

Framing nuclear deterrence and international law: U.S. National Security Strategy and the construction of Russia as a threat (1987–2022)

Mārtiņš Vargulis*

Rīga Stradiņš University, Riga, Latvia; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3969-0331>

Abstract

This article examines how the United States has framed nuclear deterrence and international law within its National Security Strategies (NSSs) from 1987 to 2022, with particular attention to the evolving construction of Russia as a strategic threat. Using qualitative content analysis supported by artificial intelligence-assisted textual classification, the study explores how successive administrations—from Obama through Trump to Biden—interpret the legal and normative foundations of the international order, and how these interpretations shape the perceived legitimacy, purpose and scope of U.S. nuclear deterrence. The findings demonstrate that threat construction is not merely a response to material realities; rather, it is rooted in discursive practices that link Russia's behaviour to violations of international law, sovereignty and the rules-based order. By integrating insights from framing theory, securitisation and international legal norms, the article highlights how nuclear strategy and law intersect to produce shifting narratives that influence U.S. policy, alliance commitments and broader geopolitical dynamics in Europe.

Keywords

nuclear deterrence • U.S. National Security Strategy • Russia • rules-based order • discourse analysis

INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States (U.S.) has maintained a unique position in shaping global security dynamics not only through its material military capabilities but also through the normative and legal frameworks embedded in its foreign policy discourse. Nuclear deterrence has remained a central pillar of U.S. strategic thinking, yet its legitimacy has increasingly been articulated through references to international law, alliance obligations and the defence of a rules-based international order. While the technical foundations of deterrence are grounded in material capabilities, the way in which nuclear policy is justified and framed in official strategic documents reveals how power, legality and legitimacy are discursively intertwined (Freedman, 2019; Walt, 2018).

Among such documents, the U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) occupies a particularly important position. Mandated by Congress since 1987, the NSS constitutes the most authoritative public articulation of each administration's strategic worldview. Although the NSS does not create binding legal obligations, its language performs a significant normative

function: it signals interpretations of international law, frames acceptable and unacceptable state behaviour and constructs legal justifications for the use—or threat—of force. As such, the NSS serves as a key site where strategic reasoning and international legal norms intersect (Dueck, 2015).

Russia occupies a central and evolving place within this discursive and legal landscape. In the immediate post—Cold War period, U.S. strategies often portrayed Russia as a potential partner within a shared international order. Over time, however—and especially following the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022—Russia has increasingly been framed as a violator of core principles of international law, including sovereignty, territorial integrity and the prohibition of the use of force (Allison, 2017; Mearsheimer, 2021). This transformation is not merely rhetorical. By explicitly linking Russian actions to breaches of international legal norms, U.S. strategic discourse redefines nuclear deterrence as a necessary instrument for defending the legal and normative foundations of the international system. This shift has had direct implications for U.S. deterrence posture in Europe and for the credibility of extended deterrence commitments to

* Corresponding author: martins.vargulis@rsu.lv

Open Access. © 2025 Vargulis, published by Riga Stradins University

 This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 4.0 License.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, particularly on the Alliance's eastern flank.

Despite a substantial body of scholarship on nuclear deterrence, great-power competition and U.S.–Russia relations, existing studies tend to treat international law either as a background constraint or as a separate normative domain. Far less attention has been paid to how international law itself is mobilised within strategic documents as a discursive resource for legitimising nuclear deterrence and constructing threats. This article addresses this gap by examining how U.S. administrations from 1987 to 2022 have framed nuclear deterrence in relation to international law within successive NSSs, and how these framings contribute to the construction of Russia as a strategic threat.

Using qualitative content analysis supported by artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted textual classification, the study identifies dominant legal and normative frames across the Obama, Trump and Biden administrations, with particular attention to how concepts such as sovereignty, legality and the rules-based order are invoked. The analysis demonstrates that U.S. understandings of nuclear deterrence are not fixed responses to material conditions; rather, they emerge through discursive processes that link strategic logic with legal interpretation and normative claims.

By integrating framing theory and securitisation studies with international legal scholarship, this article contributes to a deeper understanding of how strategic narratives shape the perceived legitimacy of nuclear deterrence. More broadly, it highlights a central question for contemporary international law and security studies: how states use legal language and normative discourse not only to interpret global realities, but also to justify and stabilise practices—such as nuclear deterrence—that sit at the limits of the legal order.

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This article is grounded in an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that integrates framing theory, securitisation theory and international legal scholarship in order to analyse nuclear deterrence as a legally and normatively constructed strategic practice. Rather than treating international law solely as a system of binding rules or compliance mechanisms, the study conceptualises law as a discursive and legitimising resource through which strategic narratives are articulated and justified. Framing theory provides the analytical foundation for examining how strategic documents structure meaning and shape interpretations of threats, responsibility and legitimacy. Political frames emphasise particular aspects of reality while marginalising others, thereby guiding how audiences understand complex security environments and policy responses (Entman, 1993). In the context of nuclear

deterrence, framing enables the linkage of material capabilities with normative claims about order, stability and legality, transforming deterrence from a technical military concept into a morally and legally justified practice (Freedman, 2019).

Securitisation theory complements this perspective by explaining how certain issues are elevated to the level of existential threats through authoritative speech acts that legitimise extraordinary measures (Buzan et al., 1998). Nuclear deterrence represents one of the most extreme outcomes of securitisation, justified by references to survival, systemic stability and catastrophic risk. In contemporary U.S. strategic discourse, securitisation increasingly operates through legal language, as adversaries are framed not only as military threats but as violators of fundamental international norms. By presenting breaches of sovereignty, territorial integrity and the prohibition of the use of force as existential challenges, strategic documents expand the object of security from the state itself to the international legal order.

International law therefore functions in this analysis as a central legitimising framework rather than as a purely doctrinal benchmark. Core principles such as state sovereignty, non-intervention, territorial integrity and Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter are repeatedly invoked in U.S. strategic narratives to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable state behaviour (Shaw, 2017; Simma et al., 2012). When these norms are framed as being violated by a specific actor, nuclear deterrence is portrayed as a defensive and necessary response aimed at preserving the rules-based international system. This interpretative approach aligns with critical legal scholarship, which emphasises that the authority of international law is produced through political and normative contestation rather than solely through formal legal doctrine (Koskeniemi, 2005).

By integrating these perspectives, the article conceptualises nuclear deterrence as a dynamic practice situated at the intersection of power, law and discourse. The construction of Russia as a strategic threat in U.S. NSSs illustrates how legal norms become securitised and how deterrence is reframed as an instrument for defending the normative foundations of international order. This framework enables a systematic examination of how successive U.S. administrations have mobilised international law to structure threat perceptions and justify deterrence, while also highlighting the broader implications of such practices for the interpretation and stability of international legal norms.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Methodological approach

This article employs a mixed-methods qualitative content analysis that integrates traditional interpretive reading with

computational text analysis in order to examine how nuclear deterrence and international law are framed within U.S. NSS. The research is based on a corpus consisting of all publicly available NSS documents published between 1987 and 2022, comprising 18 strategies issued by successive U.S. administrations.

The corpus was processed using the *Coral AI* textual analysis environment, which enabled large-scale examination of linguistic patterns through several natural language processing techniques. These included topic modelling based on Latent Dirichlet Allocation to identify recurring thematic clusters, as well as semantic similarity measures using transformer-based embeddings to trace how key concepts—such as ‘Russia’, ‘deterrence’, ‘international law’, ‘sovereignty’ and ‘rules-based order’—co-occur and evolve over time. In addition, keyword frequency analysis and co-occurrence mapping were used to quantify shifts in narrative emphasis across administrations.

To ensure that the legal dimension of the analysis was systematically captured, the computational analysis was guided by a researcher-defined coding scheme grounded in international legal principles and concepts. Specific legal categories—including sovereignty, territorial integrity, the prohibition of the use of force, norm violation and legality—were derived from core principles of international law and used to identify legal framing within the NSS texts. Supervised classifiers were trained to detect the presence and intensity of these legal frames alongside strategic and security-related themes such as deterrence, threat construction and alliance commitments.

The computational output was subsequently examined through qualitative interpretive coding using a deductive approach informed by framing theory, securitisation scholarship and international legal analysis. This step ensured that algorithmically identified patterns were interpreted within coherent theoretical and legal frameworks, rather than treated as purely quantitative indicators. Particular attention was paid to how references to international law functioned within securitising narratives, including whether legal norms were invoked to justify deterrence, attribute responsibility or construct Russia as a revisionist actor. By combining computational text analysis with theory-driven qualitative interpretation, the study captures both quantitative shifts in strategic language and qualitative changes in the legal and normative framing of nuclear deterrence. This integrative design allows for a more nuanced understanding of how successive U.S. administrations have mobilised international law within strategic discourse, providing insights that would not be attainable through either method in isolation.

Framing dynamics in U.S. NSSs: A historical overview

The framing of nuclear deterrence within U.S. NSS must be understood in the broader evolution of American national security discourse. Although the relative weight assigned

to nuclear weapons in U.S. doctrine has varied since the late Cold War, deterrence remains one of the central pillars structuring how the U.S. interprets threats, obligations and the normative foundations of the international order (Freedman, 2019; Walt, 2018). Since 1986, every presidential administration has been required to publish an NSS, providing a unique and authoritative window into how the U.S. conceptualises the international system, prioritises risks and signals commitments to allies and adversaries (Dueck, 2015). While policy implementation may diverge from the documents’ language, the frames embedded in the NSS serve as important indicators of strategic intent and legal-normative positioning.

A longitudinal, mixed-methods analysis of the NSS corpus reveals substantial variation in how successive administrations construct the external environment. One dimension of this variation concerns the prominence of specific states. As shown in Figure 1, references to Russia (formerly the Soviet Union) dominate the late Cold War and early post-Cold War strategies. Russia’s salience declines sharply during the 1990s, while Iraq and Afghanistan rise to prominence in the early 2000s, reflecting the strategic impact of the 9/11 attacks and subsequent U.S. military campaigns (Bensahel, 2010). From the mid-2010s onwards, China and Russia re-emerge as principal strategic competitors, with China surpassing Russia in certain strategies, particularly under the Trump administration (Mastro, 2019). Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 restores its centrality, reorienting U.S. strategy towards European stability and reaffirming legal concerns regarding sovereignty and territorial integrity (Allison, 2022).

A second dimension of the discursive shift concerns the thematic vocabulary structuring U.S. threat perception. Figure 2 illustrates how the prominence of concepts such as ‘terrorism’, ‘major power competition’, ‘deterrence’ and ‘geopolitics’ fluctuates over time. During the late Cold War, deterrence and great-power rivalry dominate the conceptual space. In the early 2000s, terrorism became the central organising frame, with the 2002 NSS labelling groups such as the Taliban and al-Qaeda as ‘enemies of civilisation’ (NSS, 2002). Beginning around 2010—and accelerating under both the Trump and Biden administrations—the NSS discourse shifts back towards major power competition. This shift is increasingly accompanied by a normative and legal framing: both Russia and China are depicted as actors undermining the rules-based order and violating foundational principles of international law (Mazarr, 2015).

Together, the two figures demonstrate that U.S. strategic discourse oscillates between competing priorities, but consistently relies on legal and normative reasoning to frame threats and justify deterrence posture. The framing of Russia, in particular, evolves from post-Cold War ambiguity to explicit categorisation as a revisionist, law-breaking actor

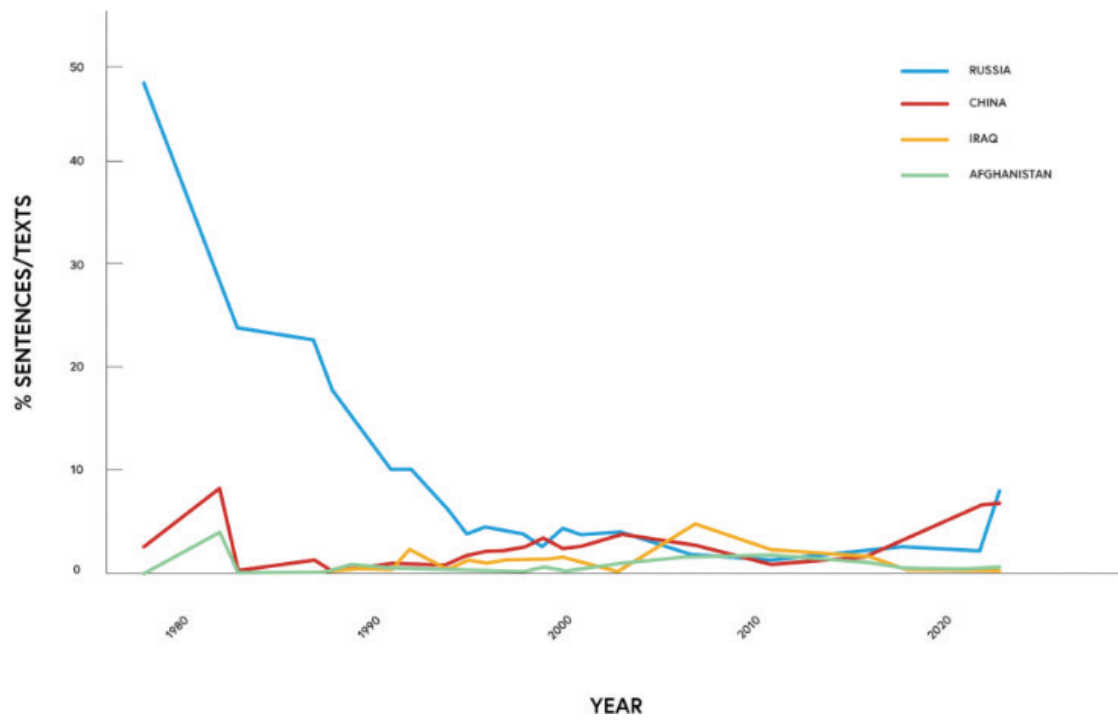


Figure 1. Percentage of sentences referencing selected states in U.S. NSS documents (1987–2022). *Source:* Chin et al. (2023).

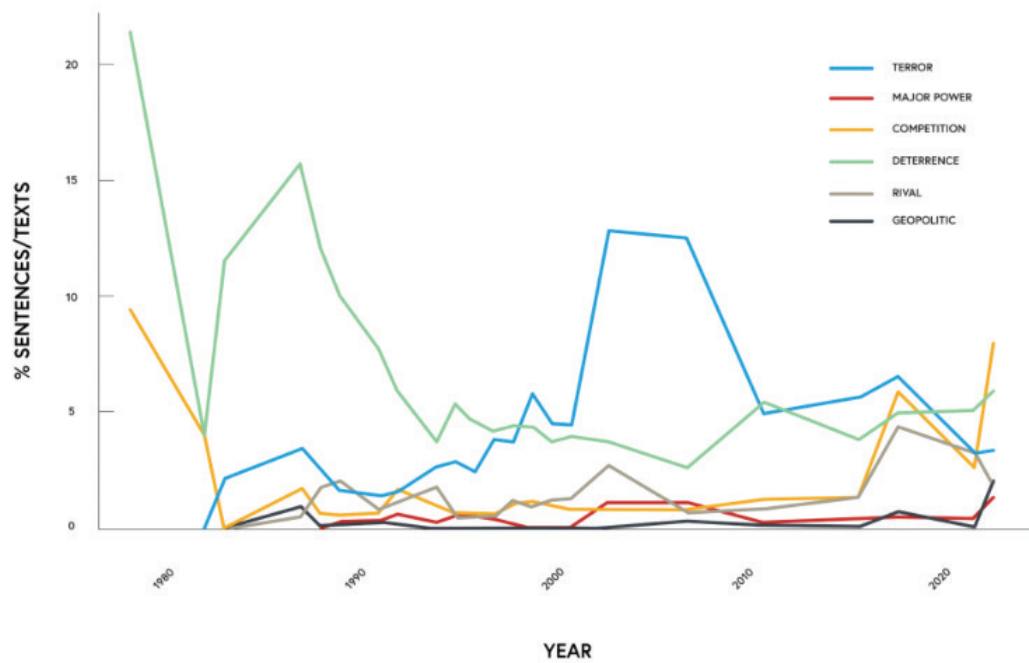


Figure 2. Percentage of sentences referencing key strategic themes in U.S. NSS documents (1987–2022). *Source:* Chin et al. (2023).

whose actions necessitate reinforced extended deterrence and closer coordination within NATO (Rumer and Sokolsky, 2020). These shifts highlight the central role of strategic narratives in shaping U.S. nuclear policy and underscore how interpretations of international law—especially sovereignty and territorial integrity—inform the construction of Russia as a threat.

Administration-specific framing of Russia and deterrence

Although each U.S. presidential administration introduces its own strategic priorities, the NSS documents reveal both persistent elements of American foreign policy thinking and significant discursive variation across administrations. This variation is particularly visible in how the U.S. frames Russia, nuclear deterrence and the broader international legal order. Building on the AI-assisted textual analysis conducted through the *Coral AI* environment, this section examines how administrations from Obama to Biden construct Russia as a threat, and how these constructions relate to changes in strategic, legal and normative framing found in NSS documents.

Across the 18 NSS documents published since 1987, the combined qualitative and computational content analysis indicates that U.S. strategic discourse consistently returns to several core themes—sovereignty, international norms, alliance obligations and deterrence—while adjusting their interpretation according to shifting geopolitical realities. Beyond the well-known alternation between counterterrorism

and great-power competition, the analysis identifies two additional thematic clusters that reappear across decades. The first is economic security, which becomes increasingly prominent from the late 1990s onwards, reflecting the growing recognition that global economic interdependence shapes national resilience and the strategic behaviour of competitors (NSS, 1998, 2006). This shift influences not only how adversaries are described but also how the economic dimension becomes integrated into the framing of Russia, particularly regarding energy leverage, sanctions and global market stability.

The second recurring cluster concerns globalisation, democracy and human rights. Early strategies frame democracy promotion in ideological terms as a counterweight to authoritarian systems. Later documents adopt a more nuanced view, linking democratic governance with economic stability and rule-of-law principles, while acknowledging local political contexts (NSS, 2010, 2015). Over time, this normative dimension becomes increasingly integrated into how the U.S. frames Russia's behaviour as a challenge not only to U.S. interests but to the foundational norms of the international system.

To illustrate how these broader discursive patterns manifest at the level of individual administrations, this section examines the three most recent NSS periods—Obama (2009–2017), Trump (2017–2021) and Biden (2021–2025)—as they represent the most relevant phases for understanding contemporary U.S. framing of Russia, nuclear deterrence and international law (Table 1).

Table 1. Administrative priorities and the framing of Russia in U.S. National Security Strategies

Administration	Core strategic priorities & international framing	Framing of Russia in the security discourse
Barack Obama (2010–2015)	- Restoration of U.S. global leadership through a strong domestic foundation (NSS, 2010). - Emphasis on cooperation with allies and international institutions. - Commitment to democracy, human rights and a rules-based order. - Recognition of economic interdependence and globalised security challenges.	- Russia framed as a <i>significant threat</i> to international norms. - Highlighting violations of Ukrainian sovereignty and destabilising regional actions (NSS, 2015). - Need to strengthen NATO, impose costs and reinforce collective deterrence.
Donald Trump (2017–2021)	'America First': prioritising national sovereignty, economic independence and military dominance (NSS, 2017). - Transactional approach to alliances; emphasis on burden-sharing. - Strategic competition narrative intensified, especially with China.	- Russia depicted as aiming to weaken U.S. influence and divide NATO. - Recognition of Russian aggression and military modernisation. - Dual framing: adversary requiring deterrence but potential partner if aligned with norms.
Joe Biden (2021–2022)	- Strong emphasis on democratic values, alliances and defending the rules-based international order (NSS, 2022). - Strategic competition with China and Russia framed within a global contest between democracy and authoritarianism. - Linking domestic renewal with foreign policy strength.	- Russia labelled an <i>immediate and acute</i> threat following the 2022 invasion of Ukraine. - Actions framed as 'blatant violations' of sovereignty and international law. - Strong focus on sanctions, collective defence and reinforced nuclear and conventional deterrence through NATO.

Source: author's analysis.

NATO, North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

International law perspective: Legal norms, legitimacy and nuclear deterrence

While the preceding analysis has demonstrated how U.S. NSSs construct Russia as a strategic threat through evolving narratives of deterrence and competition, this section explicitly situates those findings within the framework of international law. Rather than assessing compliance with specific legal obligations, the focus here is on how international legal norms are invoked, interpreted and mobilised within U.S. strategic discourse to legitimise nuclear deterrence and threat construction.

Across successive NSS documents, references to international law are neither incidental nor purely declaratory. Core principles of the international legal order—most notably state sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-intervention and the prohibition of the use of force under Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter—serve as recurring normative anchors through which U.S. strategic assessments are framed (Shaw, 2017; Simma et al., 2012). When these principles are presented as being violated, deterrence is reframed from a strategic preference into a necessary response aimed at defending the legal order itself.

This dynamic becomes particularly evident in the post-2014 period. Following Russia's annexation of Crimea, U.S. strategies increasingly characterise Russian actions as 'violations' or 'breaches' of sovereignty and territorial integrity, language that carries explicit legal meaning. By invoking these legal norms, the NSS does more than identify a geopolitical rival; it constructs Russia as a revisionist actor whose behaviour undermines the foundational rules of international society. In this context, nuclear deterrence is discursively linked to the preservation of legality, stability and predictability within the international system, especially in the European security environment.

Importantly, this legal framing does not operate in isolation but is embedded within broader securitising narratives. By portraying norm violations as existential threats to the rules-based order, U.S. strategic discourse elevates legal principles themselves into objects of security. This process effectively securitises international law, transforming abstract legal norms into values that require protection through military and deterrence measures. Nuclear deterrence thus becomes framed not only as a response to material threats, but as a safeguard against the erosion of legal and normative constraints on the use of force.

At the same time, the NSS illustrates the interpretative flexibility inherent in international law. While principles such as sovereignty and non-use of force are formally universal, their application within strategic discourse is selective and context-dependent. The strategies consistently distinguish between 'responsible' and 'irresponsible' state behaviour, implicitly positioning the U.S. and its allies as defenders of legality, while casting adversaries as norm violators. As critical legal

scholars have observed, such distinctions are not derived solely from legal doctrine but are produced through political and narrative contestation (Koskeniemi, 2005). The NSS functions as a key site where these interpretative struggles are articulated and normalised.

From a legal perspective, this raises important implications for the relationship between nuclear deterrence and international law. On the one hand, the invocation of legal norms strengthens the perceived legitimacy of deterrence by embedding it within a narrative of defence rather than aggression. On the other hand, the securitisation and instrumentalisation of legal principles risk narrowing their interpretative space, subordinating legal reasoning to strategic necessity. The NSS thus illustrates how international law can simultaneously constrain and enable power, depending on how it is framed within strategic discourse.

By foregrounding international law as a legitimising and securitising framework, this article demonstrates that nuclear deterrence in U.S. strategy cannot be understood solely through military or geopolitical analysis. Instead, it emerges as a practice deeply embedded in legal interpretation and normative justification. The construction of Russia as a threat is therefore not only a matter of power politics but also a legal narrative in which deterrence is portrayed as essential to the defence of the international legal order itself.

CONCLUSION

This article has examined how the U.S. has framed nuclear deterrence and international law in the construction of Russia as a strategic threat across U.S. NSSs published between 1987 and 2022. By integrating qualitative interpretation with AI-assisted textual analysis, the study demonstrates that U.S. strategic discourse is neither static nor reducible to reactions to material power shifts. Instead, it is shaped by evolving narratives in which military capability, legal interpretation and normative reasoning are closely intertwined.

Three central conclusions emerge from the analysis:

- First, Russia occupies a persistent—though fluctuating—position within U.S. strategic thinking. While its prominence declines in the immediate post-Cold War period, Russia re-emerges as a central threat as geopolitical conditions change, particularly following the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Across administrations, Russia is consistently framed as an actor capable of destabilising international order, though the intensity and legal grounding of this framing vary significantly over time.
- Second, nuclear deterrence retains a stable conceptual role within U.S. strategy, but its justification increasingly relies on legal and normative arguments. While

earlier strategies emphasised deterrence primarily in strategic or military terms, more recent NSS documents—particularly under the Obama and Biden administrations—embed deterrence within narratives of sovereignty, territorial integrity and the defence of the rules-based international order. Even the more transactional approach of the Trump administration preserves deterrence as an indispensable instrument, underscoring the enduring logic of nuclear deterrence despite variations in normative framing.

- Third, international law assumes an increasingly prominent role in U.S. threat construction. Russian actions are progressively described not only as security challenges but as violations of foundational international legal norms. This discursive shift reframes nuclear deterrence from a narrowly strategic tool into a mechanism portrayed as essential for defending the international legal order itself. The securitisation of Russia thus operates on both material and legal levels, presenting Russia simultaneously as a military adversary and as a revisionist power undermining core principles of international law.

Beyond these empirical findings, the study offers a broader theoretical contribution. It demonstrates that threat construction in U.S. strategy emerges through the interaction of material capabilities, narrative framing and legal interpretation. The NSS functions not merely as a policy document, but as a discursive artefact through which legal norms are interpreted, mobilised and embedded within grand strategy. In this sense, international law is not external to strategic reasoning but constitutes one of its key legitimising foundations.

These insights contribute to ongoing debates in international relations, security studies and international law by highlighting the role of legal discourse in shaping the legitimacy of nuclear deterrence. The analysis suggests that as great-power competition intensifies, legal and normative framing is likely to play an increasingly central role in how deterrence is justified and stabilised. At the same time, the selective mobilisation of legal norms within strategic discourse raises important questions about the interpretative flexibility of international law and its vulnerability to instrumentalisation.

In sum, the construction of Russia as a threat in U.S. strategic discourse cannot be explained solely by shifts in military power or geopolitical rivalry. It reflects a deeper normative process in which international law and the defence of the rules-based order become integral components of American strategic identity. Understanding this process is essential for assessing the future trajectory of U.S. nuclear policy and its implications for international legal order and global security.

REFERENCES

- Allison, G. (2017). *Destined for war: Can America and China escape Thucydides's trap?* Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston, MA.
- Allison, G. (2022). *What the Ukraine war has revealed about Russia*. Foreign Policy. Foreign Policy Group, LLC. <https://foreignpolicy.com>
- Bensahel, N. (2010). After the war: Nation-building from FDR to George W. Bush. *Political Science Quarterly*, 125(2), 293–322. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1538-165X.2010.tb00674.x>
- Buzan, B., Wæver, O., & de Wilde, J. (1998). *Security: A new framework for analysis*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, CO.
- Chin, J. J., Skinner, K., & Yoo, C. (2023). *The National Security Strategy Database*. Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA. <https://nssarchive.us>
- Dueck, C. (2015). *The Obama doctrine: American grand strategy today*. Oxford University Press, New York, NY.
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51–58. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x>
- Freedman, L. (2019). *The future of war: A history*. Penguin Books, London, UK.
- Koskeniemi, M. (2005). *From apology to utopia: The structure of international legal argument (2nd ed.)*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511493713>
- Mastro, O. S. (2019). The stealth superpower: How China hid its global ambitions. *Foreign Affairs*, 98(1), 31–39.
- Mazarr, M. J. (2015). *Mastering the gray zone: Understanding a changing era of conflict*. U.S. Army War College Press, Carlisle, PA.
- Mearsheimer, J. J. (2021). *The tragedy of great power politics (Updated ed.)*. W. W. Norton & Company, New York, NY.
- National Security Strategy of the United States of America. (1998). *A national security strategy for a new century*. The White House, Washington, DC. <https://www.whitehouse.gov>
- National Security Strategy of the United States of America. (2002). *The national security strategy of the United States of America*. The White House, Washington, DC. <https://www.whitehouse.gov>
- National Security Strategy of the United States of America. (2006). *The national security strategy of the United States of America*. The White House, Washington, DC. <https://www.whitehouse.gov>
- National Security Strategy of the United States of America. (2010). *National security strategy*. The White House, Washington, DC. <https://www.whitehouse.gov>
- National Security Strategy of the United States of America. (2015). *National security strategy*. The White House, Washington, DC. <https://www.whitehouse.gov>
- National Security Strategy of the United States of America. (2017). *National security strategy of the United States of America*. The White House, Washington, DC. <https://www.whitehouse.gov>
- National Security Strategy of the United States of America. (2022). *National security strategy*. The White House, Washington, DC. <https://www.whitehouse.gov>

- Rumer, E., & Sokolsky, R. (2020). *Thirty years of U.S. policy toward Russia: Can the vicious circle be broken?* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, DC. <https://carnegieendowment.org>
- Shaw, M. N. (2017). *International law (8th ed.)*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.
- Simma, B., Khan, D.-E., Nolte, G., & Paulus, A. (Eds.). (2012). *The Charter of the United Nations: A commentary (3rd ed.)*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.
- Walt, S. M. (2018). *The hell of good intentions: America's foreign policy elite and the decline of U.S. primacy*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, NY.