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The aim of the dissertation entitled

US Policy towards Bosnia and Herzegovina from the End of the Cold War to the War on Terror

is to analyze the role of Bosnia and Herzegovina in US foreign policy during the Cold War and the War on Terror. Academic literature and studies usually divide the topic of the US policy towards Bosnia and Herzegovina into Washington's relations with Yugoslavia during the Cold War, Yugoslavia's disintegration and the Dayton agreement, and the presence of the mujahideen in BiH and terrorist threats in the Balkans. Meanwhile, these three topics are closely related, which is what the author has attempted to present in her doctoral dissertation.

After the Second World War, the conflicts in the Balkans were the first direct challenge for American troops on the European continent, and the United States had to redefine its role in Europe after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. Bosnia and Herzegovina occupied a significant place in US policy both in the era of Yugoslavia, after the end of the Cold War, and during the American War on Terror, initiated after the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. These terrorist attacks began a new era in US foreign policy. Regardless of which phase of the war against terrorism America is currently in, in the coming years Islamic terrorism will be the biggest threat to the US. Acquiring weapons of mass destruction by terrorists or making them available by some country (Iran, for example) would constitute the darkest scenario possible. There is, unfortunately, a danger that in the future Bosnia will again turn into a battlefield. Despite half a century of close cooperation with Yugoslavia, the United States was not prepared for the breakup of the Balkan federation. A consequence of the hesitant action against the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the growing influence of the mujahideen and radical Islam in the Balkans, reflected by the fact that several terrorists who attacked the US on 9/11 were previously trained in BiH. After a closer look at the armed conflict in Bosnia and the current situation in this country, we can assume that 9/11 was not the last chapter of this complex narrative.

In the past, Bosnia and Herzegovina, a country of three cultures and religions, had become a dream shelter for terrorists. Currently, BiH can also be a strategic place for terrorist groups that can be easily reached, assembled, and provide refuge from foreign law enforcement agencies. BiH is a fertile ground for recruiting people willing to fight in the ranks of the Islamic State. Several hundred ISIS fighters in Iraq and Syria come from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright believes that one of the main threats to American interest is "terror and the rise of anti-Americanism in the Arab and Muslim world." Terrorism, understood as politically motivated violence, does not only apply to the people who have been directly subjected to terrorist acts. The indirect victim is society as a whole because individuals are forced to live in fear. America is currently faced with a potential threat from North Korea, Russia's provocations against its NATO allies, and the potential aggression of Iran against Israel. Nevertheless, the terrorism of radical Islam is the biggest direct threat to US citizens, because on several occasions Islamic terrorists have carried out attacks across the country. Therefore, the fight against Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism will remain a

priority for Washington for years to come. It would be unwise to ignore the role – positive or negative – that Bosnia and Herzegovina can play in this struggle.