
ALLIES, FRIENDS, AND PARTNERS ON EVERY PAGE: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

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“September 11th was a devastating day in American and world history, but perhaps some good has come out of those terrible events,” says Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage. “In a sense, the National Security Strategy reflects a grand global realignment in which all nations have an opportunity to redefine their priorities. In redefining our priorities, we also have an opportunity to focus international partnerships not just on winning the war against terrorism, but on meeting all transnational challenges to states.”

Late last month, as Americans prepared to celebrate Thanksgiving, the people of Sri Lanka also had much to be grateful for. On November 25th, the representatives of 22 nations — including the United States — came together in Oslo, Norway, to pledge political and financial support for Sri Lanka’s peace process, the best hope in many years of bringing an end to two decades of violence and terror.

That day was a clear reminder that even for a small nation such as Sri Lanka, resolving conflict takes the support of a coalition of international partners. That day also served as a reminder that no country can expect to deal effectively with the challenge of terrorism, as well as the conditions that can nurture such violence, without help from other nations and institutions.

Today, at the dawn of the 21st century, the United States stands alone as a nation of unmatched diplomatic, economic, military, and cultural might. As a people, we have greater capacity and capability to protect and advance our interests in the world than at any other time in our history. As a nation, we have greater responsibility to exercise leadership than at any other time in our history.

Nonetheless, for all of our clout and influence, the United States faces some of the same security challenges that countries such as Sri Lanka face.

Indeed, no nation can hope to tackle successfully the decisive challenges of this age alone.

This is a fundamental, underlying principle of President Bush’s National Security Strategy. Beyond devoting a chapter to the strategic importance of alliances and partnerships, the document underscores on nearly every page the necessity of cooperating with other nations, institutions, and organizations. International cooperation is an indispensable ingredient, whether the strategy is focused on fighting the war against terrorism, sustaining regional stability, expanding trade and development, maintaining friendly ties to global powers, or dealing with transnational challenges such as weapons of mass destruction, infectious disease, and international crime.

The U.S. commitment to international cooperation reflects not only pragmatism, but also a principle, one that runs through our history and our vision of the future. As the President’s National Security Strategy makes clear, U.S. foreign policy will serve not just the American people, but “the cause of human dignity” on every continent. This is an ambitious agenda, one that will require us not only to prevail in the war against terrorism, but also to apply the lessons we learn and relationships we build in this war to every other challenge we will face in the 21st century. As the lead agency in developing and maintaining international relations now and for the

future, the Department of State, in particular, is playing a key role in implementing this vision. And as the president's representative in this effort, Secretary of State Colin Powell is taking his responsibility for building these relationships and orchestrating the efforts of the Department with the utmost gravity and industry.

A basic responsibility for any government is to protect the governed. President Bush's top strategic priority, therefore, is to protect the American people from another terrorist attack. As the recent bombings in Bali and Kenya illustrate, however, terrorism is a grim reality around the world, and a threat to all nations and peoples. Therefore, our response — and the effect of our policies — must be global. While the United States will always reserve the right to act alone in its own interests, our national security is enhanced when other countries choose to play a constructive, proactive role in helping the United States protect itself. Given the global ambitions of terrorists, national security today is a function of how well all countries protect each other, not just how well one country protects itself.

And while coalition warfare is as old as war itself, today's coalition against terrorism is unprecedented in scale and in scope. In a monumental diplomatic undertaking, the United States has joined with some 180 other nations to counter the threat of terrorism using all of the tools available to us — intelligence, finance, law enforcement, and military operations. The United Nations set the stage for such a comprehensive coalition by passing Security Council Resolution 1373, which obligated all nations to actively combat financing, recruitment, transit, safe haven, and other forms of support to terrorists and their backers, as well as to cooperate with other nations' counterterrorism efforts.

America's global network of alliances and partnerships, many configured for Cold War challenges, quickly adapted to this post September 11th security environment. In the immediate aftermath, for example, NATO, ANZUS [Australia, New Zealand, and United States] and the Organization of American States for the first time invoked 50-year-old self-defense mechanisms. Indeed, NATO forces drawn from European nations

flew patrols over American skies in the days and months following the attacks. Other multilateral institutions changed course to meet pressing needs. The Financial Action Task Force, originally constituted to track funds fueling the international narcotics trade, took the lead in the hunt for the money trails that lead to terrorists. The G-8 nations moved to secure global networks of commerce and communication, including by stationing customs inspectors in each others' ports through the Container Security Initiative. New relationships also came into play. For example, U.S. diplomats for the first time negotiated with the states of Central Asia for access and overflight rights to American and coalition forces.

This mutually reinforcing mix of ad hoc alliances and more formal arrangements has led to a sustained and successful campaign over the past 14 months. Coalition military operations have excised al Qaeda from Afghanistan, destroying its infrastructure and killing or capturing many of its operatives. The rest remain in hiding and on the run. Intelligence-sharing and law enforcement cooperation have led to the arrest or detention of nearly 2,300 suspected terrorists in 99 nations, and have prevented many, though unfortunately not all, attacks on civilian targets around the world. More than 160 countries have frozen more than \$100 million in assets belonging to terrorists and their supporters. In each of these efforts, foreign policy professionals have played a key role in securing the necessary agreements and actions.

Beyond waging war and building the long-term capacity to fight terrorism, the current international coalition also has been essential to the liberation of Afghanistan. Although this effort is partly humanitarian, it is also an important security measure. For too long, Afghanistan served as both the proving grounds and the launching pad for terrorists. Peace and stability for Afghanistan is in the direct interests not only of the 23 million inhabitants of that country, but also the neighboring nations who suffered from destabilizing waves of drugs, criminals, and refugees from that territory, and all of the nations of the world whose investment in the rule of law has been put at risk by al Qaeda's activities.

Decades of war have taken an extreme toll on Afghanistan. The country lacks everything from basic infrastructure to civil society institutions, all of which will take considerable resources to restore. Consider that rebuilding a paved road from Kabul to Herat will cost an estimated \$260 million — at least — and that one project alone will take the concerted resources of Japan, Saudi Arabia, and the United States. Today, it will take a sustained international political and financial commitment from the community of nations, and the hard diplomatic work to get and sustain this commitment, to keep Afghanistan from chaos.

The twin campaigns to defeat terrorism and reconstruct Afghanistan are stretching global resources and testing international resolve. U.S. leadership — and especially the diplomatic leadership of the Department of State — has been essential to mobilizing both the resources and the resolve, with far-reaching results. As the National Security Strategy notes, “in leading the campaign against terrorism, we are forging new, productive international relationships and redefining existing ones in ways that meet the challenges of the 21st century.”

Like terrorism, many of the challenges of the 21st century will be transnational in nature, from proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to the need to ensure that all nations can benefit from a globalized economy, to the spread of infectious diseases. Even internal unrest will continue to have regional consequences. These transnational problems will require transnational solutions, and the current war is helping the United States to develop the requisite patterns and habits of cooperation.

Cold War alliances and rivalries, reinterpreted for the age of terrorism, are showing promising signs of flexibility. In particular, as the National Security Strategy notes, the United States may have a new opportunity for a future where “main centers of global power” cooperate more and compete less. From Russian President [Vladimir] Putin’s immediate offer of condolences and support after the 9/11 [September 11, 2001] attacks, U.S.-Russian cooperation in the war on terrorism has been path-

breaking in its breadth, depth, and openness. The United States has also forged new relationships with China, which has provided valuable assistance in tracking terrorist finances. In both cases, the overlap in our current efforts is opening new possibilities for dialogue in areas that have traditionally been difficult, including regional security issues, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, human rights concerns, and key trade issues, such as accession to the World Trade Organization.

Multilateral institutions also are showing signs of new growth. Following extensive U.S. diplomatic efforts, the United Nations passed Resolution 1441, for example, taking a tough new stand against the threat posed by Iraqi possession of chemical, biological, and potentially nuclear weapons. NATO, too, has retooled to meet today’s needs. At the recent summit in Prague, NATO invited seven European nations to join as new members, reaffirmed its commitment to developing updated military capabilities, and emphasized its new and deepening relationships with Russia, Central Asia, and other regions beyond Europe.

The international recognition that underlying corrosive conditions — such as repression, poverty, and disease — present a threat to international stability is also spurring the growth of new cooperative mechanisms. U.S. leadership is key to these efforts, as well, but will only truly be effective insofar as it leverages commitments from other nations. HIV/AIDS, for example, presents a staggering public health crisis and ultimately a risk to the stability of many regions. The United States made the initial and single largest donation to a new Global Fund, kicked off by the G-8 [Group of Eight industrialized nations] and endorsed by the United Nations, to prevent the spread and deal with the effects of the disease. That Fund has now reached a total of \$2.1 billion [\$2,100 million]. At the United Nations Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey and other such venues, the United States has helped to forge new approaches to international aid, based on principles of accountability, fiscal responsibility, and good governance. Indeed, the U.S. has established the \$5,000 million Millennium Challenge Account — a 50 percent increase in the

U.S. commitment to foreign assistance — which will be dispensed according to these basic tenets.

Ultimately, these habits and patterns of cooperation will persist because of the dual imperatives of pragmatism and principle. First, cooperation in dealing with transnational challenges is in the self-interest of so many nations, and second, nations have a dedication to certain shared values. Terrorists, for example, present a clear and direct threat to the rule of law, to international norms and standards for human dignity, and in the end, to the international system of states itself.

September 11th was a devastating day in American and world history, but perhaps some good has come out of those terrible events. In a sense, the National Security Strategy reflects a grand global realignment in which all nations have an opportunity to redefine their priorities. In redefining our priorities, we also have an opportunity to focus international partnerships not just on winning the war against terrorism, but on meeting all transnational challenges to states. Every nation in the world — from Sri Lanka to Afghanistan to America — stands to benefit. ●