

CHAPTER V CONCLUSION

The peaceful uprising against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in Syria seven years ago turned into a full-scale civil war that killed more than 340,000 people, destroyed the country and forced the involvement of global powers. This has become a global concern including the United States.

US foreign policy under Barack Obama's era was pro to human rights. However, Barack Obama wanted to maintain the existence of democratization in the Middle East. Therefore, Barack Obama intervened against Syria on the basis of human rights violations committed by the Assad Government against its citizens. In the Syrian Civil War, Barack Obama tried to intervene in the conflict because of an express human rights violation case; it was the use of chemical weapons carried out by the Assad Government against civilians in Syria.

However, after the United States was involved in the Syrian Civil War, Barack Obama as president felt a dilemma. Finally, in 2016 before Barack Obama resigned as president, Barack Obama withdrew US military forces from Syria. Referring back to the research question raised at the beginning, what are the factors that cause the United States' failure in implementing '*Responsibility to Protect*' in the Syrian Civil War during the Barack Obama Era? Then, the research question has been answered and analyzed according to the research argument.

It was explained in CHAPTER II, the Assad regime was built with four pillars; *first*, maintaining power in the hands of the al-Assad family; second, this regime helped unite the Alawi minority; *third*, controlling the entire military-intelligence apparatus; and *fourth*, the Ba'ath party's monopoly over the political system.

This has caused Syria to experience domestic social, economic and political crises such as high unemployment rates, widespread corruption, limited opportunities for social mobility, and lack of political freedom. Thus, starting on January 26, 2011, Syrian civilians held mass protests, and the March 18-19 protest was the biggest protest after the "Day of Rage" in February. Relations between the United States and Syria deteriorated during the Syrian Civil War.

It was explained to CHAPTER III, the Assad regime which abuses its power responded to violence against its civilians and carried out protracted slaughter created a heart breaking dilemma for the Obama administration. After the report on the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Government from the United Nations, Obama said that the use of weapons by the Assad government would cross the "red line" and would require US military action.

Furthermore, UNSC Resolution 2254 was the US foundation for humanitarian intervention in Syria. However, the Obama administration focused on providing humanitarian aid, and on promoting a ceasefire and political negotiations aimed at Assad's departure. One of the United States' biggest efforts in implementing RtoP in Syria was the collaboration with Turkey to build a "safe zone area" in the Turkish-Syrian border.

But, the efforts made by the United States in implementing the *'Responsibility to Protect'* were considered a failure. According to the Foreign Policy Decision-Making Theory by William D. Coplin, this study concludes that the factors that caused the United States failed in implementing RtoP in Syria:

First, the domestic factors of United States' failure in implementing RtoP such as Congress of the United States (bureaucratic influencer) did not support Barack Obama to intervene in Syria. The reason the Congress opposed Barack

Obama to intervene in Syria were the United States has no national interest in Syria, the involvement of the United States in Syria will worsen the situation, and foreign involvement tends to increase the killing of civilians and will prolong the war. Congress rebuts the argument that it is necessary to go to war over the use of chemical weapons by Assad government, particularly when other regimes that used chemical weapons in the past were not punished by the United States, and Congress argued that intervention was not necessary to maintain the credibility of the United States.

Second, the US citizens (mass influencer) criticized Obama's action. About 62 percent of American said, "***The problems of Syria are none of our business.***" Americans required Barack Obama to stay focused on his own country. They stressed on how Obama wanted to interfere in their conflict affairs while there was still much to do in his own country. Americans also stated that Obama Administration have not clearly explained what the U.S.'s goals are in Syria. They added that there was no point in intervening in Syria. The United States should not be the world police; it is not the job of the President of the United States to solve every problem in the Middle East.

Third, the scarcity of the United States' economy and military resources. Basically, intervention in Syria did not affect the United States' budget. But President Barack Obama had the biggest deficit during his presidency in the United States. The United States was forced to reduce the budget in Syria, because the US economic and military capacity did not support Obama's policy of sending military forces to Syria.

Fourth, Russia and China's involvement in the Syrian Civil War. However, the UN resolutions failed because of consecutive vetoes by Russia and China. The efforts made by the United States in intervention in Syria were very small compared to Russia and China. This is why the Assad

Government is not compliant with 'Responsibility to Protect'. Therefore, with vetoes from Russia and China that made the UN could not provide a resolution to continue interventions or other solutions, the United States could not do anything without the approval of the United Nations Security Council.

The failure of the United States in the Barack Obama era in 2011-2016 can be a lesson for the international community. There shall be activities scheduled at the international level so that a general agreement is reached regarding RtoP. Humanitarian actors need to be careful in responding to cases of humanitarian crises. Coercive actions do not always end in compliance. But it could be interrupting the actual development is very potential to be created.