distributed for broadcast.





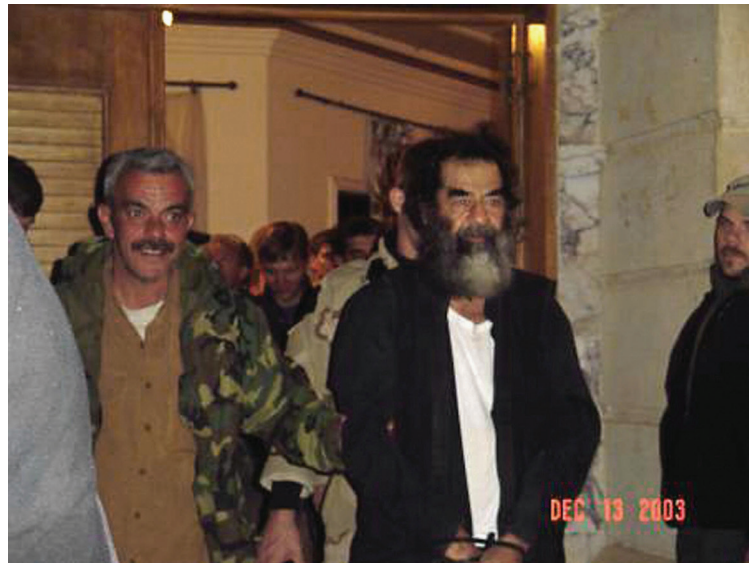
In July, President Saddam Hussein made his first appearance in court, charged with war crimes and genocide. Saddam protested the legitimacy of the court but was eventually found guilty and sentenced to death. He was executed on 30 December 2006.

One of the most significant outcomes of the American-led invasion of Iraq was that it unleashed a wave of sectarian violence in the country. Iraq is ethnically diverse, with a majority Arab population living side by side with Kurdish, Assyrian and Turkmen minorities. Its people are just over 60 per cent Shi'a Muslim and 40 per cent Sunni Muslim; smaller groups include Yazidis and Christians. Saddam Hussein had led Iraq under the Ba'athist Party, whose secular nationalist ideology tended to suppress ethnic and religious divisions.

A war on multiple fronts

When the Americans disbanded the Iraqi army, unemployed career soldiers found their way into the militias of religious fundamentalist groups such as al-Qaeda – a Sunni group led in Iraq by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi – or the Shi'a counterinsurgent militia led by Muqtada al-Sadr, or the local Shi'a Badr organisation. Sunni extremist groups such as al-Qaeda opened up another front in the war against the Americans as they entered the country during 2003. Although the ethnic Kurd Jalal Talabani was elected President of Iraq and held the office between 2005 and 2014, the national parliament – dominated by Shi'a groups – was more volatile.

By late 2006, far from the 'mission accomplished' declared by President Bush, the Americans were fighting a war on multiple fronts. Having removed the Ba'athist regime of Saddam Hussein, the Americans were now trying to transition Iraq to democracy. At the same time, international Sunni jihadists had streamed into the country to fight both the Americans and the Shi'a-dominated Iraqi government. In addition, Iran-backed Shi'a counterinsurgent militias were fighting the Sunni groups and the Americans. The United States was trapped in a quagmire of its own making.



Getty Images

SOURCE 3.15 Saddam Hussein was captured in December 2003 near his hometown of Tikrit.



AP Image/AP Photo/David Furst, Pool

SOURCE 3.16 Saddam Hussein faced trial, charged with war crimes and genocide, in July 2004. He was sentenced to death, and was executed on 30 December 2006.





SOURCE 3.17 The Iraqi War was characterised by a diverse mix of ethnic, religious and political loyalties.

AAP Image/AP Photo/US Military



SOURCE 3.18 Sunni fundamentalist leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq. He was killed in a US airstrike in 2006.

In the years between 2006 and the American withdrawal in 2011, Iraq was rocked by instability. The war was characterised by guerilla attacks on American troops, the use of suicide bombers to attack American and civilian targets, the presence of foreign fighters backed by governments such as those of Iran and Syria, and religious extremists funded by Salafist groups in Saudi Arabia. This unstable situation ultimately led to the creation of an organisation known as Islamic State in the north of the country in 2014. This group, led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, was so violent that even al-Qaeda is said to have distanced itself from the group.

In June 2009, American forces began to withdraw from major Iraqi cities, handing over control to Iraqi security forces. Their withdrawal was completed in December 2011. The Americans had comprehensively lost the war in Iraq.

The removal of Saddam Hussein from power, the dismissal of his Ba'athist regime and his hanging had significant implications for US foreign policy:

- The US engaged in a unilateral act of war, contrary to the recommendations of the United Nations.
- A huge number of former Iraqi soldiers later made their way into militias.
- There was no evidence of a link between al-Qaeda and the Iraqi regime, but after the invasion al-Qaeda made its way into Iraq to fight against the US.
- The US now had to deal with sectarian violence between Ba'athist, Shi'a and Sunni groups, and it was difficult to tell which group supported the American presence and which opposed it.
- The war became extremely unpopular in the US.
- The invasion of Iraq was by any measure a major failure. It opened up deep division in the country, and eventually led to the rise of Islamic State and brought significant instability to the region.



The Americans in the Middle East



- 1 Explain how the Persian Gulf War was significant for American foreign policy.
- 2 Outline the role of President Bill Clinton in the attempt to try to achieve peace in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.
- 3 Explain the reasons for the rise of militant Islam.
- 4 Why is the relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States complex?
- 5 Outline how the events of 11 September 2001 marked a turning point in American foreign policy.
- 6 Compare and contrast the claim about the existence of an Iraqi weapons program and that of a link with al-Qaeda between the US and the United Nations.
- 7 To what extent was President Bush’s declaration of ‘mission accomplished’ premature?
- 8 Why did Iraq become the victim of sectarian violence?
- 9 Research the goals of both the Shi’a and the Sunni militias.
- 10 How did the American invasion of Iraq have significant implications for American foreign policy?

Historiography of American foreign policy

SOURCE A

The United States did not succeed in getting China to protect human rights, or in constructing smoothly functioning free markets or genuinely representative political institutions in Russia. It did not succeed in installing well-run, widely accepted governments in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, or Kosovo. It did not transform Afghanistan or Iraq into tolerant, effectively administered countries. It did not bring democracy to the Middle East or harmony between the Israelis and Arabs.

Michael Mandelbaum, *Mission Failure: America and the World in the Post-Cold War Era*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2016, p. 10

SOURCE B

Republican politician Henry Hyde had these words to say in March 2001, six months before the attacks on 11 September.

The principal problem [for the US] is that we have no long-term strategy, no practical plan for shaping the future. The fall of the Soviet empire has removed the central organizing principle of our foreign policy for the past half-century. For all our undoubted power, we often seem to be at the mercy of the currents, carried downstream toward an uncertain destination instead of moving toward one of our own. We must resist the temptation of believing that we can fix every problem.

Fraser Cameron, *US Foreign Policy After the Cold War: Global Hegemon or Reluctant Sheriff*, 2nd edn., Routledge, London, 2005, p. xvi

QUESTIONS

- 1 What is the attitude expressed in Source A to the outcomes of American foreign policy in the post-Cold War world?
- 2 According to Source B, how important is it to have a long-term strategy?

Conclusion

The United States entered the 1990s on a note of optimism. The peaceful end to the Cold War left America as the only superpower in the world. But finding a way to redefine its role in the world also brought challenges. In Russia, the decade was marked by a rocky transition to democracy and painful economic reforms. The war in Yugoslavia brought with it a level of violence not seen in Europe since World War II, as Serb forces engaged in ethnic cleansing. In Asia, the influence of China on a global scale was beginning to be felt as its economic strength grew, but political reform and a commitment on human rights were stubbornly difficult to achieve. In the Middle East, the Persian Gulf War brought a US military presence into the region, and the Americans worked hard to achieve a lasting peace between the Palestinians and Israel.

The events of 11 September 2001 brought about a significant shift in US foreign policy. The American pursuit of war against Iraq meant that it would act unilaterally, much against its traditional values, which placed great weight on its relationship with Europe and the United Nations. The decade also changed the nature of the American relationship with Russia, as Vladimir Putin sought to reassert Russia's role in the world.

At the end of the first decade of the 21st century, compared with 1991, the world order was significantly different. China challenged the supremacy of the US, Russia was resurgent and Islamic militancy showed no sign of slowing down. American foreign policy makers were being forced to deal with the new realities of multipolarity.

In the 20 years since Francis Fukuyama declared the end of history, President George HW Bush announced the ushering in of a new world order and Joseph Nye surmised that soft power would be sufficient to advance American interests in the world, the world had acquired much harder edges than those promised by a new era of global liberal democratic hegemony. In the context of the 11 September 2001 attacks and President George W Bush's 'global war on terror', it appeared that Huntington's clash of civilisations – at least in relation to the West and Islam – was being realised. The triumph of American capitalism over Soviet communism did not result in the spread of American values such as free open markets and self-determination for all people. Instead, it opened up a series of other challenges that ultimately resulted in the erosion of American economic, military and geopolitical power.

Chapter summary

- The end of the Cold War resulted in the triumph of US-style liberal democracy over Soviet communism.
- During the 1990s, the Americans tried to transition Eastern Europe and Russia to democracies with mixed success, and the genocide in the former Yugoslavia revealed the limits of international cooperation.
- China's increasing economic power challenged American hegemony as China rose to become the second largest economy in the world.
- Peace was stubbornly difficult to achieve in the Middle East as the United States tried to bring peace to Israel, deal with the challenges of terrorism and deal with the loss of a war in Iraq.

Further resources

- Cameron, Fraser, *US Foreign Policy After the Cold War: Global Hegemon or Reluctant Sheriff*, 2nd ed., Routledge, London, 2005.
- Haley, P Edward, *Strategies of Dominance: The Misdirection of U.S. Foreign Policy*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Maryland, 2006.
- Mandelbaum, Michael, *Mission Failure: America and the World in the Post–Cold War Era*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2016.
- Putin, Vladimir, ‘Munich speech’, 12 February 2007, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/12/AR2007021200555.html>.

Endnotes

- ¹ Deng Xiaoping, quoted in Deng Xiaoping, ‘Obituary’, *The Telegraph*, 20 February 1997.
- ² Hutton, 2007, p. 114.
- ³ Aburish, Said K, *A Brutal Friendship: The West and the Arab Elite*, St. Martin’s Press, New York, 1997, p. 13.
- ⁴ US President George W Bush, State of the Union address, 29 January 2002, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html>.

CHAPTER REVIEW

- 1 Outline the main foreign policy challenges in Europe at the end of the Cold War.
- 2 To what extent might Russia be regarded as a liberal democratic success between 1991 and 2011? Give reasons.
- 3 Explain the forces that led to the breakdown of Yugoslavia between 1992 and 1995.
- 4 How significant was the rise of China in the international order after 1991?
- 5 How did the United States deal with its main foreign policy challenges in the Middle East between 1991 and 2000?
- 6 Explain how the events of 11 September 2001 shifted subsequent American foreign policy.
- 7 In your view, did America abandon its values in pursuing Iraq in the lead-up to March 2003? Why or why not?
- 8 Outline some of the impacts of American foreign policy in the world after 1991.
- 9 To what extent has American foreign policy been a success or a failure in the post-Cold War world?
- 10 In groups of three, explain and justify how the ideas in the table below were realised, or failed to materialise, between 1991 and 2011.

IDEA	EXPLANATION AND JUSTIFICATION
End of history	
Clash of civilisations	
New world order	
Hard and soft power	
The 'global war on terror'	
Project for a New American Century	