Is there such a thing as the "Obama Doctrine"?

https://www.e-ir.info/2015/11/04/is-there-such-a-thing-as-the-obama-doctrine/

VERONIKA HOELKER, NOV 4 2015

"Don't Do Stupid Stuff" – a catchy, memorable phrase that President Obama has reportedly used to describe his foreign policy in an off-the-record discussion with the press (Rothkopf, 2014) – can hardly be considered a profound doctrinal principle that could match those historically associated with presidents such as Monroe or Truman. Nevertheless the phrase stands for an important aspect of Obama's foreign policy that has been shaped significantly by the mistakes of his predecessor: the prudent use of military force.

While this alone may not amount to a comprehensive presidential doctrine as it undermines other important aspects of Obama's foreign policy, the discussions that followed the so-called "DDSS"-phrase are illustrative of the ongoing search for an Obama doctrine. Assertions that the study of presidential doctrines is prone to trivia and the perceived need of some pundits to 'move past' doctrinal approaches conflict greatly with what appears to be a well-established tradition in U.S. politics. As Crabb (1982: 2) has noted: "no other nation in modern history has relied so heavily upon 'doctrinal' statements and principles in foreign affairs as the United States." Therefore, it should come as no surprise that attempts by political commentators to pin down an Obama doctrine date back to as early as 2007, before Obama even assumed office. (Aziz and Haglund, 2014: 213) Amongst those that have engaged in such discussions, there appears to be no consensus as to whether or not there actually is an Obama doctrine and, if there is, whether it is successful.

Addressing the question of whether there is an Obama doctrine inevitably requires an understanding of what a presidential doctrine entails more generally. Therefore, the first section of the essay shall outline the concept and provide a definition that rests significantly on key features of past presidential doctrines in U.S. history. Because doctrines are usually informed by an overarching world view, the subsequent section will contour Obama's philosophy and values related to world affairs and then proceed to an analysis of his on-the-ground policies. I argue that while Obama's foreign policy has exhibited a number of core tenets that have reemerged time and again throughout his presidency, they have not (yet) yielded a presidential doctrine, as they are at odds with key components underlying doctrinal policy.

Defining Presidential Doctrines

As already mentioned, foreign policy doctrines play an important role in U.S. politics. Certainly one of the most conspicuous presidential doctrines and indeed the first one in U.S. history was promulgated well before the concept even gained widespread recognition. Against the backdrop of turmoil in Europe and the newly gained independence of many Latin American countries, James Monroe in his 1823 State of the Union Address essentially warned the European powers not to establish new colonies on the American continent (North or South), as any such attempt would be viewed as an affront to the United States. (Gilderhus, 2006: 8) This was complemented in turn by an affirmation that the United States had no intentions of intervening in the European Wars. (Crabb, 1982: 14)

Interestingly, what is famously known today as the Monroe Doctrine did not actually acquire that name (and perhaps significance) until sometime later, which is indicative of a characteristic many doctrines have had in common: whilst they may be pronounced in an official manner by the president, they are more often than not implied (if at all) rather than intentionally evoked. That means that most presidents, including Monroe himself, did not explicitly refer to the term 'doctrine' nor did they necessarily intend for a doctrine to emerge. (Crabb, 1982: 23) What would come to be

known as the Nixon Doctrine, emerged from somewhat elusive statements made by the president during a 1969 press conference in Guam, which had not been set up for the purpose of announcing a grand strategy. (Kimball, 2006: 64) Similarly, Reagan's 1985 State of the Union Address was not envisaged as an articulation of a foreign policy doctrine, and it was in fact political commentator Charles Krauthammer, who bestowed on it the title of the Reagan Doctrine several weeks later. (Pach, 2006: 76)

Moreover, presidential doctrines are typically informed by a specific set of values that form part of a broader philosophy or world view. In many cases, these values serve to underscore the overarching themes or notions that will guide the incumbent president in his conduct of U.S diplomacy. As Crabb (1982: 2) has noted, for example, one of the Monroe Doctrine's most important themes "was the 'isolationist' principle which shaped American attitudes toward Europe from the founding of the Republic until World War II." Similarly, many of the Cold War doctrines were fed by anti-communist sentiments and often exhibited ideas of containing Soviet power.

In order for doctrines to be widely applicable (at least within the foreign policy agenda of one administration), most doctrines are articulated in broad and general terms, as "[policy makers] desire maximum flexibility to adapt the principles to new and changing circumstances overseas." (Crabb, 1982: 11) When Truman addressed Congress in March 1947 to ask for assistance for the governments of Turkey and Greece to counter Soviet encroachment, the phrase that stands out as the declaratory foundation of his doctrine encompasses a broad idea that goes well beyond the countries in question: "I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." (quoted in Merrill, 2006: 27)

Finally, many scholars have observed that the most fertile ground for doctrines has been in circumstances involving international crises or other situations that put U.S. national security interests at stake. (Crabb, 1982: 11) One of the most conspicuous and more recent examples to this end is certainly the Bush Doctrine, but the same can also be said about many others: Monroe's statements were motivated by political exigencies in Europe, the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine was born out of the Venezuelan crisis and most Cold War doctrines responded directly or indirectly to a real or perceived Communist threat.

These key features are suggestive of the many aspects that underlie the concept of a presidential doctrine. Thus, the broad definition of a doctrine as a "declaratory means by which, explicitly or implicitly, an administration identifies […] its major purposive directions in foreign policy" (Aziz and Haglund, 2014: 217) serves only as a point of departure. A doctrine is usually accompanied by overarching principles or a world view; it is articulated in a way that makes it flexible and suitable to multiple situations; it serves to inform the public and international community of the administration's (new) agenda following an international crisis or situation that is otherwise relevant to national security matters; and finally, we might add that their broad and declaratory nature notwithstanding, doctrines must be complemented by actual implementation of specific policies, at least if they are to be successful. (Aziz and Haglund, 2014: 217)

Obama's Foreign Policy

From Peace to Pragmatism

In the wake of U.S. adventurism under the Bush administration, Obama embarked on a task to renew America's image abroad, in particular in the Muslim world. (Indyk et al., 2012: 1) In distinguishing himself from his predecessor, he has outlined a role for America on the international stage that rests significantly on international cooperation, universal human rights and the strengthening of multilateral institutions. As a senator, he had vigorously opposed what he then called a "dumb" war in Iraq that in his view was "based not on reason but on passion, not on principle but on politics." (Obama, 2002) This stance, as Obama later elaborated, translated into his advocacy for a more clearly formulated strategy abroad, one that "the public supports and the world understands." (Obama, 2006: 303)

In light of that, under Obama we have seen (at the very least a rhetorical) resurrection of the notion of 'universal human rights', which has effectively replaced the increasingly unpopular idea of U.S. military-led democracy promotion abroad. (Indyk et al., 2012: 15) Nowhere has this become more evident than in Obama's 2009 speech at

Cairo University, through which Obama sought "a new beginning with the United States and Muslims around the world." (Obama, 2009a) In it, Obama explicitly refuted the arrogant approach of imposing one's own system on another nation. Instead, he emphasized his conviction that notwithstanding cultural and political differences, human rights are a universal concept rather than an "American idea", and thus need to be safeguarded everywhere. The Obama administration has made it clear that this premise can only be upheld if the United States commits itself to the same principles, since past breaches of international norms have severely undercut American legitimacy and standing in the world. (White House, 2010: 10)

In his quest to reestablish that legitimacy, Obama has vowed to "rebuild the alliances, partnerships, and institutions necessary to confront common threats and enhance common security." (Obama, 2007a: 11) This goes hand in hand with the aforementioned prudence regarding military force. Obama has repeatedly emphasized the importance of acting multilaterally should military force be necessary and prioritizing diplomatic action whenever possible. (Obama, 2006: 309) The 2010 and 2015 National Security Strategy papers underscore this focus on multilateralism, not only for its virtue of boosting U.S. legitimacy and strengthening international norms, but also as an effective means to tackle global challenges of the 21st century, such as climate change and cyber-attacks.

In his 2009 Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, Obama (2009b) again underlined his support for "universal aspirations." He coupled the ideas of human rights and peace by stating that the latter acquires meaning only if it is accompanied by respect for the former. At the same time, the speech was illustrative of what Indyk et al. (2012: 6) have called Obama's combination of idealist progressivism and realist pragmatism. Obama's sober acknowledgment of the existence of evil and violence in the world, the "imperfections of man", have led him to the conclusion that as noble as peace and human rights are, their preservation will at times require "the instruments of war." (Obama 2009b)

This pragmatism features prominently in many of Obama's approaches to foreign policy even though his visionary rhetoric may sometimes lead one to think otherwise. (Indyk et al.) Despite his commitment to peace and diplomacy, Obama's foreign policy conduct has not been exclusively guided by human rights concerns. Partnerships with non-democratic regimes or countries with questionable human rights records have not been ruled out and have instead yielded a careful balancing of "isolation and engagement", "pressure and incentives." (Etzioni, 2010: 97; Obama, 2009b) Similarly, Obama has on numerous occasions reassured the American public that the U.S. reserves the right to act unilaterally "to defend itself against attack" or against imminent threats. (Obama, 2006: 308) This type of conduct is illustrative of Obama's realist rather than idealist approach to foreign policy, one that is essentially guided by what is best for the national interest. (Aziz and Haglund, 2014: 214) Obama has put this into practice through his policies on what he considered to be the "right war" in Afghanistan. In his decision to significantly increase troop deployment, the Afghanistan policy under Obama saw a doubling down on counter-terrorism to more effectively dismantle al Qaeda, which also meant a greater focus on neighboring Pakistan. (Fitzgerald and Ryan, 2014: 53)

Many commentators have tried to formulate an Obama doctrine on the basis of his policy regarding humanitarian interventions, (Etzioni, 2010; Murray, 2013; Owens, 2012), whilst others have focused more on the aspect of multilateral action (Kazemzadeh, 2010) and the idea of "leading from behind." (Aziz and Haglund, 2014) Although they all exhibit convergence on one or more aspects, the various propositions for a doctrine mirror the ways in which Obama's rhetoric and style have defied blanket categorization. In a way, one might say that this has been precisely Obama's intention. When asked to contour a potential Obama Doctrine in a 2007 Democratic presidential debate, Obama responded: "the Obama doctrine is […] not going to be as doctrinaire as the Bush doctrine, because the world is complicated." (Obama, 2007b) Obama's aversion to forging to doctrinal foreign policy agenda seems only to have solidified throughout his presidency. In light of unfolding civil unrest in the Middle East, Obama clarified that since "each country in this region is different," it is crucial "not to take this particular situation and then try to project some sort of Obama doctrine that we're going to apply in a cookie-cutter fashion across the board." (Obama, 2012)

If, as outlined in the previous section, we understand doctrines as a promulgation of foreign policy principles that draw on a specific world view and retain a degree of flexibility, Obama's case presents us with a challenge. It is not so much the lack of a world view that complicates matters but the type of world view and paradigms that Obama clings to. As noted earlier, Obama cannot easily be positioned on a realist-idealist continuum, which has led many to

observe that he is a "hybrid president", a "progressive pragmatist". (Owens, 2012: 94; Indyk, 2012: 6) A potential Obama doctrine would thus "[synthesize] elements of various competing paradigms without being beholden to any one exclusively." (Murray, 2013: 443) Despite his hybridity or perhaps because of it, Obama has so far shunned all-encompassing doctrinal statements, which complicates efforts of finding a definition of an Obama doctrine, in particular one that is concise enough to pass what Brands (2006: 3) has called the "bumper sticker test."

Ironically, this convoluted image is further exacerbated by Obama's oratory skills. Indyk et al. (2012: 139) contend that there is something irreconcilable between Obama's visionary rhetoric and his pragmatic on-the-ground policies, which has made it difficult at times to produce the kind of foreign policy results that might solidify a still elusive doctrine. It is against the background of this discussion that some of these policies will be analyzed in the following section.

Responding to Crises: Implementing "Obamaism"

It is not surprising that discussions about an Obama doctrine flared up when the President saw himself confronted with an array of new "post-Bush" foreign policy dilemmas. After the launch of Operation Odyssey Dawn in Libya in 2011, many commentators rushed to proclaim an Obama doctrine (Lizza, 2011), question the existence of any such doctrine (O'Hanlon, 2011) or go as far as simply dismissing contemporary relevance of presidential doctrines altogether. (Zakaria, 2011) It was also during that time that an administration official was said to have described U.S. foreign policy as what would become a much debated tagline for Obama's conduct: "leading from behind." (Aziz and Haglund, 2014: 215)

There is no doubt that intervention in Libya exhibited very clearly some of the central tenets of Obama's foreign policy: for one thing, it was a prime example of the high threshold for using military force abroad. During his speech announcing the UN resolution for a no-fly zone over Libya, Obama vigorously emphasized that the "United States is prepared to act as part of an international coalition," so as to share the "responsibility and the cost of enforcing international law." (Obama, 2011a) It is clear that the situation in Libya did not constitute a matter vital to U.S. national interests, ruling out the option of unilateral military action. (Lizza, 2011: 16) Moreover, initial responses to the atrocities in Libya sought to exhaust "soft" options first, including the use of sanctions and diplomatic isolation. (Dodge, 2012: 215) The idea of "leading from behind" was borne out by an intervention essentially led by efforts of the Arab League as well as France and Britain. (Indyk et al., 2012: 162) The fact that U.S. intervention in Libya was significantly driven by efforts to prevent an ensuing humanitarian crisis through multilateral action (in which the United States did not occupy a "leading" role) appeared to be solid breeding ground for an Obama doctrine.

As many have pointed out, however, there is a problem when it comes to consistency of applying this doctrine. (Dodge, 2012: 216) Firstly and as already mentioned, when it came to intervening in the Middle East, Obama insisted on employing a case-by-case strategy. As Shanker and Cooper (2011) rightly point out, "the president seemed to provide little guidance for what position he would take in other, more vital nations in the region," and indeed less can be deduced when it comes to policy in other countries plagued by humanitarian crises. Obama's reactions to civil unrest across various countries in the Middle East can hardly be said to follow the same pattern. The Obama administration refrained from enforcing sanctions or military interventions in places like Yemen or Bahrain. Muted calls on the governments in those countries to restrain their actions against protesters were clearly overshadowed by geopolitical interests related to Saudi involvement, for example. (Fitzgerald and Ryan, 2014: 95) The situation in Syria further blurs the image. Long periods of deliberation on how to respond to the violent clashes between rebels and the military were finally followed by the enforcement of sanctions and the supply of nonlethal and humanitarian aid to the "moderate opposition." (Fitzgerald and Ryan, 2014: 121) With Assad having crossed the "red line" through use of chemical weapons, Obama reluctantly agreed to send light arms to the rebels, but the situation for the United States remained complicated. Issues such as geopolitical calculations, the difficulty of aiding unorganized rebel groups and an overall reluctance to "put boots on the ground" in another Middle Eastern country severely impeded efficient action. (Fitzgerald and Ryan, 2014: 119) Even when a military strike became more palpable, Obama reassured the public that it would not be carried out without congressional approval and instead called on Congress to postpone a vote in order to "pursue [a] diplomatic path." (Obama, 2013)

The course taken by the Obama administration in response to crises in the Middle East flies in the face of a "human rights" doctrine. Although appeals to leaders in the Middle East to adhere to international norms and protect their citizens may have been unequivocal in Obama's language, his actions tell a different story. If anything, the one consistency that Obama exhibited in the cases outlined above, it is the priority given to forging multilateral alliances and avoiding unilateral action or sole leadership, exhausting means of "soft" power and considering geopolitical dynamics that may affect U.S. interests.

These priorities are also much more applicable to Obama's foreign policy outside of the Middle East. For example, the Obama administration has tried to respond to Russian aggression towards Ukraine primarily by imposing sanctions in unison with European allies. Obama underlined the importance for cooperative action against Russia, in particular by stressing that "the United States has worked to build a strong international coalition to support Ukraine." (Obama, 2014) The 2015 National Security Strategy outlined that it would continue sanctions against Russia but at the same time asserted that it "will keep the door open to greater collaboration with Russia in areas of common interests." (White House, 2015) This is also illustrative of the fact that the Obama administration continues its quest to strengthen ties even with recalcitrant nations if it ultimately serves U.S. national interests. Similarly, Obama's conduct with Iran has been marked by leading "international efforts to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons" and resorting to diplomatic means as much as possible. (White House, 2015)

Finally, the Obama administration's rebalancing towards Asia also clearly exhibits a tendency to emphasize multilateral engagement to address issues of geopolitical importance to the United States. The "pivot to Asia" envisages a strengthening of ties with emerging powers like China, whose partnership is crucial in tackling "critical regional and global security issues." (Clinton, 2011: 5) At the same time, bilateral relations with many other countries in the region are also being expanded, not least in a pursuit to "check" a rising China. (Aziz and Haglund, 2014: 223)

There is little doubt that the tenets outlined above are important components of Obama's foreign policy, but they are arguably not doctrinaire, because even if they feature time and again in Obama's foreign policy conduct, they run counter to at least two doctrinal characteristics. First, they are not always radically new. Although there are certainly aspects to the pivot to Asia that diverge from past administrations' approaches to the region, a focus on Asia "does not mark any revolutionary departure into uncharted territory." (Aziz and Haglund, 2014: 223) Secondly, there appears to be no "grand strategy" behind the policies implemented on the ground as each case of U.S. involvement abroad defies categorization that could neatly be summed up in a concise doctrinal phrase. Even "leading from behind" fails to capture the fact that Obama has gone to great lengths to maintain and even strengthen U.S. (unilateral) leadership in the war against al Qaeda. (Indyk et al., 2012: 263-264)

Conclusion

Although Obama himself has admitted a strong affinity for realist foreign policy, he has been outspoken about universal ideals and rights. He has written off U.S. democracy promotion abroad but never questioned that adherence to norms and democracy make for more stable and peaceful systems. He has articulated a clear world view guided by idealist principles but has been careful to put them into perspective by acknowledging that sometimes "just wars" must be fought. This hybridity has stood in the way of many attempts to formulate a crystal-clear Obama doctrine. Proposing an Obama doctrine that is based on humanitarian intervention, for instance, crumbles when considering Obama's assertion that "we [cannot and should not] intervene militarily every time there's an injustice in the world." (Obama, 2012) Seeing as Obama has been remarkably consistent in applying this non-doctrinal policy against the backdrop of the Arab Spring, one might say that Obama's problem is not one of consistency per se. He rigidly practices his approach of individually tailored policy, but tailored policy flies in the face of presidential doctrines.

It is precisely for those reasons that no single, overarching statement has been made by the president to serve as a basis for a flexible yet concise grand strategy. In the tradition of past doctrines, precarious situations such as turmoil in the Middle East could have been seized upon by the president to articulate a doctrine, yet his remarks May 19, 2011 provide only a broad message of support for transition at best. (Obama, 2011b) It is true that Obama has on numerous occasions emphasized the importance of multilateral action, soft diplomacy and international norms and

an increasingly retracted role of the U.S., but these alone do not constitute a doctrine. None of them can be said to be generally applicable in specific situations in specific parts of the world. As has been pointed out by Cooper and Shanker (2011) little can be deduced from military intervention in Libya to what Obama might do in the Ivory Coast.

It would not be surprising to see Obama leave office without a doctrine. Indyk et al. (2012: 275) have pointed out that

"coherence is confounded by the nature of the world Obama confronts: more complex problems, more actors intent on asserting their own prerogatives and their own leadership rather than following Washington, and of course, a far more onerous set of economic challenges than Obama expected."

On a related note, Zakaria (2011) contends that in a multipolar, post-Cold War world, there is in fact little room for a doctrinal approach to foreign policy. Most past doctrines, after all, were formulated against the backdrop of a bipolar system marked by a power struggle with the Soviet Union. Yet, this does not necessarily preclude the emergence of a doctrine in a post-Cold War era. As already mentioned, a doctrine is rarely proclaimed as such by the president himself and instead rests a great deal on what commentators make of the foreign policy in question. After all, Brands (2006: 1) reminds us that George Washington may very well have had a doctrine, had anyone considered to label it that way.

References

Aziz, O. and D. G. Haglund (2014) 'An Obama Doctrine?', in M. Cullinane and C. Elliott (eds)*Perspectives on Presidential Leadership: an International View of the White House*, New York; London: Routledge, pp. 211-229.

Brands, H. W. (2006) 'Presidential Doctrines: An Introduction', *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36(1) pp. 1-4.

Cooper and Shanker (2011) 'Doctrine for Libya: Not Carved in Stone', *New York Times Online*, March 29, accessed April 12, 2015 <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/30/world/africa/30doctrine.html>

Clinton, H. (2011) 'America's Pacific Century', *Foreign Policy*, October 11, accessed April 16, 2015 < http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/americas-pacific-century>

Crabb, C. (1982) *The Doctrines of American Foreign Policy. Their Meaning, Role, and Future* . Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Dodge, T. (2012) 'US Foreign Policy in the Middle East', in M. Cox and D. Stokes (eds) *US Foreign Policy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 197-218.

Etzioni, A. (2011) 'Obama's Implicit Human Rights Doctrine', *Human Rights Review* 12, pp. 93-107.

Fitzgerald, D. and D. Ryan (2014) *Obama, US Foreign Policy and the Dilemmas of Intervention* , New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gilderhus, M. (2006) 'The Monroe Doctrine: Meanings and Implications', *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36(1) pp. 5-16.

Indyk, M., K. Lieberthal and M. O'Hanlon (2012) *Bending History. Barack Obama's Foreign Policy*, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Kazemzadeh, M. (2010) 'The Emerging Obama Doctrine', *The Journal of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy* 32(3) pp. 194-195.

Kimball, J. (2006) 'The Nixon Doctrine: A Saga of Misunderstanding', *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36(1) pp. 59-74.

Lizza, R. (2011) 'The Consequentialist. How the Arab Spring remade Obama's Foreign Policy', *The Political Scene*, May 2, accessed April 11, 2015 <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2011/05/02/the-consequentialist?currentPage=all>

Merrill, D. (2006) 'The Truman Doctrine: Containing Communism and Modernity', *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36(1) pp. 27-37.

Murray, D. (2013) 'Military Action but not as we know it: Libya, Syria and the Making of an Obama Doctrine', *Contemporary Politics* 19(2) pp. 146-166.

Obama, B. (2002) 'Speech delivered in Chicago', transcript, *NPR*, October 2, accessed April 12, 2015 <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=99591469>

Obama, B. (2006) *The Audacity of Hope. Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream* , New York: Crown Publishing Group.

Obama, B. (2007a) 'Renewing American Leadership', *Foreign Affairs* 86(4) pp. 2-16.

Obama, B. (2007b) 'NPR Democratic Candidates' Debate', transcript, *NPR*, December 4, accessed April 11, 2015 <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=16898435>

Obama, B. (2009a) 'Remarks by the President at Cairo University', transcript, *The White House*, June 4, accessed April 12, 2015 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-at-Cairo-University-6-04-09>

Obama, B. (2009b) 'Remarks by the President at the Acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize', transcript, The White House, December 9, accessed April 11, 2015 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-acceptance-nobel-peace-prize>

Obama, B. (2011a) 'Remarks by the President on the Situation in Libya', transcript, *The White House*, February 23, accessed April 12, 2015 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/02/23/remarks-president-libya>

Obama, B. (2011b) 'Remarks by the President on the Middle East and North Africa', transcript, *The White House*, May 19, accessed April 15, 2015 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/05/19/remarks-president-middle-east-and-north-africa>

Obama, B. (2012) *Interview with Brian Williams*, online video, viewed April 15, 2015 < https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuiSSnpNuuE>

Obama, B. (2013) 'Remarks by the President to the Nation on Syria', transcript, *The White House*, September 10, accessed April 12, 2015 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/09/10/remarks-president-address-nation-syria>

Obama, B. (2014) 'Statement by the President on Ukraine', transcript, *The White House*, July 29, accessed April 16, 2015 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/07/29/statement-president-ukraine>

O'Hanlon, M. (2011) Libya and the Obama Doctrine, *Foreign Affairs*, August 31, accessed April 15, 2015 <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/68237/michael-ohanlon/libya-and-the-obama-doctrine>

Owens, E. (2012) 'Searching for an Obama Doctrine: Christian Realism and the Idealist/Realist Tension in Obama's Foreign Policy', *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 32(2) pp. 93-111.

Pach, C. (2006) 'The Reagan Doctrine: Principle, Pragmatism, and Policy', *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36(1) pp.

75-88.

Rothkopf, D. (2014) 'Obama's Don't Do Stupid Stuff Foreign Policy', *Foreign Policy*, June 14, accessed April 12, 2015 <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/06/04/obamas-dont-do-stupid-shit-foreign-policy>

White House (2010) *National Security Strategy*, accessed April 12, 2015 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf>

White House (2015) *National Security Strategy*, accessed April 12, 2015 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2015_national_security_strategy.pdf>

Zakaria, F. (2011) 'Stop Searching for an Obama Doctrine', *The Washington Post online*, July 6, accessed April 13, 2015 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/stop-searching-for-an-obama-doctrine/2011/07/06/gIQAQMmI1H_story.html>

Written by: Veronika Hoelker
Written at: University College London
Written for: Dr. Tony McCulloch
Date written: April 2014