

The United States Feared No More

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While the General Assembly was discussing the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it is another matter altogether that concerned the diplomats: are the United States still the superpower they have claimed to be since the demise of the Soviet Union or has the time come to break free of their tutelage?

In 1991, the United States had considered that the end of their rival had freed their military budget and allowed them to develop their prosperity. President George H. Bush (the father) had, after Operation Desert Storm, begun to reduce the size of the armed forces. His successor, Bill Clinton, reinforced this trend. However, the Republican Congress elected in 1995 questioned this choice and imposed rearmament without an enemy to fight. The neo-conservatives lauded their country into world assault mode to create the first global empire.

It was only on the occasion of the attacks of September 11th, 2001 that President George W. Bush (the son) decided to invade successively Afghanistan and Iraq, Libya and Syria and Somalia and Sudan and to end with Iran before turning to China.

The military budget of the United States reached more than 40% of world military expenditures. However, this extravagance had an ending: the economic crisis forced Washington to cut back. In one year, the Pentagon has dismissed a fifth of its army and halted several of its research programs. This sharp decline is just beginning and it has already disrupted the whole system. It is clear that the United States, despite having power greater than the twenty largest countries of the world, including Russia and China, is not currently able to engage in large conventional wars.

Washington thus gave up on attacking Syria when the Russian fleet was deployed along the Mediterranean coast. The Pentagon would then have had to launch its Tomawak missiles from the Red Sea over Saudi Arabia and Jordan. Syria and its non-state allies would have answered with a regional war, plunging the United States into a conflict too big for it.

In an article published by the [New York Times](#), President Putin opened fire. He stressed that “American exceptionalism” is an insult to the equality of humans and can only lead to catastrophe. At the podium of the United Nations, President Obama answered that no other nation, not even Russia, wanted to shoulder the burden of the United States. And if they were the police of the world, it was precisely to ensure equality of humans.

This intervention is not reassuring : the United States asserting itself as superior to the rest of the world and considering the equality of humans only as their subjects.

But the spell is broken. The President of Brazil, [Dilma Rousseff, drew applause by](#)

[demanding an apology from Washington for its universal espionage](#), while the [President of the Swiss Confederation denounced the U.S. policy of force](#). The president of Bolivia, Evo Morales, evoked the trying of his U.S. counterpart under international justice for crimes against humanity, while the Serbian President, Tomislav Nikolic, denounced the masquerade of international courts which prosecute only the enemies of the Empire etc. It has thus gone from criticism from a few anti-imperialist states to widespread revolt including Washington's allies.

Never before has the authority of the masters of the world been so publicly challenged – a sign that after their Syrian retreat, they are no longer to be feared.

Translation: [Roger Lagassé](#)

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