
Principles and Opportunities for American Foreign Policy

By

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America stands today at the threshold of a new century and faces a challenge that recalls the opportunities and dangers that confronted us at the end of the First and Second World Wars. Then, as now, two distinct paths lay before us: either to claim victory and withdraw, or to provide American leadership to build a more peaceful, free, and prosperous world. After World War I, our leaders chose the first path and we and the world paid a terrible price. No one will dispute that after the Second World War, Harry Truman, George Marshall, Dean Acheson, Arthur Vandenberg, and, most of all, the American people-wisely chose the other path.

That same farsighted commitment to American leadership and engagement must guide our foreign policy today. The Soviet empire is gone. No great power views any other as an immediate military threat. And the triumph of democracy and free markets is transforming countries from Europe to Latin America and from Asia to Africa. We now have a remarkable opportunity to shape a world conducive to American interests and consistent with American values—a world of open societies and open markets.

In the past year, we helped persuade Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus to give up nuclear weapons on their territory. Nuclear warheads and missiles from these states and Russia are being dismantled. Russian troops are out of the Baltic States and Germany. We have begun to build a new European security architecture. We helped to launch regional security dialogues in Asia. We negotiated an Agreed Framework with North Korea that freezes and will ultimately eliminate its nuclear weapons program. We reached an agreement with China that will sharply limit its missile exports. And we stopped Iraqi aggression against Kuwait dead in its tracks.

We also contributed to historic progress in resolving conflict, backing democracy, and promoting development in countries around the world. We fostered agreements between Israel and the PLO, and the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan. We restored the democratically elected government in Haiti—and we are going to do our part to make sure that achievement endures. In long-troubled regions like Northern Ireland, South Africa, and Cambodia, the United States contributed to extraordinary advances toward peace and reconciliation. And at the historic Cairo Conference, we restored American leadership on the critical issues of population and development.

Finally, we have taken giant steps to build the open trading system of the next century, with America at its hub. We won bipartisan support for the GATT agreement and led the way for its approval around the world. We helped to forge commitments to eliminate trade barriers in the Asia-Pacific region by 2020 and to negotiate free trade in our own hemisphere by 2005. And we made important progress in widening access to Japan's markets.

These are significant accomplishments. But we must not rest on our laurels. Aggression, tyranny, and intolerance still undermine political stability and economic development in vital

regions of the world. Americans face growing threats from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, and international crime. And a number of problems that once seemed quite distant, such as environmental degradation, unsustainable population growth, and mass movements of refugees, now pose immediate threats to emerging democracies and to global prosperity.

In meeting these opportunities and dealing with these dangers, our foreign policy is driven by several principles.

First, America must continue to engage and to lead.

Second, we must maintain and strengthen our cooperative relationships with the world's most powerful nations.

Third, it is essential that we adapt and build institutions that will promote economic and security cooperation.

Fourth, we must continue to support democracy and human rights because it serves our interests and our ideals.

The imperative of American leadership, the first principle of our strategy, is a central lesson of this century. It is sobering to imagine what the world would have been like without it in the last two years alone. We might now have four nuclear states in the former Soviet Union instead of one. We might have a full-throttle nuclear program in North Korea. We might have no GATT agreement or NAFTA. We might have brutal dictators still terrorizing Haiti. And we might very well have Iraqi troops back in Kuwait.

As a global power with global interests, the United States must not retreat from its leadership role. It is our responsibility to ensure that the post-Cold War momentum toward greater freedom and prosperity is not reversed by neglect or by short-sighted indifference. Only the United States has the vision and the capacity to consolidate these gains.

As our recent accomplishments suggest, American leadership requires that we be ready to back our diplomacy with credible threats of force. And to this end, President Clinton is determined that the U.S. military will remain the most powerful and effective fighting force in the world—as it certainly is right now.

When our vital interests are at stake, we must be prepared to act alone. Our willingness to do so is often the key to effective joint action. The recent debate between the proponents of unilateral and multilateral action assumes a false choice. Multilateralism is a means, not an end. Sometimes, by mobilizing the support of other nations, by leveraging our power and leading through alliances and institutions, we will achieve better results at lower cost in human life and national treasure. That is a sensible bargain I know the American people support.

Leadership also means focusing international attention on emerging global problems. That is why we have given new and enhanced attention to global issues such as the environment, population, and sustainable development. They deserve a prominent place on our foreign policy agenda, and as long as I am Secretary of State, they will have it.

Just as our nation must always maintain its military readiness, so we must be ready to advance our political and economic interests around the world through diplomacy. That requires highly trained men and women. It requires modern communications technology. And it requires adequate resources.

The second tenet of our strategy is the central importance of constructive relations with the world's most powerful nations: our Western European allies, Japan, China, and Russia. These nations possess the political, economic, or military capability to affect—for good or for ill—the well-being of every American. The relatively cooperative relations that these countries now have with each other is unprecedented in this century, but it is not irreversible.

Our strategy toward the great powers begins with Western Europe and Japan. We must revitalize our alliances with this democratic core. We must also seize the opportunities to build constructive relations with China and Russia, countries that were not too long ago our fiercest adversaries. Both are undergoing momentous, though very different, transformations that will directly affect American interests.

Our partnership with Japan is the linchpin of our policy toward Asia, the world's most dynamic region. This Administration has placed Asia at the core of our long-term foreign policy approach. Realizing President Clinton's vision of a stable and prosperous Pacific Community will continue to be a top priority. Asia figures prominently in many of our central areas of emphasis for 1995.

It is also imperative that we reinforce our security and political ties with Japan—as well as with South Korea and our other treaty allies in the Pacific. It is equally essential that the strength of our economic ties with Japan matches the overall strength of our relationship. During this year that marks the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II, we will highlight and heighten our close cooperation on regional and global issues—while continuing to press for greater access to Japanese markets.

Our success in Asia also requires pursuing constructive relations with China, consistent with our overall interests. We welcome China's participation in regional security and economic organizations. We support its accession to the World Trade Organization on proper terms. And we will work hard to gain its cooperation with global non-proliferation regimes. In China's own interest, and consistent with its increasing role in the world community, it needs to demonstrate greater respect for human rights and the rule of law. China's recent crackdown on dissent is disturbing and incompatible with realizing the full potential of our bilateral relations.

Our relationship with Russia is central to America's security. It has been a key foreign policy issue for this Administration. Its importance is reflected in my meetings in Geneva this week with Andrei Kozyrev, where for more than eight hours we discussed a broad array of common challenges and concerns. The United States has an enormous stake in the outcome of Russia's continuing transformation. A stable, democratic Russia is vital to a secure Europe, to resolve regional conflicts, and to fight proliferation. An unstable Russia that reverts to authoritarianism or slides into chaos would be a disaster—an immediate threat to its neighbors and, with its huge nuclear stockpile, once again a strategic threat to the United States.

That is why the Clinton Administration has been unwavering in its support for Russian reform. Despite the setbacks that we knew Russia might encounter during this historic and difficult transition, our steady policy of engagement and cooperation has paid off for every American—from reducing the nuclear threat to advancing peace in the Middle East. That is why President Clinton reaffirmed last week in Cleveland his determination to maintain our substantial assistance for democratic and economic reform in Russia.

We are deeply concerned about the conflict in Chechnya. It is a terrible human tragedy. The way Russia has used military force there has been excessive and it threatens to have a corrosive effect on the future of Russian democracy. That is why I emphasized so strongly to Foreign Minister Kozyrev this week that the conflict must end and that a process of reconciliation must begin, taking into account the views of the people of Chechnya and the need to provide them with

humanitarian assistance. What we do not want to see is a Russia in a military quagmire that erodes reform and tends to isolate it in the international community.

The third principle of our strategy is that if the historic movement toward open societies and open markets is to endure, we must adapt and revitalize the institutions of global and regional cooperation. After World War II, the generation of Truman, Marshall, and Acheson built the great institutions that gave structure and strength to the common enterprise of Western democracies: promoting peace and economic growth. Our challenge now is to modernize and to revitalize those great institutions—NATO, the UN, the IMF and the World Bank, and the OECD, among others. And we must extend their benefits and obligations to new democracies and market economies, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe.

At the President's initiative, our G-7 partners agreed that in Halifax next July, we will chart a strategy to adapt the post-war economic institutions to a more integrated post-Cold War period. We are also helping regional institutions and structures such as the Organization of American States, ASEAN, and the Organization of African Unity to promote peace and democratic development. As we go forward into the next century, we will find ourselves relying more and more on these regional institutions.

As a fourth principle, this Administration recognizes the importance of democracy and human rights as a fundamental part of our foreign policy. Our commitment is consistent with American ideals. It also rests on a sober assessment of our long-term interest in a world where stability is reinforced by accountability and disputes are mediated by dialogue; a world where information flows freely and the rule of law protects not only political rights but the essential elements of free market economies.

In the new year—in 1995—as we follow these basic underlying principles, I intend to focus on five key areas that offer particularly significant opportunities: advancing the most open global trading system in history; developing a new European security order, helping achieve a comprehensive peace in the Middle East; combating the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and fighting international crime, narcotics, and terrorism.

OPEN TRADE

First, we must sustain the momentum we have generated toward the more open global and regional trade that is so vital to American exports and good jobs for Americans. A core premise of our domestic and foreign policies is that our economic strength at home and abroad are mutually reinforcing. I believe that history will judge this emphasis to be a distinctive imprint and a lasting legacy of the Clinton Administration.

We will implement the Uruguay Round and ensure that the new World Trade Organization upholds vital trade rules and disciplines. We will work with Japan and our other APEC partners to develop a blueprint for achieving open trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. We will begin to implement the Summit of the Americas Action Plan. And we will also begin to negotiate Chile's accession to NAFTA.

Let me add a word about something on all our minds today: Mexico, and our effort to address the economic crisis of confidence in that country. The President has demonstrated vision and leadership in assembling the package of support necessary to help Mexico get back on track. The package of loan guarantees has the backing not only of the Administration, but the bipartisan Congressional leadership and the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, as well as the international financial institutions. This package contains tough but fair conditions to protect U.S. interests and to ensure the guarantees are used wisely and well.

As the President has said, we should resist the temptation to load up this package with conditions unrelated to the economic thrust of our effort. Let me say this to the Congress and the American people: This package is in the overriding interest of the United States. It should be acted upon quickly and favorably.

EUROPEAN SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

In our second area of opportunity, we will take concrete steps to build a new European security architecture. We understand that deep political, military, economic, and cultural ties make Europe's security and prosperity essential to ours. It has been so for at least half a century. Our efforts will focus on maintaining strong relations with Western Europe, consolidating the new democracies of Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, and engaging Russia as a responsible partner.

NATO remains the anchor of American engagement in Europe and the linchpin of transatlantic security. NATO has always been far more than a transitory response to a temporary threat. It has been a guarantor of European democracy and a force for European stability. That is why its mission has endured, and that is why its benefits are so attractive to Europe's new democracies.

In earlier years, NATO welcomed new members who shared its purposes and who could add to its strength. Under American leadership, the alliance agreed last December to begin a steady, deliberate process that will lead to further expansion. We have already begun to examine with our allies the process and objectives of expansion. We intend to share our conclusions with the members of the Partnership for Peace by the end of this year.

As we move toward NATO expansion, we will also bolster other key elements of the new European security architecture: a vigorous program for the Partnership for Peace, which now includes 24 nations; a strengthened Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and a process for enhancing the NATO-Russia relationship.

The tragic war in Bosnia underscores the importance of building an effective new architecture for conflict prevention and resolution in Europe. Together with our partners in the Contact Group, we are seeking a negotiated solution in Bosnia because only a negotiated solution has any chance of lasting and of preventing a wider war. What we must not do is make the situation worse by unilaterally lifting the arms embargo. We have always believed that the embargo is unfair. But going it alone would lead to the withdrawal of UNPROFOR and an escalation of violence. It would Americanize the conflict and lead others to abandon the sanctions on Serbia. It would undermine the authority of all UN Security Council Resolutions, including resolutions that impose sanctions on Iraq and Libya.

MIDDLE EAST PEACE AND SECURITY

Our third area of opportunity is advancing peace and security in the Middle East. We have witnessed a profound transformation in the landscape of the Arab-Israeli conflict—one that would simply not have been imaginable just a few years ago.

Of course, there are still many difficulties. But despite those difficulties, we must not let this remarkable opportunity slip away. On the Israeli-Palestinian track, we must continue to make progress in the implementation of the Declaration of Principles. I was encouraged by yesterday's meeting between Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat and by the serious efforts both sides are making to work out the complex issues in the next phase, where there will be self-government for the West Bank. Each side must see the benefits of peace. Israelis must gain security. Palestinians must achieve genuine control over the political and economic decisions that affect their

lives. Each must build the trust and confidence of the other especially at a time when those opposed to peace seek to destroy mutual confidence.

The negotiations between Israel and Syria are entering a very crucial phase. The parties are serious and some progress has been made in narrowing the gaps. If a breakthrough is to be achieved in the next few months, critical decisions must be made and the process must be accelerated. I assure you that President Clinton and I will do all we can to support these efforts.

As we promote peace in the Middle East, we must also deal with the enemies of peace. Iraq's massing of troops at the Kuwaiti border last October underscored the danger Iraq poses to regional security and peace. It is my conviction, and that of all the leaders with whom I have talked in the Middle East, that Saddam Hussein's regime cannot be trusted. Full compliance with all relevant UN obligations is the only possible basis on which to consider any relaxation of sanctions.

Another rogue state, Iran, now leads rejectionist efforts to kill the chances for peace. It directs and materially supports the operations of Hezbollah, Hamas, and others who commit atrocities in places such as Tel Aviv and Buenos Aires. It sows terror and subversion across the Arab world. Those industrialized nations that continue to provide concessionary credits to Iran cannot escape the consequences of their actions: They make it easier for Iran to use its resources to sponsor terrorism and undermine the prospects for peace.

Today Iran is engaged in a crash effort to develop nuclear weapons. We are deeply concerned that some nations are prepared to cooperate with Iran in the nuclear field. I will not mince words: these efforts risk the security of the entire Middle East. The United States places the highest priority on denying Iran a nuclear weapons capability. We expect the members of the Security Council, who have special responsibilities in this area, to join with us.

NON-PROLIFERATION

Our fourth area of emphasis for 1995 is to take specific steps to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. With the demise of the Soviet Union, the proliferation of these weapons poses the principal direct threat to the survival of the United States and our key allies. Our global and regional strategies for 1995 comprise the most ambitious non-proliferation agenda in history.

The centerpiece of our global strategy is the indefinite and unconditional extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which is up for renewal this year. The treaty's greatest achievement is invisible weapons not built and material not diverted. But the impact of the treaty is clear: the nightmare of a profusion of nuclear weapons states has not come to pass. I think that history will record that the NPT is one of the most important treaties of all time.

Our global strategy also includes a moratorium on nuclear testing as we negotiate a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; a global ban on the production of fissile materials for building nuclear weapons; ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention; and strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention.

With the agreements President Clinton signed last December in Budapest, we can now begin to implement the START I nuclear reduction treaty. Later this month, I will be the Administration's lead witness in urging the Senate to promptly ratify START II. Finally, we will continue to support the Nunn-Lugar program, which has been so important in providing the funds to help dismantle former Soviet nuclear weapons and which counters would-be nuclear smugglers by improving security at vulnerable facilities.

When this Administration took office, North Korea had an active nuclear program. Left unchallenged, it was poised to produce hundreds of kilograms of plutonium that could be used in nuclear weapons. The stage was being set for a crisis that would imperil security throughout Northeast Asia and undermine our entire global non-proliferation effort.

Last fall, the United States concluded an Agreed Framework with North Korea that freezes its nuclear program, provides for its dismantlement, and puts the whole issue on the road to resolution. The framework has the strong support of Japan and South Korea—key allies whose security it will protect and who will finance most of its implementation. Of course, we are under no illusions about North Korea. Implementation of the framework will be based upon verification, not trust. We are determined to ensure that North Korea fulfills every obligation at every step of the way.

Those who oppose the framework with North Korea have a heavy responsibility to offer an effective alternative that protects our interests and the interests of our allies in Northeast Asia. They have not done so.

We also have an aggressive strategy with respect to conventional arms and missiles. We will seek to broaden the Missile Technology Control Regime. We will push for a global agreement to control the export of antipersonnel landmines—one of the real scourges of the world—and work bilaterally to remove the millions of mines still in place. We are also seeking to establish a COCOM successor regime, which will restrain trade in arms and sensitive technologies to the pariah states.

CRIME, TERRORISM, AND DRUGS

Turning to our fifth area of emphasis, international terrorists, criminals, and drug traffickers pose direct threats to our people and to our nation's interests. They ruin countless lives, destroy property, and siphon away productive resources. They sap the strength of industrialized societies and threaten the survival of emerging democracies.

That is why in 1995 we plan to implement a comprehensive strategy to combat these threats. The State Department is working on this plan in close and urgent cooperation with the Departments of Justice and Treasury and other law enforcement agencies. The strategy on international crime and terrorism will include several vital steps:

- First, we will insist that other countries fulfill their obligations either to extradite or prosecute international fugitives and ensure that convicted criminals serve tough sentences;
- Second, we will work with other governments to develop and implement tough asset-forfeiture and money laundering laws to attack international criminals in a vulnerable place—their pocketbook. Unfortunately, many countries have very weak laws as far as asset forfeiture and money laundering go.
- Third, we will toughen standards for obtaining U.S. visas to make it more difficult for international criminals to gain entry to this country;
- Fourth, we will propose legislation to combat alien smuggling and immigration fraud by providing increased penalties and more effective investigative tools; and,
- Fifth, the Clinton Administration is planning new steps to expand the use of U.S. law against terrorists and against funding for their worldwide activities.

I have discussed five key areas of opportunity for American foreign policy in 1995. I also want to underscore that our foreign policy will continue to address a whole range of issues important to our interests, such as promoting stability and democracy in Asia, Latin America, and Africa; meeting humanitarian needs around the world; fighting environmental degradation; and addressing rapid population growth.

As I conclude, let me note that since my first week in office, I have consulted closely with both parties in Congress on every important issue on our agenda. We have gained bipartisan backing for key objectives of our foreign policy, including our approach on the Middle East peace process; our landmark trade agreements, such as NAFTA, GATT, and APEC; and denuclearization in the former Soviet Union.

The recent elections changed the balance of power between the parties. But they did not change—indeed they enhanced—our responsibility to cooperate on a bipartisan basis in foreign affairs. The election was not a license to lose sight of our nation’s global interests or to walk away from our commitments in the world. Leaders of both parties understand that well, and I am glad to tell you that my extensive meetings with the new Republican leadership give me great confidence that we will be able to sustain the bipartisan foreign policy that is America’s tradition.

Bipartisan cooperation has always been grounded in the conviction that our nation’s enduring interests do not vary with the times. President Harry Truman had it right 40 years ago: “circumstances change,” he said, “but the great issues remain the same—prosperity, welfare, human rights, effective democracy, and above all, peace.”

With the Cold War behind us, the United States has a chance to build a more secure and integrated world of open societies and open markets. We are the world’s largest military and economic power. Our nation’s founding principles still inspire people all over the world. We are blessed with great resources and resolve. We will continue to use them with wisdom, with strength, and with the backing of the American people.