

# THE FINANCIAL BURDEN OF PEACEKEEPING

*A study of the US' financial contribution to the UN Peacekeeping  
Budget during the presidential periods of Obama and Trump*

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## **ABSTRACT**

United Nations Peacekeeping Operations are important instruments in contemporary conflict management. The financing of these operations is a collective responsibility of the UN member states; however, as of 30th of April 2020, outstanding arrears to the UN Peacekeeping Budget was at \$2.2 billion. Approximately \$1.3 billion is owed by the United States. This financial strain on the UN is not new. As the largest contributor, the US has a long, but varied, history of withholding funds to the UN. President Obama payed the UN assessed rate, while President Trump did not. How can strategic culture explain the level of financial contribution to the UN Peacekeeping budget?

In this thesis, I make the case that these policy-decisions can be explained through US strategic culture, applied on an analysis of the Presidential periods of Barack Obama and Donald J. Trump. I argue that the Obama Administration can be categorised as internationalist, while the Trump administration is identified as nationalist. In order to test these theoretical expectations, I categorise speeches and remarks made by the key actors in the Presidential Administration; The President, The Vice President, The Secretary of State, and the Ambassador to United States Mission to the United Nations, through three elements of strategic culture: National identity and the US' role in the world; The nature of international society; and UN Peacekeeping. By doing an explorative case study using congruence analysis, I find that the Obama Administration shows a high level of liberalism and low level of limited liability; and that the Trump Administration shows a high level of limited liability and a low level of liberalism.



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Any and all mistakes remain my own.

Vilde Katrine Attramadal  
Oslo, 16.11.2020





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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>CIA</b>      | Central Intelligence Agency                             |
| <b>CIO</b>      | Contributions to International Organizations            |
| <b>CIPA</b>     | Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities |
| <b>CRS</b>      | Congressional Research Service                          |
| <b>EU</b>       | European Union  |
| <b>FY</b>       | Fiscal Year   |
| <b>GDP</b>      | Gross Domestic Product                                  |
| <b>GNI</b>      | Gross National Income                                   |
| <b>ICC</b>      | International Criminal Court                            |
| <b>IGO</b>      | Intergovernmental Organisation                          |
| <b>ISIL</b>     | The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant                |
| <b>NATO</b>     | North Atlantic Treaty Organization                      |
| <b>P5</b>       | Permanent Five of the Security Council                  |
| <b>TCC</b>      | Troop-Contributing Countries                            |
| <b>UN</b>       | United Nations  |
| <b>UNGA</b>     | United Nations General Assembly                         |
| <b>UNIFIL</b>   | United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon                 |
| <b>UNMIH</b>    | United Nations Mission in Haiti                         |
| <b>UNOSOM2</b>  | United Nations Operation in Somalia II                  |
| <b>UNPKO</b>    | United Nations Peacekeeping Operations                  |
| <b>UNPREDEP</b> | United Nations Preventive Deployment Force              |
| <b>UNPROFOR</b> | United Nations Protection Force                         |
| <b>UNSC</b>     | United Nations Security Council                         |
| <b>US</b>       | United States   |
| <b>USUN</b>     | United States Mission to the United Nations             |

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE FIELD

In 1945 many nations were in ruins after the World War II. The urge for peace resulted in the establishment of the United Nations (UN) and the signing of the UN Charter creating this organisation. In 1948, UN began peacekeeping operations (UNPKO) when deploying military observers to the middle east. Since then, UN have deployed more than 70 operations and more than 120 countries have participated. UNPKO are important instruments in contemporary conflict management. Peacekeepers are international stability forces that promote peace, and which works to prevent the resurgence of conflict. They serve on behalf of the civilian masses and for the safety of the individual citizen. The financing of UNPKO is a collective responsibility of the UN member states. Every state is obligated to pay their respective share of the cost of peacekeeping.

It is, therefore, a paradox that this big institution, the perhaps most visible branch of the UN, is in financial strain.

“The organisation is facing a severe financial crisis (...) To be more specific, a severe liquidity crisis. The equation is simple: without cash, the budget cannot be properly implemented.”

These are the words of UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, speaking at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in New York September last year, 2019.

The budget for UN Peacekeeping is built upon a percentage of the UN Regular Budgets assessed rate, which is mandatory for each member state to pay. As of 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2020, outstanding arrears to the UN Peacekeeping Budget was at a soaring \$2.2 billion of outstanding dues (Pollard, 2020). \$1.8 billion of these are owed for active missions, and the remainder of \$398 million is owed for closed missions. For the active missions, \$340 of these arrears related to the 2020 assessment, while \$1.5 billion related to assessments in 2019 and the years prior (Pollard, 2020). Of these billions of dollars owed to the UN, approximately \$1,3 billion is owed by the United States (US) (Pollard, 2020). As will be elaborated later, the US is by far the largest contributor to the UN Regular Budget and the Peacekeeping Budget. However, one can argue this is well within reason, due to the US' major role as a superpower since World War II.

This financial strain imposes restrictions upon the organisations' ability to fully assume its intended role in the international system. The arrears have detrimental impact on the ability of the UN Peacekeepers to carry out their mandates. Also, because the troop-contributing countries (TCC) receive money per troop they contribute, it makes the UN in debt to those offering their physical assistance in these critical operations. Over the past decades, the TCCs most active are many third-world countries.

This financial strain on the UN is not new. The paradox of any settlement which strives for fairness is that those who spend more ends up feeling disadvantaged and may be tempted to attain some leverage of the affairs compared to the others, and bargain through threats of withholdings and budgets cuts. As the largest contributor, the US has a long history of withholding funds to the UN. Different administrations have either complied with the UN assessments or not. In this thesis, I argue that this compliance to some extent depends on the country's overall strategic culture as well as the different emphasis administrations have put on multilateral burden-sharing. Strategic culture encompasses the shared beliefs and habits about fundamental elements of a state, which in turn, influence their predisposition toward particular policy decisions. How can these withholdings be explained from a strategic cultural perspective? It does make a difference who is in the White House. New administrations bring new faces, fresh energy and new ideas, different views of the world and a shift in strategic cultures which derives policy decisions. The character of the State can explain foreign policy and alter the national interest calculation. Change the character, and you change the interests too.

## 1.1 Research Question

In this thesis, I study the US' financial contributions to the UN Peacekeeping Budget by analysing the strategic cultures of the Presidential Administration of Barack Obama, and the Presidential Administration of Donald J. Trump. The puzzle that I address is the varying compliance to the UN between the two presidential terms. During President Obama's Administrations, the UNPKO assessments were paid in full. Over the past four years with President Trump, a different form of strategic culture has emerged where the withholdings and non-compliance have again commenced to a greater level than ever before.

I will answer the following research question:

*How can strategic culture explain the level of financial contribution to the UN Peacekeeping Budget during the presidential periods of Obama and Trump?*

With an analysis of the years 2008 through mid-2020, I explain how two different strategic cultures drive policy-decisions toward either compliance or non-compliance to the assessed level of UN Peacekeeping contributions.

The primary aim of this thesis is to explain how the compliance or non-compliance with the UN assessed level of contribution to the UN Peacekeeping Budget in part can be derived from the strategic culture in the respective Presidential Administrations. I will do this by utilizing a theoretical framework for the analysis which looks at key actors in the Administrations through US strategic culture, with the subcultures of internationalism and nationalism.

The secondary aim of this thesis is to contribute to the existing literature on the field by offering a new focus on member states' financial contributions to UNPKO. While the literature on UNPKO is vast, it mainly focuses on burden-sharing between developed and lesser-developed states, troop-contribution, the efficacy and success/failures of specific operations, as well as the relation between UN and non-UN Peacekeeping. When it comes to why or to what extent the US or other member states *finance* the UNPKO however, there is a scarcity of literature. Furthermore, much has been written on US grand strategy and strategic culture; however, few studies have attempted to merge both of these subjects of study together. In addition, with a "new" type of strategic culture in the US, which has emerged over the last four years, this thesis will look at these subjects of study in a new light. By doing this in this thesis, I hope to

contribute with a work of research which can enlighten the debate about multilateral contributions by big power politics in a new and changing world which in some areas are moving towards a more unilateral strategy.

## 1.2 Thesis Outline

The thesis proceeds as follows:

In Chapter Two, I present the background for the research question and define the central concepts of the thesis, including UNPKO and their mandate. As the US is the core of this study, I mainly focus on the role of US has in these operations. It will further give a factual explanation on how the UN peacekeeping assessments are constructed from the UNs perspective, and present a historical view on how the US has perceived these assessments. Thereafter, I will highlight relevant findings of peacekeeping, and further zoom in on findings on financial contributions and financial withholdings.

In Chapter Three, I present the theoretical framework developed by Bellamy and Williams (2013) that will be used in the analysis. To explain the differences of budgetary compliance between the two presidential periods, I apply Bellamy and Williams' concept *strategic culture*. Although the theoretical framework was developed for providing peacekeepers, I argue that through some alterations, it has transfer value when applied to different contexts, as this thesis does. Further, because I focus on the US, I use the strategic culture-theory developed by Dueck (2006) which focuses on US' strategic culture through the American creed with the elements of liberalism and limited liability. These elements lead to four different subcultures; internationalist, nationalist, progressive and realist. I show that the nationalist and internationalist subcultures are applicable to President Trump and President Obama respectively. Lastly, based on these findings, chapter three will commence with some theoretical propositions which the analysis is expected to bring forth.

In Chapter Four, I will present the methodology. Because my research question asks *how* strategic culture can explain the level of financial contribution to the UN Peacekeeping Budget, the design is that of an explanatory case study. Because strategic culture measures shared beliefs about fundamental elements of a state, my data is in the form of written sources, including a

broad range of both primary in the form of speeches and remarks in addition to secondary literature. Further, the analysis uses the congruence-analysis to test whether my theoretical propositions are correct. Lastly, chapter four will elaborate on the scope and limits of my thesis.

In Chapter Five and Six, the cases of Obama and Trump will be presented. First a presentation of key actors in the policy elite whose influence on the UN Peacekeeping Budget is most important will take place. After, I derive three different fundamental elements from strategic culture, through which I categorise the respective Administrations' beliefs in.

In Chapter Seven, a comparison of the two cases will firstly take place. Even though this is not first and foremost a comparative study, I still choose to compare the cases so that the similarities and differences becomes prominent. After, I will discuss whether my theoretical propositions are correct.

In Chapter Eight, I will conclude my thesis and provide some alternate explanations. Thereafter, the thesis commences by looking ahead and drawing lines to the recent development in American politics and change of power.



## CHAPTER TWO: BACKGROUND AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH

In this chapter, I present the UN and UNPKO with a particular emphasis on the funding of UNPKO. I also present a historical review of the US and their contributions and funding to UNPKO. The purpose of this chapter is to explain the foundation on which the research question builds upon. The information provided through the background sets the foundation for where in the literature this thesis finds itself. I will therefore lastly present some findings on UNPKO, funding to these and withholdings.

### 2.1 The Architecture of U.N. Peacekeeping

The research question of this thesis concerns the financial contributions from the US to UNPKO. To analyse this, it is critical to first clearly define what is meant by UNPKO. In this section, I explain the architecture of UNPKO. I begin with an overview of the institutional structures that govern these operations, including the UN mandate to intervene in member states through the Security Council (UNSC) and the basis of UNPKO in international law. I also highlight the importance of clearly differentiating between UNPKO on the one hand, and Peace Enforcement on the other.

The UN field missions are divided into UNPKO and political and peacebuilding missions, which together generally are referred to as UN peace operations. These are recognised as clear contributions by the UN to international conflict management and is where one finds the characteristic blue helmets. This paper will focus on UNPKO, where the means used are a form of military deployment designed to create and maintain conditions where political negotiations can continue; monitoring compliance with agreements; controlling buffer zones; and help to disarm local conflicts. They generally cannot wield military force except in self-defence, which follows from the general prohibition of the use of force found in the UN Charter Chapter 1, article 2(3) (UN, 1945). UN-authorized UNPKO primarily remain within the scope of Chapter 6 of the UN Charter: Pacific Settlements of Disputes (UN, 1945). UNPKO-troops are generally hailed from dozens of different countries and are not necessarily inter-operable between units of different nationalities, and without a shared common language.

UNPKO are clear contributions with a mandate to operate, which follows international law. International law is a system of principles and rules governing international relations between sovereign states and other institutional subjects (Dixon, 2013, p.3). It embraces the rights and bonds of both individual and non-governmental organisations, making it a set of rules drawn up by states, which work both for their purposes and as a means of organising and controlling external actors' activities at the international level. For the past 75 years, international law has moved from primarily dealing with international relations and cooperation between states to a system more involved with controlling these (Dixon, 2013, p.3). Modern international law will seek to control states by monitoring their behaviour, in relation to other states and individuals, both in other states and their citizens.

The main purpose of the UN is to maintain international peace and security. The UNs functions are developing relations between nations, and global economic, social, and cultural issues. UNPKO are one of the ways this is done. Although the UN pact does not include these duties, the organisation has conducted several operations since the second half of the 1950s to the present. The UN has established an array of institutions to work with peace and security. At the headquarters' level, the intergovernmental structure contains, among others, the UN Security Council (UNSC), which is the UNs enforcing power.

The UNSC consists of 15 members where five are permanent (P5), and ten are elected for two-year terms. The P5 are the USA, UK, France, Russia, and China. UNSC's authority is exercised as a result of violations of peace, threats to peace, or aggression. Constitutionally, the UNSC authorities are primarily designed to preserve the peace rather than enforce the law. However, these may coincide, and the UN Charter allows the UNSC to impose sanctions or authorise military force. In cases of armed conflict, the first task of the UNSC is to stop the conflicts, and not necessarily distribute blame or act only against the guilty party (Dixon, 2013, p.8). However, under article 39 in Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, "Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression" (UN, 1945), the UNSC shall determine if the existence of any threats or breaches to the peace, or an act of aggression of the peace, has been made. Thereby, they decide on what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42 to maintain or restore international peace and security (UN, 1945). Enforcement is authorised by a decision by the UNSC and can involve both economic and military measures (Dixon, 2013, p.8). There are restrictions on the exercise of this power, both politically and legally, such as the P5's right to veto. So consequently, no UNPKO or Peace

Enforcement Operations can be deployed without their support. The decision on enforcement is based on the states' political will and the extent to which the P5 are open to cooperation before enforcement occurs. The UNSC can be paralysed, and is often so both politically and legally, when the P5's primary and most essential interests are represented.

### 2.1.1 Peacekeeping or Peace Enforcement?

A broad perception is that UNPKO; the "Blue Helmets", and *Peace Enforcement* Operations have become more or less synonymous. Peace Enforcement refers to the peace operations conducted without the consent of the home state and must not be confused with UNPKO. As explained above, UNPKO troops can be deployed as a measure to restore the peace by the UNSC or be deployed with the consent of the receiving state.

This conflation of UNPKO and Peace Enforcement is partly because there have been UN peace operations that included both, for example, in Somalia (UNOSOM 2, 1993-1995), Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNPROFOR, 1992-1995), and Iraq (UNAMI, 2000-today). Besides, confusion is created when UNPKO engage in Peace Enforcement Operations to secure peacebuilding and preservation. Thus, while we can distinguish between UNPKO and Peace Enforcement in many dimensions, the distinctions have been fading.

UNPKO and Peace Enforcement differ formally in three significant respects: purpose, means, and actors. Unlike UNPKO, which is consent based, has the purpose of implementing peace accords already agreed upon by warring parties, are ruled by habilitation and minimal use of force - the purpose of Peace Enforcement is to end fighting through military force. They do not fight to win wars but to induce non-complying parties to sign peace accords (Findlay, 2002, p.6). Unlike UNPKO which fall under Chapter 6, will Peace Enforcement operations fall under Chapter 7: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression (UN, 1945; Findlay, 2002, p.8). The use of force as a cause for the protection of individuals - airstrikes without a UNSC mandate in Kosovo in 1999, or with a mandate in Libya in 2011, or by soldiers deployed in Iraq in 1991 or Somalia in 1992, contrasts with the assent UNPKO and poses distinct conceptual and operational challenges. Peace Enforcement troops have often been the domain of single states or small coalitions of the willing, and regional organisations also have played the role of peace enforcers, like NATO in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Mali.

### 2.1.2 US Troop Contribution

I now turn to elaborate upon the historical role of the US in UNPKO. Before 1988, the US was involved in about two thirds of the UNPKO cases where they provided personnel. After the Cold War, however, the number of uniformed Americans serving in UNPKO remained low, despite a spike in contribution from November 1992 to March 1996, when the US sent significant numbers of personnel to UNPKO in Somalia (UNOSOM 2), Haiti (UNMIH, 1993-1996) and the former Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR and UNPREDEP, 1992-1999) (Smith, 2013, p.72). At the start of 2001, the US had 44 military and 844 police personnel serving in UN missions. The country's contribution made up 2,3 per cent of the total uniformed personnel in UNPKO, which ranked them 14th out of the 90 TCCs. It also made the US the top TCC out of the P5, who combined accounted for 6,1 per cent of total UN forces at that time (Smith, 2013, p.73). From 2001 to 2009 a steady reduction in US personnel occurred. By the end of the decade, 87 personnel remained in six UNPKO cases. By that point, the US ranked 70th among UN troop contributors, providing only 0.09 per cent of the UN's 98,638 uniformed peacekeepers (Smith, 2013, p.73).

There are practical, self-interested reasons behind any country's decision to provide UN peacekeepers, and the US is no exception. Incentives that might motivate other TCCs, such as financial reimbursement, increased prestige, decision-making influence, operational experience or proximity to the conflict region, are however argued to be irrelevant to the US (Smith, 2013, p.79). American support for the UN is rooted in American cultural values of liberalism which are supportive of the principles on which the UN was founded upon. Various US Presidents, including Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, and even George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton, have made normative arguments to justify American involvement and leadership in humanitarian crises, The First and Second World War, and in the UN. America's role in this, according to them and many others, evolves in leading international efforts in resolving conflict, ending suffering, and expanding democracy (Smith, 2013, p.79). This idealistic expression of American exceptionalism has often led to ambitious foreign policy. It has influenced Roosevelt and the early American architects of the UN and continues to serve as a counterweight to those who see a threat to US sovereignty in the UN. This normative foundation helps prevent the US from abandoning the UN (Smith, 2013, p.79).

However, this value-laden support is conditioned on current American national security interests. US engagement in UNPKO has varied according to the strategic concerns of the day,

with its interest peaking at the start of the post-Cold War period when George H. W. Bush championed the establishment of a "New World Order" (Bush, 1991). This optimism had run its course by the time of the October 1993 Black Hawk Down incident in Somalia (UNOSOM 2), where 18 US soldiers, 2 UN Peacekeepers, and an estimated hundreds of Somali citizens died as two Black Hawk helicopters were shot down over Somalia's capital, Mogadishu. Thereby, a period of retrenchment from 1994 until late 2001 followed. During this time, US political and military leaders questioned the utility of UNPKO. However, after the terrorist attacks on 9/11 2001, the strategic outlook was challenged by showing that significant threats to US national security could emanate from the poorest, most remote places on earth (Smith, 2013, p.80). UNPKO required burden-sharing, as the US did not have the means, money or will to "police the globe" (Smith, 2013, p.80)

Even though US's contribution to UNPKO was low, overall US military capacity hovered around 1.4 million active personnel throughout the decade. Much of that capacity was not sitting idle, as approximately 263,000 American troops were stationed in 140 countries across the globe in 2001, even before the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq began (Smith, 2013, p.73). Some of these troops were engaged in stability operations in either NATO missions or as part of a multinational force, while others were deployed unilaterally. After the terrorist attack on 9/11 2001, Operation Enduring Freedom commenced approximately 8,800 US soldiers engaged in combat operations in Afghanistan. In March of 2003, a US-led coalition invaded Iraq, with a peak of 285,000 US personnel in deployment (Smith, 2013, p.). Through mid-2009, the US kept 165,000 soldiers in and around Iraq. At the same time, troop levels in Afghanistan increased from 20,000 in 2006 to 100,000 by mid-2010. In total, during the decade following September 2001, an estimated 2,333,972 individual US military personnel served tours in Iraq, Afghanistan, or both (Smith, 2013, p.74). Thus, while the US had a high level of military capacity throughout the first decade of the twenty-first century, they were occupied with matters other than UNPKO.

## 2.2 The Assessed Financial Scale

Article 17(2) of the UN Charter reads: “The expenses of the Organisation shall be borne by the members as apportioned by the General Assembly” (UN, 1945). Under the Financial Regulations and Rules of the UN, member states have the legal obligation to pay their assessed contributions, whether for the UN Regular Budget, or for UNPKO, in full within 30 days. Throughout the UNs history, however, most member states have not fulfilled their legal obligations, either in terms of the completeness or the timeliness of their payments.

The UN system is made of interconnected entities of specialised agencies, funds and programs, UNPKO, and the UN organisation itself. This system is financed by assessed and voluntary contributions from UN members. The voluntary contributions fund special funds, programs and offices, and the budgets may fluctuate annually depending on contribution levels (Blanchfield, 2020). *Assessed* contributions, however, are required dues. These bring a legal obligation of payment which is accepted by a country when it becomes a member. The funding to UN entities, such as The UN Regular Budget, specialised agencies, and to the UNPKO provides the UN with a regular and stable income to pay staff and implement core programs (Blanchfield, 2020).

It is impossible to predict how much peacekeeping will be required in any particular year, so the costs can increase significantly and unexpectedly. Also, UNPKO is not officially considered one of the UNs core functions for budgetary purposes. Therefore, there is no single, permanent budget for UNPKO, despite it being one of the organisations most visible activities. As such, each mission has its own budget (Williams, 2018). As a starting point for each country's financial contribution to UNPKO, a formula known as the "scale of assessments" is used to determine contributions to the UN Regular Budget. The basis for the Regular Budget scale is a country's share of global gross national income (GNI), with adjustments applied for a country's level of indebtedness and its standing relative to average global income (Mir, 2019). There are also payment limits applied for both the least-developed countries and the most significant contributor. The UNGA decided early on that the organisation should not overly rely on one country and established a ceiling for the share paid by the largest contributor. Over the years, the ceiling for the largest contributor has decreased as UN membership has expanded with an increasing number of members who are able to take on a greater share (Mir, 2019).

Based on these general budgeting guidelines, the UNGA settled in 1973 on an agreed methodology for funding UNPKO. In 2000, this methodology was updated and has remained unchanged since. To determine each country's share of the UNPKO Budget, the methodology builds on the UN Regular Budget scale by applying additional adjustments (Mir, 2019). Member countries are divided into ten levels based on their GNI per capita. Countries with GNI per capita below twice the world average are placed in levels D to I and receive discounts on a sliding scale based on their relative GNI per capita. Most countries with an income twice the world average contribute at the same rate to UNPKO as to the UN Regular Budget (Mir, 2019).

The P5 of the UNSC form a different level in recognition of their decision-making responsibilities for UNPKO and pay an increased share which is above their UN Regular Budget scale, equivalent to the discounts received by other countries. Like the UN Regular Budget, peacekeeping assessments are based on a member state's ability to pay, with one significant difference: the P5 of the UNSC shoulder a higher proportion of peacekeeping costs relative to what they pay for the UN Regular Budget. Since the P5 hold veto power over UNSC decisions, in effect, no UNPKO can be deployed without their support. The P5's higher financial responsibility is therefore meant to reflect its unique role in authorising UNPKO and crafting their mandates. Similar to the UN Regular Budget, UNPKO rates are revised every three years, and new assessment rates for 2019-2021 were approved in December 2018 (UN, 2018). However, because the scales are a classic zero-sum negotiation, meaning if one country pays less, another country must pay more, UN member states have consistently struggled to agree on any significant changes (Mir, 2019). The methodology for the UNPKO scale has only been adjusted once in the last forty years, in 2001, and despite some delegations' efforts, the most recent negotiation on both the UNPKO and the UN Regular Budget, completed in December 2018, maintained the status quo (Mir, 2019).

The UN stands out as the only international intergovernmental organisation (IGO) where a large proportion of expenses resulting from troop-contribution are reimbursed by a fixed budget financed by mandatory contributions. Each operations budget includes operational costs, such as troop transport and logistics, as well as the salaries of police officers and civilian staff. This budget line is also used to reimburse the TCCs according to a standard rate of \$1028 per person per month, and additional credits for contingent owned equipment and specialised assets (Tardy, 2013). Contribution with peacekeepers to a UNPKO can therefore pay off economically for many countries, for whom the financial aspects may even constitute an incentive to

participate and contribute peacekeepers. In practice, UNPKO are funded by countries at the same rate regardless of the number of troops they contribute (Tardy, 2013). In 2013, 81 per cent of the Peacekeeping Budget was covered by the US, the European Union (EU) member states, Japan, Canada and Australia. In contrast, these countries collectively contributed with less than 6 per cent of the troops. On the other hand, the first ten TCCs represent 55 per cent of the total troops deployed yet paid less than 1 per cent of the UN Peacekeeping Budget. This system, distinguishing between financing and troop-contribution, is much different from for example the EU and NATO, where the basic rule for military operations is that "costs lie where they fall", and where each country pay for most of the expenses that incur while they participate in an operation (Tardy, 2013).

Payments of the assessed contributions are important, as the countries who contribute with peacekeepers rely on the system of reimbursement per soldier. There is a separate system for reimbursing the TCCs, and the UN calculates and pays them subject to various conditions being met, such as signing a memorandum of understanding with the contributing country and having the sufficient money available. Therefore, if the UN members do not pay their contribution full and on time, it is likely to be the TCCs that suffer financially (Williams, 2018).

### 2.2.1 US' Assessed Contribution

The US has sometimes been an irregular friend to UNPKO. As mentioned earlier, it is not uncommon for Congress and certain Presidents to withhold crucial financial and political support for the resources and capacities the UN needs to accomplish the mandates set by the UNSC. Also, when missions are unsuccessful, the US Congress has been a vocal critic of the UN, and the White House rarely spends political capital to defend the UN in those cases (Smith, 2013, p.78). For example, certain members of Congress and Presidents from both political parties have at times found it politically convenient to blame the UN for failures, such as the 1993 Black Hawk Down incident in Somalia or the Rwanda genocide in 1994, which are well remembered as failures of the UN, and not necessarily of the US. Such a political landscape is a significant constraint on US politicians who might want to put UNPKO engagement high on their agenda. Nonetheless, the US has paid for the expansion of UNPKO more than any other member state. In 2000, the US contributed \$498 million for UN Peacekeeping, and as the UNSC



expanded UNPKO, their contributions rose hitting \$1 billion in 2006 and more than doubled to \$2.13 billion by 2010 (Smith, 2013, p.75).

The US assessed contributions to UNPKO are provided through primarily the Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) account, which funds 11 out of the 13 active UNPKO (Blanchfield, 2020). The Contributions to International Organizations (CIO) account also funds two observer missions, UNTSO (Israel and the Palestinians) and UNMOGIP (India and Pakistan), through contributions to the UN Regular Budget (Blanchfield, 2020). The UNPKO assessment scale for the US was over 30 per cent in the early 1990s. However, many Member of Congress found this assessment scale too high, and in 1994, financing UNPKO, UN reform and the fairness of the US share all became defining issues in US domestic policy (Mir, 2019). The US Congress therefore set a 25 per cent cap on funding for all fiscal years (FY) after 1995 (Blanchfield, 2020). Because of the cap, the US accumulated arrears to UN Peacekeeping. This made many policymakers concerned that the US could lose its vote in UNGA unless it made substantial payments on outstanding dues.

At the same time, UNPKO became more multidimensional, designed to ensure the implementation of comprehensive peace agreements. This required peacekeepers to take on tasks ranging from the protection of civilians and human rights monitoring to the reintegration of former combatants. Peacekeeping had also shifted increasingly away from tackling conflicts between countries to intra-state civil wars (Mir, 2019). Therefore, by 1999, the US' withholdings were having a detrimental impact on UNPKO, and international criticism, combined with the possibility of losing its vote in UNGA, led to Congressional action; the "Helms-Biden Agreement" (Mir, 2019).

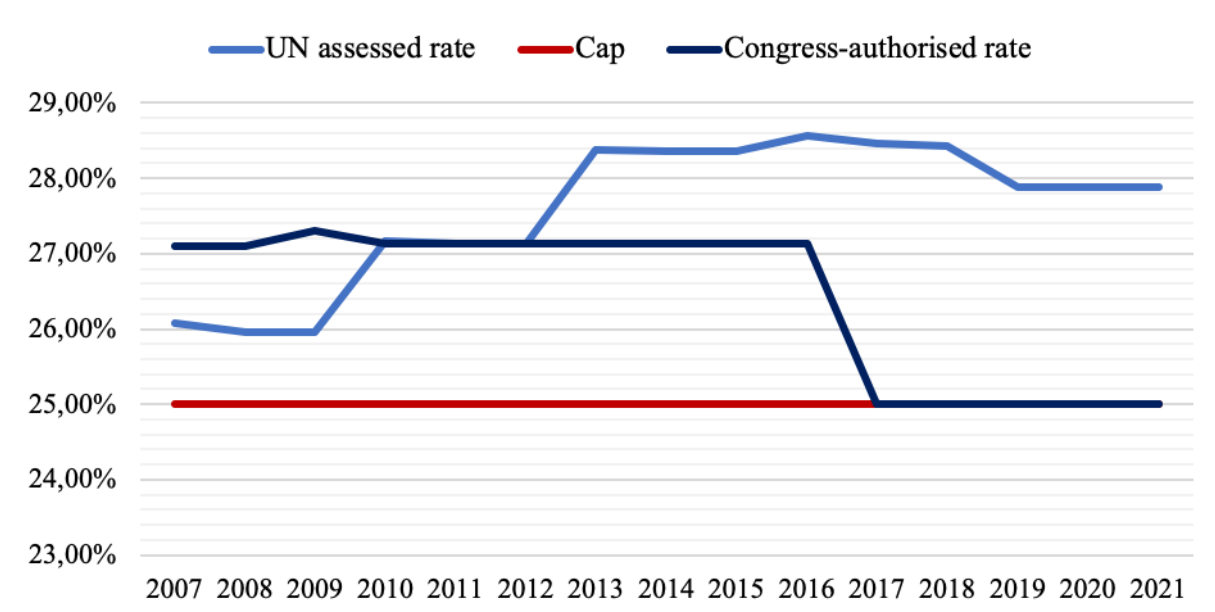
Congress and the Clinton Administration negotiated what is known as the "Helms-Biden Agreement" in 1999. This agreement called for partial payments of US arrears with subsequent payments predicated upon lowering the US assessment scale. This package was condemned by many UN member states as being unfair. However, it ultimately provided the framework for the then-Ambassador to the United States Mission to the United Nations (USUN), Richard Holbrooke, to negotiate a reduction in the US contribution to the UN Regular Budget from 25 per cent to 22 per cent. In exchange to member states for lowering the ceiling to 22 per cent, the US committed to clearing \$926 million of the \$1.3 billion in arrears the US

had accumulated over the last decade. Furthermore, many member states believed this agreement would secure the UN's future finances and permanently place the UN-US relationship on a firmer footing (Mir, 2019).

Over the years, however, the gap between the UNPKO assessment scale for the US and the cap at 25 per cent set by Congress led to shortfalls in funding from the US, as the original congressional legislation from 1995 never have been formally repealed. The State Department and Congress often covered this gap by raising the cap for limited periods and allowing for the application of UNPKO *credits* to fund outstanding US balances (Blanchfield, 2020). These credits arise when a mission underspends its appropriated budget, and money is rolled over to the next FY (Williams, 2018). For most of the years between FY1995 to FY2012, Congress waived the requirement on an annual basis, deciding to lift the 25 per cent cap and allowing the US to pay its UNPKO assessed scale and gradually reduce outstanding arrears (Mir, 2019). However, from 2013, Congress capped funding to UNPKO at 27,14 per cent and maintained this cap through FY2016, even though the UNPKO assessed scale had grown to be more than 28 per cent. However, the US did not fall behind on its payments, because the Obama Administration used UNPKO credits to bridge the difference between the approximately 27 per cent that was paid and the approximately 28 per cent that was officially owed to the UN. This meant that by 2017, the US had cleared most of its deficit, leaving approximately \$260 million of outstanding arrears (Mir, 2019).

However, US cap-related arrears have again accumulated from FY2017 to FY2020. By each budget cycle, the gap between the UNPKO assessment scale and the congressional authorised budget for UNPKO accumulates to over \$200 million. By the end of 2019, this number reached \$900 million; a figure equal to the amount owed in the 1990s prior to the Helms-Biden agreement (Mir, 2019). The build-up of arrears this time is due to Congress declining to raise the cap, even though the current UNPKO assessment scale is at 27,9 per cent (Blanchfield, 2020). As Congress re-imposed the 25 per cent cap in 2017, the Trump Administration also decided against using credits to make up the shortfall (Williams, 2018). As of March 2020, US arrears accumulated prior to 2001 totalled about \$328 million. These are mostly due to the gap between the 25 per cent cap and the UNPKO assessments scale, and others are a result from Congressional policy holds (Williams, 2018). For FY2021, President Trump has requested \$1.07 billion for UNPKO through the CIPA account, which is a 29 per cent decrease from FY2020 level of \$1.52 billion (Blanchfield, 2020).

Table 1. UN Assessed Rate vs. Congress-authorized Rate



Source: (United Nations Peacekeeping, 2020; Blanchfield, 2018; Blanchfield, 2020)

Crawford (2019) writes that between 2001 and 2016, the US spent more than \$3.6 trillion on the wars in Pakistan, Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as on Homeland Security. In the last years, another \$65 billion was requested by the Department of Defense and the State Department for 2017, and an additional \$32 billion requested for Homeland Security. In contrast, then, the US was obliged to pay \$611 million to the UN Regular Budget and \$2.2 billion to UNPKO in 2017 (Blanchfield, 2020).

Several factors complicate the process behind authorisation and appropriating funding to the UN. The most significant of these is the difference between the US and UN fiscal years, where the US fiscal year is from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, and the UN fiscal year is from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>. As a result, US payments are often behind, and funding levels reported by the UN and the US may not match. Other complicating factors are the modifications to UN Budgets due to the practice of "recosting", where periodic changes to UN assessment levels, unforeseen circumstances and US withholdings cause funding shortfalls or overruns in UN-accounts. Also, since the 1980s, the State Department has paid nearly all of their Congressional-authorized assessments of financial contributions on a deferred basis. This has caused some US payments to be delayed by a year (Blanchfield, 2018). However, the fact of the matter remains: the US arrears to the UNPKO budget is now nearing \$1 billion.

## 2.3 Previous Research

In this thesis, I distinguish between troop-contribution and financial contribution for UNPKO. Much of the literature on contributions to UNPKO evolves around the theme of providing (or not providing) troops, burden-sharing and the relationship between UNPKO and non-UN Peacekeeping Operations. The findings on these issues are important, as they evolve around the theme on contribution to IGOs. Therefore, a brief introduction to some of these findings is presented first in this section. However, there is a scarcity of literature on the financing of these operations. Bobrow and Boyer (1997) do provide some answers to financing, as they try to explain the level of financial contributions through public goods-theory, and Akinterinwa (1990) have studied the motivational forces surrounding the decision to withhold UN funds. These studies are elaborated upon below.

Three distinct waves in the literature on peacekeeping can be identified. First, during the Cold War, studies focused primarily on traditional operations which took place during this period. Second, in the post-Cold War period, the scholarly interest in peacekeeping surged, with a particular focus on the failures, dysfunction and unintended consequences of current UNPKO, using a selected few cases (Fortuna & Howard, 2008, p.293). Since the start of the new millennium the literature has tended to focus on systematic qualitative and quantitative studies testing the impact of UNPKO empirically. It has come to more robust findings about positive effects on peacekeeping, and its sources of success and failure (Fortuna & Howard, 2008, p.294).

Hart, Passmore and Shannon (2018) looks at why UNPKO fall short of the personnel level authorised for the mission. The authors note that insufficient resources may pose significant challenges to the efficacy of the mission and threaten the security of the country in question, as well as the surrounding region and beyond. By exploring the role of free riding among UN member states, they find that peacekeeper contributions from more TCCs lead to greater personnel shortfalls and suboptimal amounts of the public good of peace. They also show that free-riding increases where the conflict country has many neighbouring countries. However, countries may be less likely to engage in free-riding behaviour when they perceive higher levels of private benefit from contributing with peacekeepers.

Another subject in the literature is the burden-sharing between nation-states. After the Cold War a continuing trend of Western states taking more of the financial burden while simultaneously providing less peacekeepers began. The burden of troop-contribution has made a shift to developing countries, as the top TCCs include Ethiopia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Rwanda, Nepal, Senegal, Egypt, Ghana, and Burkina Faso (Sandler, 2017). Because of the reimbursement to the TCCs of \$1028 per person per month, countries with inexpensive and poorly trained troops make a net gain by contributing. However, UN per troop reimbursement does not come near to covering the costs of rich countries' well-trained troops (Sandler, 2017). For the US, the calculated costs per troop is \$138,465 (in 2013). Sandler (2017) therefore argues it is hardly surprising that their troop contributions to UNPKO has declined and non-UN Peacekeeping Operations are prioritised.

### 2.3.1 Financial Contribution

Gaibullov et al. (2009) identify the drivers for financing UNPKO and non-UN peacekeeping from 1994 through 2006. Their study found that proximity to the conflict region motivates a country's support of non-UN peacekeeping, as does its trade and interests in the conflict region. For UNPKO however, none of the contributor-specific proxies were statistically significant. In other words, contributors appear not to be driven by private interests with respect to UNPKO (Gaibullov et al., 2009). In addition, these results suggest that the UN is focusing on UNPKO with mostly global public benefits, where in contrast non-UN peacekeeping is directed to trouble areas where the peacekeepers either have interests to protect or may anticipate future interests. When comparing non-UN Peacekeeping Operations and UNPKO, it is important to keep in mind that UNPKO are financed through compulsory assessments. This is, however, not the case with the non-UN Peacekeeping Operations in Gaibullov et al.'s (2009) study, where contributions for example are driven by e.g. coalitions of the willing.

Moreover, their analysis suggests that if the contemplated mission has few peacekeeper-specific gains to offer, then the UN should finance and lead it. However, if the mission has many peacekeeper-specific gains, then some other entity should finance and lead it. They also conclude that, given the trends of that time, the UN may become a minor player in peacekeeping. Downsides to this is that the contributors may be tempted to serve goals which are not in the world's interest. Another downside is that non-UN peacekeeping may hamper the

willingness and ability for some nations to support UNPKO, as for example the UNSC members involved in non-UN peacekeeping operations may more frequently veto proposed UNPKO to limit their peacekeeping spending.

In *Maintaining System Stability, Contributions to Peacekeeping Operations*, Bobrow and Boyer (1997) examined the degrees to which nation-states participated in and financially support UNPKO through public goods-theory. Bobrow and Boyer (1997, p.725) argue that, in theory, peace operations are pure public goods, as their purpose is to halt armed conflict and prevent their recurrence. However, for a public good to be pure, they must be joint and non-excludable. This means that the consumption of the good does not diminish the amount of good available for consumption by other actors, in addition to the good being available for all. Therefore, if states produce public goods through self-interested behaviours, as public good theory suggests, it overcomes the distinction between self-interest and common interest. Peace operations will have a collective action problem, as someone has to pay to provide the good. Consequently, self-interested actors will either not provide the good or provide an insufficient amount of the good. As a result, states are incentivized to free-ride and choose not to finance UNPKO.

Another take on the public goods theory in relation to UNPKO is when an actor reaps private benefits by contributing to the production of public goods. The private benefits can be exemplified as a state's self-interest being served through the protection of friendly government or rebel groups, the acquisition of economic or social benefits, or the resolution of a conflict that directly damages a state's interests by harming trade, creating refugee flows and destabilising political relations. Bobrow and Boyer (1997, p.727) therefore argue that UNPKO are impure public goods. A second source of impurity stems from the fact that individual UNPKO are deployed in geographically limited areas, so the peace and stability they produce are enjoyed more directly by those closest to them and only indirectly by those further away. Third, the public goods produced by UNPKO, such as stability, trade, and democracy, are disproportionately enjoyed by the dominant powers. In sum, states are more inclined to contribute when the provision of a public good is likely to produce private goods for the contributor.

### 2.3.2 Financial Withholdings

Because of the US arrears that was accumulated prior to 2001, a few authors studied the impact this had in a variety of ways. Akinterinwa (1990) studied the motivational forces surrounding the decision to withhold UN funds, and proposed the following: The US has funded the UN and its agencies generously in the past because it has found them to be a good means of projecting American foreign policy objectives. However, whenever the usefulness of the UN and its agencies as foreign policy instruments cannot be guaranteed, the US reacts by withholding funds. Second, the withholding of funds is an expression of the limits to the tolerance of democracy by the US as well as to its greatness as a superpower. Third, withholding has never been an effective means of constraint as other states have eventually filled the loophole created by non-payment in one form or another. On this view, Akinterinwa points out it is a self-weakening policy, as it gives opportunities to other member states rather than effecting reform. Lastly, although the policy of withholding funds has domestic support, it is neither politically feasible nor acceptable at the international level. As such the US can only taint its image as the symbol of democracy by contesting democratic decisions.

Duke (1992) looks at the UN through a paradox: never before has it had the potential to do so much, yet at the same time has it never been in such dire financial straits. He describes the financial issue as the UN faces “imminent bankruptcy” because some UN members continue not to pay their dues fully, the US accounting for most of the shortfall, at the very time when the demands on UNPKO as well as other areas of the UN activity is soaring. The author proposes six options for how to solve the current situation. The most desirable, according to the author, at least in the short-term, is that the US restores its funding to the UN. He also argues that some may challenge the logic of that argument. However, the case for the restoration of US arrears and its assumption of responsibility for its assessments for the Regular Budget and UNPKO are strong. The main benefits for the US in following this course of action, the author explains, are that it would restore international confidence in the UN as well as the sincerity of the George H. W. Bush Administrations’ proclaimed support of the organisation as a cornerstone of the world order. Further, Duke explains that the consistent US underfunding of the UN is largely a by-product of a Cold War mentality where it is politic to be seen as an admirer and supporter of the organisation. However, at the same time, words are not matched with deeds.

## CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of peacekeeping can be explained through the lens of democratic peace theory, which is "based on the observation that democratic states do not wage war on each other" (Bellamy et al., 2004). According to Bellamy et al. (2014) "peacekeeping tries to maintain stable peace by promoting and defending liberal political and economic practices". From this, it follows that the more democracy and liberalism is spread across the world, the smaller the probability of interstate war taking place becomes. However, as Bobrow and Boyer (1997) found, the decision to finance peacekeeping is driven in part because of self-interest and when it produces private goods for the contributor. According to Akinterinwa (1990) the US has funded the UN and its agencies when they find the organisation to be a good means of projecting its own foreign policy objectives. However, whenever the usefulness of the UN and its agencies as foreign policy instruments cannot be guaranteed, the country reacts by withholding funds.

The preamble of the Charter of the UN reads; "We the people of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" (UN, 1945), which is a clear indication that the UN was meant to serve the collective interest of its members as opposed to individual state interest. However, this is not the reality in which the member states now find themselves. The question then becomes, what drives the interests of nations providing financial support? Or, rather, what are the predispositions that drive the level of contribution or withholdings?

I will in this chapter present the theoretical framework for which this thesis will use. Based on a framework by Bellamy and Williams (2013), who analyse why states contribute with *peacekeepers*, I argue that strategic culture will enlighten what the predispositions toward the policy decisions of financial contributions to UNPKO are. Strategic culture is defined as "the sum of prevailing attitudes, beliefs, and habits shared by a state's policy elite" (Bellamy & Williams, 2013, p.425). Elements of the strategic culture are beliefs and habits about fundamental elements of a state's identity, how it views their place in the world, the nature of international society, and the role of military power (Bellamy & Williams, 2013, p.424). According to Bellamy and Williams (2013), strategic culture shapes and affects a states disposition towards contributing to the UN. Some alterations to the framework will be made, because the elements Bellamy and Williams (2013) use to measure strategic culture from are not directly applicable to the research question of this thesis. These factors explain why states



provide *personnel*, and not the decisions on the level of financial contribution they provide. In addition, as I am focusing on US' strategic culture, I need a framework which captures the American creed. I will therefore base my strategic culture on a framework put forth by Dueck (2006), who looks at the elements of liberalism and limited liability. These elements forms subcultures which influence a states predisposition towards particular policy decisions.

In the following, I introduce the key actors from the *policy elite* whom I will focus on in the analysis. These are Congress, and the executive branch; relevant actors within the Administrations. Further, I introduce the overarching element of US strategic culture from Dueck (2006). US strategic culture inhibits some shared beliefs, which will be used to categorise the analysis. In addition, US strategic culture consists of two elements; liberalism and limited liability. Variations of these aspects makes out four subcultures. With these subcultures in mind, I will evaluate which subculture each president can be categorised. With this in mind, I will lastly present some theoretical propositions which the analysis is expected to bring forth.

### 3.1 Key Actors

The American political system was created to resist dramatic policy changes. The US federal government is fragmented, decentralised and constrained to an extent unusual for advanced democracies (Dueck, 2006, p.29). The executive branch includes the President, Vice President, the Cabinet (consisting of 15 head of executive departments), independent agencies, and other boards and committees (United States Government, 2018). For the executive branch, I will in this thesis focus the key actors who are the most influential voices on UN engagement; the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, and the Ambassador to the USUN.

Congress is a legislative branch of the US Government and consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Congress features a system of checks and balances. For instance, the President has the authority to order American troops to battle, but only Congress can issue a declaration of war (Smith, 2013, p.83). The President has the power either to sign legislation into law or to veto bills enacted by Congress, although Congress may override a veto with a two-thirds vote of both houses (The White House, n.d). The US Constitution Article II section 2 provides that the president "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent

of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the Supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for..." (The Constitution of the United States, n.d). The most important constraint on executive power lies in the division of authority between the president and Congress. While presidents generally take the leading role, and while some of them have enjoyed considerable dominance in matters of foreign policy, Congress has never fully relinquished its place as a powerful check on executive decision making; its role in relation to the president has varied from that of merely subtle constraint to outright obstacle (Smith, 2013, p.29).

Most votes in the US Congress can be organised along a single ideological continuum, which ranges from liberal, to moderate, to conservative. The two dominating political parties in the US have not always lined up perfectly on either side, as there have been conservative Democrats historically, especially in the south, as well as liberal Republicans. In recent decades, however, voters as well as political officials have increasingly sorted themselves into each party along ideological lines, with liberals voting Democratic, and conservatives voting Republican (Dueck, 2015)

Within the US government, even when one party holds both the Presidency and Congress, certain checks and balances are in place to give significant obstructive power to the minority party, such as the Senate filibuster (Smith, 2013, p.83). US legislators who may represent only a small fraction of the US population, can wield disproportionate influence over those affairs. As such, an influential member of Congress can show limited interest to particular foreign policy issues like UNPKO. For example, US Senator Jesse Helms<sup>1</sup> from South Carolina led a frequent battle to cut funding to the UN. The powerful role that the US Congress plays, and a few determined individuals in it, can amplify the voices of a strident anti-UN minority in the American public (Smith, 2013, p.84). After the President, the most influential individual voices on UN engagement are those of the Vice President, Secretary of State, and the Ambassador to the USUN (Blanchfield, 2018).

The manner in which the US provides funding to the UN system is complex and is often difficult to track in a timely and accurate manner (Blanchfield, 2018, p.2). Blanchfield, from the Congressional Research Service (CRS), explains the Congress and UN funding as such: Both

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<sup>1</sup> Jesse Helms from the Helms-Biden Agreement

Congress and the executive branch shape US policy toward the organisation. Congress authorises, appropriates, and oversees funding to the UN. At the same time, the executive branch represents the US in UN bodies through the State Department and the USUN. The President nominates Ambassadors for UN posts, and the Senate provides advice and consent for executive branch nominees (Blanchfield, 2018, p.1).

Members of Congress and the executive branch hold varied perspectives on the appropriate level and extent of US funding to the UN. Some policymakers are critical, as they believe UN actions may not align with US policy priorities. Many have also expressed frustration with UN bodies or activities that, in their view, do not operate efficiently or lack effective accountability mechanisms. These concerns have been addressed by raising or lowering the UN funding levels and placing financial conditions or limits on US contribution on UN entities, for example their withholdings from the UN Regular Budget and their 25 per cent cap on the UNPKO Budget. Some members have also proposed to eliminate all US funding to organisations or providing only the voluntary contributions. Congress also conducts oversight of UN funding by holding committee hearings, enacting reporting requirements, or consulting with executive branch agencies (Blanchfield, 2018, p.3)

### 3.2 US Strategic Culture

Strategic culture is defined as "the sum of prevailing attitudes, beliefs, and habits shared by a state's policy elite" (Bellamy & Williams, 2013, p.425). According to Gray (1986, p.36-38), strategic cultures exercises a "semi-permanent influence upon policy behaviour" that provides states with an enduring set of ideas through which they organize and explain their strategic behaviour in the absence of "new historical experience". Of particular relevance is the shared beliefs about the nature of international society, a country's identity and role in the world, and the desirability and efficacy of UNPKO, both generally and in terms of private costs and benefits, and the legitimacy of contribution to those operations. These elements will be used in the analysis as categories when evaluating the strategic culture in each presidential Administration.

The idea that culture influence security policy was first introduced in the 1970s by strategists who believed that American ethnocentrism altered its strategic thinking. Snyder (1977) warned

that US nuclear strategy was premised on flawed assumptions about Soviet rationality which led Americans to believe that the Soviets saw the issues in the same way that they did. This created expectations about Soviet behaviour that were not grounded in a deep understanding of how the Soviets actually thought about the relevant issues. Snyder (1977, p.8) further argues that Soviet thinking about nuclear issues was shaped by a combination of history, ideology, and institutional learning, in opposition to "rational man". Later, Gray (1986, p.36-37) argued that "national style" always influenced a state's security policies and defined strategic culture as:

modes of thought and action with respect to force, which derive from perceptions of the national historical experience, from aspirations for responsible behaviour in national terms (...) and the civic culture and way of life.

Booth (1979) identified the role that the "fog of culture" played in strategic policy in his call for the rational actor model to be replaced by an approach to strategy that encompassed culture, perception and identity. More recent studies have shown that security policies also can be influenced by international norms, or what Haacke and Williams (2011) describe as "regional security cultures": dispositions and habits about the most appropriate and effective ways of approaching security challenges shared by members of a regional organisation.

The disintegration of the bipolar world after the Cold War and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact resulted in the US becoming a global hegemonic superpower influencing the fate of other countries. Lippmann wrote as early as in 1952 that Americans perceive themselves as exceptional, and this uniqueness influences how the US perceives others on the international scene (Lippmann, 1952). The combination of idealism, liberalism and American realism has manifested itself historically in the foreign policy traditions in the US, which has created a push and pull effect between strategies of restraint and assertiveness. Dueck (2006, p.3) writes that these features of American strategic culture can be seen cyclically as well as simultaneously, in promoting a liberal international order and reluctance to admit the full costs of promoting this liberal vision. He further explains them in this manner; one being the relative weight of classic *liberal assumptions* within American strategic thinking, and the second, a historical and intense preference for *limited liability* in strategic affairs (Dueck, 2006, p.21). These two characteristics give rise to several distinct strategic subcultures: nationalist; internationalist; progressive; and realist. These subcultures are explained in further detail in chapter 3.3.

### 3.2.1 Liberalism in Strategic Culture

The classical *liberal*, or "American" creed, emphasises individual freedom, equality of right, majority rule, progress, enterprise, the rule of law, and the strict limits of the state. Dueck (2006) writes that Lockean liberal assumptions are so widespread as to be taken for granted (Dueck, 2006, p.21). Within, there are competing versions: left; right; moralistic; nationalistic; egalitarian; capitalistic; democratic; and individualistic. It has been reinterpreted over time to include races, ethnicities, religions and women, who were initially excluded from its full promise. The American liberal creed is evolved from a more classical liberal tradition, including authors such as Thomas Paine, Immanuel Kant and Woodrow Wilson, assuming that progress in international affairs is possible. The liberal tradition assumes that democratic governments are inherently less warlike than authoritarian ones, and that democracy encourages trade, which in turn encourages peace (Dueck, 2006, p.22). The US was founded on the idea of a "new world order", an idea involving peace, progress, republican forms of government, trade, freedom and the rule of law, hoping to ripple and spread these ideals worldwide. The promotion of a more liberal international order has always been a central goal of American grand strategy, as such an international system is seen as serving American interests; it will make the US more influential, prosperous, and secure (Dueck, 2006, p.23).

Two schools of thought have questioned how to promote such a system: "crusaders" and "exemplarists". They seem opposite, as "crusaders" believe the US should root out authoritarianism overseas and remake the international system in order to preserve the American experiment at home, and "exemplarists" believing the US should remain somewhat detached from the messiness of international politics and follow an example of non-intervention. However, they are similar in that they desire to see democratic values and systems of government spread overseas, and they work from liberal assumptions. Dueck (2006) therefore believes "realpolitik" or European style "realism" as a self-conscious school of thought never have had vast domestic audience among America's opinion elites (Dueck, 2006, p.23). A problem facing this argument is that it cannot explain variations in the degree of America's multilateral strategic commitments, as it is generally taken as a constant. However, it can still act as a filter or permissive cause, making some strategies more likely than others. Dueck (2006, p.26) specifies this by saying that American leaders and foreign policy officials will tend to gravitate toward strategic options that are consistent with classical liberal assumptions, even despite international pressures to the contrary.

### 3.2.2 Limited liability in Strategic Culture

The second factor considered part of American strategic culture is *limited liability*, defined as "culturally shaped preference for avoiding costs and commitment in grand strategy, to an extent that is actually inconsistent with stated and established international goals" (Dueck, 2006, p.26). A strategy of non-intervention and non-entanglement can be rational under a wide variety of circumstances, as every state seeks to reduce the costs and risks of foreign policy. However, when a state lays out certain ambitious goals and then fails to provide the resources to meet those goals, a strong preference for limited liability in strategic affairs provides part of the answer as to why that is. This tradition has historically influenced American grand strategy in two ways. First, the US has often played less of a role in world affairs than one would expect given America's considerable material power. Second, assumptions of limited liability have encouraged the pursuit of foreign policy aims by disproportionately limited means. The US has paid a heavy price for sustaining its leading role in the world. However, Dueck (2005, p.28) writes that the country has generally been unwilling to pay the costs that would be fully equivalent with the goals and policies articulated by US foreign policy officials.

The US has tended to prefer limited liability in strategic affairs, relative to the goals laid out by US officials and relative to America's actual material power. In this sense, Dueck (2006, p.28) says that a preference for limited liability is an important part of American strategic culture. A combination of historical, geopolitical, institutional and cultural factors is a part of the explanation to why the tradition of limited liability has been so strong within the US. Historically, a precedent was set early on in favour of an overarching strategy of non-entanglement where the long-term outcome was path dependent. Geopolitically, the separation by two oceans between the US and any other major military power has encouraged a somewhat isolated strategic mentality. Domestic political institutions have reinforced the tendency toward limited liability in strategic affairs through the political system, which was created to resist dramatic policy changes, (Dueck, 2006, p.29) (cf. chapter 3.1). Lastly, the assumptions of limited liability are implicit within the classical liberal tradition that informs American strategic culture. Liberal strategic culture can encourage a militant approach to strategic affairs; however, it is the fundamental assumption that military competition is not "normal" (Dueck, 2006, p.30). The liberal historic tendency is towards a peaceful, democratic international system, believing a more peaceful international order can, and will, evolve through economic exchange, interdependence and social interaction, without the need for military interventions.

### 3.3 Strategic Subcultures

The impact of the limited liability assumption can be measured by looking at the extent to which the US has historically converted, or failed to convert, its material potential into usable forms of for example economic leverage over other nations. The relevant metrics include levels and forms of foreign economic aid and potentially costly commitments to IGOs. A willingness to deploy these various forms of usable power can be disaggregated, and is often so, from one Administration to the next (Dueck, 2006, p.30). Various US policy officials may place greater or lesser emphasis upon assumptions of limited liability, depending on their own personal preference. The same goes for liberal assumptions of international progress. The degree of liberal commitment can be defined by the pursuit of classical liberal goals: democratic government, multilateral institutions, national self-determination overseas. The degree of commitment to limited liability can be defined by how easily decision-makers allow other considerations to trump the maintenance of levels of foreign aid and alliance or international commitments (Dueck, 2006, p.31). The difference in these levels allow for four basic American strategic subcultures: internationalist, nationalist, progressive and realist.

Table 2. Strategic Subcultures

|                                | <b>High: Liberal</b> | <b>Low: Liberal</b> |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| <b>High: Limited liability</b> | Progressive          | Nationalist         |
| <b>Low: Limited liability</b>  | Internationalist     | Realist             |

*Internationalists* are strongly liberal but only weakly committed to limited liability in strategic affairs. They believe in the promotion of a liberalised world order made of open markets, strong international institutions, and democratic governments. They are willing to promote liberal ideas through force if necessary, and they are more willing than many of their fellow citizens to spend money on foreign aid (Dueck, 2006, p.31).

*Nationalists* are weakly liberal but strongly committed to limited liability in strategic affairs. They are dubious about the possibilities of an easy or rapid liberalisation of the international system and consider a keen attention to American interests. They are reluctant to surrender any part of US sovereignty to IGOs, or to make diplomatic concessions to potential adversaries. They are sceptical of new commitments overseas and to foreign aid. On the other hand, they can be most uncompromising of all foreign policy schools once they believe the US has been insulted or attacked (Dueck, 2006, p.32).

*Progressives* are strongly committed to both liberalism and limited liability in strategic affairs. Like nationalists, they have an ancient lineage in US diplomatic history. They are also dedicated to the promotion of a more liberal international order but would pursue that goal through peaceful measures rather than through US military intervention overseas. Progressives have traditionally been wary of formal international entanglements; however recently have become much more enamoured of multilateral institution building. They remain sceptical about the need for and uses of military power and are reluctant to associate with illiberal or undemocratic regimes. (Dueck, 2006, p.32)

*Realists* are weakly committed to both liberalism and limited liability. They are, like nationalists, somewhat sceptical about the possibilities for democracy-promotion overseas and view the pursuit of America's economic and strategic interests as entirely legitimate. Unlike nationalists but like internationalists, however, they are not fixated on the preservation of limited liability in strategic affairs. They are willing to carefully use military, political and economic instruments, such as diplomacy, foreign aid and armed force, to meet states' strategic goals. This willingness flows from a commitment to promote the national interest in a balanced manner. Foreign policy "realists" within the US typically share a certain measurement to broad liberal goals in world politics, which make them *American* realists, rather than advocates of *realpolitik* (Dueck, 2006, p.34).



### 3.4 Where do the Administrations fit?

Based on the above typology of strategic culture, where do the Administrations of President Obama and President Trump fit? This part of the thesis will make a brief introduction of the Presidents building on previous research to categorise their strategic subcultures. In addition, a further explanation of their strategic subculture will be given.

#### 3.4.1 Obama - Internationalist

Gaman-Golutvina (2019) write that the neo-conservatism of President Bush Jr. was replaced by President Obamas liberal internationalist approach. McCormick (2011) argue that Obamas foreign policy approach that emerged during his presidency was one that appeared closely with the liberal internationalist approach, albeit with some realist exceptions.

Liberalism draws attention to the frequent and often long-standing occurrences of international cooperation. Further, structural hierarchy is the central organising principle of international politics in liberalist ideas. This implies an actor who can authoritatively enforce agreements between states rather than a system of anarchy where states must be able to help themselves because they cannot count on anybody else (Bellamy & Willaims, 2013 p.9-11). Norms play a significant role in liberal and neoliberal thoughts. A presence of a hegemonic state is argued to help enforce these norms of conduct, in addition to the maintaining of regimes and international peace and stability. For example, territorial integrity is upheld and enforced due to a matter of shared values or norms. These shared values and norms are the counterpoint to neorealist claims that anarchy, rather than hierarchy, is the central organising principle of international politics. Regimes are viewed as sets of international laws, rules, and organisations designed to promote coordination among nations with shared interests (Bellamy & Willaims, 2013 p.9-11).

The liberal internationalist approach is one that is grounded in a number of core values and beliefs about the motivations and aims of foreign policy behaviour for individual states and for the US in particular (McCormick, 2011). Key domestic values are viewed as important ways to create and maintain a stable and peaceful international order. These values are for example the promotion of democracies and individual freedoms. Secondly, liberal internationalism calls for promoting international cooperation and interdependence in several ways as a means to “knit” the states and people of today in a web of interdependence to address common problems and

reduce the risk of conflict (McCormick, 2011). Third, international law and international institutions are assumed to “have a modernizing and civilizing effect on states” (Ikenberry, 2009, p.72) and also fit within this liberal internationalist tradition for enhancing global cooperation and interdependence (McCormick, 2011).

Following this tradition is the basis that US foreign policy would flow directly from its domestic values as a nation, even as the US work to promote such values internationally (McCormick, 2011). Also, the US would promote free trade among nations as well as cooperative actions across borders by different levels of government and among numerous civil society groups. American foreign policy would also utilize regional and global organisations, since they too are essential in “knitting” states and the international community together. Lastly, this perspective makes the US not only to stay involved in global affairs, but also would assist in bringing about a stable, liberal order through its cooperative and constructive leadership efforts. These actions would not be done in any top-down or directive way, but instead be evoked through cooperative actions with states and actors (McCormick, 2011).

The liberal perspective explains the contribution to peacekeeping through progress and liberal institutionalism. Progress is possible in liberal thoughts because states will cooperate for mutual gain, even when the burdens and benefits are distributed unequally. Liberal institutionalists argue that:

multilateral cooperation through endeavours such as UN peace operations spreads the risks and costs, offers advantages of scale and efficiency, provides political legitimacy through the legitimating functions of international organisations, dilutes potential opposition, and allows states to monitor and control the behaviour of other participants (Bellamy & Williams, 2013, p.13).

Liberal thoughts argue that states are sometimes willing to forgo short-term advantages by contributing, due to the long-term advantages of such cooperation. Cooperation helps the maintenance of international order and the establishment of conditions needed for mutual prosperity through trade. When there is no direct pay-off from contributing to peace operations, states cooperate to foster peace because it maintains international peace and security.

In Chapter 2, I showed that the Congress-authorised rate were aligned with the UN assessment rate in the presidential period of Obama. Thus, in combination with the review presented above, I theorise President Obama can be placed in the internationalist subculture.

### 3.4.2 Trump - Nationalist

Researchers have questioned how to classify Trump, and some have marked *Trumpism* as an emerging ideology (Blyth, 2016). Mollan and Geesin (2019) argue that Trumpism builds on the characteristics of a successful right-wing populist movement, which they argue are present in Trumps campaign and presidency. Researchers have correlated nationalism to populism and what has been called “national populism” (Judis, 2018, Eichengreen, 2018, Eatwell and Goodwin, 2018).

Populism is defined as:

A thin-centered ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic camps, "the pure people" versus "the corrupt elite," and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p.6).

Defining populism as a "thin-centered ideology" is helpful to understanding the concept. An ideology is a “body of normative ideas about the nature of man and society as well as organisation and purposes of society”, or simply stated: it is a view of how the world is and should be (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p.6). "Thick-centered" ideologies, such as liberalism, socialism, nationalism, do not appear attached to or assimilated to other ideologies. Populism, however, almost always appear attached to other ideological elements. This means that populism can take very different shapes. In this light, populism must be understood as a kind of mental map through which individuals analyse and comprehend political reality. It is not a coherent ideological tradition, but a set of ideas that, in the real world, appears in combination with quite different, and sometimes contradictory, ideologies (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p.). It is seen as a way of competing for power and a way of *doing* politics.

In national populism ideology, the culture and interests of the nation is prioritised. It promises to give voice to the people who feel they have been neglected by the "corrupt elite". It is not anti-democratic; however, it is at odds with *liberal* democracy. Scholars like Canovan (1999)

argue it is a response to contradictions within liberal democracy, who on the one hand promises "redemptive" rule by the people, but which in practice is increasingly based on "pragmatic" and technocratic competing elites whose values are fundamentally different from many of those they govern (Canovan, 1999). In other words, a redemptive approach views democracy as delivering salvation through more direct forms of politics, identifying the people as the only source of legitimate authority, while the pragmatic vision views democracy as an elitist system of institutions and rules to cope peacefully with conflicts. Canovan (1999) therefore believes populism always will exist as long as we have liberal democracy.

National populism is often taken as to mean "anti-multilateralism", where one pulls out of international institutions and is a strategic as well as ideological rejection of international cooperation, however, this is not the case (Holm & Schou Tjalve, 2018). The nationalist populist rejects what it considers naïve or hypocritical liberal policy about a world free of great power, bi-lateral deal making. Moreover, it wants to reform, and in many de-liberalise, the western backed institutions such as the UN and strip them from their post-national elements. However, according to Holm & Schou Tjalve (2018), it also seeks to appropriate those elements which enhance transnational conservative cooperation and the concern with sovereignty shared by traditionalists and more authoritarian-leaning governments across the globe.

In chapter 2, I showed there are differences in the assessed rate set by the UN and the Congress-authorised rate of UNPKO contribution in the presidential period of Trump. Thus, in combination with the review presented above, I theorise President Trump can be placed in the nationalist subculture.

### 3.5 Theoretical Proposition

I now turn to present some theoretical propositions which the analysis is expected to bring forth when answering how the *strategic culture can explain the level of financial contribution to the UN Peacekeeping Budget during the presidential periods of Obama and Trump*.

To capture these findings, I will in the analysis categorise the strategic culture of the presidential period of Obama and the presidential period of Trump, with their key actors, through the nature of international society; their self-proclaimed national identity, their cooperation with IGOs, and the desirability and efficacy of UNPKO (their costs and benefits, and the legitimacy of contributions), based on the theoretical framework laid out above.

Because key actors in decision-making each have their own varied perspectives and thereby influence the policy direction, I focus on these key actors driving policy during each presidential period. As mentioned, the most influential voices on UN engagement, except from the President himself, are those of the Vice President, Secretary of State and the US Ambassador to the UN, each appointed by the President. If the president has majority in Congress, I expect Congress to comply with the President.

According to the findings of Bobrow and Boyer (1997), if the contribution brings private benefits, it is likely that a state contributes. According to Akinterinwa (1990) the US has funded the UN and its agencies when they find them to be a useful means of projecting their foreign policy objectives. However, whenever the usefulness of the UN and its agencies as foreign policy instruments cannot be guaranteed, they react by withholding funds. The question then becomes what the relative private benefits are for President Obama and President Trump, respectively, in other words; how strategic culture can capture these predispositions.

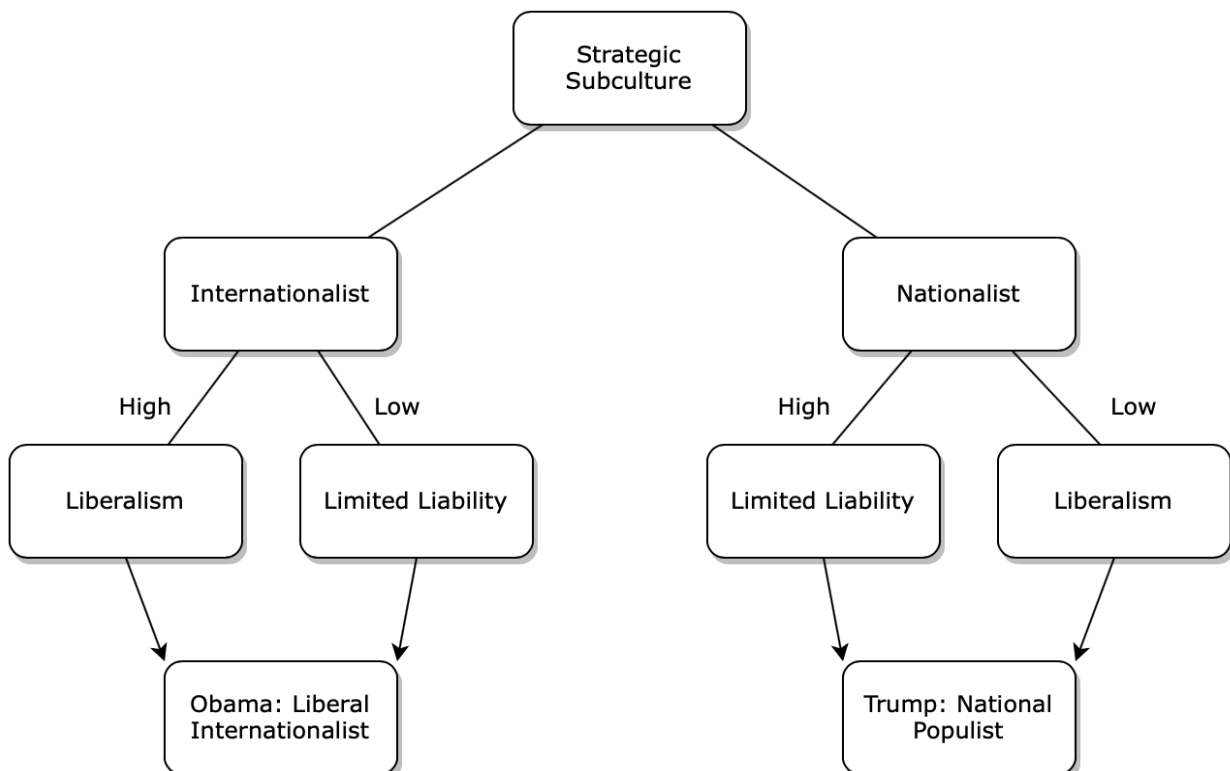
Firstly, based on the American strategic cultural aspect of liberalism, the presidential Administration of Obama will have a high degree of liberalism, and President Obama contributes at the assessed rate set by the UN because he believes in the promotion of a more liberal international order, as this also serves Americas interest into becoming more influential, prosperous and secure. From this also follows that he regards the liberalism-inspired goods to serve as a useful means of projecting his foreign policy agenda. Also, with a low level of limited liability, he will not avoid costs and commitment in grand strategy and is consistent with stated

and established international goals. From this it also follows that, as an internationalist, he will be more willing to spend money on UNPKO.

Second, based on the American strategic cultural aspect of limited liability, the presidential Administration of Trump will show a high degree of limited liability, which means he will show a preference for avoiding costs and commitment in grand strategy, which in turn is inconsistent with stated and established international goals. Also, with a low degree of liberalism, he does not believe that the promotion of a more liberalised international order is the driving factor for Americas influence, prosperousness and secureness. From this also follows that he regards the nationalist-inspired goods to serve as a useful means of projecting his foreign policy agenda. From this also follows that, as a nationalist, he is more attentive to Americas domestic interests, and is sceptical to spend money on UNPKO.

Lastly, because the President appoints the Vice President, the Secretary of State and the Ambassador to the USUN, these key actors will most likely work for the view of the President, and I therefore propose that these actors will be a driving factor in the policy direction of the presidents expressed views.

Table 3. Proposed strategic culture of President Obama and President Trump



## CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

I will in this chapter present my choice of research design and which methods I use when answering my research question: *How can strategic culture explain the level of financial contribution to the UN Peacekeeping Budget during the presidential periods of Obama and Trump?*

### 4.1 Research Design and Case Selection

When a research question seeks to explain something, often with a *how* question as in this thesis, the research approach is that of an intensive qualitative one, more precisely the use of an explanatory case study (Yin, 2018, p.4). The aim is therefore to indeed *explore* how the strategic cultures are evident in driving the predispositions of President Obama and President Trump to either the full contribution of their UNPKO assessment scale or withholding the funds which the UN have assessed the US must pay. There are therefore two cases in this research design. A case study can be explained as:

an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon [the case] in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident (Yin, 2018, p.15).

When explaining a phenomenon like I do in this thesis, I assume that the explanations will include contextual conditions. I have therefore in Chapter 2 presented an extensive background of UNPKO as it is important for the understanding of UNPKO and how the assessments are produced. In addition, I have presented an historical review of how the US has perceived their assessments and acted in the years prior, because this presents the context in which this analysis finds itself. In addition, in the next two chapters, 5 and 6, I will present my empirical data in a structured manner where I analyse their views and beliefs through categories derived from my theoretical framework; US strategic culture.

Further, Gerring (2007, p.19) explains a case-study as “a spatially delimited phenomenon observed at a single point in time or over some period of time”. My first case, the Obama Administration, has a timeframe from 2009 until 2016. This is two presidential terms. My second case, the Trump Administration, has a timeframe from 2017 until 2020. This is one

presidential term. There are two different phenomena in these cases; one where the Obama Administration payed their UNPKO assessment scale in full, and one where the Trump Administration withheld funds and did not pay their UNPKO assessment scale in full.

By definition, because my analysis includes two different cases, it is a multiple case study. My research question implies that, because there are two different strategic cultures in the two chosen cases, there must be two different answers. My goal is therefore not to answer what the differences or similarities between the two cases are. Because I study one country, there are necessarily plentiful similarities between the two consecutive presidential periods. However, the cases are different, in both the mechanisms and the outcome. However, I will still apply comparison to the analysis. I do this because it enables me to both analyse my data within the cases and across the cases, and thereby my results are highlighted when contrasted with each other.

## 4.2 Data Collection

This thesis is based on various forms of written sources, including a broad range of both primary and secondary literature. In chapter 2, I have used primary literature from the official CRS and the UN' own reports to find statistics on scale of assessment, authorized contributions and arrears from the US. In addition, I have used a mixture of primary and secondary literature for the historical background and the previous research. In chapter three, I have used primary literature for the factual information about key actors, and secondary literature for the theoretical framework. The secondary sources compromise mainly of scientific papers and media reports.

In chapters 5 and 6, I have used primary literature in the form of statements and speeches from the key actors. These documents are available online from official sites, as the UN page, the USUN, the Obama White House Archive and the White House page. To secure that the speeches are correctly transcribed, I have watched and listened to videos of the speeches whenever these were available. Key documents like the Budget Proposals are also available online, accessed from official government sites.



To guide and govern both the data collection and the analysis, I use a method of structured, focused comparison which entails that the researcher asks the same standardised questions for each case (George and Bennett, 2005, p.67). This method prescribes that only relevant aspects are examined for each case, as opposed to looking at them holistically. By doing this, the results from the empirical data in both cases will be as transferable to each other as possible. This also means that I have as far as possible sought to retrieve information from the two Administrations from similar platforms, be it the UNGA speeches, speeches at the UNSC or other public speeches in similar forums.

### 4.3 Methodology for Analysis

In order to answer my research question, I have in chapter 3.5 presented some theoretical propositions which the analysis is expected to bring forth. A part of this thesis purpose is therefore to search for the theoretically grounded explanations that can provide an understanding of how strategic culture explains the level of the UNPKO contributions. This requires a research design in the analysis that provides an opportunity for theoretical interpretation. Based on this, I have chosen a qualitative research design which enables me to interpret the predispositions in light of the context in which it is presented, and thus gain a deeper insight in the two Presidential Administrations (Bukve, 2016, p.130). Furthermore, the purpose of this thesis also requires a theoretically based method of analysis, which can structure the theory of the thesis. Therefore, the congruence analysis is used.

There are many names for congruence analysis, namely pattern matching, congruence method, conformity design (Bukve, 2016, p.135-137; Gerring, 2017; Blatter and Blume, 2008; Yin, 2014). Blatter and Blume (2008, p.325) describe the congruence analysis as an approach which focuses on drawing inferences from the (non-)congruence of concrete observations with predictions from theories to the relevance or relative strength of these theories for understanding the case under study. It can serve multiple purposes; to test theories or provide theory-informed analysis of a case without any ambitions for theory development (Bukve, 2016, p.135). I will in this thesis apply congruence analysis to serve the latter purpose, where I seek correspondence between the theory and the empirical data.

The congruence analysis is based on both deductive and inductive elements. The inductive element in congruence analysis is where the researcher reflect on which theories makes the most sense to use for the specific observation (Blatter and Blume, 2008). Firstly, by reading Bellamy and Williams' (2013) book where they look at strategic culture in order to analyse a state's predispositions to providing peacekeepers, I saw an opportunity to transfer their theoretical framework to this thesis. This required some alterations, as I am only looking at the US' strategic culture. I therefore needed an additional set of theories which captures the American creed. Secondly, I thereby employed Dueck's (2006) theories of US strategic culture which introduce the elements of liberalism and limited liability. These elements produce some American strategic subcultures, which I derived my theoretical propositions from. These propositions were presented in chapter 3.5.

The deductive element in the method is linked to my ex-ante predictions on which observations is expected on the basis of the theoretical framework (Blatter and Blume, 2008). Through congruence analysis, the researcher will be able to describe, interpret and understand a case from several angles in light of the theoretical framework. Because strategic culture is the sum of a policy elites shared beliefs, I have chosen to categorise the data through their beliefs about the nature of international society, a country's identity and role in the world, and the desirability and efficacy of UNPKO. This will enable me to look at the bigger picture of their predispositions on burden-sharing, instead of only looking at their views on financing UNPKO.

## 4.4 Validity and Reliability

External validity deals with whether the study's conclusions can be generalized to the population (Bukve, 2016, p.100). An objective for this study is therefore that the conclusions can be generalised to previous and incoming US' politicians, who can be categorised in the two strategic subcultures under study, and their predispositions to multilateral burden-sharing. The external validity is, however, a challenge for qualitative case studies where the number of units under study are too low to draw certain generalisable conclusions in the universe's population (Andersen, 2013, p15,139).

Internal validity deals with whether one have managed to draw the right conclusions about the causal connections in the data material (Bukve, 2016, p.99-100). It is often highlighted as the clearest strength of a case study because it enables the researcher to gain a detailed and comprehensive knowledge about the cases. Blatter and Blume (2008) points out that congruence analysis require that certain criteria are in place in order for the conclusions to be valid (Blatter and Blume, 2008). Firstly, the presence of a wide range of empirical expectations is required. My theory of US strategic culture includes four subcultures meant to capture the whole American creed. Through a review of the Presidents, I have derived at two theoretical expectations. However, throughout my analysis I will be mindful of that the other two subcultures can explain their beliefs as well, if the theorised subcultures cannot. Therefore, aspects which are not explained by the subculture can potentially be captured by another. If the observations do not complement each other, it might be a sign that the theory is not suitable for describing the connection, and thereby there is weak concept validity. Secondly, Blatter and Blume (2008) explains that in order to draw conclusions, one must weight all congruence and non-congruence equally. I will do this in part in chapter 7.1 where I compare the cases, and in part in chapter 7.2 and 7.3 where I discuss whether the theoretical expectations are confirmed or not.

Reliability is based on whether the study can be reliable and replicable for other researchers (Bukve, 2016, p.101). It is challenging to obtain in qualitative case studies due to the human factors that the researcher puts into the analysis. To ensure reliability in the thesis it is therefore an important prerequisite to explain the choices made and the procedure used to gather the data for the thesis. This increases the traceability and the opportunity for others to verify the choices made (Thagaard, 2013, p.203).

## 4.5 Scope and Limitations

Firstly, my analysis mainly relies on the outspoken views of those actors studied. These are cognitive opinions which from my theoretical standpoint will derive policy decisions. Researchers have long emphasised the importance of these cognitive variables when focusing on decision-making approaches in the study of foreign policy (March, 1978; Simon, 1972, 1985, p. 294; Lau & Levy, 1998, p. 30). Attention has centred on how decision-makers general

beliefs about international politics can affect their choices of policy. Cognitive consistency theory assumes a policymaker's beliefs about international politics influence his or her decision (George & Bennett, 2005). However, an individual's beliefs and behaviour are not always consistent with one another for various reasons.

George and Bennett (2005) therefore argue that while a decision-makers belief plays an essential role in information processing that precedes actual choice of action, variables other than these beliefs affect the choices made. For example, a policymaker's decisions will likely be influenced by the need to obtain sufficient support for a policy by a need for compromise, which may run in a direction that modifies or is contrary to his or her preferred option. Critical methodological issues arise when attempting to assess the role that such beliefs play in two different phases of the process of decision-making: the processing of information and analysis that precedes the decision taken, and the actual choice of policy. George and Bennett (2005) therefore argue one should regard an individual's beliefs through two propensities; diagnostic, which extent or restrict the scope and direction of information processing and shape the decision-makers diagnosis of a situation; and choice, which lead the decision-maker to favour certain types of action alternatives over others. This paper therefore recognises there are variables which will not be covered, as there are many aspects of policymaking. This thesis' scope is therefore limited to the first phase of process of decision making, namely the diagnostics.

Secondly, the US foreign policy elite pool is comprehensive and includes influential think tank fellows, corporate actors, the security community, mass media, lobbying groups and others. I therefore recognise that there are influences from many other bodies that drive the decision on how much to contribute financially. Thus, there are limits to the scope of what this thesis can and cannot explain. This thesis aims to research the actors through their strategic culture which determine the formation of attitudes toward financial contribution from two administrations, and in those cases, there will still be limits to the broad and full view of those decisions.

Thirdly, this analysis only assesses whether there is a correspondence between theory and the empirical data, which in turn makes it difficult to exclude competing theories and explanations, as well as unobserved variables (Andersen, 2013, p.149) I will therefore in chapter 8.1 provide some alternate explanations which this thesis does not answer, in order to be fully transparent.

## CHAPTER FIVE: THE PRESIDENTIAL PERIOD OF OBAMA

I now turn to present the first case which is the presidential Administration of Barack Obama. Due to my theoretical proposition that President Obama had a high degree of liberalism and a low degree of limited liability, he is placed in the internationalist-subculture of US strategic culture. This means that he contributed at the UNPKO assessed scale because he believed in the promotion of a more liberal international order, and that this also serves Americas interest into becoming more influential, prosperous and secure. From this also follows that he regarded liberalist-inspired goods to serve as a useful means of projecting his foreign policy agenda. Also, with a low level of limited liability, he would not avoid costs and commitment in grand strategy and were consistent with stated and established international goals. To assess whether these propositions are correct, I will categorise President Obama and key actors through three elements of strategic culture: Beliefs about the nature of international society; the US' identity and role in the world; the desirability and efficacy of UN peace operations (Generally and in terms of private costs and benefits, as well as the legitimacy of contribution to those operations). By doing this, I highlight the elements of the Obama Administration which will give me the foundation on how the strategic culture can explain the Obama Administration' contribution to the UNPKO Budget.

Obama rose to the presidency representing a role of crisis manager amidst the deep economic crisis of 2008 created by failures of the international institutions that the US had crafted to regulate the global economy (Best and Higley, 2014). Obama succeeded President George W. Bush (Jr.), whose foreign policy he was highly critical of. Obama saw the foreign policy of his predecessor as based on the utopianism of the unipolar world and quickly announced his intentions to substantially reduce the US military budget and his unwillingness to fight two wars simultaneously, in addition to intentions to pursue a peace-loving policy as opposed to Bushes militant course (Gaman-Golutvina, 2018). The conviction of the global community in Obamas peacekeeping prospective was so strong that it led to the Nobel Peace Prize, even in advance of his highly expected actions. The "Obama doctrine", a term frequently used to describe one or several principles of his US foreign policy, was constituted of two key ideas. First, resisting and denial of the widespread thesis of Americas inevitable decline, including a new emphasis on multilateral partnership. Second, shifting the emphasis in achieving foreign policy goals from military force to diplomacy (Gaman-Golutvina, 2018). Nye (2004; 2011)

captured a shift in Obamas methods of foreign policy implementation through smart power – which is a term he describes as the integration of both soft and hard power. Obama recognised the vulnerability of the unilateralism strategy, and the need for cooperative interaction with allies instead. During the presidency of George W. Bush, the main diplomatic agency was the Pentagon. However, under President Obama, the State Department regained its legally prescribed status as the key institution of foreign policy (Gaman-Golutvina, 2018).

Obamas second term in office, starting in 2013, shifted towards an offensive foreign policy, emphasised on maintaining the US' globally dominant position. Lynch (2015, p.50) writes that this shift towards pragmatism and less influence from ideological ideals has an historic background in American foreign politics, where presidents like Reagan, Clinton and Bush, Obamas immediate two-term predecessors, each developed pragmatic second-term foreign policies. A shift from a hopeful initial phase paved the way for a more realistic and pragmatic second term (Lynch, 2015, p.50). In the *State Departments Strategic Plan for 2014-2017*, the main goal was to promote democracy without the recognition of any alternatives, and a reaffirmation of American values (U.S. Department of State, 2014). This document contains guidelines for promotion of democracy that are the same which inspired Republicans. Obamas foreign policy therefore returned to “traditional” substance settings in his final term, which was the fundamental approach of the Bush era. However, one can argue that there is a difference in style. Thus, the neoconservatism of the Bush Administration was replaced by the liberal internationalist of Obama. Lynch (2015, p.41) writes that Obamas liberalism was not transformative, but instead a set of reactions which adapted itself to reality rather than reshaping it.

However, to distinguish between Bushes neo-conservatism and Obamas liberal internationalism is no easy job. For example, counterterrorism of both presidents show continuity from the one Administration to the next, for example where Obama killed more people with drone-strikes than Bush ever did (Klaidman, 2012). In addition, Sanger (2012, p.252) writes that Obama delivered “a modified version of Bush’s pre-emption doctrine”, where Obama, like Bush, used military force to send troops to Afghanistan and topple the autocracy in Libya. Also, his initial foreign policy team consisted of, among others, key George W. Bush Administration realists such as John Brennan as CIA director and David Petraeus as commander of US forces in Afghanistan (Lynch, 2015, p.48). On the other hand, however, Obama focused more on diplomacy than Bush, where the liberal assumption of peace through engagement

worked, in for example the case with China, where he saw not an “inevitable adversary, but rather a strategic partner in resolving critical global issues” (Bader, 2012, p.69). Therefore, the Obama-approach would find appeal among those who see the “democratic pace” theory as the way to global order.

## 5.1 Presentation of Key Actors

### 5.1.1 The Vice President

Vice President Joe Biden has a voting record of a traditional left-wing Democrat on social issues, however, has been a consistent advocate of armed intervention abroad in line with the liberal-crusader school of thought, however, Biden has altered his views along the way. Being a US Senator from Delaware from 1973 to 2009, he served on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for three decades (Erlach, 2020). He supported the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, however in hindsight have said he believed the invasion was to be a peace-building mission. In 2003 he supported the invasion of Iraq, but regretted it, and had a significant role when Obama withdrew 150,000 troops in 2011 (Rizzo, 2019). He was also against the intervention of Libya in 2011, and sceptical of committing troops to Syria.

Vice President Joe Biden has previously an instrumental force for UN Peacekeeping, by working on both sides of the party lines to come up with compromises, as he did in the 1990s working with Helms by introducing the Helm-Biden Agreement in order for the US to pay back its arrears to the UN. During an interview with the President of the Council on Foreign Relations, Richard N. Haas, at the end of 2016, Biden said “Ideologically, the president and I have no differences. It is all been tactical” (Biden, 2016). In the same interview, Biden was evident on his position as Vice President, saying that any power that exists in the vice presidency is “totally thoroughly reflective. It’s what the president decides it is”, and further emphasised the importance of the president to have somebody he can trust; “trust to give responsibility to that he doesn’t have to flyspeck” (Biden, 2016).

### 5.1.2 Secretary of State

Obamas first term Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, was more realist than Obama. Her combination of liberalism and realism led to the “three elements” of US power, where

diplomacy, development and defence each meant to reinforce the complementarity of liberalism and realism (Lynch, 2015, p.44). This meant that to maintain and ensure Americas security, which is the object of realist statecraft, the US had to practice better public diplomacy and fund overseas development appropriately, which are both liberal preferences (Lynch, 2015, p.44). One could argue however that Clinton nonetheless represent the liberal ascendancy, as she had the 16<sup>th</sup> most liberal voting record in the Senate in 2007 (Lynch, 2015, p.48). Obamas second term secretary of state, John Kerry, was the “most liberal” senator in 2003 and the fifth most liberal in 2012 (Lynch, 2015, p.48). There are arguments against using statistics like these to measure ideology (O’Hanlon, 2004; Drum, 2004), however, the appointment of two influential Democratic senators to the State Department suggests a liberal hegemony at the heart of Obamas foreign policy (Lynch, 2015, p.48).

### 5.1.3 Ambassador to the UN

In January of 2009, Susan Rice was appointed by President Obama as the new ambassador to the USUN. Howard (2010) places Rice in the far multilateral position, meaning that she views multilateral engagement with the UN as one of the core interests of the US. In terms of the strategic cultural subtypes, this implies that Rice is an internationalist and in line with the liberal-crusader school of thought. For example, through her publications she has advocated on behalf of humanitarian intervening and ending world poverty (Rice, 2006, p.76-82; Rice and Loomis, 2007 p.59-95.). After assuming office, however, her statement aligned more with the moderate multilateral position, given pressure from Congress, the Department of Defense and other members of President Obamas cabinet (Howard, 2010). After serving as Ambassador to the USUN, Rice was appointed national security adviser for President Obamas second term, in 2013 (Lindsay, 2013)

In Obamas second term, in 2013, Samantha Power became the new ambassador to the USUN. In 2002, Power wrote “A Problem from Hell” (2002) where she in a liberal-interventionist view argued that “mass killing” on the scale of Bosnia or Rwanda must be prevented by other nations, including the US, and that the stopping of executions was, in some cases, worth the cost in dollars, troops and stained alliances (Power, 2002). Power served in Obamas National Security Council during his first term, where she joined an influential group of advisers who pushed for the US-led bombing campaign in Libya. In her memoir, *The Education of an Idealist* (2019),



Power emphasises the importance of coalition-building, promotion of human rights and the value of even incremental attempts to improve complex global issues. She believes that Americas strength and its position as a global leader is formed through coalition-building, which she practiced by relentless diplomacy.

With this foundation for predispositions in mind, let us look closer at the outspoken views on the three categories from the influential people within the Administration.

## 5.2 National Identity and the US' Role

The first category is National Identity and the US' Role. I will in this chapter explore the outspoken views of the key actors on how they view the role of the US in the world, what worldview the Obama Administration enhances to other nations, and what elements of their national identity they emphasise and want to project worldwide.

At the annual US Global Leadership Coalition in 2009, Secretary Clinton spoke about how the US should lead in the world, saying that the US needs to be committed to using American leadership to build new architecture of global cooperation. However, that the fundamental idea of American leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century demands shared responsibility. “No nation can meet today’s challenges – or seize opportunities – alone”. Further, “Leadership in this era means stepping up to the plate and galvanizing others to do the same” (Clinton, 2009). She further stated that the Obama Administration are taking this approach, by pursuing broader and more effective diplomacy that reaches beyond government, “And we are committed to development that is delivered, as the president has said, through partnership, not patronage, that achieves meaningful, measurable, sustainable outcomes” (Clinton, 2009). During her term as Secretary of State, Clinton travelled to a total of 112 countries, which shows her belief in personal diplomacy.

During the State of the Union Address in 2010, President Obama spoke about Americas greatest source of strength, both at home and abroad, which he identified as their ideals:

We find unity in our incredible diversity, drawing on the promise enshrined in our Constitution: the notion that we're all created equal; that no matter who you are or what you look like, if you abide by the law you should be protected by it; if you adhere to our common values you should be treated no different than anyone else (Obama, 2010a).

At the UNGA Stakeout in 2010, Ambassador Rice commented the Human Rights Council elections, stating that in the short period the US has been in the Council, "there has indeed been some progress" (Rice, 2010). The Ambassador exemplified with among other things that Iran's bid for membership fell short and was withdrawn, and that the US played a leading role in getting the Council to contribute to a full investigation of the massacres and rapes in Guinea in 2009. Further, Ambassador Rice explained that the US joined the council in 2009 because they felt firmly that "the promotion and protection of human rights internationally is a core value of the United States, and a fundamental cornerstone of US foreign policy". Also, the US joined understanding that the Council has not lived up to its potential, and remains flawed, however that they find it more "preferable to work from within to shape and reform a body with the importance and potential of the Human Rights Council, rather than to stay on the side lines and reject it" (Rice, 2010)

During the UNGA's 68<sup>th</sup> Session in 2013, President Obama spoke about US' engagement in foreign affairs. The President stated that the US has a hard-earned humility when it comes to their ability to determine events inside other countries:

The danger for the world is that the United States, after a decade of war, rightly concerned about issues back home, aware of the hostility that our engagement in [Syria] has engendered throughout the Muslim world, might disengage, creating a vacuum of leadership that no other nation is ready to fill. I believe such disengagement would be a mistake. I believe America must remain engaged for our own security. But I also believe the world is better for it (Obama, 2013).

Further, he said that some might disagree, but he believes America is exceptional, in part because they have shown a willingness through sacrifice of "blood and treasure" to stand up not only for their own narrow self-interest, but for the interests of all (Obama, 2013).

At one of her last days as Secretary of State, Clinton spoke at the Council on Foreign Relations. The Secretary spoke of America's many responsibilities in the world, from human rights and

democracy, to energy and climate. She emphasised that America has to lead in the world because the US is an indispensable nation “We are the force for progress, prosperity and peace (...) Leadership is not a birth right. It has to be earned by each new generation” (Clinton, 2013). She further said that because the US is still the only country that has the “reach and resolve to rally disparate nations and peoples together” to solve problems on a global scale, “we cannot shrink that responsibility. Our ability to convene and connect is unparalleled, and so is our ability to act alone whenever necessary” (Clinton, 2013). Further, Clinton explained that calling the US an indispensable nation is not meant as a boast or empty slogan, rather it is a recognition of “our role and our responsibilities” and that is why the US must and will continue to lead in this century even as they lead in new ways.

And we know leadership has its costs. We know it comes with risks and can require great sacrifice (...) But leadership is also an honor, one that Chris Stevens and his colleagues in Benghazi embodies. And we must always strive to be worthy of that honor (Clinton, 2013)

During the UNGA’s 70<sup>th</sup> Session in 2015, on the background of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Russian action in Ukraine and sovereignty problems in the South China sea, President Obama urged a whole-of-government approach. He emphasised that the military is just one of many solutions for a nation to utilize and emphasised the importance of diplomacy. “Many people both inside and outside the United States say cooperation and diplomacy will not work, given the threats”, he started, continuing with:

I am mindful of the dangers that we face (...) I lead the strongest military that the world has ever known, and I will never hesitate to protect my country or our allies unilaterally and by force where necessary. But I stand before you today believing in my core that we, the nations of the world, cannot return to the old ways of conflict and coercion (Obama, 2015a).

He further told the delegates present, that the US does not want another Cold War, but it does want international norms and the will of the people respected. Speaking about the Russian actions in Ukraine, Obama said:

America has few economic interests in Ukraine. We recognise the deep and complex history between Russia and Ukraine, but we cannot stand by when the sovereignty and territorial

integrity of a nation is flagrantly violated. If that happens without consequence in Ukraine, it could happen to any nation gathered here today (Obama, 2015a).

In his exit memo to President Obama in 2017, Secretary of State, John Kerry, highlighted three problems which are global and generational in their demands and which require both short-term action and long-term strategies; problems posed by poor governance; climate change; and violent extremism. Kerry stated that, more than ever, this era requires strong institutions and deft foreign policy to advance their values and interest. He further stated that, under President Obamas leadership, the US have secured significant achievements that have made the US safer and improved the lives of millions of people around the world:

And we've done it all with just one penny on the dollar of the federal budget – an incredible bargain for the American people, but also an amount that seems increasingly insufficient to address the global challenges we face (Kerry, 2017).

Further, Secretary of State Kerry stated that when an emergency arises almost anywhere in the world, many countries think about responding, however, “only America is expected to” (Kerry, 2017). Kerry states that this expectation should be a source of pride to Americans, and a burden they should not just accept, but welcome as an opportunity. He further acknowledges that in time of great uncertainty in the world, it is not surprising that some Americans want to turn inwards and “search for ways to separate our own safety and prosperity from that of the international community” (Kerry, 2017). However, he states it is folly to think the US can build a more secure and prosperous future by “hiding from the world or by severing our connections to it. International challenges must be confronted with honesty, determination and confidence – not isolation” (Kerry, 2017)

### 5.3 The Nature of International Society

The second category is The Nature of International Society. I will in this chapter explore the outspoken views of the key actors on multilateral agreements, how IGOs should cooperate, what elements in the international order is viewed as a means of promoting their foreign policy goals.

During the UNGA's 64<sup>th</sup> Session in 2009, President Obama spoke of the responsibility and leadership which the 21<sup>st</sup> century demands: "In an area when our destiny is shared, power is no longer a zero-sum game" (Obama, 2009a). Further he proclaimed that no one nation can or should dominate another, and that no world order which elevates one nation or group of people over another will succeed. "The traditional divisions between nations of the south and the north make no sense in an interconnected world nor do alignments of nations rooted in the cleavages of a long-gone cold war" (Obama, 2009a).

In an interview with the President of Council on Foreign Relations, Richard N. Haas, in 2010, Secretary of State Clinton spoke about the importance that multilateral institutions have on global challenges. Bringing forth Middle East peace talks as an example; Clinton says that none of those challenges exists in isolation.

At one level they are bilateral negotiations involving two peoples and a relatively small strip of land. But step back and it becomes clear how important the regional dimensions and even the global dimensions of what started last week are, and what a significant role institutions like the Quartet, consisting of the United States and Russia and the European Union and the UN, as well as the Arab League, are playing (Clinton, 2010a)

Further, Secretary Clinton spoke about Americas bond to Europe, which she said are "rooted in our shared commitment to freedom, democracy and human dignity" (Clinton, 2010a). Further, Secretary Clinton explained that the US are working with their allies in Europe on nearly every global challenge, and that President Obama and herself have reached out to strengthen both their bilateral and their multilateral ties in Europe (Clinton, 2010a). "And there is no doubt that a stronger EU is good for America and good for the World", she said, and further turned to NATO: "NATO remains the world's most successful alliance" (Clinton, 2010a).

During the UNGA's 70<sup>th</sup> Session in 2015, President Obama put emphasis on that large nations, in particular, have a responsibility to take the risk of diplomacy, even though the outcomes often are unsatisfying and rarely are politically popular, however:

But I believe that leaders of large nations, in particular, have an obligation to take these risks, precisely because we are strong enough to protect our interests, if and when diplomacy fails (Obama, 2015a).

He continued with saying that there will be threats and challenges, but that “we will be stronger when we act together” (Obama, 2015a).

On a visit to Brussels in 2016, Secretary of State Kerry spoke about the Transatlantic partnership, saying the real source of strength in institutions such as the EU and NATO are only partly attributable to the resources they command: “The real source of their strength resides in the democratic ideals and the principles that they were built to defend – principles and values that attract people to them in the first place” (Kerry, 2016). Further, speaking about the sanctions on Russia after the actions in Ukraine, Kerry said:

They were not put in place gratuitously, they are in furtherance of the rule of law and long-established norms of international behaviour. They are designed solely to encourage a return to peace, stability, and the recognition of legitimate sovereignty (Kerry, 2016).

During his last speech at the UNGAs 76<sup>th</sup> Session in 2016, President Obama highlighted the importance of democracy, international cooperation and the need for UN to work together for the common goal of ending human suffering (Obama, 2016). He further criticised both Trump and radical Islam on their fundamentalism and racism.

We must reject any forms of fundamentalism or racism or a belief in ethnic superiority that makes our traditional identities irreconcilable with modernity. Instead, we need to embrace the tolerance that results from respect of all human beings (Obama, 2016)

In her last major speech as Ambassador to the USUN, Power addressed the Atlantic Council commenting on the Aleppo Offensive in December of 2016<sup>2</sup>, taking a hard line against Russia. Even though Power wanted to focus her speech to make the pragmatic case for strengthening the UN, she felt that the circumstances required to focus on a much “more immediate subject, a major threat facing our great nation: Russia” (Power, 2017a). Power said the Russian

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<sup>2</sup> The Aleppo Offensive (November - December 2016), code-named Operation Dawn of Victory by Government Forces, was a military offensive launched by the Syrian armed forces and allied groups against rebel-held districts in Aleppo.

Government under President Putin is “taking steps that are weakening the rules-based order that we have benefitted from for seven decades” (Power, 2017a). The ambassador explained that the international order is threatened by Russia’s actions:

The order enshrined in the UN Charter and other key international agreements in the aftermath of the Second World War was built on the understanding that all our nations would be more secure if we bound ourselves to a set of rules. These included the rule that the borders between sovereign states should be respected. That even in times of war, some weapons and tactics should never be used. That while forms of government might vary from one nation to another, certain human rights were inalienable and necessary to check state power. And that the nations that break these rules should be held accountable (Power, 2017a).

Power further acknowledged that there have been times when actions the US has taken “in the interest of defending our security and that of our allies” can be seen by other nations as offensive moves that threaten their security, however that the US needs to be alerted to this, which is why dialogue is important (Power, 2017a). Further, Ambassador Power said:

And some may argue – not unfairly – that our government has not always lived up to the rules we invoke. As President Obama made clear when he entered office, while the United States strives to lead by example, there are still times when we have fallen short. Yet, under President Obamas leadership, we have shown our commitment to investing in and abiding leadership, we have shown our commitment to investing in and abiding by the rules. Based on international order. The same cannot be said for the Russian Government today (Power, 2017a)

## 5.4 UN Peacekeeping

The third and last category is UN Peacekeeping. I will in this chapter explore the outspoken views of the key actors on the desirability and efficacy of UN peace operations, generally and in terms of private costs and benefits, as well as how they view the legitimacy of contribution to those operations.

During his presidential campaign in 2007, Obama made his enthusiasm for the UN explicit, by drawing a stark line between his own multilateral leanings and what he saw as the “go-it-alone”

tendencies of his predecessors. He promised to “rebuild alliances, partnerships, and institutions necessary to confront common threats and enhance common security” (Obama, 2007, p.11).

On January 26, 2009, shortly after taking upon her role as Ambassador to the USUN, Rice spoke to the then UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, saying:

President Obamas views are clear, that our security and well-being can best be advanced in cooperation and in partnership with other nations. There is no more important forum for that effective cooperation than the United Nations (Rice, 2009a).

Further, Rice linked UN engagement first of all to US security, expressing that the UN is “critically important” to the US’ national security, due to the fact that the organisation is the one place where the country can “marshal with the force of law at the commitment of other nations to do things that we need to protect our security” (Rice, 2009a).

During his first trip to the UNGA’s 64<sup>th</sup> Session in 2009, President Obama held a private meeting with the leaders of the biggest TCCs, claiming that "UN Peacekeeping can deliver important results by protecting civilians, helping to rebuild security, and advancing peace around the world". (Obama, 2009b). At the same time, however, he made it clear that his Administration’s approach to UNPKO would not differ much from previous Administrations. President Bush who preceded him contributed with diplomatic and financial support, as well as training, equipping, and capacity-building efforts. Obama further said that the US would be willing to “consider contributing civilian police, civilian personnel, and military staff officers” to the UN (Obama, 2009b).

The Obama Administration vigorously pursued a moderate multilateral agenda to enhance both US and common security interest at the White House and the Department of State, and often played a role of UN cheerleader (Howard, 2010). They made efforts to convince Congress and the Washington foreign policy establishment of the utility of UNPKO and its importance to the US national security (Smith, 2013, p.78). To exemplify, Ambassador Rice made the case that UNPKO advanced "US national security interest", by, among other things, helping to protect the borders of war-torn states, police their territory, halt the flow of illicit arms, drugs and trade, and deny sanctuary to transnational terrorist groups.



Furthermore, the Obama Administration managed to ensure that Congress fully funded American peacekeeping assessments to the UN, contributing with \$2 billion to the UNPKO budget in 2009, including the payment of \$721 million in arrears. Rice told a UN Security Council meeting on peacekeeping that “the United States is now in a position to clear all peacekeeping arrears accumulated from 2005 to 2008 and to meet our obligations in full for 2009 — currently estimated at approximately \$2.2 billion” (Rice, 2009b)

During the UNGA’s 65<sup>th</sup> Session in 2010, President Obama spoke of the role of the international society through their contributions to the UN, saying:

It’s time to reinvigorate UN Peacekeeping, so that missions have the resources necessary to succeed, and so atrocities like sexual violence are prevented and justice is enforced, because neither dignity nor democracy can thrive without basic security (Obama, 2010b).

Further he claimed it is time that the UN are more accountable, because the challenges of a new century demand new ways of serving common interests.

Secretary of State Clinton was generally centrist minded in foreign policy and did not express great ambitions for the UN during the first year (Howard, 2010). At the UNSC Summit on Peacekeeping during the UNGA’s 65<sup>th</sup> Session in 2010, Clinton praised the UN forces for their hard work:

Their presence has provided much-needed order, stability, and hope in so many places. And we should never forget the sacrifices and service of these soldiers, police officers, advisers and aid workers, who do the hard work and face the danger far from this hall that we are in today (Clinton, 2010b).

The Secretary of State further addressed concerns about the gap between the multifaceted mission requirements and the resources available to meet them, pointing out the lack of helicopters, medic units, police mentors or crisis response tools. Thus, ultimately, it is “the countries we are trying to help stabilize and the civilians we are trying to protect [that] pay the price of our inadequate financing, organizing, and executing of these missions” (Clinton, 2010b). Therefore, Clinton announced the US is expanding their efforts to help other countries train and supply formed police units that “have the skills and experience to fulfil these difficult

missions” (Clinton, 2010b). She further stated that the US is, as they have been from the very beginning, committed to improving UNPKO, not just because they think it’s the right thing to do and not just because the humanitarian imperative is so strong in the US’ own value system, “but because we actually think it’s smart and strategic as well” (Clinton, 2010b). Further, Secretary Clinton said:

These missions can help contain and resolve conflicts that otherwise would engulf nations and regions. They can help prevent fragile states from becoming failed states and sources of wider instability. And they can help struggling countries start on the road to becoming productive partners (Clinton, 2010b).

In 2014, Vice President Biden hosted the UN Summit on Peacekeeping Operations. The Vice President emphasised the nature of conflicts have evolved, and therefore the instruments that UNPKO needs evolves as well. He continued to say that, while “we ask them to do more (...) in even more difficult and more dangerous environments”, they thereby owe the peacekeepers more. He honoured the sacrifices peacekeepers have made but promised more than just words of support. “Together, our nations are here to offer resources, troops, police, and more for these missions” (Biden, 2014). Further, “The United States will do its part (...) we will also review US contributions to peacekeeping, as well, to assess gaps that the United States is uniquely positioned to fill” (Biden, 2014). Further, Biden said that this session is a chance not only to make commitments, but:

to think strategically together about future peacekeeping needs and related missions (...) when I say think strategically, we have to think ahead (...) working together I’m confident we can strengthen that system and meet the challenges ahead” (Biden, 2014).

During the UNGA’s 70<sup>th</sup> Session in 2015, President Obama informed the delegates about new measures the US was going to implement to strengthen UNPKO:

The United States will join with more than 50 countries to enlist new capabilities, infantry, intelligence, helicopters, hospitals and tens of thousands of troops, to strengthen United Nations Peacekeeping. These new capabilities can prevent mass killing and ensure that peace agreements are more than words on paper (Obama, 2015a).

He emphasised that these measures must be taken collectively: “Together, we must strengthen our collective capacity where order has broken down and to support those who seek a just and lasting peace” (Obama, 2015a).

During the UN week in 2015, President Obama picked UNPKO to be the theme in his yearly summit. Obama opened his remarks at the Peacekeeping Summit by making the case that UNPKO remain one of the world’s most important tools to address armed conflict.

Our collective ability to ‘maintain international peace and security’ has often depended on the willingness of courageous UN peacekeepers to put their lives on the line in war-torn corners of the world (Obama, 2015b).

However, the President said that he called the summit to shed light on the emerging unprecedented strains that Peacekeepers face, where “peacekeepers head into more difficult and deadlier conflicts” (Obama, 2015b):

Old challenges persist — too few nations bear a disproportionate burden of providing troops, which is unsustainable. Atop this, we’ve seen new challenges — more armed conflicts, more instability driven by terrorism and violent extremism, and more refugees. (Obama, 2015b).

To tackle these problems, the President said that the US intends to continue to do its part of being the largest financial contributor to the UNPKO. In addition, the President announced a new presidential guidance, the first in more than 20 years, to expand the US’ support for UNPKO, pledging additional resources. These resources included to work on doubling the number of US military officers serving in UNPKO, logistical support, undertaking engineering projects when they are uniquely positioned to help, and step up efforts to build the UNs capacity of for example identifying state-of-the-art technology (Obama, 2015b).

The exit-memo of Power, published right before the incoming Trump Administration in January of 2017, warned about the dangers of a US retreat from the UN. She explained that through re-engaging in the UN, the US has not compromised on their national interests, but rather advanced them; that they have not overlooked the dysfunctions of the UN system, but rather sought to tackle them; and that they have not muted their values, but rather defended them vigorously and credibly:

When the United States leads at the United Nations, we shape the rules and norms, and we can leverage United Nations capabilities in service of international security, making the United States safer and stronger, while sparing us financial and operational burdens that are unsustainable for the United States (Power, 2017b).

Further, she writes that:

Over the last eight years, we have re-engaged the United Nations, and we have led the world. President Obama restored the position of US Ambassador to the UN as a member of the Cabinet. We paid our bills and cleared hundreds of millions of dollars of UN arrears (Power, 2017b).

She also wrote that the US has deep interest in continuing to demand that the UN live up to the ideals expressed in the UN Charter of 1945, and that the US must continue to demand more budget discipline, greater efficiency, more effectiveness and far more emphasis on the tangible impact decisions and actions the UN have on real people. However, that it is clear that the US needs the UN more than ever, and that it would harm US interests, including their national security interests, to retreat from leading at the UN (Power, 2017b).

## CHAPTER SIX: THE PRESIDENTIAL PERIOD OF TRUMP

In this chapter, I present the second case which is the presidential period of Donald J. Trump. Due to my theoretical proposition that President Trump has a low degree of liberalism and a high degree of limited liability, he is placed in the nationalist-subculture of US strategic culture. This implies that he will have a preference for avoiding costs and commitment in grand strategy, which in turn is inconsistent with stated and established international goals. Also, with a low degree of liberalism, President Trump is argued not to believe that the promotion of a more liberalised international order is the driving factor for Americas influence, prosperousness and secureness. From this also follows that he regards the nationalist-inspired goods to serve as a useful means of projecting his foreign policy agenda. From this also follows that, as a nationalist, he is more attentive to Americas domestic interests.

To assess whether these propositions are correct, I employ the same three elements of strategic culture to President Trump and key actors in his Administration as was done to President Obamas' Administration in Chapter 5. To recapitulate, the three elements are: The US' identity and role in the world; beliefs about the nature of international society; and the desirability and efficacy of UNPKO (Generally and in terms of private costs and benefits, as well as legitimacy of contribution to those operations). By doing this, I highlight the elements of the Trump Administration which will give me the foundation on how the strategic culture can explain the Trump Administration's contribution to the UNPKO Budget.

President Trump came to the White House as an outsider looking to “drain the Washington swamp” and promised an “America first” foreign policy. A number of steps he took during his first year only, looked like a pronounced departure from previous political traditions. During his inauguration speech, Trump told what had gone wrong in America:

For many decades, we've enriched foreign industry at the expense of American industry (...) Subsidized the armies of other countries while allowing for the very sad depletion of our military (...) defended other nations borders while refusing to defend our own: and spent trillions of dollars overseas while Americas infrastructure has fallen into despair and decay” () (Trump, 2017)

Further, he quickly withdrew from a number of achievements of the Obama Administration; the 2015 Paris agreement, the nuclear deal with Iran, the negotiations for a Trans-Pacific Partnership<sup>3</sup>, the evisceration of the Affordable Care Act<sup>4</sup> as well as the passing of Tax Cuts and Job Acts of 2017. Furthermore, the President devoted much attention to immigration, declaring his intention to expel 11 million illegal immigrants, and to build a wall on the border to Mexico, to be paid for by the neighbouring country. Military expenditures also increased significantly during his first year in office. In 2016 the US military spending amounted to \$611 billion (Tian et al., 2017) and Congress approved Trumps \$700 billion request for the Pentagon budget (Blankenstein, 2018). President Trump also withdrew the US from the Human Rights Council.

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<sup>3</sup> Set to become the world's largest free trade deal, covering 40 percent of the global economy. Partnership with Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam, and the US

<sup>4</sup> Nicknamed “Obamacare”

As a president opposed to the establishment and wanting to return power to the people, Trump focused on the conservative attitudes and interests of the US white middle class. This meant the return of industrial facilities to the country, and a reduction of US contributions to IGOs followed suit (Gaman-Golutvina, 2018). President Trump's policy during his first year, in 2017, focused on the attention to domestic policy issues. At the beginning of his second year, in 2018, Trump started to pay more attention to foreign policy, which some may say became more and more unpredictable and clearly different from the policy of his predecessors, as the president withdrew the US from international treaties and sometimes offended his long-term Western European allies, all steps which breaks the traditional way of foreign policy-making (Gaman-Golutvina, 2018).

## 6.1 Presentation of Key Actors

### 6.1.1 The Vice President

In selecting running mates, candidates typically look for someone with strengths and experience that the person at the top of the ticket lacks, and Vice President Mike Pence were chosen to a large degree because he was seen as an effective and important ambassador to social and religious conservatives (Sanders, 2019). This is a group which is not the natural constituency of President Trump. Pence has described himself as "Christian, a conservative and a Republican, in that order" (Pence, 2016). This description is evident in his accomplishments as a politician. For example, as social attitude towards the LGBT+<sup>5</sup> community evolved rapidly in the 1990s, Pence was, and is still to this day, associated with vigorous opposition to the rapidly emerging and mainstreaming movement for gay and lesbian rights. Pence is also a big opposer to women's abortion rights<sup>6</sup>. Pence was elected to the Indiana House of Representatives in 2000 where he sat for his district for 10 years, and in 2012, Pence was elected Governor of Indiana<sup>7</sup>.

Although his most vocal issues are of domestic content, Pence has adhered to traditional Republican muscular policies in foreign affairs (Browne, 2016). These views are not

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<sup>5</sup> Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender plus other (LGBT+)

<sup>6</sup> Within a week as Vice President, Pence spoke at the annual event March for Life in Washington D.C, which is an anti-abortion rally, being the first sitting Vice President to do so.

<sup>7</sup> In 2015, Governor Pence signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), banning local government from meddling when businesses turn away customers for religious reasons. After pressure from boycotts and petitions on Indiana, concerning that this act would discriminate against especially the LGBT+ community, he would later sign a new version of the RFRA prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

particularly in Trump's interest. To exemplify, Pence backed the 2003 intervention of Iraq, and has a hard line with Russia (Browne, 2015). In December of 2015, the then Governor Pence was also critical to President-nominee Trump's plan on prevention of Muslim immigrants, tweeting: "Calls to ban Muslims from entering the U.S. are offensive and unconstitutional" (Pence, 2015). Where President Trump and Vice President views align are their advocacy for Israel. Pence has long been an advocate for Jerusalem to be recognised as Israel's capital instead of Tel Aviv<sup>8</sup> (Hepinstall and Mason, 2020). In July of 2016, it was announced that Donald J. Trump had elected him as his running mate. Former strategist for President Trump, Steve Bannon told *The New Yorker* that Pence is the connective tissue between the Trump Administration and the most conservative wing of the Republican establishment. "Trump got the populist nationalists" Bannon said, "but Pence is the base. Without Pence, you don't win" (Mayer, 2017).

### 6.1.2 Secretary of State

The appointment of Trump's first Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, caused stir amongst both Democrats and Republicans. As former CEO of ExxonMobil, one of the world's largest oil and gas companies, and without any government or diplomatic experience, Secretary Tillerson was, like Trump, a Washington outsider. The appointment of Secretary Tillerson underwent some scrutiny regarding possible conflicts of interests. Firstly, because he was suggested for the position by three US foreign policy heavyweights with a history of commercial interactions with Exxon; James Baker, Condoleezza Rice, and Robert Gates (Gaouette, 2016). Second, while working at Exxon, Tillerson made partnerships with a Russian oil and gas company with close ties to the Russian President, Putin. Tillerson was also rewarded Russia's highest honour for a non-citizen. As Bernie Sanders put it; Tillerson's status as a friend of Russia's authoritarian leader sends a very troubling message to the international community (Gaouette, 2016). Thirdly, it concerned some US politicians that the sanctions on Russia after the annexation of Crimea would make Tillerson opposed to such sanctions, as these could cost Exxon up to \$1 billion. While working for Exxon, Tillerson also oversaw partnerships with governments known to break human rights regulations, which don't align with one of the US' core pillars of foreign policy, namely protecting such rights (Gaouette, 2016).

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<sup>8</sup> The significance of Jerusalem in the Israel-Palestinian conflict is huge. More on this in 6.1.4

However, after only 13 months on the job where Tillerson had strayed from the White House line a few times, he was eventually fired over supporting Britain in their assessment that Russia was to blame for the poisoning of an ex-spy in Britain, even though President Trump's spokeswoman, Sarah Sanders, had avoided any blame of Russia in the attack (Borger, 2018). The statement Secretary Tillerson had made in support of an US ally would normally be expected from a US Secretary of State, however, Trump had said he found Tillerson too "traditional" - and that was the problem. Whatever the concerns about Secretary Tillerson's worldview was before his confirmation, it became evident that they did not align with President Trump's views after all.

The dismissal of Secretary Tillerson led to the announcement of Mike Pompeo in March of 2018. Secretary of State Pompeo was confirmed in April 2018, after coming from the position as director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). In contrast with Tillerson, who had become a restraint on President Trump's influence on his foreign policy goals, Pompeo was an enthusiastic defender of the President's policies. So much so, that senior CIA officials were worried it had an impact on his job as CIA director (Sanger, 2018). Pompeo served in Kansas House of Representatives from 2011 until 2017. Pompeo can be said to be a far-right Republican. To exemplify, while working in Congress, Pompeo was one of 25 out of 435 representatives who voted against the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015.

### 6.1.3 Ambassador to the UN

Nimrata "Nikki" Haley served in South Carolina House of Representatives from 2005 to 2011. She was elected Governor of South Carolina in 2011, being the first woman elected to that position in that state. She was also the youngest Governor in the country and the second Governor of Indian descent in the US at that time (Abramson, 2018). Haley gained national recognition when she removed the Confederate flags from the Capitol grounds in South Carolina in 2015 after the Charleston massacre (Scott, 2015). Further, Haley campaigned against Trump in South Carolina during the primaries, supporting Marco Rubio instead. At a rally in 2016, she said "I will not stop until we fight a man that refuses to disavow the KKK<sup>9</sup>" (Bryant, 2018).

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<sup>9</sup> Ku Klux Klan (KKK) is an American white supremacist hate group whose primary targets are African Americans, as well as Jews, immigrants, leftists, homosexuals, Muslims and Catholics.



The announcement that Trump picked Haley as the Ambassador to the USUN was therefore maybe surprising, as she can be viewed as an internationalist in opposed to Trumps anti-globalist views. Within the UN she was seen as a human buffer between the UN and the White House (Bryant, 2018). From the outset, Ambassador Haley formed a strong working relationship to the new UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, pushing through a reform agenda, where Ambassador Haley focused particularly on trimming the Peacekeeping Budget (Bryant, 2018). Ambassador Haley was a critic of Russia and Syria in the UN, and critical of what she saw as a global bias towards Israel. To exemplify, Ambassador Haley supported to shut down US funding for the UN's Palestinian refugee agency, and defended Trumps decision to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. By doing this, the US formally recognised a city whose status was being negotiated by Israelis and Palestinians, as the Jewish capital (Parvaz, 2018). Placing the US embassy for Israel in Jerusalem is therefore a huge nod to where the US places itself in the conflict. In October of 2018, Ambassador Haley announced she would leave the position at the end of the year. Both Ambassador Haley and President Trump stressed that this was a cordial separation (Bryant, 2018)

Haley had asked that the position at USUN was to be held at a Cabinet-level ranking. This gave her more authority at the UN and more sway over the president during Cabinet-level deliberations (Aleem, 2017). However, after Haley left her position in 2019, President Trump downgraded the position of Ambassador to the USUN from Cabinet-level ranking. Thereafter, President Trump picked the former US Ambassador to Canada, Kelly Craft, to take over as Ambassador to the USUN, and she was sworn in in September of 2019. In her written testimony before her confirmation, Craft argued for UN reform and increasing overall funding by encouraging contribution from other member states (Craft, 2019). Further, she highlighted the importance of US leadership in humanitarian assistance, drawing directly from the National Security Strategy of the Trump Administration (Craft, 2019; National Security Strategy, 2017, p.40)

## 6.2 National Identity and the US' Role

The first category is National Identity and the US' Role. To recapitulate, I will in this chapter explore the outspoken views of the key actors on how they view the role of the US in the world, what worldview the Trump Administration enhances to other nations, and what elements of their national identity they emphasise and want to project worldwide.

At President Trump's State of the Union address in 2017, the President spoke about what friend America will be to its allies:

Look no further than the heroes who wear our uniforms. Our foreign policy calls for direct, robust and meaningful engagement with the world. It is American leadership based on vital security interests that we share with our allies across the globe (Trump, 2017)

Speaking at the Munich Security Conference in 2017, Vice President Pence assured the NATO members that the US supports NATO and that they will be unwavering in their commitment to the transatlantic alliance. After dismissals of NATO and the EU during the Trump campaign, Pence's goals for these remarks was to reassure US allies in Europe of the new Administration, and their continued commitment to regional security (Liptak, 2017). He emphasised that the US would increase their military spending and that Trump would maintain deep ties to Europe. "As you keep faith with us, under President Trump we will always keep faith with you" (Pence, 2017a). He further told the assembly that the fates of the US and Europe are intertwined, "Your struggles are our struggles. Your success is our success. And ultimately, we walk into the future together" (Pence, 2017a).

During the UNGAs 74<sup>th</sup> Session in 2019, Trump highly praised his country, saying "I have the immense privilege of addressing you today as the elected leader of a nation that prizes liberty, independence, and self-government above all" (Trump, 2019). He continued to announce that since his election, the US had spent more than two and a half trillion dollars to completely rebuild their military, making the US the world's most powerful nation. Further, Americans know that their nation must be strong in wealth, might and spirit in a world where others seek conquest and domination. "That is why the United States vigorously defends the traditions and customs that have made us who we are" (Trump, 2019). The President further stated:

If you want freedom, take pride in your country. If you want democracy, hold on to your sovereignty. And if you want peace, love your nation. Wise leaders always put the good of their own people and their own country first (Trump, 2019).

He ended his speech by stating that the future does not belong to globalists, but rather to patriots.

In her speech following the Presentation of Credentials to the UN in 2019, the new Ambassador to the USUN, Ambassador Craft said that she comes to the UN not only as the Presidents emissary, but “also as the voice of Americas unwavering commitment to democracy, freedom, human rights, and whenever possible, the peaceful resolution of conflicts” (Craft, 2019). Further, the Ambassador said that in a world marked by humanitarian crises and geopolitical challenges, a strong American leadership is crucial; “and I intend to provide it” (Craft, 2019).

I will defend Americas values and interests. I will stand by our friends and allies. I will advocate for the poor and the weak. And I will never fail to work with those who genuinely wish to advance the cause of human dignity (Craft, 2019).

In a speech at the Ronald Reagan Institute in November of 2020, Secretary of State Pompeo talked about the promise of Americas freedom, saying that President Trump believes in it, and that he does too. The Secretary said further that their nation is about the “reality that all men and women are made in the image of God, with certain inherent, God-given rights just by virtue of our humanity. These truths in the Declaration really are indeed self-evident” (Pompeo, 2020). Further, he praised the nations foundation, which he describes is built on:

the premise that government’s role is to protect those very rights, to secure them. And it’s what makes us so special. It’s what makes us so good, and it’s what I get to see every day as I work with my team or travel around the world. It’s what always made our life so attractive to the strivers and those who are seeking a better world” (Pompeo, 2020).

Further, Secretary Pompeo said that, though America is “flawed like every other country”, if their policies aren’t grounded in a love of America, in the knowledge that they are an exceptional nation; their founding principles are unique and their future promise is also special, then “if we get that wrong, our nation will suffer” (Pompeo, 2020). However, “if we get it right, our friends and allies will see America leading, and we will all emerge stronger, freer and more confident” (Pompeo, 2020).

## 6.3 The Nature of International Society

The second category is The Nature of International Society. To recapitulate, I will in this chapter explore the outspoken views of the key actors on multilateral agreements, how IGOs should cooperate, and what elements in the international order is viewed as a means of promoting their foreign policy goals.

In his Joint Address to Congress in 2017, President Trump spoke about their alliances and support of IGOs. However, there was a condition to this support: “Our partners must meet their financial obligations” (Trump, 2017). Further, he said:

We expect our partners – whether in NATO, the Middle East, or in the Pacific – to take a direct and meaningful role in both strategic and military operations and pay their fair share of the cost (Trump, 2017).

Further, President Trump said that the US will respect the historic institutions, however that they also will “respect the foreign rights of all nations, and they have to respect our rights as a nation also” (Trump, 2017). The President emphasized that free nations are the best vehicle for expressing the will of the people, and that America will respect the right of all nations to chart their own path. He further stated that his job is not to represent the world, rather “My job is to represent the United States of America” (Trump, 2017).

Speaking of humanitarian disasters, Trump said that “We have seen the war and the destruction that have ravaged and raged throughout the world” (Trump, 2017). He further stated that the only solution for these humanitarian disasters “is to create the conditions where displaced persons can safely return home and begin the long, long process of rebuilding” (Trump, 2017). The President further stated that the US want peace, wherever peace can be found, and that America is “willing to find new friends, and to forge new partnerships, where shared interests align. We want harmony and stability, not war and conflict” (Trump, 2017)

Speaking at the Munich Security Conference in 2017, Vice President Pence called on member nations to scale up their military spending in accordance to NATO's goal of a 2 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) spending on defence, saying that Trump expects “our allies to keep

their world, fulfil this commitment, and for most that means the time has come to do more” (Pence, 2017a).

When the US decided to move their embassy to Jerusalem in 2017, members of the UN was furious, and held two votes to show their displeasure. In a UNSC meeting, all 14 UNSC member states, except the US, voted in favour of a draft on Jerusalem, put forth by Egypt, asking member states to refrain from moving their embassies to Jerusalem and at the same time called for preserving the demographics of the city. However, the US used their veto for the first time in 6 years to oppose the draft resolution. After the vote in UNSC, Arab and Muslim countries requested a UNGA emergency special session to vote on the draft resolution. Trump said that the US would cut off aid to countries who voted in favour of the draft resolution, saying:

They take hundreds of millions of dollars and even billions of dollars, and then they vote against us. Well, were watching those votes. Let them vote against us. We’ll save a lot. We don’t care (Trump; Rampton and Nichols, 2017).

Ambassador Haley also sent out a letter to dozens of UN states, warning that Trump asked her to report back on those countries who voted against them (Rampton and Nichols, 2017). The vote ended in 128 in favour to 9 against the resolution (UN, 2017). After the vote at the UNGA special session, Ambassador Haley said:

The United States will remember this day in which it was singled out for attack in the General Assembly for the very act of exercising our right as a sovereign nation. We will remember it when we are called upon to once again make the world’s largest contribution to the United Nations. And we will remember it when so many countries came calling on us, as they often do, to pay even more and to use our influence for their benefit (Haley, 2017).

Ambassador Haley also said that this vote will make a difference on how Americans now look at the UN, and further said that “we will look at countries who disrespects us in the UN (...) this vote will be remembered” (Haley, 2017).

Speaking to NATO members at the Wilson Center in 2017, Secretary of State Tillerson emphasised the US’ commitment to their enduring relationship with Europe under President Trump. To sustain the shared security commitments that ensure stability in the region, Tillerson

said that “the Trump Administration views it as necessary for our allies to be strong, sovereign, prosperous, and committed to the defense of shared Western ideals” (Tillerson, 2017). Further, Secretary Tillerson said that the partnership the US and European nations have forged are “a critical basis for confronting the threats of today and tomorrow, both in Europe and outside of Europe” (Tillerson, 2017). Secretary Tillerson emphasised the importance of working together to face the many challenges and threats. Tillerson recognizes that the US are stronger when they are confronting these challenges while working together, therefore; “we will pursue even greater cooperation from and with the nations of Europe, our best partners. History has shown that when we are united, we succeed in the face of shared challenges” (Tillerson, 2017).

On the issue on the Iran Nuclear deal, Secretary Tillerson was an advocate for remaining in step with European allies in abiding by the Iran Nuclear programme. However, this view was not shared with USUN Ambassador Haley and the then-director of the CIA, Pompeo. When the time came for Trump to sign a waiver on sanctions for the US to stay within the agreement, President Trump signalled that he would not do it. He also expressed frustration that Secretary Tillerson had “persuaded him” to sign earlier waivers.

Referencing President Trump's speech at the UNGAs 72<sup>nd</sup> Session in 2017, Vice President Pence spoke at the UNSC one day later, saying “just as each of you, in his words, should always put your country first, we will always put America first” (Pence, 2017b). He further explained that “America first” does not mean “America alone”, referencing to what President Trump further had said: “we will forever be a great friend to the world”.

During UNGAs 73<sup>rd</sup> Session in 2018, President Trump spoke about the US withdrawing from the Human Rights Council, saying:

I spoke before this body last year and warned that the UN Human Rights Council had become a grave embarrassment to this institution, shielding egregious human rights abusers while bashing America and its many friends (Trump, 2018).

Because no action was taken, even though USUN Ambassador Haley, had “laid out a clear agenda for reform”, the US “took the only responsible course: We withdrew from the Human Rights Council, and we will not return until real reform is enacted” (Trump, 2018).

Trump further said that, for similar reasons as the withdrawal from the Human Rights Council, the US will no longer provide support in recognition to the International Criminal Court (ICC), and that the ICC, as far as America is concerned “has no jurisdiction, no legitimacy, and no authority”. He continued by stating that the ICC claims near-universal jurisdiction over the citizens of every country, violating all principles of justice, fairness, and due process:

We will never surrender Americas sovereignty to an unelected, unaccountable, global bureaucracy (...) America is governed by Americans. We reject the ideology of globalism, and we embrace the doctrine of patriotism (Trump, 2018).

At the German Marshall Fund in 2018, Secretary of State Pompeo held a speech on restoring the role of the nation-state in the liberal international order. He said that through multilateral organisations, the international society have promoted peace and cooperation among states. “And we have worker hard (...) to preserve Western ideals because, as President Trump made clear in his Warsaw address, each of those are worth preserving” (Pompeo, 2018). He further questions if the system as it is currently configured work as it exists today, in the world which exists today. He exemplifies with UNPKO which “drags on for decades no closer to peace”; anti-Israel bias which has been institutionalised; Cuba and Venezuela in the Human Rights Council; a political wakeup call in a divided EU through Brexit, and the Iran nuclear deal where Iran did not join the community of nations after signing, rather “spread its newfound riches to terrorists and to dictators” (Pompeo, 2018). Further, he explained that the US’ mission is to reassert their sovereignty, reform the liberal international order, “and we want our friends to help us and to exert their sovereignty as well. We aspire to make the international order serve our citizens, not to control them. America intends to lead, now and always” (Pompeo, 2018).

Under President Trump, we are not abandoning international leadership or our friends in the international system. Indeed, quite the contrary (...) International bodies must help facilitate cooperation that bolsters the security and values of the free world, or they must be reformed or eliminated. When treaties are broken, the violators must be confronted, and the treaties must be fixed or discarded. Words should mean something (Pompeo, 2018)

Thereby, Pompeo said that their administration is “lawfully exiting or renegotiating outdated or harmful treaties, trade agreements, and other international arrangement that do not serve our sovereign interests, or the interests of our allies” (Pompeo, 2018).

## 6.4 UN Peacekeeping

The third and last category is UN Peacekeeping. To recapitulate, I will in this chapter explore the outspoken views of the key actors the desirability and efficacy of UN peace operations, generally and in terms of private costs and benefits, as well as how they view the legitimacy of contribution to those operations.

During the UNGAs 72<sup>nd</sup> Session in 2017, Trump spoke about the cost burden of the UN Regular Budget, saying:

The United States is one out of 193 countries in the United Nations, and yet we pay 22 percent of the entire budget and more. In fact, we pay far more than anybody realizes. The United States bears an unfair cost burden, but to be fair, if it could actually accomplish all of its stated goals, especially the goal of peace, this investment would easily be well worth it (Trump, 2017).

Further, Trump said the American people hope that one day soon the UN can be much more accountable and effective in their advocacy for human dignity and freedom around the world, However, that “in the meantime, we believe that no nation should have to bear a disproportionate share of the burden, militarily or financially” (Trump, 2017).

After UNGAs 72<sup>nd</sup> Session in 2017, Vice President Pence spoke at the UNSC one day later, saying he was sent to the UNSC by the President to call for fundamental reforms of UNPKO and “our determination to see this institution do even more to keep the peace across the wider world” (Pence, 2017b). Vice President Pence further said that “President Trump and I firmly believe that the UN must act to make its peacekeeping operations more efficient, more effective, more accountable and more credible” (Pence, 2017b), while bringing up the United States principles for peacekeeping reform laid out by UN Ambassador Haley. He also explained that UNPKO must:

support a political solution; have the consent of the host country; its mandates must be realistic and achievable; every mission must have an exit strategy; and the United Nations peacekeeping missions must adjust to progress and failure (Pence, 2017b)



In the Budget Proposal for 2018, the US aimed to reduce or simply end direct funding for international organisations “whose missions do not substantially advance US foreign policy interests, are duplicative, or are not well-managed” (Executive Office of the President 2017), and further:

Reduces funding to the UN and affiliated agencies, including UN peacekeeping and other international organizations, by setting the expectation that these organizations rein in costs and that the funding burden be shared more fairly among members. The amount the US would contribute to the UN budget would be reduced and the US would not contribute more than 25 percent for UN peacekeeping costs (Executive Office of the President 2017).

At a UN Security Council meeting on UNPKO in 2018, Ambassador Haley said that no one doubts these missions can play an essential role in supporting peace and saving lives, “when given an appropriate mandate and then properly managed and equipped” (Haley, 2018). Therefore, UNPKO reform main a top priority for the US; they need to support political solution; they need host country cooperation; mandates must be realistic and achievable; missions need to have an exit strategy; and the UN needs to be willing to change mandates when things aren’t working (Haley, 2018). “The people the UN serves deserves to know that when blue helmets arrive, they are qualified, appropriately equipped, and ready to perform their duty” (Haley, 2018). To meet these requirements for UNPKO, Haley said that resources are important, and that the US has long been the biggest contributor to these operations, however, that peacekeeping is a shared responsibility; “With shared responsibility comes shared burdens and shared costs” (Haley, 2018). The Ambassador further addressed that no one nation should shoulder more than a quarter of the UNPKO budget, and that the US looks forward to a more equitable distribution of the budget among Member States (Haley, 2018).

At the Commemoration of International Day of UN Peacekeepers in 2018, Secretary Pompeo honoured the 3,700 peacekeepers who lost their lives in service over the past decades. Further, he said that the US is:

committed to a future with better, smarter peacekeeping operations that more effectively and efficiently address conflicts, support political solutions, and meet the needs of the people on the ground (Pompeo, 2018).

Further, Secretary Pompeo said that through the US' commitment, it includes "remaining the world's top financial contributor to UN peacekeeping, as well as the leading provider of training and equipment to troop- and police-contributing countries" (Pompeo, 2018).

During UNGA's 73<sup>rd</sup> Session in 2018, Trump again spoke about the burden-sharing of foreign aid. He said that around the world, responsible nations must defend against threats to sovereignty, "not just from global governance, but also from other, new forms of coercion and domination" (Trump, 2018). Further, Trump recognizes that the US is grateful for all the work the UN does around the world, in "helping people build better lives for themselves and their families" (Trump, 2018). He further said, however, that the US is the world's largest giver in the world of foreign aid, but few give back:

That is why we are taking a hard look at US foreign assistance. That will be headed up by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. We will examine what is working, what is not working, and whether the countries who receive our dollars and our protection also have our interests at heart (Trump, 2018).

President Trump further proclaimed that, moving forward, the US was only going to give foreign aid to those who respect them "and, frankly, are our friends. And we expect other countries to pay their fair share for the cost of their defense" (Trump, 2018). Further, the President said the US is committed to making the UN more effective and accountable:

I have said many times that the United Nations has unlimited potential. As part of our reform effort, I have told our negotiators that the United States will not pay more than 25 percent of the UN peacekeeping budget. This will encourage other countries to step up, get involved, and also share in this very large burden (Trump, 2018).

Lastly, the President explained that the US is working to shift more of their funding from assessed contribution to voluntary contribution, so that they can target American resources to the programs with the best record of success. "Only when each of us does our part and contributes our share can we realize the UNs highest aspirations. We must pursue peace without fear, hope without despair, and security without apology" (Trump, 2018).

For the FY2019 Budget Request, the Trump Administration requested a 13% reduction from the enacted FY2018 funding for UNPKO. This request was based on the Administration's commitment to see reduced costs by "re-evaluating the mandates, design, and implementation" of missions (U.S Department of State, 2018, p.58). In addition, the financial burden must be shared more fairly with other UN members (U.S Department of State, 2018, p.54). Moreover, the Trump Administration expressed general support for the overall mission of the UN, but President Trump criticised the organisations for its lack of effectiveness (Blanchfield, 2018).

The most recent development in USUN's work on UNPKO, in August of 2020, is their effort to renew the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) mandate, backing Israel's demand for major changes. UNIFIL was created to oversee the withdrawal of Israeli troops after the invasion in 1978. Ambassador Craft told the Associated Press that the US long has "reiterated publicly and privately that the status quo in Lebanon is unacceptable" (Lederer, 2020), and further that now is the time to "empower UNIFIL, end the long complacency, and enable the mission to fully achieve what it was set out to accomplish" (Lederer, 2020). The UN Secretary-General Guterres however recommended a 12-month renewal of the existing mandate, and Germany's UN Ambassador Sautter told the council that "recent tensions and the danger of escalation only underline the importance of UNIFIL presence on the ground", based on the new political reality on ground since the explosion at Beirut's ports the week prior. However, Israel has accused Iranian-backed Hezbollah militants of impeding the peacekeepers from carrying out their mandate (Lederer, 2020). Craft has said that the UNSC must "either pursue serious change to empower UNIFIL or realign its staffing and resources with tasks it can actually accomplish" (Lederer, 2020). After tough negotiations, the UNSC approved the resolution to renew the mandate, making minor changes (Azari, 2020). The UNSC decided to reduce the maximum number of authorized troops from 15,000 to 13,000 (UN, 2020)

## CHAPTER SEVEN: COMPARING THE CASES AND DISCUSSION

Through three elements of strategic culture; national identity, nature of international society, and UN Peacekeeping, I have thus far captured the beliefs and habits from the Presidents and key actors in the executive branch. These key actors have instrumental influence on policy-decisions in foreign affairs, and on which direction these decisions lead the Presidents policy on multilateral burden-sharing. In this chapter I will go a bit further, by comparing the Presidential Administrations through said elements while simultaneously bringing in the theoretical assumptions on ideology which was laid out in chapter 3. By doing this, I will get a clearer impression on how the respective strategic cultures forms beliefs on policy-decisions on contribution to the UNPKO Budget. To recapitulate, a high degree of liberalism will show itself through the promotion of liberal ideals because it serves Americas interests abroad, it will make them more influential, prosperous and secure. A high degree of limited liability is culturally shaped preference for avoiding costs and commitment in grand strategy and can be measured by looking at the extent to which the US has failed to convert its material potential into levels and forms of foreign economic aid and potentially costly commitments to IGOs. My theoretical proposition is that Obamas contribution can be explained through a high degree of liberalism and a low degree of limited liability. My theoretical proposition is that Trumps contributions can be explained through a low degree of liberalism and a high degree of limited liability.

This chapter proceeds as follows: In chapter 7.1 I will systematically go through the elements of strategic culture and look at similarities and differences in the two Administrations through traits of their outspoken views presented in chapter 5 and 6. With this, I analyse the Administrations level of liberalism and limited liability. Next, the levels of liberalism and limited liability sets the foundation for their strategic subculture, and in chapter 7.2 and 7.3 I discuss how these subcultures can explain their financial contribution to the UN Peacekeeping Budget.

These are all steps to answer the research question: *How can strategic culture explain the level of financial contribution to the UN Peacekeeping Budget during the presidential periods of Obama and Trump?*

## 7.1 Comparison

The appointment of key actors who shares Obama's liberalist-internationalist worldviews is a clear indication on President Obama's intent. Both with the Vice President Biden with his history of UN cooperation through the Helms-Biden agreement, two senior and Democratic senators, and two USUN Ambassadors who both previously have been outspoken on their worldviews, shape his policy-direction towards a liberal-internationalist path. Their combined view of the US' role is also an indication towards why they contribute to the UN assessed UNPKO Budget.

The same goes for President Trump. One can only speculate what the real reasons behind the firing of Secretary Tillerson was. What is clear is that his endeavours did not align with President Trump's, and President Trump has a track record for getting rid of people in his Administrations who do not project his agenda (Tenpas, 2020). Further, as Ambassador Haley was said to be a buffer inside the UN, she would translate President Trumps wishes to the UN through speeches and demands about UNPKO reform. The firing of Secretary Tillerson and the appointment of Secretary Pompeo allowed President Trump to go through with his intentions on withdrawing from the Iran Nuclear agreement. This indicates that having an Administration who backs your decisions is key on his executive powers.

### 7.1.1 US' Role in the World

Firstly, by categorising the Administrations remarks through their view of *US' role in the world*, a trait that came up frequently in the Obama Administration is their belief that the US is a leader in the world, and that this leadership is important for progress. A trait that came up frequently in the Trump Administration about their role in the world are sovereignty and the promotion of national interests, which are promoted by President Trump as values in which the country prizes liberty, independence and self-government. The Obama Administration put emphasis on that their position in the world brings honour and pride. Other nations' expectations of American leadership are something that the Obama Administration sees as an opportunity to spread liberal ideals around the world and work for progress. It is evident that the world is better off from American leadership, because the US are willing to sacrifice both financially and militarily, not only for their own self-interests, but for the interests of everyone. These attitudes lead to the

idea of and belief in American exceptionalism, where cooperation and contribution are driven in part because it is their inherent legacy to do so.

Instead of seeing their role in the world through liberal ideals, the Trump Administration emphasises their exceptionalism through independence and patriotism. It is evident that love for their country and the protection of their freedom is an attitude which lays the foundation and direction for foreign policy-decisions. These values are seen as a way for the US to lead in the world, as Secretary Pompeo stated; if these values are the foundation of their policies, then friends and allies will see America leading. Trump references world-leadership to their military, and Ambassador Craft put emphasis on the cruciality of US leadership in the world to tackle crises and challenges. It is therefore not isolationism which drives their policies, and not anti-multilateralism, but a belief that in order for multilateral cooperation to succeed, every nation must put their own interests first. This comparison shows the different Administrations view on American exceptionalism, where on the one hand the Obama Administration is outward-looking in their role as a leader, where shared ideals with other nations and their power and status in IGOs makes them exceptional. On the other hand, the Trump Administration is inward-looking, where their national ideals and values are what makes them exceptional on the world stage.

### 7.1.2 The Nature of International Society

Secondly, by categorising the Administrations through their views and beliefs about *the nature of international society*, a trait that came up frequently in the Obama Administration was the promotion of diplomacy. Both President Obama and Secretary Clinton emphasises the importance of diplomacy for tackling global challenges. The US' role in the world through leadership also intertwines with effective diplomacy with other nations, because national or regional challenges becomes global problems when international order is threatened. The solution is therefore diplomacy in the cases where this is possible, however the Obama Administration has not shown reluctance to use force where necessary. This smart power is an identifying mark on their administration.

Diplomacy is not a defining trait in the Trump Administrations remarks, however, they do speak of partnerships and alliances, where there are shared national interests, for the promotion of

peace. After a Presidential campaign where allies were left wondering what President Trump's foreign policy would look like, Vice President Pence reassured European allies with a promise of heightened military spending and the maintenance of deep ties with Europe. A focus on and a belief in multilateral cooperation is also a defining trait of the Obama Administration. The Obama Administration emphasised that the world is stronger when working together, and through cooperation and abiding by international norms and the international order, the world will be more safe, secure and prosperous. The Trump Administration's remarks on cooperation however focus on allies' financial support. On the one hand, President Trump himself has said they are open to forge partnerships, new and old, with anyone who shares their interests, and the importance of alliances are evident. On the other hand, President Trump's Administration conditions this support to fair burden-sharing between the allies. Where the Obama Administration in similarity with the Trump Administration may see an unfairness in the distribution of the burden-sharing, they nonetheless also see it as an opportunity to show their strength through leadership and for setting an example through American exceptionalism.

The Trump Administration, however, through their nationalist ideals, view it differently. With the example of the relocation of the US embassy to Jerusalem, the Trump Administration showed that their financial contributions are conditioned on support by their allies. By being fully devoted to sovereignty and self-determination, and with a disregard to what other member states might think of the relocation, the Trump Administration pushed through their agenda. After being called out on their behaviour, they showed how they perceive their exceptionalism in being the largest contributor to the UN in combination with the conditions on their support, by watching who voted against them and threatening to withhold future financial support to those who opposed them.

From Obama's commitment to multilateral cooperation also follows a high commitment to IGOs, where Obama's first term made the decision to focus more on diplomacy and their engagement in these IGOs, and throughout have praised its importance. Multilateral diplomacy in the Obama Administration therefore regained a central position. The Trump Administration also recognises the importance of IGOs, however, have a different view on how they should operate. A similarity in the two Presidential periods is the view that these institutions are a means of promoting peace, democracy and western ideals, however, the Trump Administration emphasised the promotion of every nation's sovereignty and independence in order for these values to be fulfilled. The Trump Administration are thereby also definitive in their evaluation

on which multilateral institutions and agreements they find as a good means of projecting their national interests abroad. This shows itself through their withdrawals from IGOs like the Human Rights Council and agreements like the Iran Nuclear Agreement. Whenever these institutions or agreements are viewed as ineffective or as too big of an encroachment on their sovereignty, they seek reform or simply for an exit. This is also evident in the example of the ICC, where the Trump Administration undermines and will not acknowledge their legitimacy, jurisdiction or authority, because the IGO is viewed as a global obtrusion on their national sovereignty and self-determination. Secretary Pompeo's remarks on the withdrawals highlight their reasoning for it, which is not about abandoning leadership, rather to reform the IGOs or agreements into something which their Administration can fully stand behind.

### 7.1.3 UN Peacekeeping

In the third and last category, I categorised the Administration's view on *UN Peacekeeping*, its desirability and efficacy, and the legitimacy of contributions. The Obama Administration describe UNPKO as an important mechanism to protect civilians, rebuild security and advancing peace around the world. The Trump Administration describe UNPKO as having an essential role for supporting peace and saving lives. Both Presidents want to make the UN more efficient and to better tackle the more difficult and deadlier conflicts they find themselves in. Both Presidents emphasise the need for more resources. The differences between the Obama Administration and the Trump Administration is evident in how the solution to these concerns can be met.

The Obama Administration view their leadership at the UN as a means of advancing their national interests, and through re-engagement at the UN they have "led the world". Being a committed member state, they also see the UN as a means of shaping rules and norms. Further, engagement in the UN is viewed as important for US' national security, because through cooperation in IGOs, and through the UN specifically they can advance their security and well-being directly. UNPKO are also seen as a means of projecting their values of democracy and peace, but also as a smart and strategic way of stopping atrocities and forming struggling countries into productive partners. The Obama Administration also made the case for Congress that UNPKO advanced national security interests in order for them to accept their Budget Proposal of full assessment. The Trump Administration on the other hand has a different view



in where they through the 2018 Budget Proposal imply that UNPKO does not advance US foreign policy interests. The reasoning for this is that UNPKO are not perceived as well-managed, and their mandates are seen as unrealistic and unachievable in some cases and in effect are inefficient.

Both Administrations raise the concern that UNPKO lacks the resources for effective operation. While pointing out the resources necessary to fulfil the UNPKO mandates, the Obama Administration promised to expand their contributions - not only with continuing to be the largest financial contributor, paying their UNPKO Budget assessment in full, and pay back their arrears, but also with new resources as for example helicopters and training. The Trump Administration pointed out the need for more effective operations, while calling for reform in UN, alter UNPKO mandates so that the mandates are adapted to realistic and achievable goals, and a fairer burden-sharing.

The lack of effectiveness in UN leads to the point of accountability of UN. Both Administrations wanted to hold UN more accountable because of the new challenges which the new century demanded, and thereby what UNPKO demands in new ways of serving common interests. The Trump administration have presented reform-proposals to the UN on how to make the UNPKO more accountable, credible and effective, while calling for a fairer burden-sharing. Both Administrations calls for more resources.

On burden-sharing, the Obama Administration emphasise that the strengthening of UNPKO must be taken collectively. The Trump Administration are evident that they feel they pay an unfair share. While President Trump say that the investment would be worth it if the UNPKO could accomplish their stated goal of peace, he also questions if the countries who receive their contributions have their interests at heart. In addition, when UN is viewed as lacking accountability and are ineffective, the Trump Administration believe no one nations should bear what they regard as a disproportionate share of the burden. And by viewing UN as ineffective, the Trump Administration seeks reform, and as President Trump said; to examine what is working and what is not working.

In similarity with the Obama Administration, The Trump Administration also commit to be the UNs largest contributor, both financially and as a leading provider of training and equipment. However, unlike the Obama Administration who, while calling on other member states to

collectively strengthen the UN and simultaneously took it upon themselves to contribute at the UN assessed rate, the Trump Administration solely called upon other member states to share the burden more fairly while simultaneously sought to reduce their financing. By reducing or simply ending funding for various IGOs whose missions “do not advance US foreign policy interests (...) or are not well-managed” in the 2018 Budget Proposal, UNPKO being one of them, the Administration sends a clear signal on how they perceive UNPKO. All while UNPKO is seen as an expense without profit, namely a mechanism which they pay for without achieving their stated goals in promoting peace, the Trump Administration views UNPKO as lacking efficacy.

## 7.2 An Internationalist Explanation for Contribution

My theoretical proposition for President Obama was that he would have a high degree of liberalism and a low degree of limited liability, and because of this, he would be in the internationalist subculture of US strategic culture. The levels of liberalism and limited liability have become evident through the beliefs and remarks presented in chapter 5 and through the comparison between the Obama Administration and the Trump Administration.

The Obama Administration shifted their foreign policy from what they saw as based on the utopianism of a unipolar world to refocusing on diplomacy and re-engagement in IGOs generally. With the appointments of key actors who share his view of liberalism over other forms of ideology, Obama managed to build a team who worked for the promotion of liberal ideals. With a majority in Congress during his first two years, Obama managed to fully pay the UNPKO assessments. When Congress put an arbitrary cap on assessments of 27,2 per cent, Obama still showed the UN his commitments by allowing for the credits to cover the gap.

When looking at UNPKO as impure public goods as Bobrow and Boyer (1997) does, and with that the argument that impure public goods brings private benefits for the contributor, the Obama Administrations private interests are being served through contributing to financing UNPKO. In addition, as studied by Akinterinwa (1990), the US funds the UN and its agencies generously when it finds them to be a good means of projecting its foreign policy objectives. The Obama Administrations interests, which are formed through a high degree of liberalism, includes American leadership and exceptionalism through being the largest contributor and also

from spreading liberal ideals, hoping to ripple these around the world. They have also been evident in that the UN is a platform where they can leverage their foreign policy objectives and also being a leader in shaping rules and norms from within.

The internationalist element includes the belief in the promotion of the liberal international order. The challenges in the world which threatens the liberal order are in part solved through effective diplomacy with other nations. The refocus on multilateral cooperation also enhances the liberal international order by working together for a more safe, prosperous and secure world. Obama also shows a low degree of limited liability in that his Administration was true to his outspoken beliefs. He called out UNPKO for its lack of resources, provided more himself. He praised UNPKO for its importance, and payed their UNPKO assessments in full.

### 7.3 A Nationalist Explanation for Withholdings

My theoretical proposition for President Trump was that he would have a low degree of liberalism and a high degree of limited liability, and because of this, he would be in the nationalist subculture of US strategic culture. The levels of liberalism and limited liability have become evident through the beliefs and remarks presented in chapter 6 and through the comparison between the two administrations.

Trump has throughout his presidency abided with his slogan of America first. This have been evident in the numerous of IGOs he has withdrawn from. Besides from the appointment and firing of Secretary Tillerson, the key actors in the Administration have projected his foreign policy agenda, albeit with some modifications and more diplomatic phrasing of their remarks. With a majority in Congress during his presidential term and with the reimposed cap at 25 per cent for the UNPKO Budget, Trump did not pay his UN assessments.

As the US is a part of the UN and in effect shall follow the Charter, Trump shows a high degree of limited liability by not paying his assessed dues; not to his own words and beliefs, but to the institutionalised order in which the US have had obligations since 1945. He breaks from the liberal agenda by emphasising the importance of patriotism over globalism and nationalism over internationalism.

Again, by looking at UNPKO as impure public goods as Bobrow and Boyer (1997) does, and with that the argument that impure public goods brings private benefits for the contributor, the private interests for the Trump Administration are not met by contributing. In addition, as studied by Akinterinwa (1990), the US funds the UN and its agencies generously when it finds them to be a good means of projecting its foreign policy objectives. However, if these objectives are not met, they react by withholding. The Trump Administrations interests are formed through nationalist ideals, where the sovereignty and independence of their country is highest priority. The threshold for financing UNPKO is therefore higher for the Trump Administration, in that they seek to finance where they know the money will lead to stated goals from the UNPKO.

Looking at Trumps remarks through nationalist populism ideology also help to explain his predispositions even closer. Trump rejects those IGOs which he considers to be post-national where their sovereignty and independence is encroached upon. Whatever multilateral agreement which is an obtrusion on their national sovereignty and self-determination is rejected as a bad investment. However, the UN is nevertheless appropriated through the Trump Administration, because leading on the world stage and containing their exceptional status is still an important value. Being the largest contributor and the most powerful member state enables them to have a seat at the table, and thus the Trump Administration can enhance transnational conservative cooperation and their concerns of sovereignty. Still, there are limits to their support.

## CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

In this thesis I have studied the US' financial contributions to the UN Peacekeeping Budget by analysing the strategic cultures of the Presidential Administration of Barack Obama, and the Presidential Administration of Donald J. Trump. The different strategic cultures are evident in their policy towards IGOs in general and to UNPKO in particular. In my search of how strategic culture can explain their contributions, I proposed that Obamas' contribution can be explained through the internationalist subculture. I proposed that Trumps' contribution can be explained through the nationalist subculture. Through the presentation of the cases and through the comparison, it became evident that these theoretical propositions reasonably can explain their contributions to the UNPKO Budget.

In an internationalist perspective of US' foreign policy, President Obama managed to turn from what he saw as weaknesses of the unipolar world of the Bush era. By committing to IGOs and cooperation with nations, and through the implementation of smart power, Obama and his Administration built America to be a country based on liberal and global values.

In a nationalist perspective of the US' foreign policy, President Trump have done many right moves by reversing what Trump-supporters evaluated as weaknesses of the Obama era. He has done as promised by putting America first, which is evident in his enduring questions about the legitimacy and efficacy of, and withdrawals from, established multilateral cooperation, agreements and institutions. A question which remains is what he actually has gained by such a move. The UNPKO assessment seem extraordinary at first sight, however, it is truly modest when compared to what the US has spent on unilateral military operations since 2001.

### 8.1 Alternate Explanations

This thesis is a contribution to the discussion on multilateral burden-sharing by big power politics. It is not meant to be all-encompassing or universal. However, a few questions remain after this conclusion. This analysis has only assessed whether there is a correspondence between the chosen theory of US strategic culture and the chosen empirical data. It has not looked at the bigger American political system. As previously mentioned, there exists numerous of actors;

corporate actors, the security community, mass media, lobbying groups and so on, which more than likely affect the policy direction. A study including these would provide for a more extensive analysis on this subject. In addition, this thesis has mainly focused on the executive branch of the US political system, however, the legislative branch approves the Budget Proposals, and therefore have detrimental impact on the funding to UNPKO. As I have elaborated, the Congress decides whether they impose the cap or not, and as I have found, there are ways of bypass the cap by allowing for credits, as the Obama Administration did. Even so, a study including the legislative branch would allow for a study where one could trace the strategic culture even more extensively by applying it to the legislative branch as well. This thesis has not looked at the public opinion on UN Peacekeeping. For future research, including this element will advance the findings, because public opinions are a big driving force for policy-decisions.

## 8.2 Looking Ahead

What will the future hold? As I was finishing this thesis, the exciting and nerve-wracking US Presidential election took place. After almost a week of suspense, the media announced that the new President is Joe Biden. President-elect Joe Biden has previously, as elaborated, been an instrumental force for UN Peacekeeping. While working on both sides of the party lines, worked with Helms by introducing the Helms-Biden Agreement in order for the US to pay back its arrears to the UN. As he also has worked closely with Obama, one can expect that he will turn back to a foreign policy similar to the Administration he himself was a part of. Just as Trump reversed what he saw as weaknesses of the Obama era, President-elect Biden will probably reverse what he sees as weaknesses of the Trump era. This probably includes the return to those IGOs which Trump have rejected, and a re-focus on diplomacy and multilateral cooperation. There is still a financial crisis at the UN. The election of Joe Biden does not fix this. One can only hope that Joe Biden will pay the arrears to UNPKO as he is sworn in, and that future payments will be made on time and in full. In the meantime, the financial strain will continue to impose restrictions on the UN's ability to fully assume its intended role in the international system, and the peacekeepers' ability to carry out the intended mandates in ongoing and crucial UNPKO's will be impacted.

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