

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

Terrorism is in general is a type of political violence, that is utilized to attain political objectives.<sup>1</sup> Terrorism origins can be tracked to the date of 1st Century time, particularly when the groups of people or in this case the non-state actors use violence to pursue political gains. Political in this sense is the set of activities related to ‘ideas’, ‘government’, and ‘public affairs’, and political violence is a violent method to achieve a political change or prevent a political change. Terrorism has prevailed for centuries, as a result of a resistance towards government in a violent movement, following the dynamics of ideas and political movements. Terrorism has evolved from its earliest tracked date, to now in recent time 21<sup>st</sup> Century where states and intergovernmental organizations are collaborating to establish effective policies in combatting terrorism. The overarching intentions of terrorists have ranged from the very massive to the very tiny. Some organizations have ambitious international aims, such as transforming all political systems around the world to their favored model.<sup>2</sup> In recent time, the absence of adequate prevention by police and intelligence services within the country allows the spread of conspiracy, in building the possibility of non-

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<sup>1</sup> Merrick M. Yamamoto, “What Is Terrorism?” *Terrorism Against Democracy: Based in Part on Stansfiel{Citation}d Turner’s University of Maryland Course, “Terrorism & Democracy.”* Center for International & Security Studies, U. Maryland, (2017): 9-10.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep05041.5>.

<sup>2</sup> Yamamoto, “What Is Terrorism?”, 9-10.

state actors or terrorism,<sup>3</sup> whereas these conspiracies are often associated with ethnic, religious ideas, or even countries.

A terrorist group, Al-Qaeda is one of the examples of a terrorist group with an international scale scope with their political aim to replace several governments with an Islamic Caliphate. Al-Qaeda, is also one of the examples of Islamic terrorism, a form of terrorism using religion, particularly Islam as the reasons for their political movement. Islamic terrorist groups' actions are not spontaneous acts of violence, but methodically and strategically planned activities aimed at establishing a Sharia-based Islamic State.<sup>4</sup> The biggest terrorism operation occurred in September 11, 2001 that was coordinated by Al-Qaeda (an Islamic Terrorist group) against United States of America. Almost 3,000 people were killed during the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which triggered U.S. plan to counter terrorism during the presidency of George W. Bush.<sup>5</sup> Right after the 9/11 incident, US consider terrorism as a direct threat towards the US Security, and declared GWOT (Global War on Terrorism) afterwards under President Bush in 2001.

In the post 9/11 incident, the US President Bush imposed a strong and hard stance towards Islamic terrorism groups, and especially in dealing with Middle East countries, proven by US hard stance in Afghanistan invasion in 2001 and Iraq

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<sup>3</sup>Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism." *Comparative Politics* 13, no. 4 (1981): 379-99. doi:10.2307/421717.

<sup>4</sup>Ibn Warraq, *The Islam in Islamic Terrorism : The Importance of Beliefs, Ideas, and Ideology*, (England : New English Review Press, 2017), 22.

<sup>5</sup>History.com Editors, "September 11 Attacks." *History.com*. A&E Television Networks, February 17, 2010. Last modified February 17, 2010. (Accessed September 16, 2021). <https://www.history.com/topics/21st-century/9-11-attacks>.

invasion in 2003. After finding out the leader of Al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden who was hiding in Afghanistan under the Taliban's regime, President Bush declared the new approach to his foreign policy, the 'Bush Doctrine' that entails three points: First, is the preventive actions, where the US government has the right to attack a hostile nation that could be enemy, or any terrorist group before they attack US, secondly the principle of unilateral action, which if needed US would act alone to defend itself domestically or internationally, and third, giving the importance of spreading the value of democracy and freedom around the world, where the value of free market or individual liberty are emphasized.<sup>6</sup> President Bush was very clear on his position of foreign policy, any direct security threat towards US, including Islamic Terrorist group the Al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq that was perceived as a threat towards the US security by stating, "Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated."<sup>7</sup>

Continued with Barack Obama, in contrast with President Bush foreign policy, Obama had a different approach in combating Islamic Terrorism. Similar to Bush, Obama also faced one of the biggest terrorist groups during his second administration, the rise of ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) in Syria and Iraq as one of the most dangerous terrorist groups that can potentially threaten not only the

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<sup>6</sup> II, Gary L. Gregg, Gary L. Gregg II Professor University of Louisville, Gary L. Gregg II, and Professor University of Louisville. "George W. Bush: Foreign Affairs." *Miller Center*. Last modified September 23, 2020. (Accessed September 16, 2021).

<https://millercenter.org/president/gwbush/foreign-affairs>.

<sup>7</sup> Gregg, "George W. Bush: Foreign Affairs."

US but the international community as well. Barack Obama played a very important role in shaping US foreign policy in responding to the rise of ISIS as the US plays a pivotal role in the Middle East Region. The rise of ISIS peaked in 2014, during Barack Obama's second term administration, as this organization turned into an insurgency with the aim to overthrow the existing government and then to replace the ideology by establishing a caliphate state. The organization even became more prominent after the Rand Corporation (American Global Think Tank Group) analyzed in 2014 that ISIS has become the richest jihadist group in the world, with the asset estimation worth of US \$2 billion. Barack Obama as the US President made a clear statement and stance during the UN conference that the American government will work together with its allies to demolish the Islamic State's "network of death". During his speech, he emphasized that ISIS threat is the most urgent on global challenge, and US will lead the global initiation to fight and combat the terrorism groups. In contrast with Bush, Obama's foreign policy approach included military campaign, supporting local allies, and diplomacy through international commitment and initiatives in counter-terrorism policies. In one of his speeches, Obama vowed that he would never make the US be involved in long wars that prove to be less effective, in contrast with Bush's hard stance foreign policy in dealing with Islamic Terrorist groups.

President Bush and Obama offered a different foreign policy approach in combating Islamic Terrorism, and the result of their foreign policies are also different, whether they had been successful in combating terrorist groups, or perhaps

the opposite. It is important to understand Bush's foreign policy to understand the course of Obama's Foreign Policy in combating Islamic Terrorism. President Bush and Obama offered a different approach, that resulted a different result. Therefore, this research believes the importance of exploring the US foreign policy and plan under Barack Obama Second Term Administration in combating Islamic Terrorism, the difference approach with President Bush, and how far is the impact given to the terrorist group.

## **1.2 Research Question**

Based on the conditions explained previously, this research suggest the following research questions:

1. What is Islamic Terrorism?
2. What was President George Bush's Foreign Policy towards Islamic Terrorism?
3. How did President Barack Obama's Foreign Policy under his second administration counter the Islamic Terrorism?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

The objective of this research is to explain the concept of Islamic Terrorism, identify the President George Bush's foreign policy towards Islamic Terrorism, and analyze President Barrack Obama's foreign policy in combating Islamic Terrorism during the second term administration. The outcome of this research aims to understand on how the Barrack Obama's foreign policy that differs from George Bush's foreign policy affects the effort in combatting Islamic Terrorism.

#### **1.4 Significance of Research**

The purpose of this research is to provide an insight of Islamic Terrorism in international system, Bush's foreign policy in countering Islamic terrorist groups, including the insurgence of ISIS and other Islamic Terrorist groups, thus Obama's foreign policy in combatting terrorism under second term administration. This researcher hopes that the findings from this research can highlights the importance of U.S. role in the world, especially under the Presidency of Barack Obama and its impact to the terrorism activities. Moreover, I hope that this research can become the source of knowledge to the readers, especially to the scholars that are interested in U.S. foreign policy under Barack Obama and Islamic terrorist groups. The readers of this research, may as well analyze the U.S. foreign policy in combating Islamic Terrorism, perhaps in another region, by taking ISIS case as an example.

#### **1.5 Research Structure**

The first chapter, the Introduction provides the general perspective regarding this research. The chapter contains the background of the topic, research questions that will be answered through upcoming chapter, the research objectives, and the research significance.

The second chapter, the theoretical framework collects the literatures and review them to form the foundation to this research. This chapter also elaborates the relevant theory and concepts in International Relations that will be used as the framework to analyze further the case in this research.

The third chapter, includes the methodology that elaborates the research methodology for this research. This chapter explains the research approach, how the data will be collected, and research method that will be used for this research.

The fourth chapter is the analysis in which the findings and resources will be analyzed further according to the theoretical framework in Chapter 2, and using the research method explained in Chapter 3. The result of the analysis will answer the research question in Chapter 1.

The fifth chapter is the conclusion of this research where it includes the summary and the whole conclusion of this research.

