

# WEATHERHEAD EAST ASIAN INSTITUTE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

CO-SPONSORED BY THE APEC STUDY CENTER, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



## WEATHERHEAD POLICY FORUM

### CAN AMERICA REBUILD THE CRUMBLING STATE OF U.S.-ASIA RELATIONS?

#### Kishore Mahbubani

**Former Ambassador of the Republic of Singapore to the United Nations  
and Dean, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore**

**Tuesday, March 1, 2005**

*Kishore Mahbubani, former Permanent Representative of the Republic of Singapore to the United Nations and current Dean of the newly founded Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, addressed the first Weatherhead Policy Forum of 2005 at Columbia University on March 1, 2005. Ambassador Mahbubani, a noted author whose works include the provocative Can Asians Think? (1998), presented an external perspective on the state of America's relationship with the outside world based on his new book, Beyond the Age of Innocence.*



*Ambassador Mahbubani's address looked at previous American actions that built "reservoirs of good will" that ultimately assisted America in its ideological victory in the Cold War, especially in Asia: its sharing of the "American dream" with the world; its openness to foreign students; the international order built by the United States after 1945; and, finally, the stabilizing effects of its military presence in East Asia. However, the end of the Cold War has brought changes, and the gulf between America's self-perception and the way it is seen in the Islamic world, and China in particular, demonstrate the dwindling of those good will reservoirs.*

*Ambassador Mahbubani warned that in a shrinking world, America's power is increasingly perceived with hostility. To counter misperceptions of America's role in the world, he called on the United States to enable China's peaceful emergence as an economic power; help establish a "success story" in the Islamic world, as postwar Japan was in Asia; redouble its commitment to the multilateral order it created in 1945; evaluate better the unintended consequences of its domestic policies; and rethink its restrictive visa policy so that immigrant success stories in America will continue to inspire people abroad.*

*This Weatherhead Policy Forum was jointly sponsored by the Weatherhead East Asian Institute and the APEC Study Center, both at Columbia University. Weatherhead East Asian Institute Director Professor Xiaobo Lü moderated the forum. This is a report of Ambassador Mahbubani's presentation and the discussions that followed. A copy of this report can also be found at WEAI's Web site, [www.columbia.edu/cu/weai](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/weai), or APEC's Web site, [www2.gsb.columbia.edu/apec](http://www2.gsb.columbia.edu/apec).*

*America, after having spent so many decades accumulating so much good will, especially in East Asia, is in danger of losing these reservoirs of good will.*

## PRESENTATION

**Kishore Mahbubani:** When I was the Permanent Secretary of the Foreign Ministry of Singapore, one of my colleagues, another Permanent Secretary, decided to go to China and call on his counterpart, the Vice Minister of the Chinese government. When my colleague introduced himself, the Chinese translator looked very puzzled and said to the Vice Minister, “This is Mr. Tan—he says he’s the eternal typist from Singapore.” So if China and Singapore, two majority Chinese societies, can have difficulties in communication, you can imagine why the difficulties of communication across the Pacific are, in many ways, even greater.

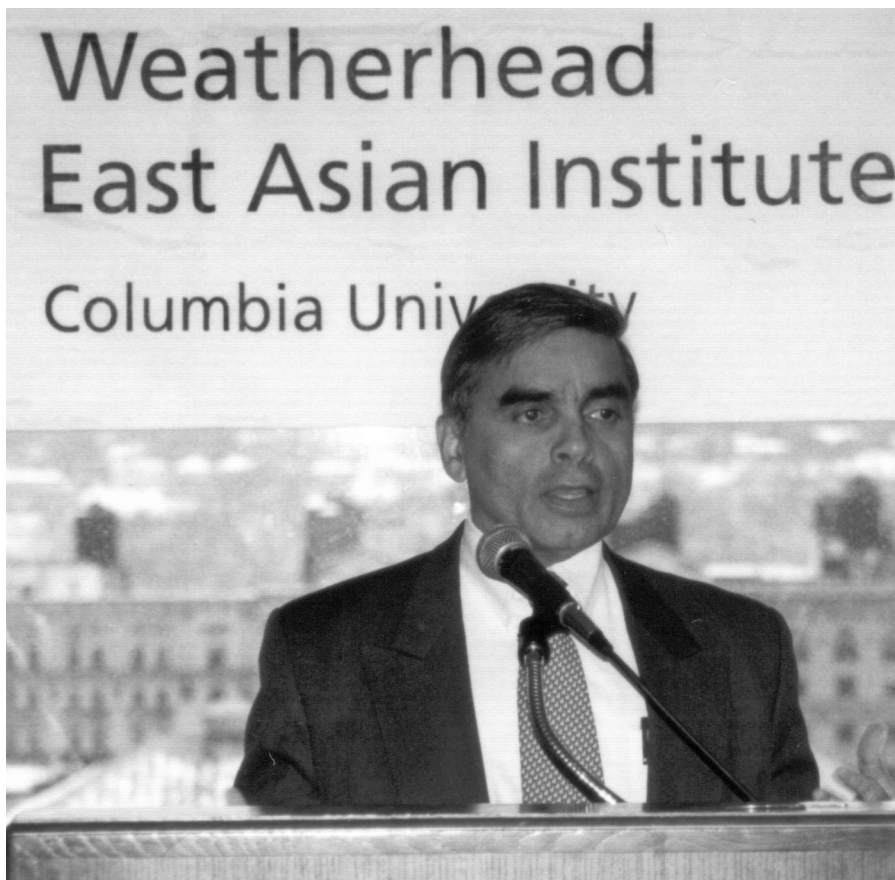
This is the moment when America, after having spent so many decades accumulating so much good will, especially in East Asia, is in danger of losing these reservoirs of good will and having them replaced, unfortunately, with ill will. We may actually be at a tipping point.

I should also begin by emphasizing where I stand. My biases are overwhelmingly pro-American. There is vivid confirmation in this room: my wife is an Irish-American from New Jersey, and her sister is here today, and my three children are dual nationals who carry American and Singaporean passports. So in that sense, I have a direct contact with American society as I speak about it. At the same time, the reason why I can take this pro-American stand is because my life has changed, and the world that I saw when I grew up in Singapore and in the region has benefited from American policies. I can speak from personal experience of the dramatic contributions that America has made to the world.

First, if I had to point to the factors that led to this accumulation of good will, America in some ways shared the American dream with the world as a whole. Most Americans think that America is a country that is separated from the rest of the world by two great oceans. But the American dream never stopped at the American borders. In fact, it traveled around the world. And I can tell you that when I was a young boy, when the first black and white TV set appeared in our house in the 1960s, we watched reruns of American programs—*My Three Sons*, *Bonanza*, and so on.

When watching American TV, we also absorbed the American ethos and the belief that we could also succeed in our lives, that our destiny was not determined at birth. For many Asian societies, the idea that you can rise above the class and the caste you were born into is a revolutionary one. Sharing that dream transformed the lives of many East Asians.

You saw the results of this dream in what I call the second factor that led to the accumulation of good will. In the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, America encouraged Asians to come and study in this country. Columbia University took in thousands of Asian students. And these students learned not just the technical details of whatever discipline



Kishore Mahbubani, Dean, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore

or vocation they chose to study; they also absorbed the American work ethic, the American culture, the belief that you could transform the world and make it a better place. After they graduated, these students brought this belief back to their home countries, and they provided the seeds that essentially have transformed East Asia into what it is today. If you want to pinpoint the critical reasons why East Asia has succeeded compared to many other parts of the world, you can look at the number of Asian students who have come to study in the United States. As of now there are 80,000 Indian students and 60,000 Chinese students in North American universities, and you can imagine the impact that these thousands of students will have when they go back to their societies.

The third factor that led to the accumulation of good will toward America was the nature of the international order that America created at the height of its power at the end of World War II. In 1945, no nation could challenge the United States. It had, by some estimates, 50 percent of the world's GNP and the capacity to do whatever it wanted. It would have been just as likely for America to behave like any other European power at the height of its power and colonize the rest of the world.

The remarkable thing is that America decided to do the exact opposite. It forced the European powers to decolonize and set the first stage for the liberation of Asia. And that contribution is still remembered by people of my generation.

The fourth and final factor is the role of the American military. American military power has played an enormously stabilizing role, especially in East Asia. One reason why you have not seen great power conflicts in the region is because of the overwhelming strength and influence of the American military. There were the Korean and Vietnam Wars, but the region as a whole has been geopolitically stable, by and large.

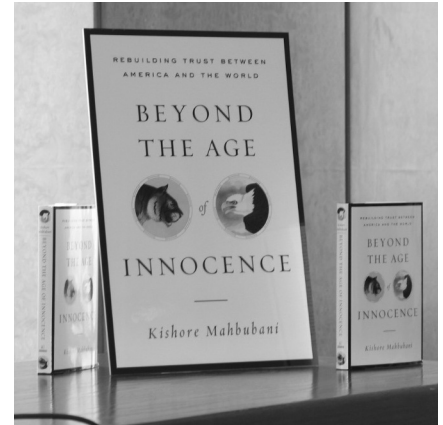
So these are the factors that have led to Asia to thrive, succeed, and grow

with this new spirit of optimism. So the question is, "When and why did the attitude toward America begin to change?" I know that it is conventional wisdom to believe that all this was due to the Bush administration, and that if the Bush administration had not been elected, there would not have been this growth of anti-Americanism around the world.

My analysis is a different one. I point to the impact of American power in a shrinking world. What America does or does not do has an impact on lives all over the world. The big change in America's attitudes toward the world took place when, having won the Cold War, America decided it could walk away from the world.

I remember a remark that James Baker made at the end of the Cold War, which many have already forgotten: "We can now create a community of democracies from Vancouver to Vladivostok." This statement is striking because he included most of the countries in that belt, leaving out only one, Japan, which had been a member of the community of democracies; and it was probably excluded because it was not Western. If you reflect on that statement, you realize that there was a desire to go back to a more comfortable universe of the Western democracies and walk away from the more uncomfortable parts of the world. And this was not just reflected in statements; it was reflected in the deeds that took place at that point in time.

In the case of the Islamic world, I think the fateful decision that America made was to walk away from Afghanistan, which had been the front line of freedom. As soon as the Soviet Union was defeated, Afghanistan was left to fall of its own accord, and you know the consequence of that: the forces that were unleashed in Afghanistan to defeat the Soviet Union were left to fester and grow, and that is how Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda emerged, and clearly bin Laden took advantage of Afghanistan being abandoned to create the movement that eventually led to the downing of the World Trade Center towers here.



*Having won the Cold War,  
America decided it could  
walk away from the world.*

The remarkable thing about Osama bin Laden is that you can see him as an isolated individual who represents an extreme point of view. However, what I have found as I ask my friends in the Islamic world is quite the contrary; his name comes up without fail as the single most respected figure in the Islamic world, especially among the masses. This is true in all parts of the Islamic world, whether it be Nigeria, Morocco, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, or Indonesia.

What happened? How did this huge section of humanity begin to identify with the figure who only had a destructive mission against a country that was perceived to be a positive force in the world? There has been a sea change in the attitudes of the Islamic world toward America between the end of the Cold War and the events of 9/11.

Let me turn now to another large section of humanity, the Chinese population. Relations between the United States and China might appear to be stable, with the government-to-government relations having their ups and downs. However, by and large, we do not see great division between these two societies.

But if you go beneath the surface, you find a surprising degree of Chinese suspicion of the United States. I will try to illustrate this with the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in May 1999 during the Kosovo War. I have spoken to many of the key American policymakers who were in office then and I asked them what happened during that event, and the answer to me was always, "Kishore, obviously it was a mistake. Why should the United States want to bomb the Chinese embassy in Belgrade? It doesn't make any sense, it was an accident, and that's very obvious."

At the same time, I've spoken to Chinese policymakers at the highest level, Chinese professionals, and working-class Chinese, and so far not 90 percent, nor 99 percent, but 100 percent have responded, "We know that that bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade was a deliberate move by the United States to send a signal to China that we cannot defy them and we can-

not challenge them in any way."

This is a strange reaction, because there is no reason that the Chinese population should have developed this distrust toward America; if you look at the growth and success of China, especially in the last 15 years, a large part of it is due to China's participation in a multilateral order that was created by America, due to China playing by rules of the WTO and accumulating a \$100 billion trade surplus with the United States today. With all of these factors that America created that allowed China to grow and prosper, the logical outgrowth would have been for Chinese society to develop a positive rather than a negative attitude toward the United States. But instead, in the last 15 years, there has been a trend in the opposite direction. If you look at America's record objectively, it has by and large been a positive force on the world stage; it would have been much more natural for the world to have been awash with streams of pro-Americanism. Instead, you see in many parts of the world, and certainly in the Islamic world and China, a growing resentment of America and American power.

This is all a result of a global structural problem in which the world is shrinking, while America remains very strong and powerful. These two forces lead to a situation in which American power impacts the daily lives of many people across the planet, and this impact leads to a sense of resentment over America's refusal to recognize how and when its power impacts on other populations. This explains the growing negative attitude toward America.

What can be done about this? I still believe that not all is lost; I believe we can still salvage the situation, that we can reverse this trend in attitudes toward America. First, America has to decide that a stable world order in which other countries can grow and prosper is also in America's interest. Sadly, if you look at global attitudes and beliefs, many people now believe that America doesn't want them to succeed. In private, many Chinese policymakers are convinced that as they grow and succeed, America will find

the means to trip up China, and they work on that belief that this is going to happen.

If you want concrete evidence, look at how China has recently proposed a free trade agreement with Southeast Asia. Driving the proposal to improve trade relations with all its neighbors is China's hope that by buying political insurance today, it will help prevent America from successfully encircling China in the future. The Chinese would not have gone out of their way to carry out these policies if they did not believe that there was a greater danger that they might face in the long run.

In the Islamic world the problem unfortunately is much deeper. The time has come for the world and especially America to try and encourage the success of at least one Islamic society. You need to have one Japan in the Islamic world, or one Taiwan, Hong Kong, or Singapore; one success story that can stand as a model in the Islamic world. That would demonstrate to the Islamic states that they too can grow and develop, because, frankly, many of them believe that this current world order is tilted against them. If this support can be made into deliberate American policy, it will buy us decades of peace.

The second prescription is for America to rediscover the virtues of the multilateral order that it created in 1945. The incredible decline in the fortune of the United Nations provides a vivid reminder of why it is important to retain a stable multilateral order. When the United States criticizes the UN, it thinks that it is only criticizing a building, a Secretariat, a Secretary-General on the east side of New York City. But the damage done when the United States attacks the UN is far more fundamental, because many states around the world rely on the order of the United Nations to give them a certain sense of worldwide stability.

Wars have become less common between historically conflictual states as a result of the 1945 order that the United States created. That order was a great gift to the world, and it should be preserved. But for it to be preserved, the United States has to show the same

commitment that it did in 1945 and create a rules-based regime that applies not just to other countries in the world, but also to itself. Unfortunately, the perception that is growing in the rest of the world is that America wants a rules-based regime that applies to other countries, but not to the United States. This exceptionalism is going to undermine the multilateral order, which, frankly, is very precious to the world.

The third prescription arises from what I call the law of “intended” consequences. When decisions are made in Washington, D.C., with only American considerations in mind, these decisions inevitably have a global impact. The simplest example is the case of cotton subsidies. When the United States provides cotton subsidies to 25,000 farmers in Southern states, it seems to be an internal decision. But the immediate result is that ten million people become impoverished in West Africa as a result of these subsidies, so there is a direct causal relationship between subsidies in America and impoverishment in Africa. The United States should be aware of the “intended” consequences of its actions, because these lead to rising anti-Americanism. I stress that they are “intended” consequences, because American policymakers are aware of these consequences.

My fourth and final point, which may be the easiest for America to carry out, is to keep the American dream alive here: to continue to show the world that if you arrive in America, you can do well, and you can succeed. Every time an Indian arrives here and succeeds, he becomes a legend in his own country; every time an Armenian arrives here and becomes like Vartan Gregorian, a success in this country, he becomes a legend back home. These success stories in America have a positive effect all over the world. This is why the recent visa policy was very damaging, because you were cutting off the flow of a group of people who, frankly, have benefited not just America, but the rest of the world, and made it a better place.



## DISCUSSION

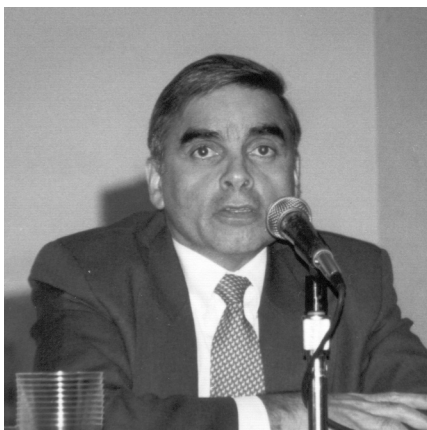
**Xiaobo Lü:** One of the major foreign policy challenges for the United States is managing the rise of China. I wonder if I can use three recent cases that all intertwine economic, geopolitical, and business interests, and ask you to comment on the larger picture. First is the licensing for Westinghouse to compete in the Chinese nuclear power sector. Second is the EU’s intention to lift the embargo on arms sales to China and the U.S. effort to stop it. Third is the Chinese firm Lenovo’s purchase of the IBM division that produces personal computers, which I personally think is not going to be permitted. Taken together, according to the Chinese, America does not want the rise of China. So how do you think America should handle this? I wonder if some of the policies are self-defeating.

**Mahbubani:** These are examples of how the U.S.-China relationship will unfold. The big difference in the way the Chinese and the United States make these decisions is that the Chinese try to take a coordinated view. They look at the big picture, and they figure out how they can use each decision to fit into their grand national strategy. In the case of the United States, the decisions are made by sectoral interests, driven by the most powerful lobbies. Often, there’s no coordinated plan on the part of the United States to send any kind of message to China.

This can lead to an enormous amount of misunderstanding, because

*Left to right:* Kishore Mahbubani, Xiaobo Lü

*I believe we can still salvage the situation, that we can reverse this trend in attitudes toward America. First, America has to decide that a stable world order in which other countries can grow and prosper is also in America’s interest.*



Kishore Mahbubani

*The most dangerous thing that can happen is for all of us to believe that there is nothing we can do to change the attitudes of 1.2 billion Muslims.*



Xiaobo Lü, Director, Weatherhead East Asian Institute

every time the United States makes a decision, the Chinese read it as part of a bigger strategy. And certainly the EU arms embargo is basically symbolic. For the United States, it's not a big thing, but for China, it's very important, because it sends a very powerful signal.

But behind all of these issues, the most fundamental question in the minds of the Chinese policymakers is, will the United States allow China to emerge and become a major economic power, as it allowed the emergence of Germany and Japan; or will the United States decide that the emergence of China could lead to the displacement of the United States as the most important power in the world? As you know, the National Security Strategy says that the primary aim of the United States is to prevent the emergence of any power that could displace the United States. And, incidentally, by current trends, in purchasing power parity terms, the Chinese economy will be larger than the U.S. economy by either 2020 or 2025. So the only question the Chinese have is, will the United States allow this to happen, or will they block it?

Now the United States can send a very clear signal that, if China behaves like Japan and Germany did, then it will be happy to see the emergence of a peaceful China. I know that signal has not been sent, because Chinese policymakers believe that America has the opposite intention; that it doesn't want to see the rise of China. So everything the United States does—from allowing Falun Gong activities, implicitly or explicitly supporting the democratic movements in Taiwan, or supporting dissidents or movements in Tibet—are all seen as part of a coordinated strategy. The fundamental problem is the depth of this suspicion. If we don't work to remove that suspicion, inevitably, we are bound to have accidents.

So far, what has saved the U.S.-China relationship is 9/11. When 9/11 happened, there was a palpable sigh of relief among Chinese leaders, because they knew the United States would have other preoccupations. But this huge sense of relief in Beijing was an indication that the Chinese leaders

believed the United States would try to go after China. If there is no such coordinated strategy in the United States, you then have this incredible suspicion in China that something is wrong and that something has to be done.

**Question:** What do you think the U.S. policy toward Taiwan should be? A lot of the Chinese attitudes and views of the United States stem from China's policy toward Taiwan.

**Mahbubani:** If I wanted to use a very simple expression to describe the best American policy toward Taiwan, I would say, "let sleeping dogs lie." The status quo is not uncomfortable to either the United States or China. The Chinese have a long-term national interest in Taiwan's succeeding because it can still serve as a beacon for China. Taiwan's success was not seen as a threat to China, and China would have been quite happy to let Taiwan grow, as long as it did not try to secede and gain independence from China. Taiwan is by far the biggest investor in China, and this is a great paradox—the economic relationship is incredibly close, and yet the political relationship is increasingly difficult.

The problems in Taiwan have arisen because of the actions of its president Chen Shui-bian and the Chinese belief that he is trying to gain independence. The difficulty over the Taiwan issue is very simple. No Chinese leader can afford domestically to be seen as being soft on Taiwan if there is a move toward independence. So as soon as there is any sense that Taiwan is moving toward independence, China has got to send very hard signals. One thing the Chinese have made clear is that even though they want to avoid war, they will go to war over Taiwan. So if they have drawn a line in the sand, why should others cross it?

The best thing we can do is let the status quo continue as long as possible, because when, in due course, Chinese society becomes like any other modern society, when the differences between Taiwan and China disappear, that problem will solve itself.

**Question:** When you say that there is a shrinking globe and that the United States is dominant, when hasn't this been the case since 1945? The United States has always acted, in certain instances, in precipitous ways. So when did the United States really depart from its values? There is always a high level of confusion and lack of coordination in this country, particularly with regard to our pluralism. So couldn't one say that it is with the onset of the Bush Administration that there has been a fundamental change in American policy and the American approach to the world?

**Mahbubani:** During the Cold War, the United States made an enormous effort to distinguish itself from the Soviet Union. One of the reasons that the Soviet Union eventually lost was because the cost of empire was too great. The United States never declared itself to be an empire and always proudly held to the belief that the countries that were on American side were there by choice.

America raised a lot of expectations in many parts of the world by standing for those values. Many countries felt abandoned and suffered in the 1990s after they were dropped by the United States very abruptly at the end of the Cold War.

The best example is Pakistan, which believed it was indispensable to American interests. When the Cold War ended, America discovered that Pakistan was not a democracy, and it cut off Pakistan. This came as a shock to the Pakistani establishment. America has rediscovered Pakistan after 9/11, but no Pakistani policymaker can stand up and say "America is our true friend now, and we must stand by America all the way." Even sophisticated Pakistanis felt seduced, used, and abandoned by the United States. There are other countries, too: Thailand, Indonesia, and so forth.

After the end of the Cold War, there was a break with America's relations with the world. 9/11 happened not because of a decision that was made after Bush was elected; it was because

of a decision that was made back in 1991. That's why the first World Trade Center bombing occurred in 1993. Obviously, some actions of the Bush administration have aggravated the situation, but the reason they have aggravated the situation is because of the underlying pools of discontent and suspicion.

The most dangerous thing that can happen is for all of us to believe that there is nothing we can do to change the attitudes of 1.2 billion Muslims, because within that community the vast majority of them, if they had a choice, would want to live the American dream. But they believe that the world does not provide opportunities for Islamic societies to grow and thrive. They may be wrong in that belief, but they do believe it. Television pipes into the Islamic world news of Palestinians being killed, Bosnians being killed. Soon they begin to believe that losses of Muslim lives do not matter to the West. Whatever you do, you must not underestimate the intelligence and sophistication of the six billion people who judge America daily on the basis of its actions. If you go to a typical bazaar in Pakistan, or in Turkey or in Bangladesh, you would be amazed at the amount of discussion that takes place on these foreign policy issues.

**Question:** Although there is American exceptionalism and misbehavior, at the same time there has been misbehavior on China's part. Can you comment on certain Chinese actions, like the refusal to vote in favor of the invasion of Iraq in 1991, and also the efforts of the Chinese government, along with its Russian counterpart, to block the humanitarian intervention in Serbia over Kosovo?

**Mahbubani:** From the Chinese perspective, an abstention on the Gulf War was a huge concession. And all that the United States wanted was an abstention. When Madeleine Albright was Ambassador to the UN, the United States wanted a resolution to endorse the U.S. intervention in Haiti. The thing the United States feared most was a

Chinese veto. Albright called on the Chinese ambassador and sent a signal of respect. Hence, China did not veto. I'm just giving examples of what it takes to bring China along in these situations.

The Communist Party that is running China today is the same Communist party of Mao. But it behaves more and more like a capitalist party. It has transformed itself. It has transformed China. The Chinese people today are not being told that the great mission of China is to go out and conquer the world. The great mission of the Chinese people is to succeed, modernize, and become a member of the developed nations club.

That major decision by China is a huge gift to the world. Because the last thing we want is China doing the exact opposite, trying to repeat what the Soviet Union did. So if you judge China objectively in terms of what it actually does, China has an enormous vested interest in a stable world order. Especially because the next 20 years are the window of opportunity for China, so it will bend over backwards to preserve stability.

And in the final point, after the recent Iraq war, the United States wanted to get a subsequent UN Security Council resolution to endorse the occupation of Iraq. American diplomats can tell you that the Chinese were among the most helpful diplomats in the Security Council. They actually assisted America at that point in time. So it is not in their interest to disrupt the world order as it exists.

**Question:** You said the most appropriate strategy for the United States would be to find one Islamic nation that it could support as a beacon of hope for the rest of the Islamic world. I was wondering what nation you had in mind. If it is Turkey, is Turkey a model that other Islamic nations would be interested in following, or is it too secular? If not Turkey, what other nations would you have in mind?

**Mahbubani:** I would frankly be very happy if any Islamic society succeeded.

Turkey is clearly closest to succeeding, especially if it is admitted to the EU. If Turkey succeeds, it will make a huge difference psychologically. The psychological point is one that Americans don't understand, but an African ambassador once said to me "You Asians are so lucky. At least you have Japan or Taiwan to inspire you. We in Africa don't have a success story. If we had one, we could follow it." That's a very important dimension.

But after Turkey, Malaysia's success would be a huge gift to the Islamic world. Beyond that the other candidate might be Indonesia. The recent successful elections in Indonesia were remarkable. I was quite amazed. After the seven years of instability that Indonesia went through from 1997 to 2004, after all the terrorist incidents that we saw in Bali and elsewhere, to have such a peaceful election carried out in such a large country with such a positive result was an enormous achievement. All of these successes have, over a time, a cumulative positive effect on the Islamic psyche, and we should encourage them.

**Question:** The two big issues between the United States and China are human rights and Taiwan. Human rights is not something we're going to come to blows over. But the situation in the Taiwan Straits could easily erupt. Now your earlier answer as to what U.S. policy should be sounds to me like a description of what U.S. policy is. You used the phrase "let sleeping dogs lie"—the problem is that the sleeping dogs are waking up. It really puts Washington in a pretty awkward position. We can't just give both sides sleeping pills and say go back to sleep. So what, specifically, do you think the United States can do to handle the situation?

**Mahbubani:** First, on human rights, Chinese intellectuals told me they resent America's criticism of China's human rights record. But in the past, even though they resented it, they at least accepted that America set the standard for what respect of human rights should be, and had a moral right to lecture.

Guantanamo was a great shock to the Chinese intellectuals. They could not believe that the United States could do such a thing. From the Chinese point of view, after Guantanamo, even the Chinese intellectuals who were very critical of the Chinese government said in private, "So what's the difference—we treat people badly, they treat people badly. We are the same."

On the question of human rights, if you look at the conditions of the ordinary Chinese people, and you look at the famines, wars, revolutions, and invasions that China has suffered, and you measure the life of the ordinary Chinese against what they have experienced, these are the best years that China has experienced in 200 years, by far.

At the point in time when the living conditions of the Chinese have never been better, that is when the rest of the world says its human rights record is very bad. Clearly, China has to improve its human rights record. But is China heading in the right direction or the wrong direction? If you observe the quality of life and openness of Chinese society, you will agree things are changing in the right direction. Before Guantanamo, if you pushed the Chinese, they would admit the need to improve. Today, if you push them on human rights, they push back very hard, because they feel America no longer has any moral credibility to criticize them.

In answer to your second question about letting sleeping dogs lie, American policy on Taiwan is not necessarily a simple straight line. The Chinese government has a very sophisticated reading of each nuance in American policy toward Taiwan.

This is why China has been very happy with America's policy on Taiwan since 9/11. In theory, nothing has changed in American policy, but the amount of pressure that the United States has put on Chen Shui-bian has never been greater. The Chinese are sophisticated enough to know that the United States is trying its best to let the sleeping dogs lie. China itself is not asking for any dramatic change; it would in fact like to see a continuation of events of the last three years.

## CREDITS

### EDITOR

Michael Roston

### ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Yvonne Thurman

Andy Wanning

### PHOTOGRAPHY

Madge Huntington

Andy Wanning

### PRODUCTION

Office of University Publications  
Columbia University

### WEATHERHEAD EAST ASIAN INSTITUTE

420 West 118th Street, 9th Floor,  
MC 3333

New York, NY 10027

Phone: 212-854-2592

Fax: 212-749-1497

E-mail: [weai@columbia.edu](mailto:weai@columbia.edu)

Web site:

[www.columbia.edu/cu/weai](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/weai)

### APEC STUDY CENTER COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

322 Uris Hall, MC 5998

New York, NY 10027

Phone: 212-854-3976

Fax: 212-678-6958

E-mail: [aw2040@columbia.edu](mailto:aw2040@columbia.edu)

Web site:

[www2.gsb.columbia.edu/apec](http://www2.gsb.columbia.edu/apec)