

# *The* NATIONAL STRATEGY FORUM REVIEW

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## **Publisher's Note**

The primary U.S. national objective should be to provide personal safety, security, and prosperity for its citizens. This includes continuing economic security, preservation of the American ethos, and protection from foreign and domestic acts of violence.

Isolation is no longer possible because of global connectivity. Important elements of this connectivity include international trade; energy dependence; electronic instantaneous communication; the potential for mass migration of people and disease; and the threat array of nuclear weapons, inter-continental ballistic missiles, cyber threats, and acts of terrorism.

The U.S. must continue its leadership role if it wishes to achieve its personal safety and security objective. In the contemporary global context, the U.S. must attempt to make the world as safe and stable as possible. This can be explained to domestic and foreign audiences in two ways. First, self-survival is a virtually universal instinct and it is true of both societies and individuals. Second, the American humanitarian and altruistic impulse benefits everyone: the U.S., its neighboring states, and the international community. Pursuing national interests does not always need to come at the expense of international cooperation.

The key imperative should be: "Keep the world safe and stable."

America's world leadership is based on its power and the recognition by other states that without well-conceived and well implemented U.S. leadership, there will be no stable world order, varying degrees of chaos, and all states will suffer.

U.S. leadership depends on its resources of power, including its economic prosperity, diplomacy, capability to project military force, and political will. For the moment, the U.S. economy is in relative decline, in large part because of its massive projected future debt burden which creates apprehension among its creditors. Curing America's economic problem should be a first priority.

The U.S. transmits but it is not always an effective listener. Other states perceive U.S. policy through the prism of U.S. arrogance, which distorts what American foreign policy is and should be. This can be improved greatly by listening and understanding the objectives of other states

and incorporating them into U.S. objectives to the extent possible. The result could be an effective complementary strategy.

The world order will change dramatically in the coming decade, including the rise of China and India as major powers. The U.S. should welcome them to world leadership, and also encourage greater leadership roles for Europe, Japan, and South America.

This issue of the National Strategy Forum Review examines the messages that the U.S. transmits and the ways in which these messages are received by other countries. We have asked authors in both the U.S. and abroad to discuss perceptions of this country and U.S. effectiveness in conveying messages about our foreign policy goals and actions. Unfortunately, the messages that the U.S. hopes to convey are sometimes garbled, leading to misunderstandings and unintended consequences.