

The Obama Doctrine in the Americas
edited by Hanna S. Kassab and Jonathan D. Rosen
Lexington Books (2016)

Sarah Akram*

The Obama Doctrine in the Americas is an edited volume spread over 14 chapters and deals with the foreign policy transition from George W. Bush to Barack H. Obama in relation to the countries of the Americas. In this work, the contributors considered the major defining features of the two US Presidents' foreign policies in dealing with security-related issues. Distinctively, the authors examined whether major differences or continuities truly exist between the foreign policies of Bush and Obama, especially given the sensitivity of the American decline. The volume is more focused on Obama's foreign policy in the Americas in terms of international security revolving around issues such as drug trafficking, organised crime, and terrorism. It is emphasised in the book that the Americas continue to be a very important region for the US security, specifically in terms of non-state pressure in various forms.

The major portion of the book is spread into several case studies throughout the Americas. Mainly, the chapters revolve around the question of the major security challenges that the United States (US) faces. Furthermore, bilateral relations with the particular country are also analysed by comparing foreign policy of the Bush and Obama administrations. The chapters also address the subject of the nature of cooperation in terms of security related issues as well as the challenges faced by the Obama administration towards the end of his presidency.

The first section has a chapter by Ted Carpenter on major security challenges in the Western hemisphere followed by the second section, titled "Obama's Foreign Policy in the Caribbean." This section examines Obama's foreign policy towards Cuba, emphasises the significant changes in the US foreign policy towards the country. This is followed by another chapter by Christa L. Remington and Jean Claude Garcia Zamor, who analyse the Obama doctrine in Haiti. This is summed up by

* *The book reviewer is Research Fellow at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad.*

Dianne William's chapter on the major trends in the US foreign policy towards the South American region. The next section of the book focuses on Obama's foreign policy challenges in the case of El Salvador and Mexico. In this section, author Bradford R. Mc Guinn sheds light on the key security challenges for the US and examines the US foreign policy under Obama towards El Salvador, which faces the grave challenge of organised crime and violence. The next chapter by Roberto Zepeda Martinez and Jonathan D. Rosen analyse Mexico, with a particular reference to one of the important issues i.e., migration.

Part four of the book titled, "the Obama Doctrine and South America" covers Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Venezuela, Brazil and Argentina, with six different chapters analysing and comparing relations in the Bush era with the Obama era. The authors highlight that the major security challenges in this region are drug trafficking, organised crime and violence. These chapters also highlight cooperation with regard to Bolivia and also shed light on Venezuela, which was declared a threat to the US security. The final section of the book titled, "Obama's Canada Doctrine and Theoretical Approaches" deals with security-related concerns between the United States and Canada.

The book gives a detailed account of the Obama administration's approach towards the whole region of the Americas. The book is aimed to study the US foreign policy of Bush and Obama regimes with regards to the threats emanating from the wider regions of North and South America. Several authors analyse transition and evolution of the US foreign policy during the Bush and Obama administrations respectively. Furthermore, security, stability and defence mechanism of the US in terms of dealing with the Americas have also been discussed in detail. This is a useful book for those who would like to study the US foreign policy towards the countries located in its immediate north and southern hemisphere.