

Containment refers to a foreign policy of the United States in the early years of the Cold War. The policy was a response to a series of moves by the Soviet Union to expand communist influence in eastern Europe and elsewhere. It represents a middle ground position between appeasement and rollback.

Rollback was a term used by American foreign policy thinkers during the Cold War. It was defined as using military force to "roll back" communism in countries where it had taken root.

Détente is a French term, meaning a relaxing or easing; the term has been used in international politics since the early 1970s. Generally, it may be applied to any international situation where previously hostile nations not involved in an open war de-escalate tensions through diplomacy and confidence-building measures. However, it is primarily used in reference to the general reduction in the tension between the Soviet Union and the United States and a thawing of the Cold War, occurring from the late 1960s until the start of the 1980s.

Rapprochement is a re-establishment of cordial relations, as between two countries. It is often used to describe the mending of relations between the United States under Richard Nixon and the People's Republic of China from 1972 onwards.

Appeasement is the policy of settling international quarrels by admitting and satisfying grievances through rational negotiation and compromise, thereby avoiding the resort to an armed conflict which would be expensive, bloody, and possibly dangerous. The term is most often applied to the foreign policy of British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain towards Nazi Germany between 1937 and 1939. The word "appeasement" has been used as a synonym for cowardice since the 1930s and it is still used that sense today as a justification for firm, often armed, action in international relations.

Deterrence (theory) is a military strategy developed during the Cold War. It is especially relevant with regard to the use of nuclear weapons, and figures prominently in current United States foreign policy regarding the development of nuclear technology in North Korea and Iran. The term is also used more generally to refer to a strategy in any field of potential conflict of being prepared to inflict unacceptable damage on an aggressor, and making sure the potential aggressor is aware of the risk so that he refrains from aggression. Related abbreviations: **WMD** – weapons of mass destruction, **MAD** – (principle of) mutual assured destruction.

Preventive engagement is the use of (primarily non-coercive) tools to prevent conflicts from developing and escalating: term used by the European Security Strategy in reference to approach Europe should take to potentially dangerous conflicts worldwide. Experts do not quite agree whether the concept includes the use of force, but if it does, military coercion is seen as the *ultima ratio*, the key tools of preventive engagement being diplomacy, aid, sanctions etc. Preventive engagement is often contrasted with the doctrine of preemptive war sometimes followed by the U.S.

Preemptive war (or a **preemptive strike**) is waged in an attempt to repel or defeat a perceived inevitable offensive or invasion, or to gain a strategic advantage in an impending (allegedly unavoidable) war *before that threat materializes*. Preemptive wars are relatively often argued to be justified or justifiable (although international law categorically rejects them).

Nation-building/ state-building describes deliberate efforts by a foreign power to construct or install the institutions of a national government, according to a model that may be more familiar to the foreign power but is often considered foreign and even destabilising. In this sense, state-building is typically characterised by massive investment, military occupation, transitional government, and the use of propaganda to communicate governmental policy.