

## THE AMERICAN–RUSSIAN COMPETITION OVER IRAQ DURING THE PRESIDENCIES OF GEORGE W. BUSH AND VLADIMIR PUTIN (2000–2003)

### A RIVALIDADE ENTRE OS ESTADOS UNIDOS E A RÚSSIA PELO IRAQUE DURANTE OS MANDATOS DE GEORGE W. BUSH E VLADIMIR PUTIN (2000–2003)

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**Nihad Talib Owaid Al-Humaidawi\***

\*University of Thi-Qar - College of Arts, Thi-Qar, Iraq

[art24gsh50@utq.edu.iq](mailto:art24gsh50@utq.edu.iq)

**Muayyad Shakir Kazem Al-Taie\***

\*University of Thi-Qar - College of Arts, Thi-Qar, Iraq

[art24gsh50@utq.edu.iq](mailto:art24gsh50@utq.edu.iq)

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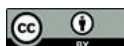
#### Abstract

Iraq has always been, and continues to be, a theater of geopolitical and economic competition between the United States of America and the Russian Federation, representing a hot spot in the foreign policy of both countries due to the intersection of interests and ambitions there. These interests became a wide arena for rivalry and even a central axis of conflict and competition between them. This competition intensified after the year 2000 due to the major transformation in Russia's strategic posture and economic stability, especially with Russia's new orientation toward regaining its former influence and protecting its strategic interests in Iraq. In contrast, the United States worked diligently to prevent any Russian influence there. However, Russia challenged American opposition by rejecting most of the UN Security Council resolutions against Iraq that were supported by the United States, even threatening to use its veto against the imposition of further sanctions, particularly the so-called "smart sanctions," as it placed pragmatic interests above all other considerations. Yet, Russia's pragmatic interests at the same time compelled it to follow its usual utilitarian policy after witnessing Washington's insistence on invading Iraq, in addition to certain promises made by the U.S. to Moscow regarding its share of oil after the removal of the Iraqi regime. Thus, Russia abandoned its old ally in exchange for those promises.

**Keywords:** Competition. George W. Bush. Vladimir Putin. Smart Sanctions. September 11 Events.

#### Resumo

*O Iraque sempre foi, e continua sendo, um palco de competição geopolítica e econômica entre os Estados Unidos da América e a Federação Russa, representando um ponto nevrálgico na política externa de ambos os países devido ao cruzamento de interesses e ambições na região. Esses interesses tornaram-se um amplo campo de rivalidade e até mesmo um eixo central de conflito e competição entre eles. Essa competição se intensificou após o ano 2000 devido à grande transformação na postura estratégica e na estabilidade econômica da Rússia, especialmente com a nova orientação do país para recuperar sua antiga influência e proteger seus interesses estratégicos no Iraque. Em contrapartida, os Estados Unidos trabalharam diligentemente para impedir qualquer influência russa na região. No entanto, a Rússia desafiou a oposição americana ao rejeitar a maioria das resoluções do Conselho de Segurança da ONU contra o Iraque que contavam com o apoio dos Estados Unidos, chegando a ameaçar usar seu veto contra a imposição de novas sanções, particularmente as chamadas "sanções inteligentes", uma vez que colocava os interesses pragmáticos acima de todas as outras considerações. No entanto, os interesses pragmáticos da Rússia, ao mesmo tempo, a obrigaram a seguir sua habitual política utilitarista após testemunhar a insistência de Washington em invadir o Iraque, além de certas promessas feitas pelos EUA a Moscou em relação à sua parcela de petróleo após a derrubada do regime iraquiano. Assim, a Rússia abandonou seu antigo aliado em troca dessas promessas.*



*Palavras-chave:* Competição. George W. Bush. Vladimir Putin. Sanções Inteligentes. Eventos de 11 de Setembro.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Iraq has always been, and continues to be, a theater of geopolitical and economic competition between the United States of America and the Russian Federation, representing a hot spot in the foreign policy of both countries due to the intersection of interests and ambitions there. These interests became a wide arena for rivalry and even a central axis of conflict and competition between them. This competition and confrontation revolved not only around economic and political interests but also around the roles each sought to play in Iraq. Each relied on different means and tools to secure an important position with the Iraqi side, enabling it to push the rival party out of the competition circle.

This rivalry intensified after the year 2000 due to the major transformation in Russia's strategic posture and economic stability, especially with Russia's new orientation toward regaining its former influence and protecting its strategic interests in Iraq, while the United States worked diligently to prevent any Russian influence there.

The importance of this study lies in describing this period (2000–2003), which began with Vladimir Putin's assumption of power in Russia. It represented a new turning point in the trajectory of American–Russian competition, particularly after the Russian Federation aspired to take on a leading role in global leadership alongside the United States of America. This had direct repercussions on Iraq during that period, especially after Russia challenged most of the resolutions supported by the United States against Iraq.

The research is divided into three axes:

- The first axis, titled **“Vladimir Putin's Assumption of Power and the Beginning of a New Phase of American–Russian Competition over Iraq in 2000,”** examines the impact of Putin's rise on Russia's position toward Iraq, which became stronger in confronting the United States and the sanctions imposed on Iraq.

- The second axis, titled **“George W. Bush and the Smart Sanctions Project and Russia’s Position in 2001,”** discusses the policy of the U.S. administration under Bush toward Iraq, which was among the most extreme and uncompromising, opposing all diplomatic means regarding Iraq, especially those proposed by Russia, in addition to initiating the imposition of new sanctions.
- The third axis, titled **“The Events of September 11 and Their Aftermath and Their Impact on the Competition over Iraq (2001–2003),”** represents a new turning point in U.S.–Russian relations after the September 11 attacks and the reflection of those events on the competition over Iraq until 2003.

The study relied on a number of valuable and diverse sources, especially published foreign documents, as well as many Arab and foreign studies, Arabic and translated English books, research papers, articles, and various newspapers, which enriched the study with much important information.

**After Russian President Vladimir Putin (2000–2008) assumed power in Russia in 2000** <sup>(1)</sup>, following the deterioration of Yeltsin's government and the latter's announcement of his resignation from office <sup>(2)</sup>, Moscow began to adopt positive and decisive positions in favor of Iraq and took the lead in breaking the sanctions imposed on it in defiance of Washington. Putin restored some aspects of strength to Russia and imposed respect for it as a major power in the world after its economic situation improved, and it began to act as a new global partner with weight and influence <sup>(3)</sup>.

Putin put domestic economic and political stability at the top of his priorities, as he worked to employ foreign policy to serve the Russian economy, which led to the

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(1) Born in Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) in October 1957, he studied law at Leningrad State University and is said to have been a training ground for KGB agents, where he later held important positions in KGB, in 1994 Putin became deputy mayor of St. Petersburg, and in 1996 he was appointed deputy chief administrative officer of the Kremlin, and in August 1999 he was appointed prime minister by President Yeltsin. On December 31, 1999, Yeltsin announced his abdication, ending the term of the first president of the Russian Federation, and on March 26, 2000, Putin assumed the presidency of the Russian Federation, and on March 14, 2008, he was elected president for a second term. John Paxton, *Leaders of Russia and The Soviet Union From the Romanov Dynasty to Vladimir Putin*, New York and London, 2003, P.143-144.  
 (2) Yeltsin announced his resignation as President of the Russian Federation on 31 December 1999 and at the same time announced the appointment of Vladimir Putin as President of the country in place of the President of the Republic of Russia until the presidential elections were held in March 2000. It was officially inaugurated in May 2000.

Bashar Saud Bashir Al-Jabour, *The Russian Role in the New World Order in the Period 2000-2006*, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Jordan, 2007, p. 95;

(3) Muthanna Ali Hussein Al-Mahdawi, *The Impact of the American Variable on Contemporary Russian-Iraqi Relations*, *Journal of International Studies*, No. 41, 2009, p. 5.

dominance of pragmatic interests, especially economic considerations, over the priorities of Russian policy, as the greater the interests, the more effective the Russian role in influencing and maneuvering, especially with the American side, and Putin translated the goals and interests of his country into cooperative relations that serve his interests and the interests of other parties, especially with regard to the Iraqi crisis <sup>(4)</sup>.

With the signs of a global economic boom in 2000, the U.S. administration realized that any interruption in Iraq's oil supply would inevitably lead to a rise in oil prices, which would negatively affect the U.S. economy during the presidential election campaigns, especially since U.S. companies were buying about two-thirds of Iraq's oil supplies for 1999 through Russian and French intermediaries, which significantly reduced the profits of these companies<sup>(5)</sup>.

In the same regard, the Security Council adopted its resolution 1293 of 31 March 2000, which provided for an increase in the amount of funding for spare parts and equipment for oil from \$300 million to \$600 million to cover any reasonable expenditures other than those payable in Iraq under the oil-for-food programme<sup>(6)</sup>. <sup>(7)</sup>

Under American pressure, Putin followed the same policy as his predecessor Yeltsin, which is to maintain close relations with their strategic ally that dates back to the Soviet era, to the extent that Russian-Iraqi relations in 2000 were raised to the level of strategic partnership<sup>(8)</sup>, as the Russian strategy at that stage was drawn according to three goals that Putin inherited from Yeltsin, two important ones, the first of which is to restore more than \$7 billion owed to Russia by Russia on the Iraqi regime. The second is the constant demand within the Security Council to pressure it to lift sanctions, and the third is to help achieve key commercial interests in Iraq, especially for Russian oil companies <sup>(9)</sup>.

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(4) Bashar Saud Bashir al-Jabour, *Ibid.*, p. 101.

(5) Hussein Faris Hussein Al-Taie, *Iraq in the Perspective of American Elites 1990-2011*, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Faculty of Education for Humanities, University of Mosul, 2024, p. 157.

(6) U.N.S.C, Resolution 1293 (2000) / adopted by the Security Council at its 4123rd meeting, on 31 March 2000, P.1-2 .

(7) U.N.S.C , 55th year : 4123rd meeting, Friday, 31 March 2000, New York ,P.2 .

(8) Saif Mu'taz Omar al-Manaseer, *Ibid.*, p. 4.

(9) Aslihan Anlar, *Russian foreign Policy Towards Iraq in The Post-Cold War Era, 2006* ,P.58; Robert O. Freedman, *Putin and The Middle East*, *Middle East Review of International Affairs* ,Vol.6, No.2 , 2002 ,P.514 .

It is worth mentioning that this is the first visit of an Iraqi Minister of Defense to a foreign country since 1991<sup>(10)</sup>, and this visit came within the framework of the Iraqi government's quest to acquire some advanced Russian technologies, for its part, Moscow expressed its desire to provide Iraq with defense systems (SA300) capable of shooting down the United States at a greater distance From 50 km <sup>(11)</sup>.

This visit angered the United States, which was quick to pressure the UNMOVIC Commission of Inquiry and Inspection to issue a comprehensive assessment of Iraq's chemical and biological weapons programs on April 19, 2000, stating that Iraq continues to develop its offensive capabilities in the field of chemical and biological warfare because Iraq has never disclosed its biological offensive program to UNESCO <sup>(12)</sup>.

The official spokesman of the Iraqi Air Defense announced on April 21 that the average of the American and British airstrikes on Iraq from December 1998 to 2000 amounted to approximately 295 deaths and 860 injuries, most of them civilians <sup>(13)</sup>.

After these developments, the Russian position became stronger and more positive in the framework of the competition with Iraq, as Putin confirmed that the economic blockade on Iraq has lost its legal legitimacy and has become a tool used by Washington to achieve its strategic, political and economic goals and objectives <sup>(14)</sup>. He reiterated his country's reaffirmation of the lifting of sanctions imposed on Iraq in accordance with international law, and described this major development in relations with the Iraqi side as reminiscent of the rivalry between the two great poles during the Cold War <sup>(15)</sup>.

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(10)An Iraqi soldier born in Mosul in 1949, graduated from the Military College in 1964, then entered the Staff College and graduated from it in 1974, was appointed commander of the First Corps during the Iran-Iraq War, as well as assuming the position of deputy chief of military operations during the war, served as chief of staff of the Iraqi army in 1995, then assumed the position of defense minister in 1996, was arrested by US forces in 2003 and sentenced to death in 2007 on charges of genocide of the Kurds, but the sentence was not carried out due to a refusal Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, died in al-Hout prison in 2020.

<https://www.europapress.es/internacional/noticia-muere-sultan-iraqui-hashim>.

(11)Ban Fawzi Al-Dulaimi, *The Policy of the Russian Federation Towards Iraq (2003-2010) and its Future Prospects*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Faculty of Political Science, Al-Nahrain University, 2012, p. 36.

(12) *The Report of the Iraq Inquiry, Report of a Committee of Privy Counsellors*, Vol.4, No.2, 6 July 2016. P.13 .

(13)Taghreed Khashan Faleh Muhammad Al-Korji, *The Policy of the United States of America Towards Iraq 1996-2006*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Faculty of Arts, University of Basra, 2024, pp. 164-165.

(14)Ban Fawzi al-Dulaimi, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

(15)*Ibid.*

The strength of the Russian position towards the Iraqi issue came during the Putin era due to Washington's restoration of its military strategy and the strategy of NATO, which began to threaten the Russian national security of the attempt to include the countries of Eastern Europe in it<sup>(16)</sup>, where the new American strategy aimed to continue its influence in controlling and controlling the world system without having any other rival power<sup>(17)</sup> Moscow was forced to take positions against this transatlantic policy, and from this standpoint, it stood by Iraq and demanded the lifting of sanctions on it<sup>(18)</sup> .

In June 2000, the Russian Government, through its Minister of Defense, Sergei Ivanov, stressed that it would continue to exert maximum pressure for a speedy and permanent end to those sanctions<sup>(19)</sup> , and that the UNMOVIC Monitoring and Verification Commission should be subject to strict scrutiny by the Security Council in order to avoid the fate of its discredited predecessor, and that no external powers should interfere in Iraq's internal affairs with a clear reference to Washington and London.<sup>(20)</sup> Ivanov added that Russia is a sovereign and independent country and we will determine for ourselves with whom and to what extent we build our relations, and it is determined to achieve its interests even at the expense of tensions with Washington<sup>(21)</sup> .

These assurances coincided with Tariq Aziz's visit in June 2000 to Moscow to discuss the issue of lifting international sanctions on Iraq, which Washington and London insist on<sup>(22)</sup> , and after that visit, Baghdad announced on July 2 a new toll of victims of the sanctions that the United States insists on remaining, as it stated that the number of Iraqi victims, especially civilians, has risen since 1990 to 1,351,535 Iraqis, according to an official Iraqi census<sup>(23)</sup> .

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(16)Muthanna Ali Hussein Al-Mahdawi, *Ibid.*, p. 5.

(17)Bilal Talal Hamad Al-Jawadi, *Russian Policy Towards the Arab Mashreq after 2000*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Faculty of Political Science, Al-Nahrain University, 2016, p. 98.

(18)Bashar Saud Bashir al-Jabour, *Ibid.*, p. 139.

(19)Saif Mu'taz Omar al-Manaseer, *op. cit.*, p. 5;  
Aslihan Anlar, *Op. Cit* ,P.58.

(20) Tareq Y. Ismael and Andrej “Russian-Iraqi Relations: A Historical and Political Analysis”, *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 4, 2001 , P.106 .

(21) Ella Akerman , *Old Frinds In The New World Russin And Iraq From Gorbachoy To Putin 1990-2003*,Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, College University of London, 2007 ,P. 163 .

(22)Saif Mutaz Omar al-Manaseer, *previous source*, p. 5.

(23)Diaries, Documents, Reports, War on Iraq, Center for Arab Unity Studies, Beirut, 2007, p. 614.

During the talks held by Tariq Aziz during his visit to Moscow on July 28, 2000, the political discourse shifted to a greater level of support for the lifting of the economic blockade and even demanding the return of Iraq to its role in the international community, and these talks came to confirm that Moscow is not affiliated with Washington <sup>(24)</sup> .

On the other hand, the Chairman of UNMOVIC Committee, Hans Blix, reported in Ibb that UNMOVIC was ready to resume its activities in Iraq even in the absence of Iraq's agreement to resume inspections <sup>(25)</sup> .

Russia's most daring move to try to end the sanctions and apply them on the ground came in a clear challenge to the United States by opening the civil aviation line between Iraq and Russia (Moscow-Baghdad) on August 19, 2000, making Russia the first country to violate the air traffic ban imposed on Iraq since 1990 <sup>(26)</sup> .

By September 2000, Russia began to resume flights to Baghdad in clear defiance of the American embargo and isolation that the United States is trying by all means to continue to impose on Iraq <sup>(27)</sup> , and with the support of most of the Arab world, it has eased the impact of those sanctions by supporting Arab and international humanitarian flights to Baghdad, and hinting that Iraq will be more receptive to the return of inspection committees if Washington and London stop their flights to monitor the no-fly zones <sup>(28)</sup> .

The decision to challenge the UN air embargo imposed ten years ago by Moscow was a test of the ongoing US efforts to continue isolating the Iraqi regime from the world and treating Iraq as an international pariah, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, during her conversation with Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, expressed her strong opposition to the Russian plans and called on Moscow to reconsider its decisions towards Iraq, saying that air travel through Europe to Iraq is not a good idea <sup>(29)</sup> .

However, Russian airlines began their negotiations with Iraq to obtain exclusive rights to fly from Moscow to Baghdad, where the Iraqi government reopened Baghdad

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(24) Ban Fawzi al-Dulaimi, *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

(25) Kenneth Katzman, *Iraq: Weapons Threat, Compliance, Sanctions, and U.S. Policy*, Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade Division, 2002, P.2 .

(26) Fadi Khalil et al., *Russian Foreign Policy in the Middle East after the Cold War*, Tishreen University Journal for Research and Scientific Studies, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2015, p. 124;

(27) Hussam Muhammad Khudair, *Iraqi-Russian Relations 2014-2018*, Journal of International Studies, No. 82, 2020, p. 513.

(28) Robert O. Freedman, *Putin and The Middle East*, P.516 .

(29) Coues Lesen and Devin Horruax, *Russia May Defy Ban on Air Service To Iraq*, U.S. Voices Opposition To Flights to Baghdad , The Washington Post, 15 Septmper, 2000, p.21 .

International Airport to Russian air traffic <sup>(30)</sup> , and on 13 November, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov traveled to Baghdad during his tour of the Middle East to be the first foreign minister to visit Baghdad since 1994 with the aim of reviving the settlement process that had reached an impasse <sup>(31)</sup> In it, he called for easing the global pressure supported by the United States on Iraq, looking for new ways to deal with it, and canceling the no-fly zones in the north and south of the country<sup>(32)</sup>, and stressing the need to restore domestic and foreign aviation to and from Baghdad. <sup>(33)</sup>

This was followed by the visit of the Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz on the 28th of the same month to Moscow, during which Tariq Aziz held lengthy and difficult talks with the Russian leaders regarding Iraq's recognition of Resolution 1284, and despite Moscow's efforts, Baghdad rejected, but the Russian-Iraqi friendship was not in doubt despite the differences that occurred during the meeting <sup>(34)</sup> .

These visits came to increase the American anger, especially after the announcement of the Iraqi president in November 2000 to change the currency of dealing in oil from the US dollar to the European euro currency, which left a great impact on the American economic policy, which prompted the United States to think more seriously about removing the Iraqi regime <sup>(35)</sup> .

It is clear that Vladimir Putin's assumption of power in Russia did not change the latter's view in dealing with the Iraqi crisis, but we find that President Putin was more determined than his predecessor in confronting the United States and even challenging it, and the most prominent example of this is his violation of the aviation standard despite the American opposition, which it considered contrary to the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, and it seems to us that Russia has become determined to make the United States recognize as an international actor with its international status in the world.

### 1- The Smart Sanctions Project and Russia's Position on it in 2001

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(30) Ibid .

(31) Ella Akerman ,Op.Cit ,P. 167 .

(32)Hussam Muhammad Khudair, Ibid., p. 514.

(33)Bilal Talal Hamad Al-Jawadi, previous source, p. 98.

(34) Tareq Y. Ismael and Andrej ,Op . Cit , P.106; Ella Akerman ,Op.Cit ,P. 168 .

(35)Ma'an Mahmoud Younis Abdullah Al-Jubouri, Colin Powell and his Role in the Crisis and the Iraq Wars 1990-2003, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Faculty of Education for Humanities, University of Mosul, 2024, p. 114.

On January 10, 2001, the George W. Bush administration<sup>(36)</sup> <sup>(37)</sup>, which was characterized as the most extreme administration that viewed the countries of the world as either a friend or an enemy who would present it and oppose its policy, received the comprehensive report on Iraq from the Clinton administration after the end of his term, and Secretary of Defense William Cohen told the new team that they would find little support in the region for the regime change process in the region. Iraq through force, and the CIA's brief report to the new President Bush Jr. made barely mention of the Iraqi Baathist regime<sup>(38)</sup>.

Bush Jr. took office on January 20, 2001 as President of the United States<sup>(39)</sup>, and it seems that the American foreign policy during his tenure is an extension of Clinton's predecessor, but to a stronger degree, as the latter adopted a unilateral policy in his foreign policy, as in his election campaign, Bush explained his vision of foreign policy and that he seeks to achieve the distinct<sup>(40)</sup> American internationalism. This is what he confirmed in one of his statements that the United States will do everything necessary to remain the only great power in the world because it has the military power that does not accept challenge and will do its best to maintain that power<sup>(41)</sup>, especially after the return of Donald H. Rumsfeld<sup>(42)</sup> to the Pentagon and his determination on **the Project for the**

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(36) He was born on June 6, 1946 in New Haven, graduated from Yale University in 1968, attended Harvard University to study for an MBA in 1975, became governor of Texas in 1994, was elected governor of Texas for the second time in 1998 with 70% of the vote, and in 2000 ran for the Republican presidential election. He became president of the United States in January 2001, eight months after he took office, the September 11 attacks marked a turning point in his presidential career, in March 2003 he launched air and ground raids on Iraq during which he toppled the regime, and in 2004 he ran for a second term until 2009. *Memoirs of George W. Bush, Fateful Decisions, Photographed by: Abu Abd al-Rahman Al-Kurdi, 2nd Edition, Publications Company for Distribution and Publishing, Beirut, 2013; Udo Zauter, Presidents of the United States of America from 1789 to Today, Dar Al-Hekma, London, 2006, pp. 306-311.*

(37) Dirar Muhammad Hassan Al-Memari, *The Reasons for the U.S.-Russian Rivalry in the Middle East*, *Journal of Historical Studies*, No. 38, 2024, p. 528.

(38) Michael Knights, *The Cradle of Conflict (Iraq and the Birth of Modern American Military Power)*, translated and presented by: Qais Qasim Al-Ajrash, Review: Hassan Nazim, Al-Rafidain Center for Dialogue, Beirut, 2019, p. 236.

(39) Hussein Faris Hussein al-Taie, previous source, p. 160.

(40) Benjamin Zyla, *The Bush II Administration and US Foreign Policy*, *WeltTrends*, 2007, P.113-114.

(41) Hussein Faris Hussein al-Ta'i, previous source, p. 161.

(42) He was an American politician born in 1932 in Illinois, received a bachelor's degree in political science after graduating from university in 1954, became a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for three years from Illinois from 1963 to 1966, and an adviser to President Nixon from 1969 to 1973, served as Secretary of Defense for two terms, the first under President Gerald Ford for the period 1975-1977, and the second under President George W. Bush for the period of 2001-2006. He was a contemporary of four American presidents, and he had a leading role in the war on Iraq, where he said, "The removal of Saddam Hussein created a more stable and secure world", and died in 2021 at the age of 88.

Robert D. Mcfadden, Donald H. Rumsfeld, *Defense Secretary During Iraq war*, New York

**New American Century.** <sup>(43)</sup> It is based on the premise that the twenty-first century is American and that the United States must dominate the world <sup>(44)</sup> .

At the first meetings of the United States National Security Council on the Project of the Century, Rumsfeld made it clear that since the fulcrum of the U.S. overarching strategy was the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, the liquidation of the regime in Iraq would help resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict <sup>(45)</sup> .

Decision-makers in the US administration, led by Rumsfeld, were unanimous that open ends in the policy of containing Iraq militarily is an undesirable process and needs increased political efforts, so General Franks, the commander of the US Central Command, informed his opinion on dealing with the Iraqi regime by saying: **"We need to set fixed goals, the current policy has no definite end and containment has not changed the behavior of the Iraqi regime... We are still watching Saddam firing at our planes... And the punishments will collapse."** <sup>(46)</sup>

Therefore, Bush Jr. set his sights on specific goals, which are to be exclusive to international resolutions, especially with regard to Iraq, and to get rid of the existing regime at that time, under the pretext of Iraq's non-compliance with international resolutions and its lack of cooperation with the inspection committees, so on February 17, the American and British forces bombed Iraq for the fourth time <sup>(47)</sup>, and the bombing included targets outside the southern no-fly zone, which resulted in the death of three people, and the American and British Defense Departments justified that Iraq had upgraded its air defense system <sup>(48)</sup> .

The Russian Foreign Ministry also confirmed that the US military strikes proved to the whole world that Washington seeks to strengthen and guarantee its hegemony and its monopoly on the international decision and the marginalization of any action or

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Times ,June30,2021 , P.8;

Al-Arab Newspaper (Paris), Issue 12107, July 2021, p. 19. .

(43)Founded in June 1997 by William Kristol and Robert Kagan, this project was located on the fifth floor of the American Enterprise Institute building located in Washington, D.C., and the project was aimed from the beginning to strengthen American global leadership. For more details, see: Fares Turki Mahmoud, The New American Century Project, Journal of Regional Studies, Volume 12, Issue 37, 2018.

(44)Muhammad Hassanein Heikal, The American Empire and the Raid on Iraq, Dar Al-Shorouk, 2011, pp. 329-330.

(45)Ibid., p. 334.

(46)Michael Knights, op. cit., pp. 237-238.

(47)Ban Fawzi Al-Dulaimi, Ibid., p. 39.

(48)Hussein Faris Hussein al-Ta'i, previous source, p. 161.

decision by any power or even from the United Nations<sup>(49)</sup>. By forcing the latter to adopt resolutions that are in line with its strategy<sup>(50)</sup>, Dmitry Rogozin, **chairman of the State Duma's Foreign Affairs Committee, went** so far as to announce that he would ask the State Duma to pass a resolution calling on President Putin to unilaterally lift sanctions on Iraq in response to the bombing<sup>(51)</sup>.

After the February 2001 strikes, Russia contributed to the establishment of a Russian-French-German axis opposed to these strikes, and the Russian leadership adopted the position that the Iraqi issue could be resolved by diplomatic means and channels rather than by military solutions<sup>(52)</sup>.

In the same regard, the Iraqi Foreign Minister, Mohammed Saeed Al-Sahaf, during his meeting with the Secretary-General of the United Nations<sup>(53)</sup>, Kofi Anna on February 27, 2001, refused to listen to any details related to Resolution 1284 and the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), especially after the recent strikes<sup>(54)</sup>, which prompted the United States to seek new sanctions. **which was formally** adopted by the Security Council and is considered a recurring episode in the series of international sanctions against Iraq<sup>(55)</sup>.

This draft stipulates that the United Nations will place international observers with its neighbors and at major airports to prevent Iraq's importation of military equipment, and to entice countries to support the project and its implementation, they will be allowed

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(49) Tareq Y. Ismael and Andrej ,Op . Cit , P.106 .

(50) Ban Fawzi Al-Dulaimi, Ibid., p. 39.

(51) On 22 February 2001, the Russian State Duma approved by a vote of 359 to 2 a resolution calling on Putin to seek a United Nations resolution to lift the sanctions regime imposed on Iraq.

Tareq Y. Ismael and Andrej ,Op . Cit , P.106 .

(52) Hussam Muhammad Khudair, Ibid., p. 514.

(53) He was born in Kumasi, Ghana, in 1938, completed his primary and secondary education there, traveled to the United States to complete his undergraduate studies in economics, where he entered McAllister College in Minnesota in 1961, worked after graduating from the United Nations World Health Organization in 1962 in Geneva, and then served at the African Economic Commission in Addis Ababa. In 1972, he received a Master of Science degree from the Sloan School of Management of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he is fluent in English and French as well as several African languages, facilitated the repatriation of more than 900 international employees and non-Iraqi citizens from Iraq in 1990, became Secretary-General of the United Nations for the period (1997-2006), received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001, and received many honorary awards, medals and national honors. He died in 2018.

C.I.A, C06814205, Kofi Annan ,Secretary General UN (since 1997) Addressed as: Mr. Secretary General, July 29, 2020 ,P.1; Alan Cowell, Kofi Annan, Who Redefined the U.N., Dies at 80 ,The New York Times, August 19, 2018, P.1; MR. Kofi Annan, Former Secretary-General of the United Nations, United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law, 2022, P.1-3.

(54) Taghreed Khashan Muhammad Al-Korji, Ibid., p. 169.

(55) Ban Fawzi al-Dulaimi, op. cit., pp. 39-40.

to buy Iraqi oil at discounted prices, and according to the plan of the project, it will identify the companies allowed to buy oil in an attempt to eliminate the role of intermediaries who pay illegal money to the Iraqi <sup>(56)</sup>government. Since the draft law stipulates the control of oil revenues and includes a list of dual-use items and the prohibition of investment, as well as the return of the intermittent percentage of Iraqi oil exports in favor of the Compensation Fund to 30% instead of 25%, it is noted that the draft does not have any indication of the suspension of sanctions or the requirements for lifting them <sup>(57)</sup> .

The US-British project was rejected by Russia and threatened to use the veto, and the discussion turned into an argument between Russia and the United States, as Russia promised that it was not a matter of easing the sanctions but about tightening them <sup>(58)</sup>, as Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov expressed his country's rejection of the decision in a letter he sent to his American counterpart Colin Powell, in which he said **that "we see in the plan a serious threat to Russia's commercial and economic interests in Iraq."** In a clear reference to the targeting of Russia's growing economic interests in Iraq <sup>(59)</sup> , in particular that it has expanded the possibility of allowing all countries to sell commercial goods and products to Iraq, and that it is the United Nations committees that are authorized to accept certain companies and bring them into competition, which in turn harms Russian companies that rely on Iraqi government support <sup>(60)</sup> .

Baghdad, on the other hand, was angry and categorically rejected the smart sanctions project, promising another ploy by the United States to control Iraqi oil in its favor, and demanding the full lifting of international sanctions on Iraq <sup>(61)</sup> .

After the intensification of the situation among the members of the Security Council and their division regarding the smart sanctions project, the Speaker of the Russian State Duma, **Gennady Selezney**, went to Baghdad on March 18, 2001 in a visit described as official about the convergence of interests between the two countries, where he informed the Iraqi government during his visit that he hoped to meet with President

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(56)Bashar Fathi Jassim Al-Aqeedi, The Russian Position on the American Pressure on Iraq 1991-2003, *Journal of Regional Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 11, 2008, p. 354.

(57)Ban Fawzi Al-Dulaimi, *Ibid.*, p. 39.

(58)Ella Akerman ,Op.Cit ,P.272 .

(59)Bilal Talal Hamad Al-Jawadi, *Ibid.*, p. 100.

(60)Ban Fawzi al-Dulaimi, op. cit., p. 40; Bashar Fathi Jassim al-Aqidi, op. cit., p. 355.

(61) Ella Akerman ,Op.Cit ,P. 272 .

Putin soon to talk about this issue, despite the Russians knowing that this rapprochement will not be permanent regardless of their peaceful policies towards the Iraqi issue because they will face a response. He acted and was hostile to the United States, and it is certain that Washington will use all its tricks and arms to prolong the sanctions and impede the return of Russian-Iraqi economic cooperation <sup>(62)</sup> .

In light of the US plans to overthrow the regime and tighten the noose on it by continuing to impose political and economic sanctions, there was a continuation of Russian-Iraqi economic cooperation, as the Russian newspaper Pravda reported that during the talks between Vladimir **Rushailo** , the secretary-general of the Russian National Security Council, and the Iraqi ambassador, Mezher al-Douri, Rashililo thanked the Iraqi government for encouraging Russian companies to enter the Iraqi markets <sup>(63)</sup> .

On April 17, 2001, Iraqi Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan visited Moscow and during his meeting with Putin, he conveyed a verbal message from Saddam Hussein in which he expressed interest in the strategic partnership between the two countries<sup>(64)</sup>. Ramadan rejected the Russian proposal to resume the work of the inspection committees, as well as Moscow's concerns about its interests in Iraq in the event of an invasion by Washington and London, which upset the Iraqi government and seemed frustrated after the February 2001 strikes and threatened to cancel the contracts signed with Russian oil companies <sup>(65)</sup>.

On the other hand, the Security Council issued Resolution No. 1352 on June 1, 2001, which included the extension of the oil-for-food program for one month until July 3, instead of six months, which is the usual period of the program <sup>(66)</sup> .

Iraq 's response to Resolution 1352 was to announce the suspension of oil exports to world markets in protest against the resolution, in light of the ongoing consultations in the Security Council to implement the smart sanctions project <sup>(67)</sup> .

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(62) Tareq Y. Ismael and Andrej ,Op . Cit , P.108 .

(63) Robert O. Freedman, Putin and The Middle East,P.518 .

(64) Ella Akerman ,Op.Cit ,P. 170 .

(65) Aslihan Anlar, Op. Cit,P.58 ;

Saif Mutaz Omar Al-Manaseer, previous source, p. 5.

(66) U.N.S.C, Resolution 1352 (2001) / adopted by the Security Council at its 4324th meeting, on 1 June 2001,P.1-2.

(67)Diary – Documents – Reports – The War on Iraq, p. 614.

After the decision of the Iraqi government to stop Iraqi oil, Russian companies exerted pressure on the Russian government to prevent the approval of the American-British project, and the representatives of the Russian oil companies that own shares in Iraq demanded in an extensive meeting on June 25 that the Russian government take all necessary measures to prevent the implementation of the Anglo-American project <sup>(68)</sup> .

In response to the draft, Russia tried to submit another draft to the Security Council against the US-British project on June 26, 2001, and the Russian draft included a call for the lifting of sanctions on Iraq immediately after the establishment of a system for the control of Iraqi weapons, and then lifting them within 180 days based on the recommendation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations <sup>(69)</sup> . From the Russian point of view, the resolution will also lead to a departure from the task of fully implementing the Security Council resolutions on Iraq and will lead to a freeze in the status quo <sup>(70)</sup> .

The American side refused to reject the project, as the American delegate, James (71)B. Cunningham, immediately ruled out the discussion of the Russian proposal, saying that it was not a valid basis for discussion, and the British delegate declared to the journalists that the Russian project was not credible <sup>(72)</sup> .

The US administration witnessed intensive meetings between February and June 2001 that included five assistants to the US national security members in an unprecedented manner, all of which were dedicated to discussing the Iraqi affairs, because the Iraqi president, according to US intelligence, intends to develop missiles that exceed their permissible range of 150 kilometers, and this will represent a qualitative leap in Iraq's military capabilities <sup>(73)</sup> . In it, it proposes cooperation with the Iraqi opposition to ignite an uprising in the south against the Iraqi regime in preparation for its overthrow

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(68)Ella Akerman ,Op.Cit ,P. 173 .

(69)Bashar Fathi Jassim Al-Aqidi, Ibid., p. 356.

(70)Ali Muhammad Idan al-Jubouri, previous source, p. 105.

An (71)American diplomat born in Allentown, Pennsylvania in 1950, he studied at the School of Political Science at Syracuse University and graduated from it in 1974, holding several positions, including advisor and commander of the NATO General Staff during the period 1989-1990, as well as assistant director at the U.S. Department of State in 1991, and was appointed U.S. ambassador to Italy in 1996, and then served as deputy U.S. envoy to the United Nations from 2001 to 2005.

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org> James B.Cunningham.

(72)Bashar Fathi Jassim Al-Aqidi, Ibid., p. 356.

(73) The Report of the Iraq Inquiry, , Report of a Committee of Privy Counsellors, Vol.4, No.2, 6 July 2016 , P.26 .

and to mobilize international recognition of the government that will be formed immediately after its fall <sup>(74)</sup> .

On the other hand, Moscow reiterated its rejection of the smart sanctions project through the visit of the Deputy of the Russian National Security<sup>(75)</sup> Council **Vladimir Zhirinovsky** to Iraq on July 1, 2001 to support Iraq's position rejecting the US-British project <sup>(76)</sup> . <sup>(77)</sup> In fact, it was reported that during the first ten months of 2001, Russia signed contracts with Iraq worth \$185 billion, and that Iraq accounted for more than 60% of Russia's trade with the Arab world <sup>(78)</sup> .

Although the smart sanctions bill was rejected after strong Russian opposition to it, it was presented by Washington again after the change in the Russian position, as it was presented to the Security Council and approved unanimously, and it seems that the United States was able to win Moscow on its side, especially after the events of September 11, which will be mentioned in detail, by giving it a share of Iraqi oil after the overthrow of the Iraqi regime <sup>(79)</sup> .

## **2- The events of September 11 and its impact on the competition for Iraq**

The events of September 11, 2001<sup>(80)</sup>, which led to economic losses of hundreds of billions of dollars and the temporary loss of 26 million jobs in important American economic sectors<sup>(81)</sup>, changed the course of US-Russian relations, which were punctuated by many points of divergence and disagreement, and gave a strong impetus towards

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(74)Michael Knights, op. cit., p. 238.

(75)Bashar Fathi Jassim Al-Aqidi, Ibid., p. 356.

A (76)Russian politician, born in 1946 in Kazakhstan, entered the Faculty of Law at Moscow University at the age of 18 and graduated from it in 1969, then entered the Language Institute and studied Turkish, worked as a translator for the period from 1970 to 1972, held various government and trade union positions, participated in the founding of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party in 1989, and in 1991 founded his own party after being expelled from the Liberal Party. Zhirinovsky participated in and won the parliamentary elections five times, he died in 2022. Dmitry Brezhia, The Legacy of Vladimir Zhirinovsky, Center for Arab and Eurasian Studies, April 23, 2024.

<https://eurasiaar.org>.

(77)Ibid.

(78) Robert O. Freedman, Putin and The Middle East,P.518 .

(79)Bashar Fathi Jassim Al-Aqidi, Ibid., p. 358.

(80)Kamal Deeb, An Earthquake in the Land of Discord in Iraq 1915-2015, Presented by: George Korm, Dar Al-Farabi, Beirut, 2003, p. 338.

(81)On September 11, a major incident shook the whole world in the form of the hijacking of four planes seized by a group of radical Islamists affiliated with Al-Qaeda and crashed into the Pentagon building in Washington, which includes the Armed Forces Command Building, the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the World Trade Center towers in New York. Mahmoud Mohamed Al-Karaki, Russian-American Relations under Presidents Vladimir Putin and George W. Bush 2000-2008, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Faculty of Political Science, Mutah University, 2009, p. 25;

cooperation between them against terrorism<sup>(82)</sup> On September 24, Russia stood by the United States without reservation in its declared war against terrorism<sup>(83)</sup>, indicating that this war is not an American war, but the entire world's war against terrorism<sup>(84)</sup>.

Putin also stressed that the relationship between the two parties should be broad-based and centered on the two sides of trade and investment<sup>(85)</sup>, and that the events of the 11th highlighted the joint cooperation to fight terrorism and the emergence of Russia as an important international actor in international relations<sup>(86)</sup>.

<sup>(87)</sup> On September 20, the members of the project sent a long letter to Bush Jr., in which they stated their full support for the war on terror, world leadership, victory, and support for military action against Afghanistan<sup>(88)</sup>. They also agree with Secretary of State Colin Powell's statement that the Iraqi president is one of the leading terrorists, and that the Iraqi government has contributed in one way or another to those attacks, and there must be serious efforts to remove the Iraqi president from power, so Washington should provide financial and military support to the Iraqi opposition<sup>(89)</sup>, so the Iraqi president sought to mobilize Russian support, so the Iraqi president sought to mobilize Russian support, and in late September, the Iraqi president called on Russian oil companies to develop new oil fields in Iraq. Iraqi Oil Minister Amer Mohammed Rashid pointed out that the economic and trade relations between Iraq and Russia are strategic<sup>(90)</sup>.

The new US administration adopted the doctrine of pre-emptive warfare that revolves around repelling any expected attack by launching pre-emptive strikes against both Afghanistan and Iraq, especially after abandoning the doctrines of deterrence and dual containment, which were the basis of US military intelligence,<sup>(91)</sup> and identified

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Russian (82) President Putin was the most responsive to cooperation with the United States, as he was decisive from the beginning and declared his support for the American campaign against terrorism, and the provision of Russian assistance such as the availability of airspace and intelligence information, and support for the coalition in Afghanistan. For more information, see: Mahmoud Muhammad Al-Karaki, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

(83) Bashar Saud Bashir al-Jabour, *Ibid.*, p. 104.

(84) Shaher Ismail Al-Shaher, *The Priorities of American Foreign Policy after the Events of September 11, 2001*, Syrian General Book Authority, Damascus, 2009, p. 163.

(85) Ban Fawzi al-Dulaimi, *Ibid.*, p. 42.

(86) Fadi Khalil et al., *Ibid.*, p. 122.

(87) Shaher Ismail Al-Shaher, *Ibid.*, p. 161.

(88) Faris Turki Mahmoud, *Ibid.*, p. 116.

(89) *Ibid.*

(90) Robert O. Freedman, *Putin and The Middle East*, p. 518.

(91) Wathiq Al-Saadoun, *The American Military Strategy under President George Walker W. Bush 2001-2009*, *Journal of Politics and International Relations, Middle East Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 2020, pp. 123-124.

nearly 60 countries that sheltered al-Qaeda cells, as well as giving each of them a strongly worded message (either with us or against us) in terms of joining the coalition against terrorism and overthrowing political regimes. <sup>(92)</sup> The first of these operations began with a massive military campaign on Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, to topple the Afghan regime, which was called "**Enduring Freedom**" <sup>(93)</sup> , which was supported by 40 countries in their attack against it <sup>(94)</sup> .

The U.S. Department of Defense sought to find a link between Iraq and the perpetrators of terrorist attacks in order to find logical justifications for intervening in Iraq, waging war on it and overthrowing the Iraqi regime <sup>(95)</sup> , especially after the latter refused to lower the flags of its diplomatic mission to the United Nations. <sup>(96)</sup>

Accordingly, in November 2001, the United States postponed efforts to lift and extend economic sanctions on Iraq for nine months, but this step faced opposition from Moscow, which threatened to veto the proposal, and with the emergence of Russia as a supporter of the United States in its war against Afghanistan, Washington was afraid of provoking any dispute with Moscow. Therefore, Washington agreed to extend the oil-for-food program until December of the same year <sup>(97)</sup> .

The United States continued to pass its plans and implement the strategy of US President Bush Jr. to target Iraq under the pretext of the war on terrorism, as Washington viewed Iraq as one of the axes of evil and the countries sponsoring terrorism <sup>(98)</sup> , as the US Secretary of State Colin Powell announced at the beginning of 2002 that his country monitors the countries that support terrorism, especially Iraq, because it is constantly developing weapons of mass destruction<sup>(99)</sup> The military option is the appropriate

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(92)Michael Schwartz, *An Endless War: The Context of the Iraq War*, Translated by: Nasr Muhammad Ali and Sahar Jaafar Al-Kishwan, Review: Hassan Nazim, Al-Rafidain Center for Dialogue, Beirut, 2019, p. 9.

(93)Muayyad Hamza Abbas, *The American Strategy in the Middle East after September 11, 2001*, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Faculty of Political Science, Al-Nahrain University, 2012, p. 62.

(94)Shaher Ismail Al-Shaher, *Ibid.*, p. 148.

(95)Abdullah Bashir Suleiman Hamed, *A Comparison between the US Invasion of Iraq and the Russian Invasion of Ukraine 1990-2022*, *Journal of Humanities and Natural Sciences*, Vol. 4, No. 10, 2023, p. 423.

(96)Hussein Faris Hussein al-Ta'i, previous source, p. 166.

(97) Alan Sides , *U.S. Likely to Delay Action on Iraq Curbs* , *The Washington Post*, November 7,2001,P,26 .

(98)Hussein Taher Taskam, *Ibid.*, p. 55.

(99)Ban Fawzi al-Dulaimi, *Ibid.*, p. 42.

response to defend the United States and the international community from the threat posed by Iraq and to restore security and peace in the region <sup>(100)</sup> .

The US-Russian relations began to undergo a difficult and real test after the events of September 11 due to Washington's insistence on waging war on Iraq and regime change in it, and the reason for this is due to the different foreign policy agendas and the conflict of US-Russian economic interests, and the latter's fear that this war will lead to destabilization of the situation in the areas adjacent to its borders, such as the Caucasus and Central Asia. In addition, there is no evidence to convict Iraq of terrorism and its involvement in the events of September 11 <sup>(101)</sup> .

In light of Washington's attempts to link international terrorism to Iraq, Moscow considered that the situation in Iraq was radically and fundamentally different from the situation in Afghanistan, and in his speech during an international conference in Rome in February 2002, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov stated: **"Although Moscow agreed to strike Afghanistan, it was not ready to agree to any operation against Iraq, and Moscow was not willing to give up its great economic interests for its oil company in Iraq."** <sup>(102)</sup>

Although there are no indications of a link between terrorism and Iraq, the United States continued its position of waging war on Iraq under the pretext that Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction, and the US Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld found the justification for this when Iraqi Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan refused on February 13, 2002 the return of international inspectors because there were no reasons for their return other than espionage <sup>(103)</sup> .

Although the U.S. Congress during the Clinton era passed a resolution authorizing regime change in Iraq, it did not take decisive steps to overthrow it, so Bush Jr. was determined to overthrow the Iraqi regime, so in mid-June 2002, he issued an executive order allowing the CIA to use all means, including assassinations, to overthrow Saddam

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(100)Ma'an Mahmoud Younis Abdullah Al-Jubouri, *Ibid.*, pp. 116-117.

(101)Hussam Muhammad Khudair, *Ibid.*, p. 514.

(102) Ella Akerman ,*Op.Cit* ,P. 282 .

(103)Istabraq Fouad Habib, *Media Treatment of the American Occupation of Iraq, Content Analysis of Newsweek Magazine – Arabic Version, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Faculty of Mass Communication, Middle East University, 2009, p. 88.*

Hussein <sup>(104)</sup>'s regime , as well as allocating \$200 million to carry out covert operations in Iraq aimed at overthrowing the regime <sup>(105)</sup> .

Following the cessation of cooperation between Iraq and the inspection teams of the UNMOVIC Committee, the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Sultanov paid a visit to Iraq on July 20, 2002 in order to push the Iraqi government to cooperate with the Commission and not to give a justification to the United States to launch a military campaign against it or to maintain the economic sanctions imposed on it. Work of the Committee <sup>(106)</sup>.

In an effort to bolster its economic position in Iraq to counter any potential U.S. military threat against Iraq, despite repeated criticism of the Russian leadership by Washington over its cooperation with Baghdad, on August 16, 2002, Moscow and Baghdad began planning a five-year, \$40 billion economic agreement to strengthen ties while Washington was considering launching a military offensive to remove Saddam Hussein from power. This indicates Russia's refusal to abandon its old ally <sup>(107)</sup> .

Since the new Iraqi-Russian agreement represents a strong blow to Bush's attempts to mobilize international support against Iraq, Bush Jr. rushed to contact President Putin to discuss the issue and urged Moscow to help Washington in its decision on Iraq. <sup>(108)</sup> In their response to Washington, the Russians wondered what the return would be if Moscow supported the planned U.S. decision against Iraq, and U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell's response to those questions was that the U.S. would work to free Russia from some trade restrictions, but the disappointment increased because the Russians believed that the relationship with Washington did not achieve the gains that Putin wanted compared to Iraq <sup>(109)</sup> .

On the other hand, there were American plans and calculations to invest in Iraqi oil and even control it, and this is one of the main reasons for the attack on Iraq and the

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(104)Wathiq al-Saadoun, op. cit., p. 129.

(105)Istabraq Fouad Habib, Ibid., p. 89.

(106)Bilal Talal Hamad Al-Jawadi, Ibid., p. 103.

The (107)agreement included cooperation in several fields, most notably oil, electric power, chemical products, irrigation, railway construction and transport, as well as the use of Russian experts for the construction and repair of infrastructure in Iraq.

Peter Baker , Russia, Iraq Plan Deal to Bolster Ties , The Washington Post ,August 17,2002,P.1.

(108) Russia Wondering What It Gets For Backing U.S. Against Iraq , The Washington Post, October 7,2002,P.22 .

(109) Ibid .

change of regime in it, as Iraq has the largest oil reserves in the world after Saudi Arabia, in addition to Iraqi oil has enormous profitability advantages in investment, and this allows the American administration to use it later in its political and economic conflict with other rival capitalist powers. The wars it waged under the pretext of fighting terrorism were nothing but the realization of a huge economic project aimed at opening new markets <sup>(110)</sup> and opening up the areas of American domination over the world oil markets <sup>(111)</sup> .

In accordance with these developments, the United Nations Security Council issued its resolution No. 1441 on November 8, which is a follow-up to resolution 1248, and the new resolution stipulated that Iraq has violated its obligations towards the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council due to its non-compliance with them, its proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and long-range <sup>(112)</sup> missiles, and the offer of a last chance for disarmament and compliance with Security Council resolutions, and any new violation will lead to serious consequences. It is worth mentioning that the decision granted the inspectors broad and unprecedented powers, including interviewing any official, including members of the Iraqi Cabinet, and the Iraqi regime approved the decision in order to avoid any military action that overthrows its regime <sup>(113)</sup> .

Russian <sup>(114)</sup> Foreign Minister Ivanov said when asked about Resolution 1441 by the American news channel (NBC) that the resolution was adopted by the Security Council in order to ensure the work of international inspectors, and that the inspectors are solely responsible for proving the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq or not. As for the military option, we believe that there is no basis for resorting to this extreme measure of the use of force <sup>(115)</sup> , and according to the terms of the unanimous resolution,

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(110)Mahmoud Muhammad Ali, *The American Plan to Occupy Iraq*, Dar Al-Wafa for Printing and Publishing, Alexandria, 2018, pp. 5-6.

(111)Shaher Ismail Al-Shaher, *Ibid.*, p. 223.

(112)U.N.S.C, Resolution 1441 (2002) / adopted by the Security Council at its 4644th meeting, on 8 November 2002,P.1. .

(113)Ma'an Mahmoud Younis Abdullah Al-Jubouri, *Ibid.*, pp. 119-120.

(114)Bilal Talal Hamad Al-Jawadi, *Ibid.*, p. 104.

(115) МИНИСТЕРСТВО ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ, Стенограмма интервью Министра иностранных дел России И.С.Иванова американской телекомпании "Эн-Би-Си" Москва, 27 января 2003 года ,С.3-4 .

Iraq has only thirty days to submit an accurate and comprehensive statement of all programs related to weapons of mass destruction. <sup>(116)</sup>

In light of this crisis, Russian companies have been a factor of pressure on the Russian government to continue its support for Iraq, and this increasing importance comes from the importance of oil, and this is what Russian Foreign Minister Ivanov confirmed that Russia has interests in Iraq and they are not hidden from anyone, because those interests were based on long-term relations <sup>(117)</sup>.

According to the 2002 Committee on Economic, Technical, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation, there were 200 Russian companies operating in Iraq, and in order to preserve its interests, Moscow believed that the settlement of the Iraqi crisis should be resolved without resorting to war, by returning international inspectors to Iraq based on UN resolutions, and in the event that the inspectors failed to detect weapons of mass destruction, it would lead to the lifting of the sanctions imposed on Iraq <sup>(118)</sup>.

However, the United States decided its decision from the beginning to overthrow the Iraqi regime, and the U.S. Congress approved it since October 11, 2002, where the Senate approved the resolution by 77 votes to 23 and the House of Representatives approved it by 269 votes to 133, and it is noteworthy that the number of votes was more than the votes that approved the second Gulf War. The resolution gave the President full authority to defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threats posed by Iraq <sup>(119)</sup> as one of the Axis of Evil States that threatened world peace, and Iraq was specifically accused of continuing to show hostility toward United States support against terrorism <sup>(120)</sup>.

By the end of 2002, it became increasingly clear that the United States intended to invade Iraq, and this provoked the Russian side, which expressed that it would exacerbate tensions in the region, and Putin reiterated his countryly opposition to any military action against Iraq <sup>(121)</sup>.

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(116)Memoirs of George Bush, op. cit., p. 321.

(117)However, the Iraqi Government cancelled the contracts of Russian companies, including Oil Corporation, signed in 1997, because they contacted the Iraqi opposition to secure their interests in the event of a takeover of power in Iraq when the regime falls. Ban Fawzi Al-Dulaimi, *Ibid.*, 44-45.

(118) Ella Akerman ,Op.Cit ,P. 285 .

(119)Memoirs of George Bush, op. cit., p. 321.

(120) MD Aminuzzaman, *Geopolitics of Oil and Iraq Crisis , The Sis Submitted For The Award W of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University West Asian Studies,2011,P.219* .

(121) *Ibid* .

Despite Russia's position rejecting the war on Iraq and its threat to use the veto, the Russian leadership, after being sure of the inevitability of striking Iraq, tended to hold the stick from the middle, as it opposed the military option and enlisted the resort to diplomatic solutions, and at the same time did not go with its position rejecting the American decision until the end <sup>(122)</sup>, as it was overpowered by its pragmatic and utilitarian interests, especially after the United States promised Russia a share of Iraqi oil in the event of the overthrow of the regime, and thus the matter was resolved and what it wanted was done. United States of America <sup>((123))</sup>.

## 2 CONCLUSION

- 1- Through this research, we have found that Vladimir Putin's assumption of power in Russia had a positive impact on Iraq, especially at the beginning of his assumption of power, where he set basic goals to advance the economic and political reality of Russia through the resumption of cooperation with the Iraqi government.
- 2- Russia has worked to challenge most of the resolutions issued by the Security Council against Iraq and supported by the United States of America, because it has put pragmatic interest above all considerations, even if it is against the United States, and this is represented by the Russian step, which was considered the most daring step in trying to end the sanctions and apply them on the ground, in a clear and explicit challenge to the United States by breaking the air travel imposed on Iraq and resuming its air flights to it.
- 3- After George W. Bush took power in the country, the United States continued its aggressive policy towards Iraq, and even imposed more sanctions, especially the so-called smart sanctions, which met with strong opposition from the Russian side, to the point of threatening to use the right of veto.
- 4- The events of 9/11 and the fight against terrorism were only a new excuse for the United States to implement its plans not only in Iraq but in the entire Middle East

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(122)Ban Fawzi al-Dulaimi, op. cit., p. 49.

(123)Bashar Fathi Jassim Al-Aqidi, Ibid., p. 359.

region, and it was able with all its political, diplomatic and military power to mobilize the world public opinion to achieve its goal in Iraq and overthrow its regime and occupy it, while the Russian Federation, Iraq's strategic ally, preferred its pragmatic and utilitarian interests after seeing the United States' insistence on invading Iraq as well as some of the promises it made. Washington to Moscow regarding its share of oil after getting rid of the Iraqi regime.

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