

# CHANGING CONCEPTION OF FAILED STATES FROM NEOREALIST PERSPECTIVE

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## ABSTRACT

“Failed States” has become one of the outstanding concepts in international relations for the last two decades. The aim of this paper is to point out the change in understanding of failed states from neorealist perspective. The argument is that while “failed states” issue used to be considered as economical before 9/11, it has become a security issue after that. Moreover, the analysis level has shifted nation level to international level. Having introduced and mentioned literature review, the definition problem takes place which is followed by theoretical approaches. Next part will focus on the change in failed states understanding from neorealist perspective.

**Key Words:** Failed States, International Terror, Neorealism

## NEO-REALİST PERSPEKTİFTEN BAŞARISIZ DEVLETLER KAVRAMSALLAŞMASININ DEĞİŞİMİ

### ÖZET

“Başarısız Devletler” son yirmi yılda uluslararası ilişkilerde en önemli kavramlardan biri haline geldi. Bu çalışmanın amacı başarısız devlet anlayışındaki değişimi neo realist perspektiften açıklamaktır. Argümanı; “Başarısız Devlet” kavramı 11 Eylül’den önce ekonomik bağlamdayken bundan sonra güvenlik bağlamında algılandığıdır. Bunun yanında, analiz düzeyi devlet düzeyinden uluslararası düzeye kaymıştır. Giriş ve literatür taramasından sonra kavramın tanımı hakkındaki sorunlar ve akabinde teorik yaklaşımlar yer alacaktır. Daha sonraki kısım başarısız devlet kavramındaki değişimi neo realist perspektiften inceleyecektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Başarısız Devlet, Uluslararası Terör, Neorealizm

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As world politics and international system changes, new concepts either encounter or revive and become popular in international relations. “Failed States” concept is not an exception in this context. The term was included to the literature after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which was a period of change in

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world politics as well as international system. Although it is considered that the term is first used by Helman and Ratner in 1993, they admit their inspiration from the word *debellatio* that was used for describing destroyed German state after World War II (Helman and Ratner, 1993). However, the term has been becoming more popular for the last two decades particularly after 9/11. This article aims to point out the change in the failed states concept. Having mentioned the literature review, the problem of conceptualizing takes place. Since the term is very recent, the literature does not suggest a common definition. This will be followed by both theoretical and practical approaches to failed states before and after 9/11. The change will be discussed in the context of neorealism that is suggested by Robert Gilpin. The argument of the paper is that the concept was taken in the context of economic and domestic policy issue before 9/11 but after that the concept has been shifting towards international security issue. The difference of this article is instead of supporting or opposing the “failed states” concept or suggesting an alternative term, it focuses on the understanding of the concept. Additionally, different from literature, the term is held from neo - realist international relations approach

### 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the “failed states” is a new phenomenon in international relations, the literature seeks to constitute theoretical approaches by categorizing different works. Call addresses neoconservative and neoliberal interventionists as the promoters of the “failed,” “failing,” or “fragile” states as an important problem in international security and development (Call, 2010). Most comprehensive categorization is done by Di John. He divided the literature into five sets of big ideas; pre-requisite approach to development, liberal view of war and violence, functionalist theories, the new war thesis and the resource curse (Di John, 2010). Vinci took the issue from neorealist perspective (Vinci, 2008). Additionally, Dorff analyzed the issue from realist perspective and suggested hegemonic stability theory to fix failed states (Dorff, 2005). Whereas, Chomsky took the issue from critical perspective (Chomsky, 2006). It is also recommended that the concept should be taken in international political economy context (Bilgin and Morton, 2002).

Some scholars use empirical method either to create a theoretical model or to disprove what literature suggests. Howard is an example of the former. He tried to develop a causal model for state failure by testifying 8 variables and resulted as state failure is a process of two stages and a discrete set of factors increases the probability of entering one stage as opposed to the other (Howard, 2008). Gros divides the countries into five categories; anarchic, phantom, anaemic, captured and aborted (Gros, 1996). Unlike Howard, Hehir collected data in order to disprove the correlation between state failure and terrorist incidents (Hehir, 2007). Although, Simons and Tucker do not prefer empirical methods, they support the idea that there is not any correlation between state

failure and international terrorism referring to jihadist movements in Africa (Simons and Tucker, 2007).

On the other hand, some scholars suggest alternative terms instead of “failed state”. “Problem state”, “Fragile state”, “Illegitimate state” are some examples of that (Call, 2008; 2010). Additionally, instead of categorizing the states as failed or successful, use of “postcolonial studies” term is another alternative that is raised (Eriksen, 2011).

In this regard, Jackson distinguishes sovereignty with respect to their function by negative and positive. Negative sovereignty is the legal foundation upon which a society of independent and equal states formally rests and positive sovereignty is ability to provide political goods for its citizens (Jackson, 1993).

Apart from definition, as it will be discussed in this paper, the literature also suggests case studies and way of fixing them. Most common case studies are African states, particularly Somalia (Gros, 1996; McAllister, 2002; Hill, 2005; Coyne, 2006; Di John, 2010; Kimenyi et al, 2010). Reasons of state failure and fixing them are the other leg in this context. “Escalating ethnic conflicts, state predation, regional guerrilla rebellion, democratic collapse, and succession/reform crises in authoritarian states” (Goldstone, 2008) are considered main reasons for the state failure in the literature. Economic reasons are also addressed (Rotberg, 2004). Fixing failed states is the complimentary part of this leg (François and Sud, 2006; Ghani and Lockhart, 2008; Yoo, 2011).

Another group takes the issue from international security perspective. That works focus on the diffusion of insecurity both in regions and whole globe (Dorff, 2005; Patrick, 2007; Iqbal and Starr, 2008). On the other hand, Chomsky applies the theoretical suggestions to United States government’s attitudes and claims that US itself is failed states (Chomsky, 2006).

## **2. THE PROBLEM OF DEFINITION AND CONCEPTUALIZING**

It is not surprising that the “failed states” is a recent concept both in academic and political field. The main reason should be claimed by addressing increasing number of states for last half a century. Thus, decolonization is the primary motivation for the emergence. The other milestone is the dissolution of USSR and collapse of Berlin Wall. Such events resulted in asymmetrical distribution of power and wealth around the world. As an illustration of the case; whereas post – WWII era, when there were around 50 countries in the world, after the collapse of USSR, the number had increased nearly 200. Moreover, the existed countries in 1945 were the results of deep historical progresses such as nationalization, institutionalization or civilization. In contrast to them, majority of the countries that gained independence after decolonization are lack of historical heritage, strong institutions. They even considered as “imagined community” (Kaiser, 2001; Njami, 2011) and the boundaries of them are

artificial. As a result, the academic world has required to identify the differences between the formerly and newly independent countries as well as functioning of them. However, since the surviving processes as well as the effects of such countries are very recent, identification of that event is unavoidably new and problematic.

The name of the term “failed state” itself is arguable in literature. As it is stated, although the term *debellatio* used in describing the destroyed German state after World War II (Helman and Ratner, 1993), it is mostly believed that the failed states term has been resurrected by Helman and Ratner to describe the countries that “utterly incapable of sustaining itself as a member of the international community” (Helman and Ratner, 1993; 3). The term has been challenged significantly. Charles Call suggested alternative uses for the concept which are “Collapsed States”, “Weak States”, “War – torn States” and “Authoritarian States” by making distinction between each other (Call, 2008). What are seen in literature also is the terms “Rogue States” and “Fragile States”. Although these two labels “failed” and “rogue” are often used interchangeably in the daily political lexicon, the difference between the two has often been clear to US policymakers (Bilgin and Morton, 2004). Another synonymous term is “Collapsed States” (Rotberg, 2004).

This definition problem causes deepening the discussion. This leads us to explain the conceptualizing process. As it will be pointed out more detailed in the following chapters, any consensus does not exist about the indicators of “failed states” or “successful states”. Most common indicator is the *Failed States Index* that is proposed by Fund for Peace. It uses 12 indicators; Demographic Pressures, Refugees/IDPs, Group Grievance, Human Flight, Uneven Development, Economic Decline, Delegitimization of the State, Public Services, Human Rights, Security Apparatus, Factionalized Elites, and External Intervention (<http://www.foreignpolicy.com>, 2009). On the other hand, Rotberg points out the characteristics of failed states as; where civil unrest, intensity of violence, civil wars, disharmonies between communities, ethnic or other intercommunal hostility, lack of controlling peripheral regions, growth of criminal violence, limited quantities of other essential political goods, flawed institutions, destroyed infrastructures, effective educational and medical systems are privatized informally, unparalleled economic opportunity, corruption, declining real national and per capita levels of annual gross domestic product, climatic disasters do exist (Rotberg, 2004; 5 – 9). On the other hand Chomsky describes them as follows:

*They do not protect their citizens from violence or that decision makers regard such concerns as lower in priority than the short – term power and wealth of the state’s dominant sector. Another characteristic of failed states is that they are ‘outlaw states’, whose*

*leadership dismisses international law and treaties with contempt”*  
(Chomsky, 2006; 38).

As a result, there is lack of consensus for the indicators of failed states.

The main problem of discrepancy in conceptualizing causes polyphony and confusion. As it will be discussed in the following two chapters, those different indicators results in different conceptualizing which leads to different definitions. As a result, two mainstreams have emerged in two decades about failed states. First is that the concept should be taken in the context of domestic politics. On the other hand it is claimed that failed states concept is the subject matter of international relations. In fact, the latter has been becoming dominant since 9/11. Following parts will testify the evolution of the concept in that period and points out the change.

### **3. FAILED STATES BEFORE 9/11**

Failed states issue has emerged as a domestic issue, particularly in post – Soviet space and third world in the post-cold war era. When Helman and Ratner introducing the term into literature as

*From Haiti in the Western Hemisphere to the remnants of Yugoslavia in Europe, from Somalia, Sudan, and Liberia in Africa to Cambodia in Southeast Asia, a disturbing new phenomenon is emerging: the failed nation-state, utterly incapable of sustaining itself as a member of the international community (Helman and Ratner, 1993; 3)*

obviously they were addressing internal problems. With respect to that, early discussions about state failure took the issue in the context of political philosophy. “What is state?” and “What are the functions of a state” used to be the main questions of the academic works.

Thus, early academic studies on failed states referred to “social contract” notion, which was suggested by early modern philosophers because the definition of state was the starting point to analyze the issue. One of the earliest contribution to social contract theory was done by Hobbes:

*Every man should say to every man: I authorise and give up my right of governing myself to this man, or to this assembly of men, on this condition; that thou give up, thy right to him, and authorise all his actions in like manner. This done, the multitude so united in one person is called a Commonwealth; in Latin, Civitas (Hobbes, 1651; 106).*

Thus, Hobbes considers state as a contract between individuals and authority in order to get rid off the anarchic society. This leads scholars to take

domestic violence and civil wars as an indicator for state failure in the early post-cold war era. Hobbes' younger contemporary scholar John Locke points out the equality:

*A state also of equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another; there being nothing more evident than that creatures of the same species and rank, promiscuously born to all the same advantages of nature, and the use of the same faculties, should also be equal one amongst another without subordination or subjection (Locke, 2003; 101).*

It is clearly understood that states should provide law and equality for its citizens especially in terms of equality of opportunity. This refers to contemporary indices of state failure such as corruption, flawed institutionalizing. Another contribution to social contract was done by Weber who refers to *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory (<http://www.ne.jp>, 23.11.2011).

With respect to those earlier as well as successor contributions on state existence and functioning, contemporary scholars have been trying to constitute a model for state failure or state succession since the end of Cold War. This historical process shaped two mainstreams in this context. First mainstream considers the state as public provider thus dysfunction causes failure, and second mainstream suggests that loose of monopoly of violence in territory means a state failure (Eriksen, 2011; 230 – 231). Those should be expressed simply as lack of “effectiveness” and “legitimacy” (Goldstone, 2008; 285). The former refers to lack of infrastructure, economic troubles and other non-security issues. The later on the other hand refers to internal security concerns such as state weakness, loose of authority, anarchy or decentralization which is different from secession as McAllister suggests (McAllister, 2008; 124).

To illustrate the case, studies predominantly focused on Africa. During the cold war period, new independent African states had staged the conflict of bipolar system by coup d'états and civil wars. After the cold war the characteristics of conflicts have shifted towards ethnic conflicts owing to artificial boundaries of that states. However, majority of those conflicts has never ended with secession. Thus, since 1970's particularly sub - Saharan Africa has been witnessing civil wars, which fulfills the condition lack of legitimacy. This leded dysfunctioning of state inevitably by creating infectious diseases, famine, and collapse of infrastructure which confirms the lack of effectiveness condition. Although, Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan are featured cases in literature, taking Africa as a whole is more common (Prah, 2004; Hill, 2005; McAllister, 2008). Additionally, some former communist as well as Latin American states are taken in the context of state failure with respect to weak authority (such as Tajikistan and Yugoslavia in 90's) and dysfunction (such as Haiti). This skips scholars to the further step which is fixing failed states. Unlike

conceptualizing, fixing failed states suggest two main theoretical approaches. First approach takes the issue from liberal institutionalist perspective and second takes from hegemonic stability theory, which will be discussed in the following part because that approached has occurred after 9/11 in the context of failed states. Liberal institutionalists call for financial aid and assistance from intergovernmental organizations, particularly IMF, World Bank or UNCTAD in order to fix them and provide stability. Thus, the issue is considered mainly as economical and technical.

Consequently, the emerging term “Failed States” has been considered as economic, social and internal security issue since the beginning of post-cold war era. With respect to historical philosophy, functioning and legitimacy are two main concerns of being a “successful” state. Thus, the problem is considered as a domestic issue. The literature until 9/11 mentioned neither spread of instability nor international security. Therefore, the failed states were completely a domestic policy issue, which would get rid off by financial assistance from the view of liberal institutionalisms. Although the literature still suggests same after 9/11, an alternative approach has been trying to alter the concept since that time, which is the subject of next part.

#### **4. FAILED STATES AFTER 9/11**

Although the domestic context keeps being as a subject in academic field, since 9/11 the failed states concept has been shifting towards international security context. US National Security Strategy addressed the issue as “potentially generating internal conflict, humanitarian crises or regional instability” (The White House, 1998). This might be considered as a sign of the departure from domestic issue concept but still it is limited with regional context. However, the attention has been stressed more strictly after 9/11 attacks. In 2002 US National Security Strategy pointed out failed states in a broader range;

*America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones. We are menaced less by fleets and armies than by catastrophic technologies in the hands of the embittered few. We must defeat these threats to our Nation, allies, and friends (The White House, 2002).*

Thus the US administration has shifted the issue from domestic to firstly regional, then international security context. This is the starting point of the new context of failed states.

With respect to this, the main argument about failed states is that they become safe havens for international terrorism, drug production and trafficking and arm trades (Ottaway and Mair, 2004; François and Sud, 2006; Patrick, 2007). Such situation unavoidably affects both regional and international

security. For the former; firstly, instability harms economies of neighbor countries by declining trade or increasing migrations. Secondly, and related to migration, such cases affect security as well because immigrants may aggressive actions from host country as in the case of Palestinian attacks to Israel from Jordan refugee camps in 80's. Moreover, the spillover effect is also argued in literature (François and Sud, 2006; Iqbal and Starr, 2008; Howard, 2010).

Moreover, the main concern about failed states related with international security. As it is stated, loss of legitimacy results in rise of terrorist organizations, who at the end threats humanity. According to UK national security strategy report;

*That was the situation in Afghanistan, where the Taliban regime sheltered terrorist training camps before the terrorist attacks in September 2001, and with narcotics networks in several parts of the world, for example Southern Afghanistan and West Africa (Cabinet Office, 2008).*

Thus, referring to terrorist attacks, failed states have been considered as primary source of conflict around the world.

Hence, since 9/11 the concept of failed states has been changing from a domestic political economy subject to an international security issue.

## **5. CHANGE IN FAILED STATES CONCEPT**

With respect to that, the main purpose of this article is to analyze why this change has been occurring. To understand such a change in international security understanding, neo – realist approach will be implemented because of its assumptions as well as level of analysis.

Firstly, since the international security features as global characteristic rather than atomic individual or relational, the level of analysis should be international system level. Therefore, classical realist or liberal approaches would be lack of satisfying to explain change in international system. Secondly, as the issue has been shifting to security concern, not surprisingly realist approaches would be more relevant to understand the issue. Finally, among realist approaches, neo – realism would be more talented because of the approaches to issue of order and change. While classical realism focuses more on international “order”, neo – realism tries to explain the “change” in international system. As a result, neo – realism becomes the most relevant approach to explain the change in failed states.

Hence, the change in failed states concept will be discussed in the context of Robert Gilpin's model that was suggested in his book *War and Change in World Politics*. Gilpin argues that the study of international political change must focus on the international system and especially on the efforts of political



actors to change the international system in order to advance their own interests (Gilpin, 1981; 19). Five assumptions are suggested to analyze the change in world politics:

1. *An international system is stable (i.e., in a state of equilibrium) if no state believes it profitable to attempt to change the system.*
2. *A state will attempt to change the international system if the expected benefits exceed the expected costs (i.e., if there is an expected net gain).*
3. *A state will seek to change the international system through territorial, political, and economic expansion until the marginal costs of further change are equal to or greater than the marginal benefits.*
4. *Once equilibrium between the costs and benefits of further change and expansion is reached, the tendency is for the economic costs of maintaining the status quo to rise faster than the economic capacity to support the status quo.*
5. *If the disequilibrium in the international system is not resolved, then the system will be changed, and a new equilibrium reflecting the redistribution of power will be established. (Gilpin, 1981; 10 – 11).*

First two assumptions are related with each other and discussed in the same context. Expected net gain refers either attempt to increase future benefit or attempt to decrease threatened losses. From this point of view, those assumptions should be applied on the post-cold war era. The 2002 US National Security Report puts the future benefits as;

*The aim of this strategy is to help make the world not just safer but better. Our goals on the path to progress are clear: political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states, and respect for human dignity (The White House, 2002).*

Hence, from US government perspective, more political and economic freedom would increase the future benefits of the state. Existence of illiberal states and organizations is more costly than struggling with them. This leads US to attempt to change the system in the sake of future mutual gain, which would result in a net gain.

At this point, Gilpin suggests three factors that influence change in the sake of expected net gain. First one is environmental factors, which are consisted of change in transportation & communication, military techniques and economics. In terms of transportation & communication, the technological developments result in easy to access as well as control distant places. Susan

Strange steps further and claims that technology is a more dynamic force for structural change than international political system by increasing the wealth and reducing the costs (Strange, 1991; 38). Yet technological improvements in transportation may greatly enhance the distance and area over which a state can exercise effective military power and political influence (Gilpin, 1981; 57). Thus, increasing transportation and communication skills in 21<sup>st</sup> century makes easier for US and NATO soldiers exercise all around the world even in Africa or in other “failed states”. Additionally, from American perspective fixing failed states promotes transportation opportunities, which results in easier to access each place of the world. The other consistence; military techniques and technology determine the political or territorial expansion as well as distribution of power. The collapse of Soviet Union shifted power in favor of US and made it the only hegemonic power in the world. This encouraged the US administration to take more aggressive attitudes.

*Today, the United States enjoys a position of unparalleled military strength and great economic and political influence...We will defend the peace by fighting terrorists and tyrants (The White House, 2002).*

Thus, the leading capacity on the military technique and technology encourages US government to take more aggressive initiative against terrorists and their ‘safe haven’ failed states. Final environmental factor is economic. As an international political economy scholar, Gilpin strongly emphasizes the interaction of economics and politics as a driver in process of change. Struggle for power and wealth is the key dynamic in realist international political economy perspective (O’Brien and Williams, 2007; 16). Therefore the change in power and wealth causes change in politics as well. In a more technical sense;

*The desire of groups and states to increase their shares of the economic surplus and the tendency for this surplus to decline as a result of the law of diminishing returns constitute powerful incentives behind expansion and international political change (Gilpin, 1981; 82).*

Last decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century had experienced important economic activities including collapse of Eastern Bloc, East Asian and Latin American financial crises, establishment of single currency in Europe. Therefore, the wealth and increasing amount of capital in the world had changed dramatically. Although, US and Japan had remained being two leading economic powers in the world, Russia, European Union and China had become shareholder of world capitalist system. This has changed the wealth, which led political change from American side in order to maintain its economic dominance.

Second factor is the structure of international system. Anarchic international system, which is the main assumption of realism, is the

characteristic of the structure. Thus, according to Kenneth Waltz, states may alter their behavior because of the structure they form through interaction with other states (Waltz, 1979; 93) and change in structure occurs only with the change in the distribution of capabilities across the units (Waltz, 1979; 97). Gilpin supports this argument by;

*It is the differential or uneven growth of power among states in a system that encourages efforts by certain states to change the system in order to enhance their own interests (Gilpin, 1981; 93).*

Postcold war period fulfills such claims. Collapse of Soviet Union and the dissolution of Warsaw Pact have secured the leading capability of US and its allies, particularly NATO. This led the units in the system (US and NATO) to change the security attention in the world. Both in new Strategic Concept and Lisbon Summit it is declared that struggling against terrorism has been the new strategy of NATO (<http://www.nato.int>, 1999; 2010). The address in struggling terrorism named in US National Security Strategy Reports;

*Together with our European allies, we must help strengthen Africa's fragile states, help build indigenous capability to secure porous borders, and help build up the law enforcement and intelligence infrastructure to deny havens for terrorists (The White House, 2002).*

Hence, the change in international distribution of power resulted in the change in international security understanding of Western states and the interest has shifted towards struggling against failed states.

Final factor that influence the change is the domestic sources. Rulers, interest groups, political parties etc are the sources of domestic political determiners. The most crucial aspect of a domestic regime related to international political change is the relationship between private gain and public gain (Gilpin, 1981; 97). If the expansion of state and interest of such groups are parallel then the change in international system more possible. This claim is relevant in case of failed states. The aim of fixing failed states is to promote trade and other economic activities, which would be beneficiary for commercial or trade institutions that promote private gain. New concept of failed states is relevant as well in terms of securing trade routes or energy resources for private and institutions. US led NATO operation to Iraq and Afghanistan might be a case to prove that assumption. This leads to increase wealth as well as reduces the security concerns, which should be considered as public gain.

Consequently, since the expected benefits of units in the system, particularly US and NATO, the failed states concept has been changing in the sake of interests of those units. The three factors, which are environmental,

international and domestic factor, explains the behavior of those states which results in a changing process on the concept of failed states.

Since both the concept and change in the concept is recent in international politics, the 3<sup>rd</sup> assumption which claims that, a state will seek to change the international system through territorial, political, and economic expansion until the marginal costs of further change are equal to or greater than the marginal benefits, is still in progress. Nevertheless, it should be claimed that as a result of unexpected costs of Afghanistan and Iraq operations, which were considered as “failed states”, the US government is more cautious to declare new “failed states”. Syrian Civil War illustrates this situation. Although the weak central authority led to rise terrorist organizations such as Al-Nusra Front, Syria has not been proclaimed as “failed state”. Thus, marginal cost has not exceeded the marginal benefit in this context, which caused retreat of the new conceptualizing of failed states.

This leads us testify the 4<sup>th</sup> assumption in a broader context. Does the cost of maintenance the status quo exceed the financing capacity of dominant power in the system, who is the US in this case? To answer this question, as Gilpin suggests, a distinction between internal and external factors should be made. Internal factors are based mainly on economic structure. With respect to that, although US economy had been keep growing in last decade of 20<sup>th</sup> and first decade in 21<sup>st</sup> century in terms of GDP, the trade balance had experienced the reverse situation. This had entailed domestic economic problems, particularly increasing unemployment and decreasing in social welfare. Such problems and decreasing effect in international trade would result in problem of affordability of the status quo from internal side. In terms of externalities, increasing cost of political leadership causes decline in that position. With respect to failed states, since fixing them by aids or investments has been getting more and more expensive, US leded Western states seek to promote them in order to reduce the cost of security. Hence, although US is still the leading economic power around the world, it has been challenging by diminishing its trade volume as well as increasing cost of international security. This encourages US to change the failed states concept from economic to international security issue. However, the new conceptualization of failed states could not be managed by US as it is seen in Syrian case.

This raises the question related with the last assumption. Is the distribution of power around the world changing? In fact, it is not easy to answer this question based on the early 21<sup>st</sup> century information. Although, the change in world politics is obvious since the dissolution of Soviet Union, which had proved the victory of US leded Western Bloc, the leadership of US has been challenging or at least it is felt by US administration as well as scholars.

*While the United States is weakening, it continues to be much stronger than China in a number of ways. The United States could*

*regain leadership positions. However, the United States is focused on short-term survival (Jones, 2010; 206).*

Thus, it is considered that although US will keep its leadership in 21<sup>st</sup> century, it will be relatively less efficient and more costly. Therefore, since the change in the distribution of power among states in the system is less, the equilibrium in terms of failed states framework will stand in two different forms.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Change in distribution of power leads to change the concepts and frameworks as well. "Failed states" concept should be considered as an example for that. In the early period, the concept has taken as a domestic issue based on functioning of the state and monopoly of violence. It has been a result of historical progress in the idea of state. The social contract theory of Hobbes and Locke is the primary source of the idea.

However, this has been seeking for a change since 9/11. Weberian understanding of state has become more dominant in political science framework. As a result, *raison d'état* has been the monopoly of violence. In this regard, the failed states issue has been taking as an international security problem by referring "safe haven" for terrorist organizations. Existence of unsafe entities caused more costly to maintenance the system. Afghanistan and Iraq wars are primarily based on this notion. In this regard, the existing units of the system as well as the framework on state failure should be changed. As a result of this, US sought to change the system by operating on Iraq and Afghanistan politically and state failure paradigm in intellectually.

Nevertheless, this assumption is challenged as well in literature. This new perception is considered as Western oriented, thus it is inherently political and based on Western interests. Indeed, the failure of fixing them resulted in unexpectedly high costs. From neorealist perspective, the expected benefit exceeded the expected cost and US sought for changing the system. However, the marginal cost could not reach the marginal benefits. As a result of this, new framework for failed states could not be settled neither academic literature nor politics. In this regard, the failed states issue will keep be taken as domestic political economic issue rather than international security.

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