
Remarks Presented to the Georgetown School of Foreign Service

By
United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice

[The following are excerpts from the speech presented to the Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., January 18, 2006.]

In his second Inaugural Address, President Bush laid out a vision that now leads America into the world. “It is the policy of the United States,” the President said, “to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.” To achieve this bold mission, America needs equally bold diplomacy, a diplomacy that not only reports about the world as it is, but seeks to change the world itself. I and others have called this mission transformational diplomacy. And today I want to explain what it is in principle and how we are advancing it in practice.

We are living in an extraordinary time, one in which centuries of international precedent are being overturned. The prospect of violent conflict among great powers is more remote than ever. States are increasingly competing and cooperating in peace, not preparing for war. Peoples in China, India, South Africa, Indonesia and Brazil are lifting their countries into new prominence. Reform, democratic reform has begun and is spreading in the Middle East. And the United States is working with our many partners, particularly our partners who share our values in Europe and in Asia and in other parts of the world to build a true form of global stability, a balance of power that favors freedom.

At the same time, other challenges have assumed a new urgency. Since its creation more than 350 years ago, the modern state system has rested on the concept of sovereignty. It was always assumed that every state could control and direct the threats emerging from its territory. It was also assumed that weak and poorly governed states were merely a burden to their people, or at most, an international humanitarian concern but never a true security threat.

Today, however, these old assumptions no longer hold. Technology is collapsing the distance that once clearly separated right here from over there. And the greatest threats now emerge more within states than between them. The fundamental character of regimes now matters more than the international distribution of power. In this world it is impossible to draw neat, clear lines between our security interests, our development efforts and our democratic ideals. American diplomacy must integrate and advance all of these goals together.

So, I would define the objective of transformational diplomacy this way: to work with our many partners around the world, to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system. Let me be clear, transformational diplomacy is rooted in partnership; not in paternalism. In doing things with people, not for them; we seek to use America’s diplomatic power to help foreign citizens better their own lives and to build their own nations and to transform their own futures.

In extraordinary times like those of today, when the very terrain of history is shifting beneath our feet, we must transform old diplomatic institutions to serve new diplomatic purposes. This kind of challenge is sweeping and difficult but it is not unprecedented; America has done this kind of work before. In the aftermath of World War II, as the Cold War hardened into place, we turned our diplomatic focus to Europe and parts of Asia. We hired new people. We taught them new languages, we gave them new training. We partnered with old adversaries in Germany and Japan and helped them to rebuild their countries. Our diplomacy was instrumental in transforming devastated countries into

thriving democratic allies. Allies who joined with us for decades in the struggle to defend freedom from communism.

With the end of the Cold War, America again rose to new challenges. We opened fourteen new embassies in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and we repositioned over 100 of our diplomats to staff them. Our efforts helped newly liberated peoples to transform the character of their countries and now many of them, too, have become partners in liberty and freedom, members of the NATO, members of the European Union (E.U.), something unthought of just a few years ago. And during the last decade, we finally realized a historic dream of the 20th century therefore, a vision of a Europe whole and free and at peace.

In the past five years, it was my friend and predecessor Colin Powell who led the men and women of American diplomacy into the 21st century. He modernized the State Department's technology and transformed dozens of our facilities abroad. Most importantly, Secretary Powell invested in our people. He created over 2,000 new positions and hired thousands of new employees and trained them all to be diplomatic leaders of tomorrow.

Now, today, to advance transformational diplomacy all around the world, we in the State Department must again answer a new calling of our time. We must begin to lay the diplomatic foundations to secure a future of freedom for all people. Like the great changes of the past, the new efforts we undertake today will not be completed quickly. Transforming our diplomacy and transforming the State Department is the work of a generation, but it is urgent work that must begin.

To advance transformational diplomacy, we are and we must change our diplomatic posture. In the 21st century, emerging nations like India, China, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, and South Africa are increasingly shaping the course of history. At the same time, the new front lines of our diplomacy are appearing more clearly, in transitional countries of Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. Our current global posture does not really reflect that fact. For instance, we have nearly the same number of Department of State (DoS) personnel in Germany, a country of eighty-two million people that we have in India, a country of one billion people. It is clear today that America must begin to reposition our diplomatic forces around the world, so over the next few years the United States will begin to shift several hundred of our diplomatic positions to new critical posts for the 21st century. We will begin this year with a down payment of moving 100 positions from Europe and, yes, from here in Washington, D.C., to countries like China, India, Nigeria, and Lebanon where additional staffing will make an essential difference.

We are making these changes by shifting existing resources to meet our new priorities, but we are also eager to work more closely with Congress to enhance our global strategy with new resources and new positions.

We will also put new emphasis on our regional and transnational strategies. In the 21st century, geographic regions are growing ever more integrated economically, politically, and culturally. This creates new opportunities but it also presents new challenges, especially from transnational threats like terrorism and weapons proliferation and drug smuggling and trafficking in persons and disease.

Building regional partnerships is one foundation today of our counterterrorism strategy. We are empowering countries that have the will to fight terror but need help with the means. And we are joining with key regional countries like Indonesia, Nigeria, Morocco, and Pakistan working together not only to take the fight to the enemy but also to combat the ideology of hatred that uses terror as a weapon.

We will use a regional approach to tackle disease as well. Rather than station many experts in every embassy, we will now deploy small, agile transnational networks of our diplomats. These rapid response teams will monitor and combat the spread of pandemics across entire continents. We are adopting a more regional strategy in our public diplomacy as well.

In the Middle East, for example, as you well know, a vast majority of people get their news from a regional media network like Al Jazeera, not from a local newspaper. So our diplomats must tell America's story not just in translated op-eds, but live on television in Arabic for a regional audience. To make this happen, we are creating a regional public diplomacy center. We are forward deploying our best Arabic-speaking diplomats and we are broadly coordinating our public diplomacy strategy both for the region and from the region.

Our third goal is to localize our diplomatic posture. Transformational diplomacy requires us to move our diplomatic presence out of foreign capitals and to spread it more widely across countries. We must work on the front lines of domestic reform as well as in the back rooms of foreign ministries. There are nearly 200 cities worldwide with over one million people in which the United States has no formal diplomatic presence. This is where the action is today and this is where we must be. To reach citizens in bustling new population centers, we cannot always build new consulates beyond a nation's capital.

A newer, more economical idea is what we call an American Presence Post. This idea is simple. One of our best diplomats moves outside the embassy to live and work and represent America in an emerging community of change. We currently operate American Presence Posts in Egypt and Indonesia and we are eager to expand both the size and the scope of this new approach.

Perhaps the newest and most cost effective way to adopt a more local posture is through a Virtual Presence Post. Here one or more of our young officers creates and manages an internet site that is focused on key population centers. This digital meeting room enables foreign citizens, young people most of all, to engage online with American diplomats who could be hundreds of miles away. This is a great way to connect with millions of new people across Europe, Asia, and Latin America.

In today's world, our diplomats will not only work in different places, they will work in different communities and they will serve in different kinds of conditions, like reconstruction and stabilization missions, where they must partner more directly with the military. So to advance transformational diplomacy we are empowering our diplomats to work more jointly with our men and women in uniform.

Over the past fifteen years, as violent state failure has become a greater global threat, our military has borne a disproportionate share of post-conflict responsibilities because we have not had the standing civilian capability to play our part fully. This was true in Somalia and Haiti, in Bosnia, in Kosovo, and it is still partially true in Iraq and Afghanistan. These experiences have shown us the need to enhance our ability to work more effectively at the critical intersections of diplomacy, democracy promotion, economic reconstruction and military security. That is why President Bush created within the State Department the Office of Reconstruction and Stabilization. Recently, President Bush broadened the authority and mandate for this office and Congress authorized the Pentagon to transfer up to \$100 million to State in the event of a post-conflict operation, funds that would empower our reconstruction and stabilization efforts. We have an expansive vision for this new office, and let there be no doubt, we are committed to realizing it. Should a state fail in the future, we want the men and the women of this office to be able to spring into action quickly. We will look to them to partner immediately with our military, with other federal agencies and with our international allies, and eventually we envision this office assembling and deploying the kinds of civilians who are essential in post-conflict operations: police officers and judges and electricians and engineers, bankers and economists and legal experts and election monitors.

Our Reconstruction and Stabilization Office must be able to help a failed state to exercise responsible sovereignty and to prevent its territory from becoming a source of global instability, as Afghanistan was in 2001.

The diplomacy of the 21st century requires better “jointness” too between our soldiers and our civilians, and we are taking additional steps to achieve it. We for decades have positions in our Foreign Service called Political Advisors to Military Forces (POLADS). We station these diplomats where the world of diplomacy intersects the world of military force, but increasingly this intersection is seen in the dusty streets of Fallujah or the tsunami-wrecked coasts of Indonesia. I want American diplomats to eagerly seek our assignments working side-by-side with our men and women in uniform, whether it is in disaster relief in Pakistan or in stabilization missions in Liberia or fighting the illegal drug trade in Latin America.

Finally, to advance transformational diplomacy, we are preparing our people with new expertise and challenging them with new expectations. I have been Secretary of State for almost exactly one year now, and in that time I have become more convinced than ever that we have the finest diplomatic service in the world. I have seen the noble spirit of that service, a service that defines the men and women of our Foreign Service, Civil Service, and our Foreign Service Nationals, many of whom are serving in dangerous places far away from their families.

I see in them the desire and the ability to adapt to a changing world and to our changing diplomatic mission. More often, over the course of this new century, we will ask the men and women of the Department of State to be active in the field. We will need them to engage with private citizens in emerging regional centers, not just with government officials in their nations’ capitals. We must train record numbers of people to master difficult languages like Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, and Urdu.

In addition, to advance in their careers, our Foreign Service Officers must now serve in what we call hardship posts. These are challenging jobs in critical countries like Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, and Angola, where we are working with foreign citizens in difficult conditions to maintain security and fight poverty and make democratic reforms. To succeed in these kinds of posts, we will train our diplomats not only as expert analysts of policy but as first-rate administrators of programs, capable of helping foreign citizens to strengthen the rule of law, to start businesses, to improve health and to reform education.

Ladies and gentlemen, President Bush has outlined the historic calling of our time. We on the right side of freedom’s divide have a responsibility to help all people who find themselves on the wrong side of that divide. The men and women of American diplomacy are being summoned to advance an exciting new mission. But there is one other great asset that America will bring to this challenge. No, in a day and a time when difference is still a license to kill, America stands as a tremendous example of what can happen with people of diverse backgrounds, ethnic groups, religions all call themselves American. Because it does not matter whether you are Italian American, African American or Korean American. It does not matter whether you are Muslim, Presbyterian, Jewish, or Catholic. What matters is that you are American and you are devoted to an ideal and to a set of beliefs that unites us.

In order for America to fully play its role in the world, it must send out into the world a diplomatic force, a diplomatic corps that reflects that great diversity. It cannot be that the last three Secretaries of State, the daughter of European immigrants, the son of Jamaican immigrants and a daughter of the American segregated South would be more diverse than the Foreign Service with which they work. And so I want to make a special appeal to each and every one of you. It is exciting to be a diplomat these days because it is not just about reporting on countries. It is not just influencing governments. It is being a part of changing people’s lives, whether in our acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) programs abroad or in our efforts to educate girls in Afghanistan or to help with extremism in the Middle East with good partners like Pakistan and Jordan. Imagine the excitement of the people who are going to work in Liberia now with the first woman president on the African continent to try and build a Liberia where people can reach their dreams and their future. But we cannot do it without

America's best and brightest, and America's best and brightest come in all colors, they come in all religions, they come in all heritages. Our Foreign Service has got to be that way, too.

I sit in an office when I meet with foreign secretaries and foreign ministers from around the world that is a grand office that looks like it's actually out of the 19th century although it was actually built in 1947, but that is very American, too. And there is a portrait of Thomas Jefferson that looks direct at me when I am speaking to those foreign ministers, and I wonder sometimes, "What would Mr. Jefferson have thought"? What would he have thought about America's reach and influence in the world? What would he have thought about America's pursuit of the democratic enterprise on behalf of the peoples of the world? What would he have thought that an ancestor that my ancestors, who were three-fifths of a man in his constitution, would produce a Secretary of State who would carry out that mission? America has come a long way and America stands as a symbol but also a reality for all of those who have a long way to go, that democracy is hard and democracy takes time, but democracy is always worth it.