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The Impact of Donald Trump's Foreign Policy on Maghreb Countries: Western Sahara Dispute as a Case Study

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Dedication

First of all I would like to thank Allah for granting me the strength, wisdom, and perseverance to reach this stage. I dedicate this work to my beloved parents, whose permanent support, love, and encouragement have been the foundation of my journey.

To my only and beloved sister Imen who has been my confidante and my inspiration. To my brothers, sisters-in-law, and my nephews, This dedication is a sincere homage to the cherished bond and joy.

To my dear friends, this dedication is a heartfelt tribute to our incredible bond and treasure moments together. Your friendship brings me immense joy, support, and laughter.

To my dear and lively companion, Bichou, who brings endless joy and love into my life.

Thank you all for your endless love, encouragement, and understanding.

To Western Sahara

Roumaissa

Dedication

I express my sincerest gratitude to Allah for his abundant blessings and grace that have guided me to this point. I am truly humbled and grateful for the opportunities and abilities bestowed upon me, Alhamdulillah.

I would like to express my heartfelt dedication to the important individuals in my life who have played a significant role in shaping who I am today. First and foremost, I dedicate this work to my beloved mother, whose unwavering support and sacrifices have been instrumental in my journey. She has been both a mother and a father to me and my brothers, working tirelessly to provide for us. My deepest gratitude goes to my late father, whose memory I hold dear and whose guidance and love continue to inspire me. I also extend my dedication to my brothers, Nadjem and Saif, whose presence brings immense joy and love into my life. To my grandmother and extended family, your love and encouragement have always been a source of strength. Lastly, a special dedication goes to my dear friend Zhayra, whose unwavering friendship and support have been a constant source of inspiration. This work is dedicated to all of them with profound appreciation and love.

To Western Sahara

Dhikra

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Abstract

The subject of this study revolves around the Morocco and Western Sahara conflict under consideration of US foreign policy in the Maghreb region and how it affected this conflict specifically during the Trump administration. The work investigates this dispute exactly for being the oldest and the most neglected one in the international arena compared to the other global issues. The work's major goal is to clarify the driving force behind Donald Trump's shift. It is based on qualitative method, and analyses political discourses using governmental documents and media discourse analysis, focusing on Trump's tweets regarding his announcement of the US recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara territory. These analyses demonstrated and clarified how American foreign policy differs from one country to another among the Maghreb region, demonstrating biases in favour of Morocco in its decision-making with regard to the Moroccan-Western Sahara conflict. The analysis led to the conclusion that Morocco's normalization of relations with Israel is the primary factor behind Trump's recognition of Morocco's sovereignty over the Western Sahara.

Résumé

Ce travail examine le conflit entre le Maroc et la Sahara occidentale, en prenant en compte la politique étrangère américaine dans la région du Maghreb et son impact spécifique sur ce conflit, en particulier pendant l'administration Trump. L'objectif principal de cette étude est de clarifier la force motrice derrière le revirement de Donald Trump. Cette recherche est basée sur une méthodologie qualitative et analyse les discours politiques en utilisant des documents gouvernementaux et une analyse des discours médiatiques, en mettant l'accent sur les tweets de Trump concernant son annonce de la reconnaissance par les États-Unis de la souveraineté marocaine sur le territoire du Sahara occidental. Ces analyses ont démontré et clarifié comment la politique étrangère américaine diffère d'un pays à l'autre au sein de la région du Maghreb, mettant en évidence des préjugés en faveur du Maroc dans la prise de décision concernant le conflit entre le Maroc et le Sahara occidental. L'analyse a conduit à la conclusion que la normalisation des relations entre le Maroc et Israël est le facteur principal derrière la reconnaissance par Trump de la souveraineté du Maroc sur le Sahara occidental.

ملخص

موضوع هذه الدراسة يدور حول الصراع بين المغرب والصحراء الغربية، وذلك في ضوء السياسة الخارجية الأمريكية في منطقة المغرب العربي وتأثيرها على هذا الصراع بشكل خاص خلال فترة إدارة ترامب. تهدف الدراسة إلى التحقيق في هذا النزاع لكونه أقدم وأكثر النزاعات إهمالاً في المجتمع الدولي مقارنة بالقضايا العالمية الأخرى. والهدف الرئيسي للعمل هو توضيح القوة المحركة وراء تغيير دونالد ترامب. يستند هذا العمل إلى المنهج النوعي. ويحلل الخطاب السياسي باستخدام الوثائق الحكومية و الخطاب الاعلامي مع التركيز على تغريدات ترامب المتعلقة بإعلانه لاعتراف الولايات المتحدة بسيادة المغرب على إقليم الصحراء الغربية. أظهرت هذه التحاليل ووضحت كيف تختلف السياسة الخارجية الأمريكية من بلد إلى آخر في منطقة المغرب العربي، مما يشير إلى وجود تحيزات لصالح المغرب في عملية اتخاذ القرار بشأن الصراع المغربي الصحراوي. وأدى التحليل إلى استنتاج أن التطبيع بين المغرب وإسرائيل هو العامل الرئيسي وراء اعتراف ترامب بسيادة المغرب على الصحراء الغربية.

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List of Acronyms

AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act.
ALR	Algerian Liberation Revolution.
DOD	Department of Defense
ESF	Exchange Stabilization Fund
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MINURO	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
RRF	Rapid Response Force
SADR	Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
US	United States
NAFTA	North American Free Agreement

Introduction

The choice of this dissertation topic was driven by several factors, including the significance of the Western Sahara conflict and being one of the most neglected and long-standing issues on the international stage, the role of the United States in its resolution during the Trump administration has paid attention and raised many questions, and the need to explore the motivations and implications of US foreign policy decisions. Additionally, the timing of the research aligns with notable shifts in US policy and provides an opportunity to contribute to existing literature and offer valuable insights for policymakers and scholars. The Maghreb region, encompassing the countries of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania, has long been a crucial geopolitical arena marked by intricate historical, cultural, and political dynamics. Over the years, external powers, including the United States, have engaged with the Maghreb countries, influencing their development and shaping regional dynamics. The consolidation of relations between the Arab Maghreb countries and the United States has significantly increased, driven by a focus on combating terrorism, particularly after the Al Qaeda attack on the US In September 11, 2001. The United States has turned to the Arab Maghreb region to benefit from its expertise in counterterrorism, primarily focusing on enhancing security and military capacities. Both sides have strengthened cooperation and exchanged knowledge in fighting extremist groups, leveraging the region's strategic location and experience in dealing with terrorism. The collaboration involves intelligence sharing, joint training exercises, and resource support to prevent and respond to global terrorist threats. This fight against terrorism has also led to closer diplomatic and economic ties, with the US providing financial assistance and promoting economic opportunities to address the root causes of extremism and support socio-economic development and stability in the Arab Maghreb countries. Overall, the fight against terrorism has played a pivotal role in deepening

relations and fostering collaboration in security, military, diplomatic, and economic spheres between the Arab Maghreb and the United States.

The foreign policy of the United States, particularly during the administration of Donald Trump, played a significant role in shaping the region's trajectory. To comprehend the complexities of the United States' foreign policy towards the Maghreb countries during the Trump era, it is essential to consider the historical background that has shaped the region and influenced its interactions with external actors. This historical background provides a lens through which we can understand the evolving dynamics and challenges that influenced the United States' approach to the region.

The Maghreb countries gained their independence from European colonial powers in the mid-20th century. The aftermath of decolonization witnessed the emergence of independent nations seeking to assert their sovereignty and forge their own paths. However, the region also faced numerous challenges, including political instability, economic disparities, social unrest, and occasional conflicts. These factors have shaped the regional dynamics and influenced the relationships between the Maghreb countries and external powers, including the United States.

Against this backdrop, the Western Sahara conflict emerged as one of the most protracted and unresolved disputes in the Maghreb region. The Western Sahara, a territory located on the northwest coast of Africa, has been a subject of contention between Morocco and the Polisario Front, a Sahrawi nationalist movement seeking independence. The dispute has sparked tensions, diplomatic maneuvers, and occasional armed conflict, with profound implications for the region.

Despite its significance, the Western Sahara conflict has often been overshadowed by other international crises, receiving limited attention and diplomatic efforts. This neglect has left the conflict in a state of stalemate, further exacerbating the challenges faced by the

Sahrawi people and hindering regional stability.

Given the historical background and the significance of the Maghreb region, particularly in relation to the Western Sahara conflict, it is crucial to analyze the foreign policy of the United States during the Trump administration. By examining the motivations, objectives, and implications of US engagement with the Maghreb countries, this dissertation aims to contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics and challenges within the region. Additionally, focusing on the Western Sahara conflict as a case study will shed light on the complexities of the dispute and explore potential pathways towards a resolution.

All the sources used in this dissertation are important, each one helped to explore different information. This study is based on the diversity of sources such as; books, articles, websites, videos, documents and social media platform as well. Carl. D Cavalli in his book, *Basics of American government* tackles the US foreign policy in detail in terms of its definition, and the UA policy making process which aided this research to find much more information about this topic. “*American government 2e*” by Glen Krutz clarifies the US foreign policy meaning and tackles also the main interests of US foreign policy. These two books and other sources helped this research to cover almost everything related to US foreign policy. The sources used in this research include speeches delivered by presidents, such as Obama’s speeches to Maghreb countries like Tunisia, where he praised their adoption of democracy and highlighted the relations between America and Tunisia during his presidency. Another speech focused on Libya and discussed the future relations between the two countries after the death of Gaddafi.

Two articles were included in the study. The first article, titled “Contemporary Practice of the United States Relating to International Law” by Jack V. Hoover, discussed various events and actions related to the 2020 U.S. election, recognition of Morocco’s sovereignty over Western Sahara, the Biden administration’s engagement with international

institutions, Trump's clemency grants, and the reversal of immigration and asylum policies by the Biden administration. The second article, titled "Time for International Rearrangement in Western Sahara," provided comprehensive insights into the conflict. Both articles were valuable in understanding the positions of countries and organizations regarding Trump's announcement of Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara. Overall, these sources were instrumental in examining the topic and gaining a deeper understanding of the various perspectives and dynamics involved.

The analysis of President Trump's tweets regarding the recognition of Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Morocco and Israel played a crucial role in identifying the underlying rationale behind the US proclamation. By closely examining these tweets and examining the relationship between them, valuable insights were gained. Furthermore, the official document of the proclamation, titled "Recognizing the Sovereignty of the Kingdom of Morocco over Western Sahara," released by the Federal Register of the United States government, provided additional evidence supporting the main rationale behind the declaration. Moreover, the joint declaration involving the three parties – the USA, Israel, and Morocco – served as a concrete demonstration of the agreement reached.

This study employs a qualitative methodology, utilizing diverse data sources to inform the research. The approach involves political discourse analysis, focusing on governmental and official documents, policy statements, and agreements related to US foreign policy towards the Maghreb region and the Western Sahara conflict. Comparative method is also used to examine foreign policies across different US administrations and the positions of international actors and regional organizations. Thematic and political analysis of the collected data aims to identify patterns, differences, and recurring themes, providing a comprehensive understanding of the foreign policy landscape and reactions to the Trump

administration's decisions. This work also employs media discourse analysis to analyze Donald Trump's proclamation through his Twitter posts. Specifically, the study focuses on three tweets to uncover the rationale behind his decision.

The aim of this study is to examine and analyze the foreign policy of the United States towards the Maghreb countries, with a particular focus on the Western Sahara conflict. In addition, the dissertation seeks to explore the various dimensions of US engagement in the region before and during the administration of Donald Trump and understand the implications of his policies on the resolution of the Western Sahara dispute. Specifically, this work aims to analyze the specific actions and decisions taken by the Trump administration in relation to the Maghreb region, including diplomatic engagements, policy shifts, and declarations. It seeks to assess the impact of Donald Trump's foreign policy on the Western Sahara conflict, considering his recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over the territory and the international response to this decision with evaluating the reasons behind Trump's declaration and the motivations for pursuing normalization between Israel and Arab countries within the context of US policy towards the Maghreb countries.

This study focuses on addressing two key questions:

1. What is the impact of Donald Trump's foreign policy on the Western Sahara conflict?
2. What is the primary rationale behind Trump's declaration regarding the Western Sahara conflict?

This study aims to examine the impact of Trump's foreign policy on the Western Sahara conflict and uncover the rationale behind his declaration. By analyzing various aspects and exploring different dimensions, the study seeks to provide insights and answers to these key questions.

The dissertation consists of two chapters. The first chapter, titled "US Foreign Policy towards Maghreb Countries before and during the Trump Administration," provides an

overview of US foreign policy in general and then delves into its specific application to the Maghreb countries during the Trump era. It examines the key policies and strategies implemented by the US towards the region, highlighting any significant shifts or developments. The second chapter, titled “The Impact of Trump’s Foreign Policy on the Western Sahara Conflict,” focuses on the Western Sahara conflict itself. It provides an overview of the conflict’s origins and evaluates the positions of the international community on the issue. Furthermore, it examines the specific aspects of the conflict during the Trump administration, emphasizing the impact of President Trump’s proclamation recognizing Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara. This includes an analysis of the reaction from the Polisario Front, as well as the international stance on this declaration. In addition, the second chapter explores the motivations behind President Trump’s recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara. It particularly emphasizes the rationale of normalizing relations with Israel as a key factor. This analysis sheds light on the underlying motivations and considerations that influenced US policy decisions regarding the Western Sahara conflict. Overall, the dissertation will try to provide a comprehensive examination of how the Trump administration’s foreign policy towards the Maghreb countries, specifically the Western Sahara conflict, has influenced the resolution of the conflict. It delves into the motivations behind key decisions, with a particular focus on the normalization of relations with Israel.

Chapter One:

US Foreign Policy toward Maghreb Countries before and during Trump's Administration

The US foreign policy is known for its complexity, exceptionalism and change over time depending on the president's beliefs, personality, and leadership style which makes its understanding a hard task to accomplish, not because of the multiplicity of institutions and forces that contribute to its making, but rather because of being the only superpower in the world, its role in the international arena, and the great influence on the other nations. In the matter of the Maghreb region, which has traditionally had a marginal or decreasing impact in international affairs. However, after the 9/11 attacks and due to its strategic location as a gateway to Europe, the Middle East, and South Africa, the US policy-makers paid attention to the region at economic and security levels. It had witnessed different ties with the US policy for instance; significant attention, in terms of security and military policies that were implemented by president Obama, then they were ignored and neglected by president Trump.

This chapter is an attempt to explain and discuss three main points. First, the concept of US foreign policy, using a historical approach concerning significant events and major trends in US foreign policy. Further, it sheds light on the tools, interests, stages, and the mechanisms of the foreign policy making process starting from the president until the final influential powers. Second; the US foreign policy towards the Maghreb countries in two different administrations with different interests and national objectives. It tackles the American foreign policy toward the Maghreb region during Obama's presidency that was characterized by security ties and military policies, moving to Trump's administration where the region received less attention and disinterest.

1.1 US Foreign Policy

The foreign policy can be explained as “the scope of involvement abroad and the collection of goals, strategies and instruments that are selected by governmental policy makers”(Rosati and Scott 4, qtd. in Cavalli 326-327), in other words, it is a set of techniques, ways ; or the rules that are used by a nation to deal with another nation to achieve national objectives and interests or the mechanism in which the national government apply to interact with other nations diplomatically, as Joseph Frankel puts it: “ Foreign policy consists of decisions and actions, which involves to some appreciable extent relations between one state and others.” (1). It is the objectives That the officials of state (president, congress, cabinet,..) try to attain abroad, in other words, The manner used by the US to achieve its national goals (Krutz 628).

Foreign policy is like the ship which its radar navigates it towards the right direction, foreign policy also leads the state in achieving the national objective and having an appreciated position among other nations” a state without a foreign policy can be compared to a ship in the deep sea without knowledge of directions (Foreign Policy and Diplomacy). US foreign policy is almost done in its entirety by the government, however, the president often leads in decision making, under the support of congress, military, the state department, the media, the bureaucracy, and the public among them. It is a haggling procedure that makes sense to those people or groups who use their power and position to make policy according to their interest and nation’s interest as well(Allinson and Zelikow, qtd. in Cavalli 327) It can be also considered as a result or an outcome of a discussion upon a certain goal or national objective and bargain over the best way to achieve it abroad. When the policy is agreed upon, the president carries out, and American citizens in the media, military and business, interest groups, and voters participate in its application. It represents the US needs and interests of involvement abroad and the instruments chosen to achieve those goals (Cavalli 327).

1.1.1 History of US Foreign Policy

According to David M and John Oakland US foreign policy is like that of all nations, a combination of self-interest and an attempt to act on common ideals, and America's strength and large area makes it special comparatively to the other nations at critical times in its history. In the beginning of its history the US, as the American political scientist Joseph S. Nye terms "Soft Power" which means weak in the world stage and attracting support by using diplomacy or ideals, to the world superpower. Nowadays, many commentators noticed that it is rare to use "Soft Power" especially after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and to use "Hard Power" instead, where a nation achieves its objectives by applying economic sanctions and military forces. Moreover, Obama's administration insisted on ending the "Iraq and Afghanistan" wars, and repairing the balance with greater readiness to discuss what he and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton call "Smart Power" (200).

US foreign policy went through various changes due to the different principles and policies brought by the change of presidents and international events. After signing the treaty of Paris that put an end to the US independence war in 1782, and during George Washington presidency (1783_1791) who declared in his farewell speech that he wanted the state to be neutral and stays out of permanent alliances with the other nations and to use temporary alliances instead in exceptional cases. In other words, America should interact with the external world especially Europe due to its lengthy and consuming wars only in trade and commerce. Then following president Thomas Jefferson (1801 _1809) who advocated the preservation of democracy and states' rights rather than federalism, he was against wars and having large, expensive standing military forces that should be separated from the executive branch. The US preferred to be geopolitically distant from its motherland Europe which may lead to wars and trade complications to it. This lasted for 150 years of its history. The US in that period of time kept being neutral and limited political, economic, and diplomatic

engagement with foreign countries and world affairs. For instance, in the Napoleonic war (1799-1815) the US chose to be neutral (Paterson 4-5).

The US was too weak to stop the European intervention in Latin America until it expressed its opposition to any foreign involvement through the Monroe Doctrine which consists of three main principles: first, non-colonization which means that the USA rejects any new colonies in the Americas. Second, non-intervention is that the European powers keep uninvolved in the new world's nations' affairs. Third, non-interference which demanded the European colonies in the Americas to avoid meddling in European affairs. Besides, the USA enforced this doctrine after building a powerful navy in 1900's, and it had transformed its foreign policy from neutrality to isolationism with the sense of having a special mission in the world, so that, USA's brand of Republican government would affect only the western hemisphere (Latin America). In brief, the typical relations of the USA and Latin America were a mixture of idealism and ideological domination in the doctrine (Mauk and Oakland 204-205).

Isolationism means a country stays out of foreign dilemmas (Krutz 650). The US isolationism or non-interventionism continued to the 19th century, the end of World War 2. To be an isolationist state and remain outside of permanent alliances is no longer the best way for American security, hence, it switched its approach from isolationism into internationalism through the participation in international organizations such as; NATO and UN. During the cold war, the American foreign policy implemented the inclusion or the containment strategy in order to limit the Soviet Union spread.

In 1991, at the end of the coldwar, the US saw a revival element that believed that the US should drop out from the world to protect itself. However, since it became the only superpower in the world and no more nuclear annihilation threats, many local and regional conflicts arose, besides many countries fought for their freedom and rights. Although the

public desire to retreat, international crises like the fall of Berlin in 1989, the Gulf war in 1990, and the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 forced the US to think about its security.

Many conflicts like the Palestinian-Israel conflict reinforced US internationalism. Thus, it focused on cooperative actions abroad to preserve the physical and economic security of the state and its allies. In addition, the internationalist foreign policy has been strengthened because of the 11/9 attacks which lead to the spread of American forces in Afghanistan under the banner of avoiding future terror attacks and in Iraq in order to prevent weapons of mass destruction from being directed towards the US. In brief, “the isolationist streak in US foreign policy routinely conflicts with international crises which push the United States into the international system.” (Papp, Johnson, and Endicott, qtd. in Cavalli 335-336). In other words, the US tried to stay neutral then isolationist in world affairs, but the international events and crises forced it to ride the wave.

1.1.2 Stages of US foreign policy

In the United States, foreign policy making should go through a five stages process, starting with the Inputs which are things such as; international events that lead policy makers to act. It usually demands a response. Then, the policy makers should think and decide whether they address the inputs or not. Subsequently, the findings and the results of their decisions are the foreign policy Outputs which are the response to the inputs (they can be words or signals that shows what the US will do or their future declaration). Moreover, the Outcome stage is the answer of the question “what happens next”, the “what happens next” is the outcome. Finally, outcomes can create a feedback loop that may raise new inputs (Carter 3).

1.1.3 Interests of US Foreign Policy

The United States' foreign policy is premised on protecting the country's needs and interests. In general, such aims are dynamic and updated; yet, the US government insists

onfour major goals in the sphere of foreign policy:

1.1.3.1 Protection and Security

The protection of the state and the citizens in and out their state, from different forms of threats and risks such as; economic threats from boycotts and high tariffs on trade and military threats (Krutz 629). In addition to the Conservation of a balance of power in the world which means no one nation or state is more powerful militarily than all the other regions in the world (Krutz 629).

1.1.3.2 Economic Interests

Maintenance of access to key resources and markets and the access to major resources including the natural ones such as; oil, and economic resources like the investment of foreign capitals for domestic infrastructure projects like buildings, bridges, and weapons systems. US foreign policy aims to improve its business' interests through selling local products in the international marketplace and supporting the economic development in the world in general and in the developed countries in specific (Krutz 629).

1.1.3.3 Ideological Interests

Concerning this interest is about the preservation of Human Rights and Democracies, one of the rewards that comes due to US foreign policy's objectives is peace, It supports international peace through participation in international organizations, for instance; United Nations (UN) (it was a permanent leader), the Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the Organization of American Process States (Krutz 630).

1.1.4 Instruments of US Foreign Policy

US foreign policy is a set of goals and national objectives to be achieved. Therefore, it depends on various instruments and methods in order to realize those interests, such as; diplomacy or soft power is based on dialogue and negotiation, and it is the first step tended by the US government in its interaction with the other countries, however, it can never

function in isolation from the other instruments of power, there are also military force, foreign aid... (Fendrick 179).

1.1.4.1 Military Force

Military force is the main instrument of a sovereign state to defend its national objectives and a significant source of strength in US foreign policy. It is used when diplomacy fails and because of the threats against the USA, the government officials (president and high national security officials) have been exhibiting a surprising willingness to use military force as an instrument of foreign policy. So that the US has entered various wars to achieve certain national interests, they can be defensive such as; the Gulf War in 1991, or offensive like the Iraq war in 2003. Although there are strategies that would restrict the use of military power under the banner of the country's vital interests and the lives of its citizens are threatened, yet they are giving a way to force-use doctrines that are based on the [the need to counter a wide range of threats to the country's far flung global interests as well], in other words, US foreign policy should use the hard power only when it is necessary. However, after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the protection of the US against terrorism became a national objective, and the debate over the military action against Iraq had increased the officials' willingness to resort to force and to employ military power as a broadly instrument of diplomacy (Introduction: Force and Foreign Policy).

1.1.4.2 Trade Policy

After the second World War, the US engaged in internationalism, so that the government had focused on building strong economic linkages between countries to prevent any future collapse. It is known that welfare and prosperity of America has been based on economic growth, trade, and interaction with the other countries through tariffs and trade agreements to bargain with them in order to obtain concession in the other region, as it had used during Clinton presidency in 1990's, when he urged China to reduce its human rights

policy through customs tariffs and preferential treatment (Bianco, Canon, 469, as cited in Chouiteh 14).

1.1.4.3 Foreign Aids

The United States is considered as one of the most successful nations in using this tool. Since 1945, the US has provided over 1.1 trillion dollars to other nations as a foreign aid. Each year about 75% of economic assistance and 25% military aid in order to help reconstruct post-war Europe after the second World War. For instance; The Marshall Plan, and it was the beginning of a long foreign assistance program and it continues till today. Moreover, it aims to develop humanitarian assistance for life-saving relief from natural disasters, security assistance, and increase the military capacity of the allied countries (Paterson 20-21).

1.1.4.4 Agreements and Treaties

Another broad-based foreign policy instrument that the US find useful and important is the international treaties and agreements with the other countries for various reasons and subjects, and to switch from bilateral agreements about tariffs to multilateral treaties about the treatments of the recent prisoners and wars. The seven-country Iran Nuclear Agreement in 2015 is a good example (Krutz 637-638). The second article of the US constitution provides that the president:

shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he 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, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments. (Article II, Section 2, Clause 2)

1.1.5 US Foreign Policy Making Process

Some foreign policies are the outcomes of decisions made by the executive branch, others are the result of interactions between a number of governmental and non-governmental actors, presidents, and other institutions, formal and informal presidential advisers, congress, or its members, representatives of relevant interest groups, and public opinion,... (Carter.G 3).

1.1.5.1 The President and the Executive Branch

Article 2 in the constitution gives the president the powers of commander-in-chief, chief-diplomat, chief-administrator, chief of state, chief-legislator, chief-judicial officer, and voice of the people. These powers make him the most powerful individual in the US government and an obvious leader in the US foreign policy (Rosatti and Scot) and an official representative of America' overseas matters such as; fighting wars, trade agreements, negotiating treaties and diplomatic relations (Cavalli 329). Since the foreign policy is often made during times of crisis like wars or natural disaster, the executive branch which has highly extended in 20th century, gives the presidents much more powers in foreign policy making (Yergin), because the national security council, the cabinet of executives, defense, homeland security, and the top military officers, are all working hand-in-hand with the president in carrying out foreign policy decisions (Rothkopf). In addition to, “ The beliefs of and opinions of, Say, George W. Bush differs from Barack Obama” (Elovitz, Allinson and Zelikow), in other words, the personality, beliefs, opinions, and the leadership style of the president reflects the manner and the way he decides, applies and makes foreign policy (Cavalli 330).

1.1.5.2 The Congress

The power of the president and the executive branch has greatly increased in the 20th century, however, congress is an effective branch in the making of US foreign policy due to

its power of oversight and pursuit, article II of the constitution gives it the duty of investigation of the executive branch' actions that are against the American public interests (Cavalli 332- 333). These powers make the House of Representatives a crucial part in the application of US foreign policy because of the ability of controlling foreign policy decisions by regulating the funding, and the Senate as well, and it is charged with organizing them by confirming treaties. Whether, sending troops or diplomatic missions overseas, funding projects, or granting aid (Rosatti and Scott, qtd. in Cavalli 333). In addition to, the congress which is a legislative branch has more numerous powers than the president including the declaration of wars, controlling internal commerce and immigration, supporting and setting the nation' s military, and making any other law for applying these powers (Carter 5).

1.1.5.3 The Cabinet

Another important Actor in US foreign policy making process on one hand is the State Department which belongs to the original departments of the United States government. It is located in embassies and consulates around the world. It aims to communicate US foreign policy to allies and maybe enemies, and always supports the president's decisions and seeks to achieve them. It is public and visible because it takes the executive branch's directives to the people of the world (Rosatti and Scott). On the other hand the secretary of state is the main diplomat at state. He is assigned by the president and he has taken the lead in US foreign policy because he acts as the president's "mouthpiece" in applying the policies. Moreover, he has numerous diplomats around the world in order to be acquainted with US issues. He is also responsible for the response to international crises and for representing the nation by sending diplomats to negotiate and affect the outcome (Cavalli 331).

1.1.5.4 Bureaucracy

Decision making is a crucial part of the US foreign policy, however, they still make decisions till they get implemented by bureaucracy and become real. Otherwise, they remain

only words on presidential letterhead. Each American institution such as; department defense, state department, treasury, FBI, or homeland security has a bureaucratic staff that is responsible for making specific policies. The implementation of these decisions is not that easy (Allinson and Zelikow, qtd. in Cavalli 330) due to its complexity and obtaining of various organizations with different cultures and different goals that help it in carrying out policies. Bureaucracy is not just charged with applying and carrying out policies but also it gives the opportunity to modify or to change the original presidential decisions (Cavalli 330-331).

1.1.5.5 Interest Groups, Media, and Public Opinion

As the actors mentioned above represent an important part in US foreign policy making process, as well as the American public which can be considered as the national barometer for the presidential decisions and the central point to the media and interest groups to pay the leaders' attention. Interest groups, media, and public opinions are somehow related to the congress because the congressional leaders need voters to get elected, and the two groups (interest groups and public opinion) need a third party to communicate which is the media. Therefore, public media such as; talk radio and network..., gives the citizens the opportunity to communicate with US foreign policy making process by receiving their country's news from online and written sources. In addition to, the news, media and interest groups have a great impact on Americans, they try to inform and motivate them to agree or disagree with government policy, so that public opinion can influence their foreign policy making process in a direct way through voting, picketing, or petitions (Cavalli 333-334).

1.2 US Foreign Policy towards Maghreb Countries before Trump's Administration

Barack Hussein Obama was born on August 4, 1961, Honolulu, Hawaii, United states of America. He is an American politician and an attorney, his name associated with the first black American president of the world's most powerful country. His first entry into politics

was via joining the democratic society and his election to the Senate in Illinois in 1992. Then he represented the US senate defeating the Republican Alan Keyes on January 3, 2005. In July 2004 he delivered the Keynote speech at the democratic national convention which helped him to gain national recognition, after that he was elected as a president of America, indeed he won the election and was sworn into the office on January 20, 2009 and became the 44th president of the USA. He ruled for two terms (Mendell and Wallenfeldt).

1.2.1 Obama's Foreign Policy

In the matter of American foreign policy during Obama's administration, he faced several challenges, issues and wars. As soon as he began to act as a president; Iraq was suffering from the lack of security conditions and the Taliban reemerged in Afghanistan, additionally he inherited the American war against terrorism not only that North Korea and Iran also caused tensions in relations as they kept resisting the efforts to obstruct its nuclear arms program. In view of all of these cases, policymakers realized that the American foreign policy is not in its best condition which made them open for making transformation, So, Obama adopted new decisions concerning that in order to make a foreign policy that can be described as [offshore and balanced]. First, the United States would avoid direct intervention in external conflicts as interfering in the affairs of other countries trying to impose American hegemony using military intervention did not serve America nor its foreign policy. Instead of that, it would focus on its security overseas. USA soldiers have been retreating from both Iraq in December 2011 and Afghanistan. As a result, Obama has fulfilled his promise regarding stopping wars. Besides that; he chose to be selective in terms of external relations and participations; in a clear sense, he tended to the continental isolationism. Among the selected countries that are chosen to establish and strengthen relations with them are the Maghreb countries (Paterson 34-35).

1.2.2. Obama s Foreign Policy in Maghreb Countries

The observed change that Obama brought was the great attention that he paid to North Africa and Maghreb regions, and there were objects behind this interest. From the outset during his election campaign. He stated his priorities for developing Africa's policy and he delivered a message addressing the Muslim countries indicating his intention to strengthen America's economic and security relations with them. He discussed the need to develop cooperation in economics. This development rests on increasing the opportunity and improving education and does not focus and target the oil trade. This means that the rapprochement between them would not be only to benefit from their natural resources. Rather, it would involve other goals such as strengthening the democratic institutions and combating extremists and terrorist organizations that also targeted Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. Moreover, the presidency of Obama coincided with the Arab spring events which also comprised the Maghreb region as Eizenstat mentioned it: "On 4 June 2009, President Barack Obama called for a “new beginning” in relations between the United States and the Muslim world. For decades, the Maghreb region of North Africa –which includes Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia– has fallen through the cracks of US foreign policy" (17).

1.2.2.1 The US foreign policy towards Algeria

Starting with the American relation with Algeria, it has always been marked by fluctuation, uncertainty and at certain periods under certain circumstances marked by hostility. In the past, Algeria has never been among America's priorities nor within the range of its policy's objective. However, before the independence of Algeria from France colonization exactly during the Algerian liberation revolution, enmity was created between the two countries because of American aid to France against the ALR, this caused a relatively total break between them for period of time, until America was subjected to terrorist attacks

in September 11, 2001 by the terrorist organization Al Qaeda. Algeria at that time was known with its military power and experience with terrorism that made America resort to an alliance with it, as a result, the relation in the security field was strengthened (Dkhekhena 14). During Obama's presidency the relation continued in the same path. He kept Algeria close for the sake of confronting this dilemma side to side. During his presidency, frequent civil and military exchanges took place, also the two countries exchanged visits, as the Deputy Foreign Minister visited Algeria in July 2016, and the Foreign Minister held a strategic dialogue with the Algerian Foreign Minister in April 2015. Moreover, Algeria hosted senior US military officials and ship visits, and the United States hosted a joint military dialogue with Algeria in July 2016. likewise to the military cooperation between the two countries, there was also cooperation in the economic field; Washington and Algeria have strengthened their economic ties and the hydrocarbon have taken the lead in commercial exchanges representing 95% of the value of Algerian exports to the United states of America, thus it became Algeria's first trading partner instead of France (U.S.-Algeria Relations).

1.2.2.2 The US Foreign Policy towards Libya

Moving to Libya, "The relation between the United States and Libya has been tense for much of the last thirty five years, but has normalized gradually since late 2003 "(Blanchard. M 5).For decades Libya and the USA were in a stressed relation that is punctuated with enmity and sense of revenge due to many reasons most of which revolve around the disagreement on position and opinion regarding international situations. From a side, America was to international terrorism, also for its unnecessary involvement in many regional conflicts. From the other side; Libya was prompted to rebel against the USA because of the unjustified financial and military aid for Israel, as Libya's position toward Palestinian colonization was very clear and completely opposed. Also it opposed American interference in Arab countries' affairs. However; the major point that led to the confrontations and clashes

between the two remains the pursuit of weapons of mass destruction. In 2006, they tried to adopt a full diplomatic relationship expecting a new beginning, but it remains ambiguous for the same reasons, then the civil war in Libya broke; the Libyans revolted against the president Muammar Gaddafi. The revolution took the course of armed conflicts, so president Obama intervened and cooperated with NATO and they bombed Libya targeting its president. The war continued until the dictatorial leader was overthrown and died (Blanchard. M 56). Obama stated regarding Gaddafi's death "the end of a long and painful chapter for the people of Libya, who now have the opportunity to determine their own destiny in a new and democratic Libya" (Obama: Gadhafi's Death). In addition, he congratulated Libyans for demanding their rights and for their achievement in eliminating the dictatorship pointing out the long and hard way that they must pass by. Nevertheless, he guaranteed them the commitment of the United States with the international community towards the Libyan people; he promised them that his country would be a partner and supporter in creating a future that provides dignity and freedom (Bruce).

1.2.2.3 The US Foreign Policy towards Mauritania

The United States partnership with the Islamic Republic of Mauritania began in 1960. They had a relationship based on mutual respect and common interests in the states during the era of President Dwight Eisenhower, actually the first country to recognize the independence of Mauritania was America. US-Mauritania relations were severed due to the expulsion of Senegalese nationals by Mauritanian governments, exacerbated by Mauritania's support for the 1991 Gulf War. But in the late 1990's, Mauritania adopted new policies that were more appreciated and admired by the US. This greatly advanced US-Mauritania relations, and led to planning military cooperation and training programs. Despite the Mauritanian military coups in 2005 and 2008, which were condemned by the US government, Obama did not ignore the country's transition to democracy, in contrast he

supported it. In addition, the United States contributed to voter education and election support (Policy and History).

1.2.2.4 The US Foreign Policy towards Tunisia

As for America and Tunisia, they had an enduring diplomatic relationship for a period of up to 200 years. America has always been a supportive country to Tunisia since a long time, as it is known it was the first country to recognize Tunisia's sovereignty on May 17, 1956. In 1977 the United States of America concluded its first commercial cooperation with Tunisia. After that, the relationship between them became stronger and moved towards solidarity and alliance, especially after the outbreak of the popular revolution on December 17, 2010. It is known as the Revolution of Freedom and Dignity. This revolution resulted in Tunisia's transition from the dictatorial regime of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to a democratic country guaranteed by the constitution imposed by law. The democratic transition in Tunisia coincided with the first term of Obama, who congratulated the Tunisian people through a videotape expressing the support and pride of the United States government for the success and progress achieved by Tunisia:

The story of Tunisia gives us hope here in Tunisia you're moving ahead with a historic democratic transition you've me together in a spirit of compromise and consensus you've forged a new constitution you've held free and fair elections and formed an inclusive government ...you're showing that democracy is possible and necessary in North Africa and the Middle East. (Eye on Tunisia)

Obama welcomed the establishment of economic and security cooperation treaties and agreements between the two nations. He assisted to increase the economic growth by enhancing the business climate and the bilateral trade, so the administration worked with the Congress to double the level of economic assistance to Tunisia to make it capable of competing and most importantly focus on reforms ; This was highlighted in the USA's

secretary of commerce speech, where Pritzker hosted Tunisian president Beji Caid Essebsi at a round table meeting with senior American businessman; they discussed the importance of economic and trade reforms in order to grow the investment and exchanges between Tunisia and the USA. In military and security fields, he made from it a major partner in regional counter_terrorism efforts. Additionally, he located 225 million dollars in security assistance to face internal and external threats and terrorism (Fact sheet).

1.2.2.5 The US Foreign Policy towards Morocco and Western Sahara

Morocco is one of the first countries to recognize the sovereignty of the newly independent United States; it opened its ports to American ships by decree of Sultan Muhammad III in 1777, trying to make a friendship with it. Morocco and America established their first full diplomatic relations in 1905. However, it did not last long due to the imposition of protection for Morocco by France (1912_1956), but their normal diplomatic relations had immediately resumed as soon as the United States recognized the independence of Morocco in 1956. Their friendship lasted until Obama's presidency (U.S .Relations with Morocco). This was demonstrated by King Mohammed VI's visit to the White House, where he met ~~with~~ President Obama, who emphasized ~~on~~ the strong and mutually beneficial partnership and strategic alliance between the United States and the Kingdom of Morocco. The King also reiterated their commitment to working together to fulfill the promise of Morocco's 2011 Constitution and to explore ways in which the United States can strengthen Moroccan democratic institutions, civil society, inclusive governance and the protection of the rights offundamental freedoms. In addition, they committed to deepening the ongoing dialogue between them, which has yielded benefits for both of them. Obama also welcomed and supported the reforms and the next steps for Morocco. Thus, several agreements were signed, including the mutual customs assistance agreement on November 21, 2013, to expand bilateral cooperation in detecting money laundering, commercial fraud and other financial

crimes. On November 21, 2013, the United States and Morocco signed a trade facilitation agreement; Diversification of educational and cultural exchange programs was also discussed. The King was keen on the importance of early ratification of the agreement concluded between the two countries regarding registration and setting up the American school system in Morocco. These initiatives contributed to building a solid relationship between them. Also the meeting between the two presidents is a catalyst for strengthening the bond between the two countries (Robinson).

Regarding the conflict over the issue of Western Sahara and Morocco, the United States did not interfere despite its good relationship with Morocco, only during the Carter and Reagan administrations, the United States supported Morocco. It did not fully support a Moroccan plan for administration or autonomy for the region, but preferred instead to provide military support, otherwise this conflict has never been a source of inconvenience to American decision-makers like other international conflicts. However, Morocco kept aspiring for the American intervention which it considers the most important reaction and the most important position on the issue to it. In the early 1990s, Morocco tried hard to influence the unwavering neutral opinion of the United States through its support for the coalition forces in the first Gulf War; it even declared its willingness to mediate between Israel and the Arabs to help the peace process initiated by the United States. But it was a failed attempt, as President Bush assured King Hassan of Morocco that this dispute is up to the United Nations. This did not affect or cause any problem, neither in their relationship nor in their economic transactions and exchanges. The American policy of neutrality continued until Bill Clinton and George W. Bush presidency, despite many cases of cooperation between Morocco and the United States(Turner 23).

The reversal of the U.S. position in this conflict under the current Obamaadministration despite the apparent shift in attitude toward the autonomy proposal

was unexpected. There have been some indications that the Obama administration may not be unequivocally biased in favor of Morocco, these indications were proven in June 2009, as the United States appeared to no longer unequivocally support Morocco's autonomy plan; Obama sent a letter to King Mohammed explaining the reason for this shift, A passage in the letter was particularly revealing: "I share your commitment to UN-led negotiations as the appropriate forum to achieve a mutually agreed solution... My government will work with yours and others in the region to achieve an outcome that meets people's need for transparent governance, and trust in the rule of law and equal administration of justice". In addition, it was circulated by diplomatic sources that the report in which the message was conveyed indicates that the United States no longer supports the Moroccan autonomy plan. Instead, the administration reverted to the pre-Bush position that there could be an independent Polisario state in Western Sahara (Zoubir 96_97). However, In November 2013, President Obama's spokesperson, Jay Carney, stated that President Obama viewed Morocco's autonomy plan for Western Sahara as a serious and credible approach. This plan was seen as capable of fulfilling the aspirations of the people in the region to govern their own affairs peacefully and with dignity. Morocco enjoys significant backing from the Pentagon, certain sections of the State Department, and influential members of both political parties in Congress (Zoubir 61).

1.3 US Foreign Policy towards Maghreb Countries during Trump's Administration

Donald John Trump was born on June 14, 1946, New York USA. Trump is an American famous figure and businessman. He embodies the American success story. He started to show his interest in the presidency of the USA in 1999 when he declined to run the election. Trump did not give up instead, he published a book titled *America We Deserve* in which he translated his social liberal and economic conservative political views, also he

returned to the Republican Party, and gained a high public profile during the 2012 presidential election, however, he did not run for office at that time, On June 16, 2015, Mr.Trump officially announced his candidacy for the presidency of the United States and was elected to the presidency in 2016, accompanied by a Republican majority in both houses of Congress. On January 20, 2017, He was sworn in as the 45th President of the United States (Duigna).

1.3.1 Trump's Foreign Policy

In many ways, President Trump's policies are similar to those of Republican Presidents Reagan and Bush, two of his party's past three presidents to lead the country. His foreign policy preferences are influenced by the United States' unilateralism, rather than President Obama's attempts to strengthen multilateral organizations such as the United Nations and the International Criminal Court. Trump, like many other Republicans, prefers to "do it alone" rather than rely on the international community. He, like most Republicans, favors military decisiveness over hesitation, and defense above diplomacy. He overruled President Obama's decision to withdraw troops from Iraq and Syria, which he had ordered on behalf of a war-weary American population.

Trump, more than any other modern US President, embraces reality. National interests take precedence over international initiatives or multilateral organizations in a Trump state. There will be no humanitarian operations because "the legacy of the Obama-Clinton interventions will be weakness, confusion, and disarray," as Trump says. After the Cold War's ending, previous generations of US presidents have experimented with liberalism and idealism, supporting democracy and economic equality abroad at the expense of American voters. Trump's foreign policy would not include liberal hegemony or Bush's Middle East democracy ambitions. "This is realism's time in the sun," Daniel Drezner observed.

Tufts University Professor Emeritus Tony Smith described Trump as "the most anti-liberal internationalist president" since 1940. In other words, Trump will pursue an "America first" foreign policy that reflects a realistic view of international affairs. National Security Advisor Lieutenant General H. R. McMaster and Director of the National Economic Council Gary Cohn described Trump's foreign policy as one in which, "the world is not a global community but an arena where nations, nongovernmental actors, and businesses engage and compete for advantage. Rather than rejecting the fundamental essence of international relations, we embrace it." Defense will take precedence over diplomacy and development. This is reflected in the 2018 budget plan, which reduces appropriations for all federal departments except the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, and Veteran Affairs. In contrast, the Department of State is facing budget cutbacks of more than 30% and considerable personnel reductions. With the State cuts, the huge foreign aid development budget that the United States has considered a conventional foreign policy weapon for 70 years would be eliminated. "We are just not going to be able to do that. We have to rebuild our country," declared the President. "This is not a soft power budget," said Mick Mulvaney, Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This is a hard power budget, and it was done on purpose. The president certainly intended to send a message to our allies and potential foes that this is a strong-arm government.

As Trump took office on January 20, he immediately set out to undo the international order that the United States had constructed since the Cold War's end 25 years earlier. In his first two weeks as President, he declared NATO outdated, backed out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and promised to renegotiate NAFTA. He imposed a travel ban on people from seven Muslim-majority countries which was rejected by the justice as unconstitutional. He requested a \$54 billion military budget increase and ordered additional soldiers into Syria while cutting global assistance and US diplomatic budgets by 30%. He backed Israel's

settlement construction in the Occupied Territories and basically abandoned the two-state solution guarantee. He withdrew the United States from the Paris Climate Agreement. As a result, the country is just one of two in the world (together with Syria) that does not understand the imminent urgency of global warming. "U.S. President Donald Trump's every inclination goes opposed to the ideals that have anchored the postwar international system," stated Princeton professor and famous foreign policy specialist G. John Ikenberry. He also lifted human rights restrictions on aid to Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, downplayed the release of the annual Department of State country reports on human rights, and embraced strongmen around the world such as Putin in Russia, Al-Sisi in Egypt, Duterte in the Philippines, and Erdogan in Turkey.

Under the contours of a new Trump Doctrine which have begun to form in his first few months, the United States will be more inward-looking and less active in international affairs. As with past Republican administrations, the government will prefer to take unilateral action rather than submit to multilateral institutions. The priority is security, not the advancement of freedom, democracy, or human rights. Economically, President Trump will seek protectionist measures to keep the United States' economic might and jobs at home, rather than allowing them to go elsewhere. Yet his foreign policy will not be completely isolationist, but it will not involve the full spectrum of diplomatic activities undertaken by his predecessors to develop global wealth and maintain the stability of other countries (Paterson 40-44).

1.3.2 Trump's Foreign Policy in Maghreb Countries

The election of US President Donald Trump in 2017 signaled a significant shift in Washington's foreign priorities. The Middle East and North Africa are not immune to this tendency; since new geopolitical realities have evolved that frequently contradict existing arrangements. The Trump administration's approach toward the Maghreb region and North

Africa, in particular, was marked by disinterest and an overarching emphasis on American national interests. But, the steady decline of the White House and State Department in North Africa is being replaced by an engaged Military and a reenergized Congress. In other words, US foreign policy under President Donald Trump is characterized by isolationism and US engagement across the world is decreasing as a result. Africa is not an exception and in November 2018, for instance, the Pentagon announced a cut of 10% of its troop presence on the continent. Maghreb countries, on the other hand, have never been a priority for Washington's policymakers. Actually, its relevance for Washington is primarily due to its closeness to Europe and its vicinity to the Sahel, where American military presence is on the rise. Furthermore, the National Security Adviser John Bolton revealed the Trump administration's new "Africa Plan" on December 13, 2018. It pursues a mostly realist agenda, concentrating on American national security and economic interests while aiming to battle terrorism and restrict Russian and Chinese dominance on the continent. As a result, the new plan contradicts Obama's objectives, which primarily sought a liberal agenda of democracy, youth empowerment, equitable business opportunities, and security. President Trump appears to have left Africa to the Military, American security services, and US corporate circles (Cherif 1-2).

1.3.2.1 The US Foreign Policy towards Algeria

Relations between Algeria and the United States of America continued even during the Presidency of Trump, as trade exchanges and military aid continued between them according to the interests of each of them. And these interests withstood and took priority despite many barriers and contradictions between the policies of these two countries. From a side, Algeria is the most important economic partner for China, a close ally of Iran, and the largest importer in the continent of Russian weapons. On the other hand, the United States is not in agreement with these countries, that both China and Russia are its biggest enemy and

form of its competitors in many fields including economic and the military field, especially with regard to nuclear weapons. As for Iran, as is known, the relationship between them has been very tense for a long time. Here it can be concluded that Algerian foreign policy is totally inconsistent with American foreign policy, yet this was not a sufficient factor for the bonds between them to be severed, and their relationship withstood even in front of the strictness of President Trump's. This was manifested by the continuity of the dealings between them. During Trump's early days, an ambassador to Algeria was selected and approved. In addition; There have been three Strategic Dialogue meetings between Washington and Algiers from the beginning of its presidency. Moreover, the Algerian foreign minister is routinely welcomed to Washington. It is likely that the reason for these mutual dialogues, visits, and meetings is the Pentagon's attempt to integrate Algeria into its military projects for Africa, through which the United States intends to confront terrorism and immigration, and this means that the United States still considers Algeria an indispensable ally to combat terrorism (our partnership with Algeria). On the occasion of the fifty-eighth anniversary of Algeria's Independence Day, the president received good wishes from the presidents and kings of brotherly countries; also he received a congratulatory message from Trump, where he wrote to him "On the occasion of the celebration of your Independence Day on the 5th of July, I congratulate you and the Algerian people". He was keen to mention the partnership between the two countries and his willingness to develop it, saying, "Our two countries have a strong partnership that continues to develop under your leadership as President of the Republic". In view of the emergence of the Corona pandemic at that time, he praised the existing cooperation between them, telling him, "Our two countries also face a common enemy, which is the Covid-19 pandemic, which poses a great challenge ". Further He encouraged the deepening of the ongoing bilateral partnership on all fronts and worked to bring the peoples of the two countries closer (Cherif 3).

1.3.2.2 The US Foreign Policy towards Libya

Trump's interests in Libya started even before he became a president by posting on his Twitter page On August 23, 2011. In his first writings, he claimed that the US should get payment from Libyan rebels in the form of oil in exchange for military assistance. He predicted that whichever government after Gaddafi would be worse than leaving him in power. The Benghazi attacks were crucial as a point of discourse for him and sparked great fervor among his followers during the election campaign. However, once he assumed office, The focus on Libya was minimized and less pronounced. Periodic character assaults against

Hillary Clinton and President Obama persisted into President Trump's term, particularly on their policies in the Middle East and North Africa. Trump's military threats shifted from North Korea to ISIS to Syria's Bashar alAssad to al Qaeda. Some of these threats resulted in actions, such as ongoing air operations against ISIS and Syria in retribution for chemical weapon use. He spent a major chunk of his inaugural address addressing the menace of global terrorism. Notwithstanding the United States' engagement in Libya and Libya's fight against the growth of ISIS within its borders, the country was never mentioned by name. Although addressing many of the same challenges of terrorism and national instability, President Trump did not mention Libya in his September 2017 address to the UN General Assembly. Yet in a series of published speeches after meeting with Libyan Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj, President Trump officially praised the United Nations' efforts at nation building within Libya. In brief, Libya has received short shrift from President Donald Trump's administration. In contrast to former President Barack Obama's administration, US foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) under Trump has been primarily focused on combating the so-called Islamic State (ISIS or IS) and resisting Iranian influence growth. Moreover, concerning the domestic policy actions regarding Libya, president Trump continues the trend that began during the second mandate of Obama's administration, yet the

military operations are greatly decreased, and he opted to continue Obama-era economic sanctions on Libya. (Wadlow 49-50-51-70). Besides, according to Washington, terrorism, migration, and Russian influence are embedded in the Libyan quagmire. Additionally, Libya is important to Europe's and the Sahel's stability. This explains the US army's ongoing presence in and around Libya, whether through surveillance, strikes, semi-secret outposts, permanent military sites, or participation in French-led operations in Mali. Yet the Foreign policy in the United States is difficult to forecast, and there are now more doubts than answers regarding the White House's plans for Libya. Notwithstanding Trump's desire to promote strongmen throughout the MENA region, and reports of Haftar visiting Washington to speak with Trump and/or National Advisor John Bolton, it seems unlikely that the US will officially swap sides to overtly endorse Haftar. Although Trump may like Haftar and retain tight ties with the Arab nations that support the Benghazi-based commander, the White House would be well to recognize the risks of assisting Haftar as he pursues a winner-take-all strategy to Libya's civil war (Cafiero).

1.3.2.3 The Islamic Republic of Mauritania

Mauritania's relation with the states during the Trump administration, is encountered with difficult conditions that disturbed the atmosphere between the two nations because of the decision. President Trump has informed the Congress and the Government of Mauritania of his decision that he intends to terminate Mauritania's eligibility for trade preference benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), starting from January 1, 2019. On the basis of the annual eligibility review required by AGOA, the President finds that Mauritania is not making enough progress in protecting internationally recognized workers' rights and not making enough effort to abolish hereditary slavery, in his view, Mauritania does not comply with the eligibility requirements of AGOA and it deserves to be punished. Deputy US Trade Representative C.J. Mahoney said concerning this case

"Justification for the position of this decision." Forced or compulsory labor practices such as hereditary slavery have no place in the 21st century". He added: "This action underscores this administration's commitment to ending modern slavery and enforcing labor provisions in our trade laws and trade agreements. We hope Mauritania will work with us to eliminate forced labor and hereditary servitude so that its AGOA eligibility can be restored in the future (President Trump Terminates Trade). Donald Trump was subjected to a lot of criticism, and it was circulated in many writings from different platforms such as news, magazine even officials from Mauritania denied Trump's excuses, accusing Mauritania of not combating forced labor. In this regard, they made it clear to the world that Mauritania is a democratic country that criminalizes slavery in all its forms and practices, and several laws were enacted to eliminate it. The Mauritanian responses and reactions participated to increase the tension in the relationship (To Donald Trump).

1.3.2.4 The US Foreign Policy towards Tunisia

Tunisia, like the majority of its neighbors in North Africa, received less attention from the Trump Administration than other Middle Eastern nations like Egypt, Iran, or Israel. Just a few senior officials (none of them were Secretaries of State) lately visited Tunis. Prime Minister Youssef Chahed visited Washington twice between 2016 and 2017, meeting with certain key members of the Trump administration but not Donald Trump. President Beji Caid Essebsi has also not met with Donald Trump one-to-one. A clear contrast to the Obama administration, when Tunisian heads of state were frequent visitors to the White House, Tunisia was frequently complimented by American officials, and US secretaries traveled to Tunisia on a semi-annual basis. Tunisia, on the other hand, maintains its dominance in Congress and the Senate. As a result, congressional and senate visits, as well as assistance, will continue as usual. As a result, when President Trump proposed cutting funding to Tunisia by two-thirds in 2018, Congress resisted and increased aid to the country (Cherif 3-

4). Moreover, the Congress has affected U.S. relations with Tunisia through legislation, monitoring, and direct interaction with Tunisian leaders; but, it has not yet supported such cutbacks. Less than half of what Congress appropriated for Tunisia under the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2020—which was with « not less than » \$191.4 million—was included in the Administration’s FY2021 aid budget proposal for Tunisia, at \$83.9 million in bilateral economic and security assistance. Congress also allocated « not less than » \$50 million in prior-year Economic Support Fund (ESF) appropriations for Tunisia in the 2020 legislation. The State Department Relief and Recovery Fund (RRF) and the Department of Defense (DOD) Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund have both received funding from Congress for assistance to Tunisia. Additionally, DOD has been given permission to provide reimbursement-based assistance to Tunisia’s military for securing the country’s border with Libya. Moreover, Tunisia has consistently received the most « global train and equip » counterterrorism support from the DOD in Africa (Tunisia: In Brief 1).

1.3.2.5 The US Foreign Policy towards Morocco

Contrary to Algeria, a large and remarkable agreement was sought between Morocco's foreign policy and America's foreign policy, as Morocco also does not agree with Russia, China, or Iran. There are many indications that it is striving to preserve and to consolidate its relationship with the United States and. Firstly, Morocco is the largest buyer of American weapons in Africa, according to the report of the “Defensa” military website; over the pastfor decades, Morocco has strengthened its navy and equipped the army with advanced mechanisms, with a total budget of \$2.8 billion. Rabat also purchased 24 new Apache attack helicopters, worth \$1.6 billion, in addition to Patriot air defense systems and the G-55 reconnaissance aircraft. Secondly, due to Morocco's strategic location on the border with Algeria, it has made it an observer of Russian, Chinese or Iranian activity in Algeria for

the benefit of the United States, and this is certainly considered an important matter in favor of the Pentagon, which President Trump has focused on a lot. In addition, Rabat tried to curry favor with Washington for its own interests by severing relations with Tehran in May 2018, when Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita stated via Al-Jazeera that Rabat had decided to sever diplomatic relations with Iran due to the Lebanese Hezbollah's links to the Polisario Front, which seeks the independence of Western Sahara. He added that Rabat asked the Iranian ambassador to leave after obtaining information that revealed financial, logistical and military support provided by the party to the Polisario. As soon as it showed hostility to Tehran, the kingdom began to restore its position in Washington, and the rapprochement between the two countries increased. Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita was then invited to Washington in September 2018. Finally, Rabat now has the potential to be a partner for Washington thanks to its lobbying efforts and political reforms, albeit limited. In short, it can be said that Morocco performed well among lawmakers in Washington and worked a lot to align well with President Trump's policy, and this helped him gain more ability to become a broadcaster in North Africa for Trump's Washington (Cherif 3_4). In other words, Trump's foreign policy towards Morocco was not the same as his policy towards other countries in the Maghreb region.

In conclusion, the foreign policy of the United States has historically been shaped by the preferences and priorities of its presidents. Donald Trump, as a controversial Republican president, implemented significant changes in U.S. foreign policy, particularly in his approach towards Morocco. Trump's foreign policy was characterized by a focus on America First, prioritizing national interests over global engagements. Consequently, he showed little interest in countries of the Maghreb region, except for Morocco. Unlike his predecessor, Barack Obama paid considerable attention to the Maghreb. Despite the shared attitudes and positions of Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, and Tunisia on various international conflicts,

Trump's foreign policy differentiated between these countries based on American interests and needs. This divergence is evident in their stance on issues such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, where they all supported Palestine and rejected Israeli normalization. Additionally, regarding the Western Sahara conflict, they united in denying Morocco's claim to sovereignty over the region.

Morocco implemented new policy decisions during Trump's presidency that aligned with his administration's policies. Morocco aimed to secure U.S. support in its conflict with Western Sahara and sought to resolve the longest-standing dispute in Africa's history. By accommodating Trump's policies, Morocco sought to win the United States over to its side and gain the necessary backing for its objectives.

Overall, Trump's foreign policy approach towards Morocco exemplified his America First agenda, prioritizing domestic interests and conducting transactions with countries without significant intervention in their affairs. Morocco, recognizing this approach, strategically adjusted its policies to align with Trump's administration in order to gain support for its objectives, specifically in the Western Sahara conflict.

This chapter concentrates on Donald Trump's foreign policy toward Morocco as a nation, excluding its role in the conflict. A more in-depth analysis of Morocco's participation in conflicts will be provided in the second chapter. The purpose here is to explore the wider implications of Trump's foreign policy approach toward Morocco without going into details at this point.

Chapter Two

The Impact of Trump's Administration toward the Western Sahara Conflict

The Western Sahara conflict which started in 1975 after being a Spanish colony, is considered as a longstanding and complex issue between Morocco and the Polisario Front. This conflict has attracted international attention for decades, and had various perspectives and positions worldwide. This chapter will examine the dynamics of the conflict during Trump's administration and emphasize on his impact on this conflict. By analyzing the policies and actions taken during his administration, as well as the reasons behind his decisions.

The chapter is divided into three main parts. The first part gives an overview of the Western Sahara region's significance, and digs into the historical origins of the conflict, figuring out its roots and addressing the reasons that have contributed to its persistence. The second part focuses on the impact of Trump's administration on the Western Sahara issue. It examines a series of significant events that occurred during his presidency, evaluating his approach, policies, and actions in relation to the conflict. This section aims to assess how Trump's foreign policy influenced the dynamics and developments of the Western Sahara dispute. The third section investigates the reasons behind Trump's declaration recognizing Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara. It critically analyzes the main rationale behind this decision. In Brief, this chapter has examined the United States' foreign policy toward the Western Sahara conflict during Donald Trump's administration, with a particular focus on his impact and the main rationale behind his policy shifts. Through an analysis of the pre-Trump era and the policies implemented during his presidency, this research has provided valuable insights into the dynamics of US engagement in the region and its consequences.

2.1 Western Sahara and Morocco Conflict

At the Berlin conference in 1884, the African continent was divided up by the European powers where the Western Sahara was first colonized by Spain. So, it was a former Spanish colony that Morocco occupied in 1975. Since then, Morocco and the native Saharawi people, led by the group known as the Polisario Front, have been engaged in a protracted territorial dispute over it (Leite et al 5).

The region is located in North Africa, on the Atlantic Ocean's coast. Morocco borders it on the north, Algeria on the east (they share a 42-kilometer border), and Mauritania on the east and south. It covers an area of 266,000 square kilometers. Western Sahara's borders, as most African countries, were defined through agreements and treaties signed by the colonies (Spain and France in 1900, 1904, and 1912) (Besenyo 9). However, due to the conflict between Morocco and the Polisario Front over the Western Sahara region, it is politically and geographically divided by a 2500 km sand-wall (also known as the berm or the rabotu by the Polisario) built by the Moroccan government in the mid-1980s. The wall crosses into northwest Mauritania and physically separates the eastern portions of Polisario-controlled territory (Bhatia 291). See(Appendices A,B).

2.1.1 The Historical Root of the Conflict

The Western Sahara conflict is the oldest and the most neglected dispute in the world, mainly this conflict is between Morocco and the Polisario Front; it revolves around Morocco's claim to own Western Sahara After discovering its rich natural resources, This conflict was divided into two phases; the first phase consisted of armed clashes from 1975 to 1991, and the second one which started from 1991 was the cease fire . The conflict included a set of events, agreements and attacks by the concerned parties besides the involvement of some international and African organizations and some neighboring countries and superpowers. The sequence of events was as follows:

2.1.1.1 The United Nations Visiting Mission and the Green Marche

The commencement of this dispute is preceded by a series of events that contributed to its emergence such as, the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Spanish Sahara in 1975. When the region was under the colonization of Spain, specifically in May 1975, the United Nations sent a mission to the Spanish Sahara for the purpose of investigating the political situation and the conflicting claims in the region by Morocco, the Polisario Front, Spain and Mauritania. On October 15, 1975, this mission stated, after studies that had been carried out on the entire region besides the neighboring regions and the capital of Spain, Madrid that most of the Sahrawi people preferred political independence and were looking for the end of Spanish colonial rule. The next day, the International Court in The Hague ruled in favor of self-determination for Western Sahara. After issuing this decision, Morocco has taken the first steps towards acquiring the Spanish Sahara, and King Hassan II responded through a speech he delivered in Marrakesh about the launch of the "Green March", a peaceful march represented in the recruitment of about 350,000 Moroccan civilians to cross the border into the Spanish Sahara at the beginning of November 1975, the people declared Through it the will of Morocco to restore the Sahara. In fact, this march witnessed a complete failure, due to the reaction of the Polisario Front. It restricted the Moroccan forces and prevented the exploitation of phosphate deposits. There was no response from the Spanish military forces, and instead of interfering, Spain decided to abandon this area (Seddon 24).

2.1.1.2 Madrid Agreement and the outbreak of guerrilla warfare

In the meantime, a tripartite agreement was signed between Morocco, Mauritania and Spain, or what is known as the Madrid Accords, through which it was agreed that Spain would withdraw from the region and handover its keys to the administration of Morocco and Mauritania in 1976. Since the Moroccan regime could not wait, it proceeded immediately its movements and Impose military control over as much territory as possible,

that between November and December 1975 Morocco occupied the main cities and the so-called Useful Triangle; in the northwest, which included Laayoune and the phosphate mines in Boucraa. The sudden attack did not match the strength and modest capabilities of the POLISARIO front. Unlike the Green March, this attack was very successful; it also caused the Spanish abandoning Villa Cisneros (Dakhla), the main city in the southern part of the territory in January 1976, a month later On February 27, 1976, the Moroccans approached Bir Lahlou. As for the Polisario Front, it is also striving, planning and working to get rid of any external forces ; It announced the formation of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic which is government recognized by about 70 countries. Meanwhile, the Guerrilla war broke out between the Polisario Front, Morocco and Mauritania (seddon25).

At the beginning of the war, it tried to raid both Mauritania and Moroccan outposts in Western Sahara and resist their forces, on the grounds that they are external colonies. The Moroccan forces in the north were unable to completely isolate the Polisario from their rear bases in Algeria; however its plans and attacks continued to be successful in this region and it continued to annex other parts of the region. Later on Mauritania withdrew from occupied Western Sahara by signing a peace treaty with the Polisario Front and recognized the Sahrawi Republic. Now the Front can focus more on the war and confront Morocco only, which has not limited the implementation of its plans .On the contrary, Morocco annexed the Mauritanian part of the lands ceded by Spain. Furthermore, to prevent further attacks, it built a 2,700-kilometer-long sand berm filled with mines and patrols by the Moroccan Armed Forces. It is considered as one of the largest military infrastructure projects in the world (Chograni).

2.1.1.3 Declaring a Cease-fire and Resorting Negotiation

Given the continuity of the war which is represented in offensive and defensive operations by Morocco and the Polisario Front without any results that satisfy both sides, the

United Nations finally decided to intervene and put an end to this conflict. It made a peace proposal in 1988 called MINURSO United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara, which is a Proposal providing for eligibility of referendum on the indigenous Sahrawi to decide whether they wanted independence for Western Sahara under the leadership of Polisario Front or whether the region will officially become part of Morocco. Initially, both sides accepted this peace proposal and agreed to a cease-fire in 1991. When the UN administrative and peacekeeping force arrived in Western Sahara to prepare for the referendum, thousands of Moroccan settlers entered the area and insisted on assessing their electoral credentials. This procedure was prolonged and the referendum was not organized due to the emergence of differences over who is entitled to vote. But the cease-fire lasted for a considerable period during which the Polisario Front continued its campaign. Besides a number of setbacks from the front, no changes occurred until 2001. King Mohammed V announced his disapproval of holding a referendum in Western Sahara; therefore, the United Nations began to search for alternative solutions to the 1988 proposal. In 2003, it was suggested that the territory should be governed for five years, followed by a referendum, but Morocco rejected the proposal. In 2007 Morocco proposed autonomy but made no offer for a referendum which is another rejected proposal, So Morocco and the Polisario Front met in December to renew discussion on the situation. Continuing negotiations did not come up with a solution or agreement between them, which made the United Nations renew the peacekeeping mission (History).

2.1.2 The International Involvement in the Conflict

The world's most powerful governments, organizations, and bordering countries have all taken different perspectives on the Western Sahara dispute. Furthermore, with the participation of key bodies such as the United Nations, Algeria, and Morocco, as well as support from nations such as France and the United States, it is evident that the issue has

broad implications. And achieving a peaceful resolution remains a big challenge, so that the involved parties require to maintain diplomatic efforts and an unwavering commitment to discussion and compromise.

2.1.2.1 The Position of International Organizations toward the Conflict

The level of involvement of the world's international organizations demonstrates the significance of the Saharan conflict. There are organizations at the Arab and African level such as; The Arab League which has appropriately neglected the issue, preferring to focus on less sensitive issues, but it has indirectly contributed to the healing of the schism between Morocco and Algeria. However, for ideological factors certain Arab states have taken sides such as; the Gulf monarchies, particularly Saudi Arabia, have shown significant support for King Hassan, while South Yemen and Syria have recognised the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) in the name of "revolutionary solidarity." In contrast to the Arab league, the SADR was eventually accepted by the African Unity Organization in February 1983. Its support for the SADR position rather than Morocco is due to Morocco's violation of two main OAU principles: Colonial people's right to self-determination and the integrity of borders inherited from European powers. After this decision, Morocco dropped out of the organization. Despite the OAU's apparent unity, half of the member states admitted the SADR, where many others supported Morocco (18 countries joined in a protest march upon Morocco's withdrawal). Moreover, king Hassan has offered economic and technical rewards to the African states in order to cut diplomatic ties with the SADR, and this policy has seen success at the level of Uganda, Angola and Nigeria which has suggested the gap between the OAU's formal policy and the acts of certain members. In addition, the quest of king Hassan to improve his international standing pushed him to mediate in the Angolan civil war and Mauritania-Senegal dispute. He also hosted the Franco-African, Maghreb, and Arab league summits, which helped him in achieving his goal (Arkell 429-430).

Two other main organizations at the global level: the UN and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) which both have strongly condemned Morocco's annexation of Western Sahara. The UN in the beginning of the conflict had an unclear position and it has accepted the division of the territory between Morocco and Mauritania. Then following its apparently effective operations in Afghanistan, the Gulf war, Cambodia, Angola, and Namibia, it has increased its attempts to reach a solution for the region, and became an influential figure behind the proposal to hold a referendum. However, these efforts were restricted due to the outbreak of hostilities and king Hassan's unchangeable position for Morocco's absolute geographical integrity. Although the NAM's influence is not as strong as the UN's, it has always supported the right of self-determination for the Sahrawi people, and one of its main founding members is Yugoslavia which was the only European state that has recognized the SADR at that time. Besides, the influence of organization can be shown implicitly through the Algerian hegemony within the movement which led it to not give up the Sahrawi battle in order to not lose its credibility (Arkell 430-431).

2.1.2.2 The Position of Maghreb Countries toward the Conflict

It is known that Algeria is the most supportive country for the Polisario Front since its inception in 1973. This assistance was not limited to providing the front with weapons, training and foodstuffs, but also backed up and defended their decision and position. AS the division of the region between Morocco and Mauritania under the Madrid Agreements, which ignored the presence of the Polisario as a main member in the agreement; the Algerian regime expelled 45,000 Moroccan families residing in the country in response to Morocco and in support of the Polisario. In addition, in March 1976, Algeria recognized the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, this decision led to the severance of diplomatic relations between the two countries and geopolitical rivalry broke out between them. Moreover Algeria's intervention has been accused by the public opinion as an appropriate excuse to antagonize

Morocco, but its rulers insisted that the right to self-determination for the Sahara, is based on a principle adopted by The Modern Algeria, and they continued to aid trying to find a settlement for the Sahara conflict against Morocco and demanded that it be discussed in international circles, such as the United Nations, and not directly with Morocco (Rachidi). As for Tunisia, from the very beginning in 1976, when short armed skirmishes began between the two conflicting parties, it officially declared its neutrality and offered to mediate a peaceful settlement of the Sahrawi issue under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. This is due to the circumstances that it faced. From a side, the western Sahara conflict coincided with the abolition of the Tunisian-Libyan union signed in 1974, so it tried not to risk provoking the wrath of Gaddafi and his economic revenge and severed diplomatic relations between the two countries and they were not restored until 1977 instead it adopted positive neutrality on the issue , from the other side, it considered this firm position as a way to avoid any differences with Algeria and Morocco .Despite the difficulty of the matter of being under the pressure and subjected by two neighbors and brotherly countries, which strive from time to time to mobilize Tunisia's support and persuade it to abandon its position regarding this issue. Tunisia has been repeatedly accused of siding with an opponent. But the official position of strict neutrality tends to be adopted by all Tunisian political parties (Belkaid).

Despite the fact that, Colonel Qaddafi was the first Arab leader who rush to support the Polisario front and supplied it with material even before going into the conflict with Morocco at a time when it was fighting the Spanish, Libya's attitude towards the Polisario Front and the Western Sahara conflict still characterized by ambiguity and inconsistency. Further Gaddafi's assessment continued to provide aid until the eighties, at the same time he appeared through it his antipathy for the Moroccan monarchy (Arkell 428).

Unlike other countries, Mauritania had two different positions, since it was at some

point a third party in this case. First, the Western Sahara war drained its budget, so it decided to withdraw and officially ended its role in this war. Later on, it was reconciled with the Polisario organization (Branigin).

2.1.2.3 The Position of the United States, Europe France and Spain

The Moroccan regime has been a major ally of the US in North Africa, providing communications, transit, and port facilities. It has also supported the US initiatives in the Middle East and Africa, and has intervened as a regional support for French and US policy. Moreover, as international political and diplomatic support for the Polisario and the SADR increases, it is likely that the White House, under congressional pressure, may increase pressure on King Hassan to discuss peace. Under these conditions, the US is likely to join those who have begun to demand for 'third party intermediaries' to initiate separate conversations with the Moroccan regime and the Polisario. Such an attempt to introduce mediation' will be met with opposition from the Polisario, which will continue to advocate for direct negotiations between the two sides directly involved as the basis for any peace talks (Seddon 33-34).

France has remained a major supplier of arms to Morocco, despite the French Socialist Party's long-standing relations with the Polisario. It has maintained a policy of formal neutrality on the Western Saharan issue and has not recognised Moroccan sovereignty or the SADR. President Mitterand has been concerned about improving Franco-Algerian relations, but is wary of affecting commercial relations with Morocco. Recent shifts in the balance of power in French politics make significant changes of policy less likely (Seddon 34). Spain has attempted to maintain cordial relations with both Algeria and Morocco, while also recognising the right of the Saharan people to self-determination. In 1978, one of Spain's left-wing opposition groups, the UCD (ruling Union del Centro Democratico) recognized the Polisario as the sole legitimate representative of the struggling Saharan people, but when the

Spanish Socialist Labor Party came to power in 1982, they maintained an equivocal position. In September 1985, the Spanish government closed the three Polisario offices and expelled the representatives. This decision reflects the development of a new policy of closer relations with the Moroccan regime. However, The accession of Spain to the European Community will bring the issue of the Western Sahara more clearly before the European Parliament. The success of the Paris Conference and the 10th Anniversary Celebrations of the SADR are important milestones. There is growing support in Britain, France, Spain and West Africa for self-determination for the Saharan people (Seddon 34-35).

2.2 US Foreign Policy toward Western Sahara under Trump's Administration

The Trump Administration, like its predecessors, has embraced a policy that favors the United Nations diplomatic role in resolving this protracted war. The United States publicly supports a political settlement, ideally through direct dialogue. According to some newspaper reports, the US reiterated the Obama Administration's language in support of Morocco's Autonomy Plan as "serious, realistic, and credible" and a "potential approach that could satisfy the aspirations of the people of Western Sahara to run their own affairs in peace and dignity." The US perspective, on the other hand, is more complicated, referring to Morocco's autonomy proposal as only one possible path. Amy Tachco, Political Coordinator at the United States Mission to the United Nations in New York, stated the US stance in a clear manner: So this year [2018], the United States has taken a different approach with this renewal [of MINURSO]. Our goal is to send two messages. The first is that there can be no more "business as usual" with MINURSO and Western Sahara. The second is that the time is now to lend our support, our full support for Personal Envoy Kohler in his efforts to facilitate negotiations with the parties.

The United States wants to see progress at last in the political process meant to resolve this conflict. That is why we have renewed the MINURSO mandate for six months,

instead of one year. Over the next six months we expect that the parties will return to the table and engage Personal Envoy Kohler. We also hope that neighboring states will recognize the special and important role they can play in supporting this negotiating process.

The United States emphasizes the need to move forward toward a just, lasting, and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. We continue to view Morocco's autonomy plan as serious, credible, and realistic, and it represents one potential approach to satisfy the aspirations of the people in Western Sahara to run their own affairs with peace and dignity [Emphasis added]. We call on the parties to demonstrate their commitment to a realistic, practicable, and enduring political solution based on compromise by resuming negotiations without preconditions and in good faith. Entrenched positions must not stand in the way of progress (Tachco, qtd. in zoubir 62).

2.2.1 The Conflict during Trump's Presidency

In August 2017, the former German president Horst Köhler was designated as the United Nations Special Envoy for Western Sahara and attended exploratory discussions in late 2017 and early 2018. The UN Security Council's decision to renew MINURSO's mandate for six months in April 2018 was prompted by irritation with the lack of progress, MINURSO's increasingly open-ended nature, and a desire to reduce the UN's peacekeeping budget in general. To reassure Rabat, the United States and France included language reflecting their viewpoint in April 2018 and following UN Security Council decisions. Köhler organized the first session of discussions between Morocco and Polisario in Geneva in December 2018, which was the first round of talks between them in six years. However, Köhler's resignation in May 2019 and the Council's October 2019 reversion to one-year mandates halted progress. Following, Morocco and Polisario set out conditions for the appointment of a new UN envoy, including a high-profile personality and rejecting diplomats

from Scandinavian countries (due to their sympathy with the Sahrawis cause), Germany (because Rabat had learned from the experience with Köhler how difficult it was to oppose Berlin) and a UN Security Council permanent member state (in order to minimize unnecessary political pressure on the negotiations), which made it a hard task for the UN Secretary-General António Guterres to identify an appropriate alternative for Köhler. However, Morocco's expectations and Western Sahara's reputation discouraged international diplomats from taking the job. So, the skepticism about the possibility of settling the war prompted the UN Security Council to return to its regular one-year renewals for MINURSO.

Furthermore, Morocco started to create facts on the ground by inviting friendly African and Middle Eastern countries to open consulates in Western Sahara, starting by Côte d'Ivoire in June 2019 in Laayoune, followed by the Comoros then a slew of African governments followed suit. The United Arab Emirates became the first Arab country to open a consulate in Western Sahara on November 4, 2020. While the Polisario Secretary-General Brahim Ghali denounced consulate openings as breach of Western Sahara's legal status. It also carried out two laws to define its territorial waters and an Exclusive Economic Zone off the Western Saharan coast. These diplomatic missions, according to Rabat, contributed to confirm its claim to sovereignty over the territory, which helped Morocco to increase its investment and trade with sub-Saharan Africa, rejoin the African Union, and used its new ties to lobby African governments to drop their recognition of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic.

The Polisario Front rejected Morocco's move to create facts on the ground, and faced a stalemate at the UN and pressure from the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic to resume hostilities with Morocco. Therefore, the Polisario Front's fifteenth congress focused on how to react to deteriorating political conditions, with activists divided between supporters of military action and defenders of diplomacy (International Crisis Group 3-8).

The Polisario Front tensions with Rabat and within its own movement have been exacerbated by skirmishes over the Guerguerat road, which connects Morocco and Mauritania through Western Sahara. Pro-Polisario civilians and Polisario fighters have been blocking traffic along the road since October 2020, and Morocco has protested to the UN about the blockade. Morocco violated the ceasefire by mobilizing troops inside the 30 km-wide restricted area on 13 November. On 14 November, Polisario declared an end to the ceasefire and resumption of hostilities with Morocco. In the following weeks, Polisario's military arm attacked Morocco's defensive positions, but Morocco denies incurring any casualties. The return to war has energized Sahrawi youth in the camps and abroad, and Polisario has reactivated its international solidarity networks (International Crisis Group 8-10).

2.2.2 US Recognition of Moroccan Sovereignty over Western Sahara

President Donald J. Trump stated on December 10, 2020, that the United States will acknowledge Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara, reversing decades of US policy. Despite a 1991 UN truce and continued UN Security Council demands that Morocco and the Polisario Front seek a mutually acceptable solution, neither party has relinquished its claim to Western Sahara. Trump's speech effectively ended the US's support for UN-led negotiations, putting the US at odds with the majority of the international community, which instantly criticized the US decision as a violation of the right to self-determination (EICHENSEHR 318).

Historically, the United States has joined the majority of countries in keeping neutral on Western Sahara's status. Recent administrations have demonstrated a greater willingness to engage with Morocco on the Western Sahara issue, but before Trump's announcement, the US had not recognized Moroccan authority over Western Sahara or the self-proclaimed SADR. To prevent the appearance of endorsing Moroccan sovereignty over

the territory, successive administrations prohibited Morocco from using bilateral aid in Western Sahara (Eichensehr 320).

Polisario officials rejected the Trump announcement as an unacceptable violation of international law, but they also saw it as an opportunity to draw renewed global media attention to the conflict. Morocco on one hand announced its decision to keep troops in Guerguerat indefinitely, rejecting the possibility of negotiating a future withdrawal. On the other hand Polisario has stated clearly that it will refuse to participate in any future ceasefire talks under these circumstances. And on January, 24, 2021, the Pro-Polisario forces shelled the Guerguerat area and threatened to escalate the conflict (International Crisis Group 12).

2.2.3 The International Stance on Trump's Announcement

US President Donald Trump's decision to support Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara prompts the world public opinion to react and interfere in this matter. The majority of the international organizations, countries, politicians, and others have declared their position which was the opposition to every decision that violates international rights, and Trump's announcement is among these decisions, most of these positions were in support of the United Nations resolutions. The reactions were as follows:

It was expected that international organizations would not stand without any reaction in front of the Trump Declaration; rather they stated their position clearly. They confirmed and agreed on one decision which was [to reaffirm their commitment to UN-mediated negotiations on Western Sahara's sovereignty]. For the United Nations it responded to this decision negatively. Stephane Dujarric reaffirmed that the UN position on Western Sahara had not changed, stating that "there are no major operational changes from our part" and that the UN believes a "solution can be found through dialogue based on the relevant Security Council resolutions" (Hover et al 322).

The dialogue was accomplished, that the Senior of UN officials briefed and discussed

the UN Security Council in a closed session on Western Sahara after US President Donald Trump recognized Morocco's sovereignty over the disputed region. They considered Trump's announcement contradicted to long-standing US policy. Further it do not correspond to US firm and grounded positions which is represented in its support for the cease-fire since 1991 between Morocco and the Polisario Front (Nichols).

The announcement caused concern among African analysts and political parties. They considered that this step is nothing but a danger and an obstruction to the situation of the conflict that both the African Union and the United Nations have spent decades trying to resolve. The ruling African National Congress party in South Africa studied the decision from a humanitarian point of view and asked about the conditions of the population in the region and in Palestine and said "The unalienable rights of the people of Western Sahara and Palestine to self-determination and freedom shall not be derailed by Trump's deal". In addition, the ANC statement declared that "The ANC calls on all international and progressive forces on the continent and the world to condemn this deal, and to continue to work for the implementation of UN and AU resolutions". For the African Union, no position or opinion emerged from it (Hover et al 323).

The European Union followed the same path of the UN Security Council which is opposing the US shift on Western Sahara. This was confirmed by Peter Stano, spokesman for the European External Action Service, saying: "The European Union's position on the Western Sahara conflict remains fully in line with the position and resolutions of the United Nations Security Council on Western Sahara." In addition, the European Union insisted on the peace process at the United Nations, affirmed its continued support for the United Nations, and urged the importance of a process for negotiation and advancing a solution after Washington reversed course to recognize Morocco's claim to the territory. In this regard, Peter Stano said: "The European Union considers Western Sahara a non-self-governing

territory in the sense of the United Nations, where a process ad hoc to the United Nations is underway to determine its final status, which is supported by the European Union"

Stano added that the EU hopes to "restart the political process with the aim of achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, based on a compromise which will provide the right to self-determination for the people of Western Sahara... We continue to encourage the parties to work towards this solution, within the framework of the United Nations" (Barigazzi).

Considering that Algeria is the first ally of the Polisario Front, it announced its position immediately after Trump announced his decision, and stated that it did not support this decision. And It took a complete rejection as a reaction and justified it by saying that this decision contradicts the decisions and the principle of the United Nations. In addition, such a step would disrupt and negatively affect the efforts made to end the long conflict over contracts on the land of the desert. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Algiers stated regarding the US decision: "It has no legal effect because it is inconsistent with UN resolutions, especially Security Council resolutions in Western Sahara." Another statement in a statement said, "The announcement would undermine the de-escalation efforts put in place at all levels in order to pave the way for launching a real political process"(Algeria rejects trump's ...).

Several other governments responded negatively to Trump's announcement including Russia; it condemned this decision, and perceived it as a violation of international law. Spain also responded, by reiterating its commitment to the "principles and resolutions of the United Nations" on this dispute. France's position was more nuanced, where it stated that this decision puts it under pressure and may create a problem for Paris. On one hand, the United States' recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara is inconsistent with international law and UN Security Council resolutions. On the other hand, this statement may

encourage Morocco to demand France to issue a similar declaration, which aroused their concern (International crisis group 11).

2.3 The Rationale behind Trump's Announcement

The analysis aims to explore the reasons behind Donald Trump's decision to recognize Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara, with a specific focus on the context of Arab-Israel normalization. It seeks to understand the factors that influenced this decision and how it relates to the broader regional dynamics. By examining the regional diplomacy efforts, the strengthening of U.S.-Moroccan relations, the pursuit of strategic alliances, economic considerations, and domestic political factors, the analysis aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the reasons behind Trump's recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara.

There are several factors that could have contributed to and influenced the emergence of Trump's recognition of Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara. One factor that appeared in Trump's first tweet regarding the recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara was the mention of the long and positive relationship between the United States and Morocco. This factor highlights the historical ties and positive rapport that have existed between the two countries over the years. Trump prepared the world public opinion with a tweet saying: "Morocco recognized the United States in 1777. It is thus fitting we recognize their sovereignty over the Western Sahara." 5:10 PM · Dec 10, 2020.

It seems that former President Donald Trump used Twitter as a platform to deliver a political message regarding the recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara. He highlighted the historical relationship between the United States and Morocco, emphasizing that Morocco recognized the United States in 1777. By referencing this historical fact, Trump aimed to establish a sense of reciprocity and acknowledge the longstanding ties between the two nations. The intention behind this messaging was to imply

that the recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara was not a sudden or arbitrary decision. Instead, Trump sought to convey that it was rooted in a deep and enduring connection between the two countries. By framing the decision within the context of historical relations, he likely aimed to garner support and legitimize the recognition in the eyes of the international community.

Another significant factor is geopolitical interests. The decision may have been driven by strategic considerations, such as forging closer ties with Morocco as a key regional ally or countering the influence of other nations in the region. In this context, it is worth noting Morocco's efforts to align its policies with those of the United States. Morocco actively worked to change the trajectory of its policy in order to fit in with the USA's strategic interests. By doing so, Morocco aimed to position itself as the leading ally in the region, aligning its actions and goals with those of the United States. This alignment is likely to have motivated Trump to reward Morocco with the recognition of Western Sahara. It can be seen as a gesture of appreciation for Morocco's efforts to align its policies and strategic objectives with those of the United States. By recognizing Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara, Trump may have sought to strengthen the alliance, further solidifying Morocco's status as a key regional partner.

Trump's background in business and his deal-making mindset may have shaped his decision-making process regarding the recognition. He could have viewed it as an opportunity to negotiate and secure strategic, economic, or political advantages for the United States. By treating the recognition as a transaction, Trump might have sought concessions or agreements from Morocco in exchange for the recognition of their sovereignty over Western Sahara. This approach aligns with his business-oriented approach to governance, where he aimed to maximize benefits for the United States through deal-making.

2.3.1 The Main Reason behind Trump's Proclamation

In a series of tweets the former president Donald Trump announced two main event in the international arena starting by: “Today, I signed a proclamation recognizing Moroccan sovereignty over the Western Sahara. Morocco’s serious, credible, and realistic autonomy proposal is the ONLY basis for a just and lasting solution for enduring peace and prosperity!” (Donald J. Trump). This tweet signifies his statement in which he recognizes Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara, and emphasizes the autonomy plan as the sole basis for creating a reasonable and durable solution for peace and prosperity in the region. Moreover, this verbal and informal announcement was officially released by the Federal Register of the United States Government on December 15, 2020 as a Presidential document where the former President Donald J. Trump issued this proclamation to express the United States’ support for Morocco’s autonomy proposal as the sole solution to the Western Sahara dispute. The proclamation recognizes Moroccan sovereignty over the entire Western Sahara territory and dismisses the possibility of an independent Sahrawi State. It urges the parties involved to engage in discussions based on Morocco’s autonomy plan. The proclamation also highlights the United States’ commitment to promoting economic and social development in the Western Sahara, including the establishment of a consulate in Dakhla to facilitate economic and business opportunities. This proclamation, dated December 4, 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DONALD J. TRUMP, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim that, the United States recognizes that the entire Western Sahara territory is part of the Kingdom of Morocco (Recognizing the Sovereignty of the Kingdom)(Appendix C).

The declaration tweet was preceded by another announcement which tackles a new diplomatic event,“ Another HISTORIC breakthrough today! Our two GREAT friends Israel

and the Kingdom of Morocco have agreed to full diplomatic relations – a massive breakthrough for peace in the Middle East!” (Donald J. Trump).

This tweet highlights the historical nature of the agreement between Israel and Morocco to establish full diplomatic relations. It portrays the development as a significant breakthrough for peace in the Middle East. From this statement the tweet can be considered as a celebration of the positive outcome of diplomatic efforts between Israel and Morocco.

The timing and the content of both tweets reflect the relationship between them. On one hand, both tweets were posted at the same time which indicates a close connection between the two incidents. On the other hand, the content is also crucial in which one of them announces the establishment of full diplomatic relations between Israel and Morocco while the other one declares US recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara. The relationship between both tweets signifies the possibility of working on a larger contract or an agreement between the involved parties that connect the US proclamation to the normalization of relations between Israel and Morocco. Moreover, it can be shown in the joint declaration issued by the Kingdom of Morocco, the United States of America, and the State of Israel. It refers to a telephone conversation between King Mohammed VI of Morocco, President Donald Trump of the United States, and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, announcing the opening of a new era in relations between Morocco and Israel. The declaration emphasizes the recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over the Western Sahara and expresses support for Morocco’s autonomy proposal as the basis for a just and lasting solution to the Western Sahara dispute. It also highlights the importance of economic cooperation, the establishment of diplomatic relations, and the promotion of peace and stability in the Middle East. The declaration includes commitments to implement the agreements and take further actions before the end of January. It was signed on December 22, 2020, in Rabat, Morocco (Joint Declaration)(Appendix D).

Keating argues that according to the second tweet there was an exchange of benefits between the United States and Morocco in order to secure Morocco's agreement to normalize relations with Israel. The Trump administration had a goal of gaining recognition from as many Arab countries as possible for Israel before January 20 and was willing to offer significant incentives to those countries. The United Arab Emirates received a \$23 billion arms deal, and Sudan was removed from the list of state sponsors of terrorism. In the case of Morocco, its recognition of Israeli sovereignty came at the cost of concessions regarding the Western Sahara territory. This diplomatic development is significant because no other country currently acknowledges Moroccan sovereignty over the Western Sahara, which is classified as a "non-self-governing territory" by the United Nations. It is worth noting that the United States has previously shown favoritism towards Morocco in similar situations (Keating).

2.3.2 The Abraham Accords

The Abraham Accords Declaration emphasizes the importance of peace, mutual understanding, and coexistence in the Middle-East and worldwide. It promotes interfaith dialogue, cooperation among states, and respect for human dignity, freedom, and diversity. The declaration supports efforts to combat radicalization, foster prosperity, and provide a better future for children. It welcomes the progress made in establishing diplomatic relations between Israel and its neighboring countries under the principles of the Abraham Accords, with a shared commitment to a better future referring to the Abraham Accords. This agreement was considered part of the Accords, as it was included in the U.S. Department of State's website dedicated to the Abraham Accords (The Abraham Accords).

On September 15, 2020, a significant event took place at the White House in Washington, DC. Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the Foreign Minister of the UAE Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, and the Foreign Minister of Bahrain

Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani participated in a ceremony where they signed a trilateral document known as the "Abraham Accords Declaration." This declaration aimed to promote peace and cooperation in the Middle East and drew its name from Abraham, who is considered the common patriarch of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. U.S. President Donald Trump, who added his signature, also witnessed the declaration. Moreover, On October 23, 2020, Israel and Sudan agreed to normalize their relations. The leaders of both countries, along with U.S. President Donald Trump, issued a joint declaration stating their intention to end the state of belligerence and establish diplomatic relations. Although no publicly available document had been signed at that time, it was acknowledged that these new relations between Israel and Sudan were an expansion of the Abraham Accords, as indicated by a fact sheet published by the White House. Then On December 22, 2020, Israel, Morocco, and the United States signed a Joint Declaration announcing the establishment of full diplomatic relations and the normalization of their relations. This declaration encompassed various areas, including the immediate authorization of direct commercial flights between the two countries. While not explicitly referring to the Abraham Accords, this agreement was considered part of the Accords, as it was included on the U.S. Department of State's website dedicated to the Abraham Accord (Singer).

The United States, under the Trump administration, played a significant role in brokering the Israel-Morocco deal, which marked the fourth agreement facilitated by the US between Israel and Arab countries. As part of the agreement, President Trump recognized Morocco's sovereignty over the Western Sahara, a region that has been at the center of a long-standing territorial dispute involving Morocco and the Algeria-backed Polisario Front (Holland).

Jared Kushner, a senior advisor to former President Donald Trump, and his team continued negotiations with other Arab and Muslim countries, aiming to finalize additional

agreements before the end of Trump's term. This diplomatic breakthrough signifies the Trump administration's efforts to normalize relations between Israel and Arab countries. He announced that Morocco and Israel had agreed to reopen their liaison offices in Tel Aviv and Rabat, respectively. These offices had been closed by Morocco in 2000 during the second Palestinian uprising. Furthermore, Kushner stated that both countries would establish embassies in each other's capitals "in the near future" (France 24). Moreover, he flew on December 21, 2020, from Israel to Morocco on the first commercial flight to mark the re-establishment of diplomatic relations. He will meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel before traveling with an American delegation, including an Israeli delegation led by Meir Ben-Shabbat. The visit aims to strengthen ties and sign bilateral agreements, particularly in the economic sector. This follows Trump's proclamation recognizing Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara (Hekking).

According to Tharoor, it has been reported that Morocco, along with other predominantly Arab nations, has taken the step of establishing open diplomatic relations with Israel. As a consequence of this agreement, it seems likely that the United States will officially acknowledge Morocco's territorial claims over the disputed Western Sahara region. This recognition sets the United States apart as the sole major global power endorsing Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara (Tharoor).

The conflict between Morocco and the Polisario front that started in the mid-seventeenth century involved a series of exchanged armed attacks that stopped with the intervention of the United Nations. This conflict caused tensions between the countries of the region and has poisoned the relations between them. This is due to the different attitudes and positions of these countries towards the conflict. The relations between Morocco and Algeria in particular became strained, given that Algeria is the first ally and the largest supporter of the Polisario Front and Morocco is one of the parties involved in the conflict, as each of the

two of these countries tries to persuade the rest of the countries to adopt their position. So this conflict became one of the main obstacles in the process of regional integration.

After the stalemate in the conflict for a long time, there have been changes during Trump's leadership, and the most important thing that happened is Trump's recognition of Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara. The decision aroused the confusion of international public opinion, most of which was rejection, and questions arose about the reason for this decision. Trump utilized Twitter as a platform to announce his decision, using concise messages to convey the process, reasoning, and agreement reached. The main driving force behind the decision was the establishment of diplomatic ties between Morocco and Israel, which held considerable significance. Furthermore, the enduring relationship between Morocco and the United States, along with the influence of Trump's close advisors, also played a part in shaping the decision. By leveraging the succinct nature of Twitter, Trump effectively communicated the key factors that influenced his recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this dissertation went through different stages starting by an overview of the US foreign policy and its evolution on the Maghreb countries, with a particular focus on Western Sahara. It provided a comprehensive analysis that includes a comparative approach in which this work dug into the differences and similarities of US foreign policy before and during the Trump administration, emphasizing on Obama and Trump administrations.

The research had also shed light on the complexities and long-standing nature of the Western Sahara conflict, emphasizing its neglected status on the international stage. The origins of the conflict, its main actors, and the underlying dynamics had been thoroughly explored. Additionally, the positions of key stakeholders, including the international organizations such as; the United Nations, Maghreb countries, as well as external powers such as the USA, France, and Spain, had been analyzed, providing a comprehensive understanding of the regional and international dimensions of the conflict. Furthermore, the study focused on the impact of the Trump administration on the Western Sahara conflict, particularly through the declaration recognizing Moroccan sovereignty over the territory, and providing the international response to this policy shift, taking into account the reactions from various countries and organizations, as well as the Polisario Front which had rejected that announcement. Moreover, it critically analyzed the rationale behind this decision, with an emphasis on the normalization of relations between Morocco and Israel. On December 10, 2020, former President Trump took to Twitter to declare the US recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over the Western Sahara territory. This declaration was later formalized on December 15 through a proclamation released by the Federal Register of the United States government. While several factors may have contributed to Trump's decision, including

historical friendship and geopolitical interests, the primary driver behind his recognition was the aim of normalizing relations between Morocco and Israel.

This intention becomes evident through Trump's Twitter post and the Joint declaration, which served as significant proof points highlighting the deal made in the context of normalizing relations. It is worth noting that Trump's support for Arab-Israeli normalization was consistent, as demonstrated by his involvement in the Abraham Accords. Furthermore, the dissertation was based on the political analysis through considering various sources, such as the tweets, official documents, and Joint declaration, it gained a deeper understanding of the motivations and reasoning behind the US proclamation. These sources collectively shed light on the decision-making process and the significance of the diplomatic relations established. Trump's role as a supporter of Arab-Israeli normalization further underscored the importance he placed on this aspect, which influenced his recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara.

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Reflecting on the research conducted, it was evident that the Trump administration's foreign policy had a significant impact on the Western Sahara conflict. Despite the change in administration, President Biden has not reversed Trump's declaration, indicating a level of continuity in US policy. This highlights the need for a continued engagement with all parties involved in the conflict and a concerted effort towards a peaceful and lasting resolution.

Moving forward, it is recommended that policy-makers maintain an active involvement in the Western Sahara conflict, seeking constructive dialogue and working towards a comprehensive resolution. Additionally, further research and analysis are encouraged to capture the evolving dynamics of the Maghreb region, considering the changing geopolitical landscape and the interests of both regional and international actors.

This study aided in the comprehension of Moroccan-Western Sahara conflict within the context of US foreign policy in the Maghreb region, highlighting differences in approach and biases towards Morocco, particularly during the Trump administration. The research provided crucial facts into the complexities of the conflict, assessed major policy decisions, and investigated the reasons behind them. Furthermore, this analysis led to the conclusion that Morocco's normalization of relations with Israel is the primary factor behind Trump's recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara. By addressing these important issues, this study aimed to facilitate constructive dialogue and contribute to the prospects of achieving a peaceful resolution in the future.

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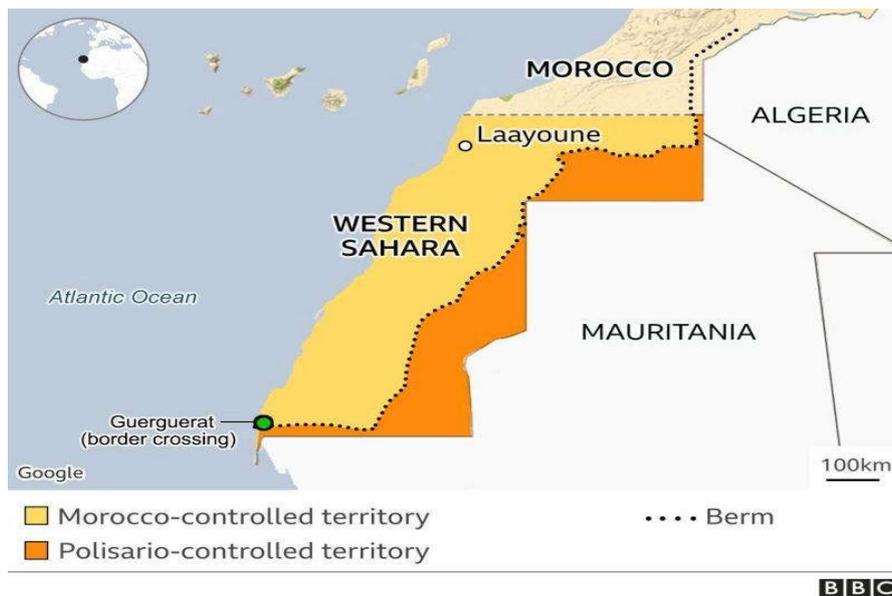
Appendices

Appendix A. Western Sahara before Division



Source: "Western Sahara profile." BBC NEWS. 11 July

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Appendix B. Western Sahara after Division

Source: "Western Sahara profile." BBC NEWS. 11 July

2011. www.google.com/amp/s/www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14115273.amp.

Appendix C: The US Proclamation of Recognizing the Moroccan Sovereignty over Western Sahara

PUBLISHED DOCUMENT

Proclamation 10126 of December 4, 2020

Recognizing the Sovereignty of the Kingdom of Morocco Over the Western Sahara

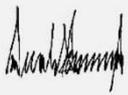
A Proclamation

The United States affirms, as stated by previous Administrations, its support for Morocco's autonomy proposal as the only basis for a just and lasting solution to the dispute over the Western Sahara territory. Therefore, as of today, the United States recognizes Moroccan sovereignty over the entire Western Sahara territory and reaffirms its support for Morocco's serious, credible, and realistic autonomy proposal as the only basis for a just and lasting solution to the dispute over the Western Sahara territory. The United States believes that an independent Sahrawi State is not a realistic option for resolving the conflict and that genuine autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty is the only feasible solution. We urge the parties to engage in discussions without delay, using Morocco's autonomy plan as the only framework to negotiate a mutually acceptable solution. To facilitate progress toward this aim, the United States will encourage economic and social development with Morocco, including in the Western Sahara territory, and to that end will open a consulate in the Western Sahara territory, in Dakhla, to promote economic and business opportunities for the region.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DONALD J. TRUMP, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim that, the United States recognizes that the entire Western Sahara territory is part of the Kingdom of Morocco.

☐

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-fifth.



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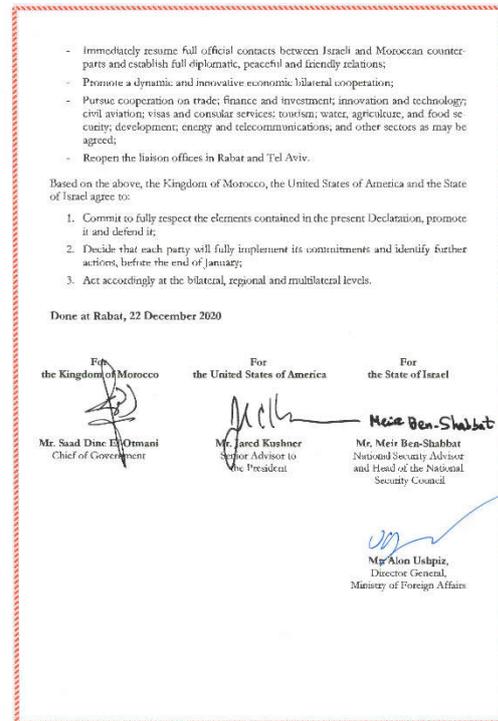
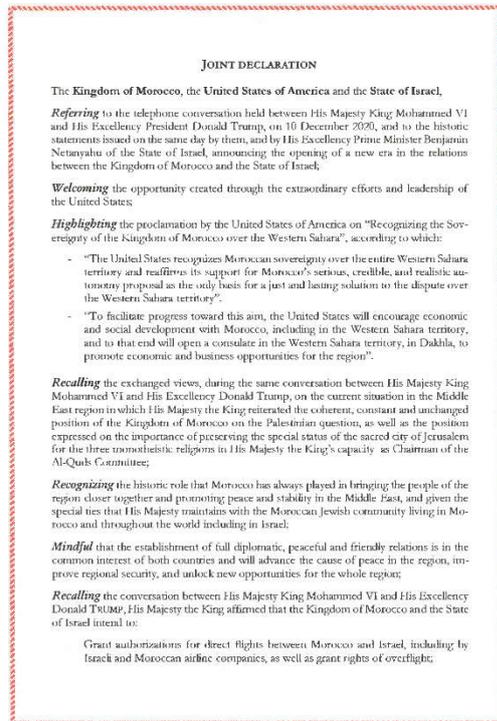
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Source: "Recognizing the Sovereignty of the Kingdom of Morocco over the Western Sahara." Federal Register. 15

Dec.2020. www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/12/15/2020-27738/recognizing-the-sovereignty-of-the-kingdom-of-morocco-over-the-western-sahara.

Appendix D. The Joint Declaration



Source: "Joint Declaration." *State department*. www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Joint-Declaration-US-Morocco-Israel.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwjF-5CGk57_AhXDO-KHbhnAZYQFnoECA4QAQ&usg=AOvVaw1HEE3MGC07cw3x-R1ooLvO.