

Introduction



U.S. Department of State

In 1790, when Thomas Jefferson assumed his duties as the first U.S. Secretary of State, his entire staff consisted of a chief clerk, three assistant clerks, and a messenger. The young nation maintained two diplomatic missions—in Britain and France—and 10 consular posts. Today the United States has diplomatic relations with some 180 nations and maintains over 250 diplomatic posts around the world. Through multilateral institutions, many under the aegis of the United Nations, we engage with other nations to address issues ranging from peacekeeping and human rights to humanitarian relief and trade.

The goal of American diplomacy is as sweeping as our diplomatic representation around the world. President Bush said in his second inaugural address: “It is the policy of the United States 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.” With this charge, the United States faces tremendous challenges and tremendous opportunities, comparable, I believe, to those faced by our diplomatic predecessors who, sixty years ago, helped to transform countries devastated by World War II into thriving democracies, allies who joined us in the long struggle of the Cold War.

To meet the extraordinary challenges of the 21st century, the Department of State is pursuing “transformational diplomacy.” The goal of transformational diplomacy is to work with others 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. We seek to use America’s diplomatic power to help others better their own lives and transform their own futures.

Countries such as China, India, South Africa, Indonesia, and Brazil are playing an increasingly prominent role on the world stage. Democratic reform has begun and is spreading

in the Middle East. The United States is working with our many partners to promote freedom in every part of the globe.

This is not the work of months or even years, but of generations. Yet we face urgent issues everywhere, from the global threat of terrorism to the fight against AIDS in Africa and many other regions. The United States is helping to educate girls in Afghanistan. With others, we have used our military and economic power to bring peace to the Balkans, relief to the tsunami-devastated Asia Pacific region, and help to the earthquake victims of Pakistan. We are engaged in the pursuit of peace in East Africa and in the strengthening of democratic governance and fundamental rights and liberties in the Americas. We are transforming traditional institutions, like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with our European partners to meet the demands of the new century.

In the six essays that follow, the senior State Department officials who manage our daily relationships on the international stage offer their perspectives on the policy objectives and priorities of America’s global diplomacy. Jendayi Frazer is Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Christopher R. Hill for East Asia and the Pacific, and Daniel Fried for Europe and Eurasia. C. David Welch is Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Richard A. Boucher for South and Central Asia, and Thomas A. Shannon for the Western Hemisphere.

While the details of U.S. policy objectives differ region to region, a common thread runs throughout all of our diplomatic efforts: we will champion freedom, respect for the individual, and a commitment to the opportunity for a better life for all human beings everywhere.

Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State