

The U.S. and the Emerging Global Security Agenda

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We are in the midst of the most profound flux in world affairs since the creation of the Western alliance system in the late 1940s. The collapse of the Cold War order, the rise of China and India as new global powers, and the advent of new transnational challenges all combined to introduce new uncertainties into the global system. Seemingly unconnected surprises – the global financial crisis of 2008-9, the spread of swine flu, \$140 per barrel oil, the breakdown of transatlantic solidarity over Iraq, the effects of the Indian Ocean tsunami and Hurricane Katrina, the terrorist attacks of 9/11, and others – were not isolated events but rather interrelated consequences, direct or indirect, of the new era of globalization. Globalization was rendering obsolete the old dividing lines – East-West, North-South, developed-undeveloped, aligned-nonaligned – that had helped define the international order for half a century.¹ Managing this revolution in world affairs demands nothing less than a new international system.

The nature of these challenges called for concerted international action, because no country – not even the United States, with its unrivaled power – could successfully address them alone. Yet absent a single overarching threat, forging such a common approach was elusive. Insisting on the need for a common global approach was one thing; translating that hope into sustainable action, quite another. The election of President Barack Obama marked a decisive return to multilateralism on the part of the United States, but the challenges he inherited are enormous, and the willingness of other countries to join the United States in co-leadership is uncertain.

Toward a Post-Cold War Order

The Cold War was a unique period in international affairs, in which the Western alliance system held together impressively well for nearly half a century, cemented by a generally shared assessment of an external threat. The United States had been the chief architect of this global order, championing the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, and regional alliances in Europe and Asia. It had sustained this system consistently, if not always deftly, through Democratic and Republican administrations alike for nearly forty years. Because of the particular circumstances of the Cold War and the prominent role of nuclear weapons therein, the United States was thrust into an unusual global role. “Leader of the Free World” had a pompous and presumptuous ring to it, but the designation was not far off, even as America’s European and Asian allies grew in power and self-assertiveness.

The United States also played a key role in ending the Cold War by forging a common Western approach and skillfully managing the revolutionary developments in eastern Europe, the unification of Germany, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union.² One of the principal contributions of American diplomacy during this period was simply its consistency and steadiness of purpose. With everything else in flux, U.S. policy was a fixed point of reference around which others could orient themselves.

However, U.S. leadership did not translate easily into the very different challenges of the post-Cold War world. The task of forging a viable new order was made additionally difficult by the way the Cold War ended – “not with military victory, demobilization, and celebration but with the unexpected capitulation of the other side without a shot being fired... The grand struggle had ended not with a bang but a whimper.”³ With Western institutions intact and Western values seemingly triumphant, it was hard to consider, much less undertake the kinds of radical reforms that the times demanded. Instead, Western leaders settled for incremental steps – often good and appropriate ones, but not far-reaching enough. To be sure, there were important innovations, notably the enlargement of NATO and EU and creation of a common European currency, but these were limited in scope largely to the European continent.

The end of the Cold War exploded not only the old bipolar order but also the role that the United States had grown accustomed to playing in world affairs. The generally shared security perspectives on the part of the Western allies gave way to greater divergence and new frictions. Common approaches were made difficult because of European preoccupation with internal European issues, Russia’s growing sense of exclusion and victimization, and the failure to bring the rising powers of China and India into the global system as full participants. The United States was often accused of the arrogance of unilateralism – a charge that was leveled at the Clinton administration as well as that of George W. Bush – but the reality was that the United States for the most part stood alone in its capacity to wield power on a global scale.

As I wrote more than a decade ago, “The problem seems to be, quite literally, that we have more power than we know what to do with. Americans have always been ambivalent about the exercise of power in international relations; this ambivalence has become particularly acute with respect to the country’s status as the sole remaining superpower in a world without a compelling rationale and logic for the continued exercise of its unrivaled power. Even those reveling in what they saw as the “unipolar moment” of American predominance were by no means disposed to exercise American power with the sense of purpose and mission that had guided it during the “American century.”⁴

These conditions helped create what might be called “the problem of American power – not just the *use* of American power (whether we are using it wisely or unwisely), but the very fact of *having* such unrivaled power.”⁵ It was harder to maintain alliances, because other countries lacked the capacity to be full partners. It could prompt other states to make common cause in an effort to constrain American power. It could create resentment on the part of others and foster anti-Americanism. And it tempted American leaders to take on more than they could handle, simply because there was nothing to stop them from doing so.⁶

For the United States in the 1990s, the sweeping rhetoric of global change – “Europe whole and free,” “new world order,” “assertive multilateralism,” “democratic enlargement” – disguised an essentially cautious set of policies that reflected more continuity than transformation. During the administration of President George H.W. Bush, “Europe whole and free” was an important rallying cry in 1989-90 and an aspiration to open Western institutions to the emerging democracies farther east. The administration deserves credit for successfully navigating the end of the cold War and addressing the challenges immediately in its wake, but it hardly started the

more fundamental transformation of the larger international system. The idea of a “new world order” was in vogue briefly but was soon eclipsed by the international community’s inability to deal with a disintegrating Yugoslavia. The world looked neither new nor orderly.

The American public, eager for a post-Cold War peace dividend, was in any case unreceptive to grandiose foreign policy initiatives and in 1992 elected Bill Clinton president on a platform focused on the domestic economy. The Clinton Administration nonetheless embraced the same sweeping foreign policy rhetoric, betraying a familiar American propensity to couch foreign policies in grandiose and universalistic language. “Assertive multilateralism,” meant to signal a greater willingness to engage in multilateral peace operations, soon fell victim to the difficult missions in Haiti, Bosnia, and especially Somalia, where 18 U.S. soldiers were killed and 77 wounded in 1993 in an ill-conceived and undermanned mission. In the wake of the Somalia debacle, the administration abandoned its early enthusiasm and laid out a highly conditional set of guidelines for U.S. participation in peace operations – anticipating those laid out by the UN itself after the massacre in Srebrenica in 1995.⁷

“Democratic enlargement” helped accelerate the accession into NATO of former Warsaw Pact countries, but it so dominated the transatlantic agenda that other aspects of NATO’s transformation were neglected.⁸ The Community of Democracies initiative, beginning with a conference in Warsaw in 2000, had a certain symbolic appeal, but it was more an admission of the failure of existing institutions, notably the United Nations, than a viable successor or even complement to them. Aside from some important steps in global trade relations – including the belated conclusion of the Uruguay trade round, conclusion of the North American Free Trade Agreement, and creation of the World Trade Organization – there were few foreign policy achievements in the eight years of the Clinton presidency that were truly transformative. This seemingly harsh judgment is more a comment on the character of the times than on the deficiencies of the Clinton administration. Absent a compelling global security challenge to serve as a catalyst, and with Europe, Russia, and China each for its own reasons internally preoccupied, there was little opportunity for innovative global leadership even had the United States tried to exercise it. Some American officials liked to declare that the United States had both an opportunity and an obligation to fashion a new global order, but no one at home or abroad was buying it.

9/11 and the “Global War on Terror”

At the dawn of the 21st century, for all the tumult of a globalizing world, we were occupying what was still called the “post-Cold War era” rather than one which had acquired its own designation and defining characteristics. For the administration of President George W. Bush, which had entered office in early 2001 with no clear identity, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, constituted just such a defining moment. There were some early assertions of unilateralism, such as the conspicuous U.S. withdrawal from the International Criminal Court⁹ and the Kyoto Protocol on climate change in the first few months of the Bush administration, but these did not yet constitute an overarching strategic design.

All that changed with the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Because those attacks were directed at the United States and carried out on American soil, Americans were uniquely affected. More than that, 9/11 seemed to provide a new and all-consuming rationale for the administration. The public at large, eager to rally around the flag at a moment of national emergency, set aside its usual healthy skepticism to acquiesce in an unprecedented expansion of executive authority and foreign policy interventionism.

A country that might have been led in a very different direction was induced to see the terrorist challenge as a “global war on terror” and the functional equivalent of the Cold War. After its successful toppling of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, and with only an improvised, poorly designed stabilization in place, the administration overrode not only foreign critics but responsible domestic ones as well to launch an unnecessary and ill-conceived invasion and occupation of Iraq. To justify and win public support for the invasion of Iraq, the Bush administration, in its National Security Strategy document of October 2002, advanced the controversial doctrine of preemption, which asserted the right of the United States to depose foreign regimes that represented a potential or perceived threat to the security of the United States, even if that threat was not imminent.

Nor was the justification limited to an extension of the right of national self-defense. Underlying this assertive unilateralism was the belief that “the United States possesses unprecedented – and unequalled – strength and influence in the world.” It was also tied to the belief that “our Nation’s cause has always been larger than our Nation’s defense” and the judgment that “the great struggles of the twentieth century... ended with a decisive victory for the forces of freedom – and a single sustainable model of national success.” It was a potent combination: the certain belief in a global mission, the unquestioned rightness of its cause, and the confidence in having sufficient power to impose America’s will on the rest of the world.

Under normal conditions this extreme brand of global Wilsonianism would have been subjected to countervailing pressures. But the attacks of 9/11 had a profound psychological effect on a country that had not been attacked on its own home territory since the war of 1812. And the nature of those attacks – coming literally out of the blue and with no indication of whether or when additional attacks might follow – heightened their psychological impact, which is of course the essential purpose of terrorism. The attacks caused a terrific shock around the country, and a deep-seated desire to be made safe again, providing the Bush administration and the neo-conservatives at its core with an unusual degree of latitude to shape a national response.

As time went by without another attack and as a series of counter-terrorism policies, both domestic and international, were put in place, Americans began to recover their equilibrium. They came to understand that the challenge posed by international terrorism would be with them for some time to come, and that they would have to live with a certain degree of fear. They also began taking a more critical look at some of the emergency measures put in place in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. Meanwhile, as the successful military operation in Iraq turned into a disastrous occupation and deepening insurgency, the administration was obliged to retreat from the so-called Bush Doctrine (of preemption) and cope with a growing domestic backlash.

The second Bush term, beginning in 2005, reverted to a more traditional American foreign policy orientation. The focus was still on the “war on terror,” but within a more balanced set of foreign policy priorities, as reflected in the somewhat more modest National Security Strategy document issued in March 2006. There was a return to more constructive relations with European and Asian allies, as leaders on all sides recognized the need to put an end to mutual recriminations over Iraq and other issues and begin working together on issues of common concern. The United States gave a new diplomatic push to the six-party talks on North Korea and lent more visible support to EU-led negotiations with Iran. Within the administration, the revamped national security team represented a shift away from the “neocons” toward foreign policy Realists. Some of the bluster was still there, but the actual content was closer to the mainstream of American foreign policy.

The Obama Administration

From the outset, Obama administration, whose transition team website was called *change.gov*, signaled a very different tone and set of priorities from its predecessor. Proclaiming a “new era of engagement,” the Administration set as its priorities to “end the war in Iraq responsibly, finish the fight against the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan, secure nuclear weapons and loose nuclear materials from terrorists, and renew American diplomacy to support strong alliances and to seek a lasting peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.”¹⁰ Unilateralism gave way to a predisposition to act within multilateral frameworks; efforts to isolate or displace hostile regimes were replaced by a willingness to open channels of communication with them. The term “war on terror” disappeared from the official lexicon – part of an effort to reduce the overriding priority that had been assigned to the terrorist challenge without weakening the actual efforts to meet it.

In the first days of his administration, President Obama set a date for the withdrawal of U.S. combat forces from Iraq, ordered the closure of the prison camp at Guantánamo Bay within a year, declared the end of the use of torture, pledged U.S. leadership in addressing climate change, and set as a goal a world without nuclear weapons. The underlying policy changes were not always so radical, particularly in dealing with terrorism and the difficult security situations in Iraq and Afghanistan, but the tone and image certainly were.

The ambition of the agenda was of course tempered by the reality of overstretched capacities, for another aspect of the outgoing Bush administration’s overestimation of American power had been profligacy in its use. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, together with the so-called “global war on terror,” were not accompanied by tax increases or a resumption of the military draft, with the result that the country’s economic resources and military preparedness were stretched dangerously thin. So the Obama administration’s shift toward a more multilateral approach was born of necessity as well as conviction. If there were something that might be called an “Obama Doctrine” – and such a designation would be premature at best – it included a focus on international peace and security rather than democratization and liberalization, engagement rather than isolation and regime change, and respect for other cultures and social systems rather than the Bush administration’s insistence on a “single sustainable model of national success” that was universally applicable.¹¹

Substantively, the greatest change was in the higher priority attached by the administration to the global financial crisis, threats to the global trading system, and the interrelated challenges of energy and environmental security. All these tended to shift the priority focus of U.S. strategic interests away from hard military concerns toward a new agenda of “softer” security issues. Even the challenges of nuclear nonproliferation rested as much in diplomacy as on the threat or use of military power. 9/11 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq had taken the United States back to a Cold War-like preoccupation with military security; the new challenges demanded a very different response. The very definition of “national security” is now in flux.

These changes were reflected organizationally as well. The Obama Administration embarked on the most radical reorganization of the U.S. National Security Council (NSC) system since the National Security Act of 1947. Presidential Policy Directive 1, dated February 13 2009, directed that in addition to its statutory members (President, Vice President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and National Security Advisor), the NSC would also include the Secretary of the Treasury, Attorney General, Secretary of Homeland Security, and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. When issues related to international economic affairs, homeland security and terrorism, or science and technology were being discussed, the NSC would expand further to include additional cabinet officers and advisers.

In a follow-on memorandum of March 18 entitled “The 21st Century Interagency Process,” General James Jones, the National Security Adviser, laid out the rationale behind these changes. “Matters pertaining to national and international security are broader and more diverse,” it argued, and “traditional organizations and means of response to global challenges may be inadequate or deficient.” Consequently, he outlined changes to the NSC structure to make it more strategic, agile, transparent, and predictable. These innovations aimed at “the strategic integration of the activities of all government agencies involved in dealing with the expanded notion of 21st Century national security issues.” “A truly agile NSC,” the memorandum continued, “should be able to cope with multiple major issues simultaneously, consider the full range of options, and propose effective informed decisions in an appropriate time frame.”

These changes were eminently appropriate to the altered global security landscape, but it remained to be seen whether an already overburdened NSC system could manage an even larger agenda. They were in many ways a reflection of the challenges facing the international system as well.

The Emerging Global Agenda

As it set about to translate a new agenda into viable policies, the Obama administration faced a set of intractable foreign policy challenges – not only obvious ones like Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, but also others which in the longer run will be more important to global security and well-being. These included the rebuilding of the international financial architecture after the global crisis of 2008-9, protecting a global trading system that was being threatened by an anti-globalization backlash, enhancing energy security after the 2008 oil price shocks, developing a viable climate change regime to begin reducing carbon emissions, reinvigorating the nuclear

nonproliferation regime, and refashioning global institutions that were proving ill-equipped to deal with these challenges.

Rescuing the Global Economy The most obvious international priority is today the ongoing financial and economic crisis, whose rapid spread revealed both the extent of global financial interdependence and the inadequacy of existing mechanisms. Assuming power just as this crisis was entering a new phase – the most dangerous since the Great Depression – the Obama Administration undertook a set of radical and often controversial steps to stabilize U.S. financial institutions, rescue the U.S. automobile industry, and develop a concerted international response to the spiraling crisis. This international effort aimed at short-term steps to inject new capital into the global economy and longer-term steps to reform the international financial system. It was noteworthy that the International Monetary Fund found itself totally sidelined – the first time since its creation at the 1944 Bretton Woods conference that it played no role in a major financial crisis. Additionally, regional initiatives such as Mercosur in South America reflected a growing movement away from the IMF, whose loan portfolio was at its lowest ebb in 20 years. It was for these reasons that the Europeans, led by British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, called for a summit meeting of the Group of 20 (G20) world economic powers to consider a “Bretton Woods II” world financial architecture, bypassing not only the IMF but the G7 framework as well.

The convening of the first G20 summit, which was held in Washington even before Obama took office, reflected a growing awareness that the old framework of the G7 and the international financial institutions no longer reflected the actual distribution of economic power and influence around the world. Emerging market economies accounted for 30% of global GDP, 45% of total exports, and 75% of foreign exchange reserves, yet the OECD countries have 63.8% of the total voting share in the IMF, with the G7 alone constituting 43.7% of the total. As the summit opened, Indian Prime Minister Manmoham Singh noted that “bodies such as the G-7 are no longer sufficient to meet the demands of the day,” a point echoed more bluntly by Brazilian President Luiz Ignacio Lula da Silva.¹² Yet despite its modest tangible results, the summit was successful in the sense that G20 leaders acknowledged the imperative of reforming the global financial architecture: “The Bretton Woods institutions must be comprehensively reformed so that they can more adequately reflect changing economic weights in the world economy.”¹³

A second G-20 summit, held in London in April 2009, did not support the fiscal stimulus measures the United States and the United Kingdom had proposed, but it did agree to an impressive \$1.1 trillion package of measures to assist the poorest countries via a recapitalization of the IMF and the multilateral development banks and support trade financing. It also created a Financial Stability Board – replacing the old Financial Stability Forum – to strengthen financial oversight and monitoring. Yet these new measures exposed the fact that the mechanisms did not exist, at the IMF or elsewhere, to regulate governmental financial institutions, much less non- or quasi-governmental institutions such as China's sovereign wealth funds.

To bring the new economic powers more fully into the global system, the United States should propose further institutional reform. Symbolically, a good place to start would be for the United States and Europe and to give up their conventional claims to the top World Bank and IMF jobs and open those leadership positions to candidates from other countries. Procedurally, emerging economic powers like China and India should be accorded substantially greater voting power.

One possible formula would be for the U.S. to relinquish its position as the sole country with veto power in return for EU agreement to reduce its combined voting share from 30% down to the same level as the United States.¹⁴ Substantively, the IMF, together with the Bank of International Settlements and Financial Stability Board needs to strengthen its roles in gathering and disseminating financial information, developing standards and codes such as “Basel II” banking standards, improving fiscal coordination, and strengthening surveillance of both individual country and international financial systems. These combined measures might constitute the functional equivalent of a “World Financial Organization,” but without the formal structure of a WTO-like body. The L’Aquila summit of the G8 held in July 2009 offered some proposals to be taken up by the G20 at its next summit.

Meanwhile, the Doha Development Round, launched in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, risked becoming the first post-war global trade negotiation to fail. The Round’s failure would surely accelerate the movement toward protectionist trade policies and could cause irreparable damage to the credibility of the World Trade Organization. It would have a particularly devastating effect on the developing countries it was ostensibly meant to help.

This had a security dimension as well, because the “responsibility to protect,” reaffirmed at the UN General Assembly debate in July 2009, focused particularly on the extent to which peace and stability are threatened by poverty, resource scarcities, environmental pressures, and weak state capacity.¹⁵ Indeed, the Doha development round was launched in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks out of awareness of the link between poverty and terrorism.¹⁶

Yet despite the rhetorical commitment to completing the round that was reaffirmed at every G7 and G20 meeting, neither the United States nor any other economic power had done much to move it forward. The reasons for inaction were not hard to discover. Thus a bold move will be needed to overcome entrenched positions. The elements of a deal would have to involve substantial new concessions on agriculture by the U.S. and the EU in return for commensurate commitments by India, Brazil, China, and others to open their markets in services and agriculture. With the Europeans, simultaneous pursuit of an “enhanced transatlantic market” would make a new U.S.-EU Doha initiative on agriculture more attractive to both sides, as it would aim at reducing additional barriers to transatlantic trade that are not covered in the multilateral round.¹⁷ This would have the added advantage of breaking new ground for future negotiations with other trading partners, particularly India and Brazil.

However, gaining such concessions may require more than just U.S. and EU concessions on agriculture. It may also need an exogenous “sweetener” such as creation of a global energy and environmental fund on which India, China, and others could draw – and which would also benefit U.S. trade in renewable and alternative energy.

Energy and Environmental Security Spurred by the oil price shocks of 2008 and growing public awareness of the effects of greenhouse-gas emissions on global warming, the Obama administration established among its core priorities the development of a clean energy economy and U.S. leadership in addressing global climate change. Domestic innovations were essential, but even the most successful national plan would have little long-term impact unless accompanied by an equally ambitious global strategy. Global energy requirements were

projected to double over the next two decades, driven largely by rapidly rising demand from China, India, and other emerging economic powers. These trends pose risks to energy security, owing to supply disruptions or resource competition, and severe climatic impacts coming from continued rapid increases in greenhouse gas emissions.

Some argued that given its poor track record to date, the United States had to take the first steps before it could win support from the big emerging economies, but the reverse is also true – that the U.S. Congress and the public at large need some assurance that China, India and others would join in a global regime before agreeing to binding U.S. commitments. Otherwise, many fear those rising economic powers would be free-riders on and economic beneficiaries from a new global system. Indeed, the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 (the Waxman-Markey bill; H.R. 2454), which would cap U.S. greenhouse-gas emissions at 17% of 2005 levels by 2020 and at roughly 80% by 2050, specified that the Administration certify annually “whether China and India have adopted greenhouse gas emissions standards at least as strict as those standards required under this Act.” Thus the domestic and international dimensions needed to be addressed simultaneously, not sequentially.

The policy challenges are several: to promote more efficient energy markets, diversify energy supply, develop mechanisms to moderate swings in supply and demand and to offset price shocks, catalyze substantial financing for global funds to promote energy efficiency and clean energy technology, and bring producers, consumers and transit countries into more regular dialogue. Gaining Russia’s adherence to the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) would be an important next step toward global energy security, and it could improve chances of bringing other key supply countries which have observer status in the ECT – Iran, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Kuwait, even Venezuela – into full participation. Other big energy importers like China, which is an observer, and India, which is not, should also be brought in. The International Energy Agency likewise could play an important role as the political counterpart to the legal commitments embodied in the ECT regime, especially with an enlarged ECT membership. To take on these functions, the IEA needs to expand its membership beyond OECD members to include other major consumers, notably China and India, as well as strengthen its links with key producers and transit states, some of which might eventually become members.

A final element of a strategy toward energy security, which needs to be integrated with environmental security, is to create global incentives for energy efficiency and a shift to clean, renewable energy. The outline of one such approach is contained in the International Partnership for Energy Efficiency Cooperation (IPEEC), proposed at the G8 Energy Ministerial in June 2008 and formally established in cooperation with the International Energy Agency at the G8 Summit in L’Aquila.

In addition to being the fastest-growing energy consumers, China and India are becoming the biggest polluters as well. China has overtaken the United States as the world’s leading source of greenhouse-gas emissions, with India poised to take over second place within the next six years. Thus the overriding international challenge will be to bring these countries, together with the advanced Western economies, into a workable global climate change regime. The challenge is complicated by the facts that Chinese and Indian cumulative emissions are still far behind those of the advanced Western countries, as are their per capita emissions – points made forcefully by

India's environment minister to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during her July 2009 visit to India. The Indians and Chinese are not about to be lectured by the United States and Europe; they need to see that they can pursue "green" policies without sacrificing continued rapid economic growth.

The December 2009 conference of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen is the target date for a new climate pact, as called for at the 2007 UNFCCC conference in Bali. A global mega-deal is probably not feasible under current global economic conditions. Seeking agreement on binding commitments would be too much, too soon. The danger is that no agreement at all will come out of Copenhagen or its follow-on conferences. U.S. leadership is needed to forge a viable, if limited approach, beginning with Senate passage of a domestic cap-and-trade system (perhaps made contingent upon a positive outcome at Copenhagen) and U.S. willingness to commit to binding targets, even if out to 2050. The U.S., EU, and Japan could then need to take the lead in assembling a global fund with significant private sector participation to induce China and India to join a consensus at Copenhagen (or soon thereafter). The most realistic outcome would seem to be flexible national plans with political (rather than legally binding) commitments to cap carbon emissions out to 2050, reviewed and monitored by an international body analogous to the WTO trade policy review mechanism.¹⁸

Nuclear Proliferation Having foregone nuclear non-proliferation in favor of anti-proliferation under the last administration – relying not on formal arms control agreements but on forceful measures to prevent hostile states from acquiring nuclear weapons – the United States under President Obama articulated a dramatic new vision of a world without nuclear weapons and a reinvigorated Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). In his speech in Prague in April 2009, Obama proposed dramatic reductions in the U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals via a new arms reductions treaty, ratification by the U.S. Congress of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, a global moratorium on the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes, new measures to strengthen the NPT, and a new effort to secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the world within four years.¹⁹ The core argument was that unless the United States, together with Russia, demonstrated that it was taking seriously its obligation to pursue nuclear disarmament under Article VI of the NPT, it would be very difficult to enforce the other provisions of the treaty. As President Obama put it in Prague, "The basic bargain is sound: Countries with nuclear weapons will move towards disarmament, countries without nuclear weapons will not acquire them, and all countries can access peaceful nuclear energy."

In basic outline, this was the vision of a nuclear-free world laid out in two influential editorials by former Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger and George Shultz, former Secretary of Defense William Perry, and former Senator Sam Nunn, and endorsed by more than a dozen other former secretaries of state, secretaries of defense, and national security advisers. Yet this seeming bipartisan convergence masked a number of conceptual differences over how best to counter the spread of nuclear weapons. Among these were the ongoing debates about whether other states are better dissuaded from pursuing nuclear weapons by robust U.S. nuclear capability or by U.S. arms reductions, the role and relevance of nuclear deterrence with respect to "rogue states," and indeed the utility of arms control agreements of any sort in countering nuclear proliferation.²⁰

A strengthened nuclear non-proliferation regime called for a number of inter-related steps, all of them difficult. With the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) due to expire in December 2009 and with an NPT review conference (the eighth) scheduled for May 2010, there was considerable time pressure as well. The essential first step was conclusion of nuclear arms reductions agreements between the United States and Russia, which together account for nearly 95% of the world's nuclear warheads. Joint reductions by the United States and Russia would provide additional leverage for bringing India and Pakistan – and eventually Israel as well – into the NPT regime. These measures would serve to exert additional pressure on North Korea, the fourth non-NPT nuclear power, and Iran, which has threatened to follow North Korea in withdrawing from the treaty.

At their Moscow summit meeting in April 2009, President Obama and Russian President Dmitriy Medvedev agreed to replace the START treaty with a new treaty pursue deeper arms reductions, later set at a maximum range of 1500-1675 strategic warheads each, and to work together to strengthen the NPT. These were encouraging first steps, but their realization was complicated by Russia's firm rejection of U.S. plans for a theater missile defense (TMD) system in Europe and NATO's contentious debate over offering membership to Ukraine and Georgia. The Obama administration put both these plans on a slow track pending the opening of a larger strategic dialogue with Russia, but they nonetheless stood as major obstacles to the arms control agenda laid out in the Prague speech.

Just as U.S.-Russian arms agreements were in some ways hostage to TMD and NATO enlargement, the same could be said of nuclear nonproliferation efforts more generally. In East Asia, south and southwest Asia, and the Middle East and Persian Gulf, nuclear nonproliferation efforts needed to be embedded in a larger strategic dialogue and regional security framework.

A Global Grand Bargain?

The list of global challenges was so long that it was hard to know where to begin and how to prioritize. In the past year, Americans have lurched from seeing climate change as the most urgent priority to being fixated on runaway energy prices and then to agonizing over the global financial system. Addressing these challenges separately risked leaving us in the same ruts that negotiators had been in for years. One way around this dilemma was to follow the advice of former U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower: "If a problem cannot be solved, enlarge it." It is a way of bringing more politically relevant clout to bear and creating opportunities for constructive trade-offs. Most of the challenges were interconnected, and they had better chances of resolution if they were tackled as part of a coherent overall strategy – a "global grand bargain."²¹

A new bargain was needed for the additional reason that the existing Western-led international order was being challenged on several fronts by new global actors who do not fully share the same values and norms. The open question is whether the existing international institutions and patterns of interaction can be successfully adapted to accommodate and integrate the rising powers and address a new agenda of issues brought on by globalization. If so, on whose terms will this transformation occur? An Indian author recently wrote that "the West is within us." Will those liberal democratic values prevail, or will there be a clash with the competing values

and perceived interests of other important global actors – “the West versus the rest,” in other words?

In this regard, the evolving role of the G20 is promising, in that it brings China, India, and other rising powers into a common forum with the established powers, representing collectively some 85% of global economic activity, energy consumption, and greenhouse-gas emissions. Already the G20 has moved beyond economic issues to touch on energy security and climate change; it could continue to evolve into a kind of informal global steering group, brokering deals at the political level and then referring the actual negotiations to established forums. It is not a perfect grouping, because it leaves many countries unrepresented, but it could play a useful role in conjunction with other existing institutions in creating a new and flexible international system.

The task is analogous to the creation of the post-World War II system 60 years ago. The institutions created then – the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions, the Marshall Plan, the North Atlantic Alliance, the European Economic Community, and others – were not part of a single system, but they were linked conceptually. NATO would not have gotten off the ground without the success of the Marshall Plan, just as the early steps toward a European Community would not have been possible without the security assurance that NATO provided. But an attempt to deal with new problems within the framework of existing institutions cannot provide the solutions required. This is where the international community has been stuck for the nearly two decades since the end of the Cold War: trying to adapt those institutions to new challenges and open them to new members, while invoking a sense of common interests that were more relevant to the last half of the 20th century than they are to the early 21st. That effort at incremental adaptation has about run its course; a new overarching concept, a global grand bargain is needed.

Conclusion

The old security paradigm, born of a bipolar military standoff between two superpowers, is no longer valid. Nor was the European fixation on peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and stabilization – appropriate though it may have been for the ethnic conflicts that erupted in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War – the right way of addressing 21st century threats to security. The challenges that now affect global security and well-being often spring from resource scarcities and resource nationalism; climate change impacts, including mass migrations that can spawn new inter-cultural conflict; humanitarian emergencies threatening to overwhelm international as well as local capacity; and state failure coupled with large ungoverned areas, including in most of the world’s mega-cities. Globalization accelerates and exacerbates all these challenges. A new security paradigm, together with new institutions and patterns of interstate relations, is needed.

U.S. leadership will be necessary but not sufficient. It is necessary because no other country or group of countries wields the essential power and influence in each of these areas – or as much capacity to block action by others – as the United States. But the United States lacks the capacity to deliver progress all by itself in any of them. The illusion that the United States as the sole superpower could solve global problems on its own surely has been shattered by our

experience in Iraq over the last few years. Nor would the emerging distribution of global power and influence, characterized by a dramatic shift of power and influence roughly from west to east, permit a new global order to be managed by a U.S.-European condominium. Yet, somewhat paradoxically, the United States and its allies had a crucial role to play in fashioning a new global bargain that integrated the rising powers and accommodated their interests, while at the same time preserving and extending the basic liberal values that had undergirded the Western-led international system.

NOTES

¹ National Intelligence Council, "Mapping the Global Future: Global Trends 2020" (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2004) and "Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World" (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2008).

² For an account of this period, see Robert L. Hutchings, *American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War: An Insider's Account of U.S. Policy in Europe, 1989-92* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 343.

⁴ Robert L. Hutchings, ed., *At the End of the American Century: America's Role in the Post-Cold War World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), pp. 1-14.

⁵ Robert Hutchings, "Strategic Choices, Intelligence Challenges," in Calvin M. Logue, Lynn M. Messina, and Jean DeHart, eds., *Representative American Speeches, 2003-2004* (New York: H.W. Wilson Company, 2004) p. 4.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53-35: That fall of Srebrenica, 15 November 1999.

⁸ Robert Hutchings, "Transatlantic Relations since the End of the Cold War," in Klaus Larres, ed., *A Companion to Europe since 1945* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 231-48.

⁹ Technically speaking, the Bush Administration did not "withdraw" but rather informed the UN Secretary-General that "the United States does not intend to become a party to the treaty" and therefore "has no legal obligations arising from its signature on December 31, 2000 (www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2002/9968.htm).

¹⁰ From the White House website: www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/foreign_policy/

¹¹ There were many efforts by pundits to characterize an "Obama doctrine." The sense in which it is used here is akin to Amitai Etzioni's blog in the Huffington Post (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/amitai-etzioni/the-obama-doctrine_b_236087.html).

¹² Washington Post, November 15, 2008, p. A01.

¹³ Statement from the G-20 Summit, November 15, 2008: *New York Times*, November 16, 2008.

¹⁴ For ways to achieve this end, see Edwin M. Truman, "On What Terms is the IMF Worth Funding?" Working Paper 08-11, Peterson Institute for International Economics, December 2008, pp. 4-8.

¹⁵ For the official U.S. contribution to this debate, see USUN Press Release #146(09), July 23, 2009.

¹⁶ There is a dispute in the literature, but there does seem to be an *indirect* link between poverty and terrorism in the sense that poverty and relative deprivation are among the conditions that terrorists exploit to expand their support.

¹⁷ Atlantic Council of the United States, "Transatlantic Leadership for a New Global Economy," Policy Paper, April 2007, esp. pp. 20-27

¹⁸ See, e.g., Jonathan Lash, "The Road to Copenhagen," in *Energy Security and Climate Change* (Aspen Institute, 2009), pp. 51-8.

¹⁹ At the L'Aquila summit of the G8, President Obama formally announced that he would host a Global Nuclear Summit in March 2010 to address the dangers of nuclear terrorism.

²⁰ Christopher F. Chyba and J.D. Crouch, "Understanding the U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy Debate," *The Washington Quarterly* 32:3 (July 2009): 21-36.

²¹ Robert Hutchings, "A Global Grand Bargain," *Washington Post*, November 17, 2008, p. A19; Robert Hutchings and Frederick Kempe, "The Global Grand Bargain," *Foreign Policy Online*, November 2008.