National Security Strategy

The United States possesses historically unparalleled strength as a global power. The basis of this strength is the American economy and the skills of the American people. The U.S. economy is open and dynamic and thus a magnet for private investment from around the world. America’s workforce is industrious, flexible, and well-educated, allowing the economy as a whole to adjust fluidly to changing global circumstances. For America, globalization is a source of opportunity, not of fear.

There is no hostile global rival to the United States. America’s military position is dominant both in terms of today’s deployed forces and tomorrow’s technological frontiers. America’s all-volunteer military is the best in the world and continues to attract able and dedicated people.

Thus this is a time of opportunity for America. In order to translate this moment of influence into decades of peace, prosperity, and liberty, the United States must have a determined and coherent national security strategy. That strategy will be based on a distinctly American internationalism that recognizes the inextricable link between our values and our national interests. The ultimate aim of this strategy is to organize the world along a set of constructive, globally beneficial principles -- political, economic, military, and ethical -- affecting both relations between states and conditions within them.

Our national security strategy is not, however, a purely external one. It recognizes that our influence abroad rests on our strength at home. Thus, we will continue to reform and improve America’s schools, promote a vibrant and innovative domestic economy, and build the military capabilities needed to deter and defend against the threats of the 21st century.

I. Choosing the Right Path

The twentieth century saw the rise and fall of fascism and communism, failed ideologies that promised progress but generated only misery and tragedy. Now at the dawn of this century, the path to progress is clear and there is no viable alternative. The path that works is one of political and economic freedom; peaceful relations with other states; respect for human dignity and human rights; proper incentives to
stimulate creativity and entrepreneurship among a population; the rule of law; and respect for ethnic differences within the multiethnic states.

America has prospered along this path. If we have prospered more than others, it is because our Founding Fathers had the wisdom and good fortune to choose this path 225 years ago. But this path is not America's alone. It is universal and its benefits are intrinsic. It is the path which allows governments to fulfill their responsibilities to their people and to attract the resources necessary to prosper in the international economy. The values that the United States holds dear are increasingly recognized as critical to the success of the modern democratic state. The correct choices have never been clearer or more important to success in the international order.

The United States wishes all countries to choose this path of genuine progress. America will not impose this path on others, but we will encourage others to make the right choices, while discouraging wrong choices. Our strategy for translating America’s present moment of influence into decades of peace, prosperity, and freedom is to create and maintain the conditions that allow states to choose the right path. This is the fundamental purpose of our national security strategy.

Three potential impediments stand in the way of this strategy:

- Discord among the advanced democracies;
- Renewal of great power security competition; and
- Tyranny, corruption, ignorance, poverty, and disease.

America’s engagement with the rest of the world will seek to curb and if possible eliminate these basic impediments to global progress. By doing so, the United States can help promote a peaceful international environment in which there are strong incentives for countries to choose democracy, open economies, and respect for their neighbors.

America will implement this strategy not by acting unilaterally or imposing any sort of “hegemony,” but by organizing coalitions as broad as possible of states able and willing to promote an agenda that encourages and enables the right political, economic, and security choices. Effective coalition leadership requires clear judgments about priorities, an appreciation of others’ interests, constant consultations among partners, and a willingness to compromise on some points but to remain focused on core objectives. The burden of building a beneficial global
order must be shared. We will look to our allies and coalition partners to bear their fair share of this burden, and will follow their views in proportion with the share of responsibility they bear.

1. Discord among the Advanced Democracies

Most of the world's wealth and influence is held by democratic states friendly to the United States. There are more like-minded states today than at anytime in history to share in the work of building a prosperous, democratic, and peaceful future. So to encourage all countries to make the right choices, the principal proponents and beneficiaries of the system must manage well the relations among themselves. They must not fall into tactical disputes on second-order issues and drain the energy, resolve, and cohesion needed to bring others onto the path. The United States bears special responsibility in this regard. We must redouble our efforts to conduct our relations with other democracies -- most of whom are already our formal allies -- toward common higher purposes, and away from divisive disputes.

The U.S.-European relationship is America's most solidly established instrument in promoting peace, democracy, free trade, and the rule of law. There is very little of lasting consequence that the United States can accomplish in the world without the sustained cooperation of the European allies. Our European allies share our democratic values. Transatlantic historical and cultural links are strong and enduring. Our national interests largely coincide. The major European nations all belong to NATO, the most successful Alliance in world history, and one that runs on U.S. leadership, great institutional resilience, decades-long patterns of defense cooperation, and strong public support on both sides of the Atlantic. In economic affairs, the European Union is America's strongest partner in seeking further to open up the international trading system.

In the Asian-Pacific region, America's three key allies - Japan, South Korea, and Australia - have a combined population of almost 500 million, their economies together are nearly $13 trillion. Their democratic values are a beacon for all in the region, much of which thirsts for political diversity and the rule of law. From the Korean peninsula to East Timor, these four democracies can be the prime movers for a broad and successful Asian transition to democratic practices in a context of growing prosperity. America, Japan, South Korea, and Australia represent an extraordinarily positive force for the region in
the period ahead, and it is critically important that we maintain and strengthen these relationships.

The United States will work with the advanced democracies around the world to encourage all countries to choose the path of political freedom, economic openness, and peaceful relations with neighbors. Together we will further liberalize trade, creating a "culture of cooperation" to avoid debilitating trade disputes. We will press international financial institutions to support real reform, and will foster the development of domestic institutions and policies that promote high quality growth. We will likewise work together to support civic culture and civil society directly in these countries, strengthening the fundamental elements of participatory democracy. Together we have the chance to shape the international community along the lines in which we have prospered; divided we will surely fail at this noble calling.

2. Renewed Great Power Security Competition

America's internationalism is premised on a respect for power, and recognizes that all states do not play equally important roles. The triumph of peace, democracy, and liberty is unquestionably easier when the international balance of power favors those who believe in these values. Thus, the United States must manage its relationships with these great powers to make rivalry and challenge to the new paradigm an unattractive course for these states.

There is always the potential for the rise of a great power or coalition of powers who will seek to find an alternative path and try to upset the consensus. This is a danger today because so many potential great powers are in the midst of internal transition - most importantly, China, Russia, and India. We will do this by providing incentives to choose constructive relations with us, and by creating disincentives for renewed security competition.

We seek a productive and realistic friendship with Russia. Our goal is to draw Russia into a strong and responsible relationship with the West. We will encourage Russia to pursue a free market, fight corruption, implement micro-economic reforms, and entrench the rule of law. We will stress our concern over human rights, press and media freedoms, and tolerance as key to Russia's ultimate integration with the wider Western world and ultimately to Russia's own stability. We also will work to put in place a new strategic framework that
includes efforts in nonproliferation and counterproliferation, less reliance on strategic offensive weapons, development and deployment of limited but effective defenses, and greater transparency.

We wish to establish a balanced relationship with China through the development of mutual respect and an honest representation of our differences. We will work hard to develop and strengthen areas where we can work together, including on regional stability, human and religious rights, economic development, and nonproliferation. We will support China's integration into the Western world; China is incomparably more open, commercial, and connected to the outside world than it was twenty-five years ago -- a development which is entirely in the U.S. national interest, and which we will continue to encourage. We will adhere to one China policy, but not at the expense of peaceful relations across the Taiwan straits. We will help Taiwan defend itself if need be.

We will support India's rise as a great power and a stabilizing force in South Asia. Already the world's largest democracy, India and the United States are natural allies. The past decades of political tension between Washington and New Dehli have served no useful purpose, and must be left behind.

3. Tyranny, Corruption, Ignorance, Poverty, and Disease

The third key obstacle to the path of freedom is the complex set of deeply rooted societal problems that prevent countries from building strong and effective institutions of domestic governance. These problems take many forms, but the most extreme is the outright despotism that still persists in a few unfortunate parts of the world, such as North Korea and Iraq. These governments, incorrigibly committed to the wrong path and already written into the wrong side of history, rule at the great expense of their people and pose significant regional dangers. America will deal with these governments firmly and without illusions as to their legitimacy. We will contain the external threats they pose while working to alleviate the internal suffering of their people in ways that do not perpetuate their reigns.

In most cases, however, the obstacles are less extreme but more complicated. There are many governments, for instance, that wish to move their countries on to the right path but have great difficulty doing so because of corruption, ethnic strife, endemic poverty, inadequate education, and the debilitating
effects of disease. To address these problems, the United States will work with those governments that dedicate themselves to promoting the rule of law, fighting crime, improving public health and education, alleviating poverty, and protecting the environment. The United States should focus its help and support on the "pearls" both large and small -- states that have made the right choices. But that attention must be sustained and nurtured by initiatives that need not be large or costly, but which must be timely and linked to defined objectives.

Education is the key to strengthening democratic institutions, promoting the development of human potential, equality and understanding among our peoples, as well as sustaining economic growth and reducing poverty. Poverty alleviation requires governments to undertake sound economic policies, to attract private investment (domestic and foreign), and to fight against corruption and other market distortions. Current multilateral debt reduction programs provide a means for countries pursuing these policies to overcome their debt burden. Economic openness has been proven to be the primary stimulus for economic development. Foreign direct investment serves to promote employment, enhance competition, and introduce modern management practices. But countries must root out corruption and increase governmental transparency to translate the benefits of economic openness to ever larger parts of their populations.

There is the constant possibility of backlash in countries that think and hope they have chosen the path to progress through democracy, but have not yet seen the fruits of open economic societies. The phenomenon permeates Latin America and the Caribbean, where there is also a strong counter-pull toward populist, state and leader-directed solutions to deal with abject poverty, unemployment and underemployment, bad public education and public health systems, and corruption. The unfulfilled expectations of the masses can create a real risk of leading to an alternative "ism" or the rise again of poisonous forms of nationalism.

Fortifying the Foundations of America’s Strength

The distinction between domestic and foreign affairs is a diminishing one. Globalization means that events beyond America’s borders have a greater impact on circumstances within them. Similarly, America’s ability to engage and influence foreign affairs is largely a function our own strengths and qualities - a truth long recognized by American statesmen. Thus, an essential component of our national security strategy
is to fortify the domestic and national foundations of our international influence.

I. Education and the Nation's Knowledge Base

America's strength and prosperity rests ultimately on the knowledge and skills of the American citizenry. The role of government is not just to channel the abilities of the people toward great common purposes; it is also to ensure that the nation's knowledge base is constantly renewed and improved upon - at all levels of the educational ladder - so that the capabilities of the nation as a whole continue to grow.

Education is also essential to a policy of sustaining and promoting free trade; this alone is enough to make education an important national security priority. The market already rewards those who have technical and scientific skills, but American workers must also be willing and able to compete for high-paying jobs that require technical skills. It will be possible to defend free trade only if American workers benefit fully from the opening of the American market. This in turn requires that the skills of the American workforce become ever more closely aligned with the comparative advantage of the United States in the global economy. This a goal that can be accomplished only though our education policy.

Improving the U.S. educational system is a top U.S. priority, particularly at the primary and secondary levels where public school reform is urgently needed. Literacy is the basis for learning throughout a person's lifetime, so we will work to improve literacy programs between preschool and second grade across the nation, giving particularly emphasis to areas with lower income levels or high concentrations of recent immigrants. Our reform agenda for public primary and second schools is based on four core principles: accountability based on regular testing; local and state control and flexibility to innovate; government assistance to help our schools transition to higher standards; and meaningful alternative options for parents and students in persistently dangerous or failing schools. Over time, this agenda will help America improve the standing of our students' test scores among industrialized nations in math and science, the subjects most likely to affect our future economic competitiveness.

American colleges and universities are already recognized as the finest in the world, and a degree from an American university is
valued throughout the world. We will ensure that they remain so.

II. Economic Vitality

In order to be successful, the United States must maintain its economic strength and domestic cohesion which form the basis of American influence abroad. We will pursue pro-growth policies that encourage greater productivity, reduce tax burdens, while maintaining fiscal responsibility and stable prices.

As with education, the domestic economic agenda is extensive. Some of the priorities include working to modernize the health care system, particularly Medicare. We must revitalize the social security system so that it will have a sound financial footing. We must also develop and diversify our energy supplies, while increasing environmental protection through the deployment of American ingenuity and technology. For the poor and disadvantaged in the United States, we should take new approaches such as encouraging and supporting the work of charities and faith-based community groups.

History has shown that expanded trade - imports as well as exports - leads to more prosperous U.S. businesses, more choices of goods and lower prices for consumers, and more opportunities for American farmers and workers leading to higher wages, more jobs and economic growth. Expanding trade brings particular benefits to lower-income Americans who are squeezed both as consumers and taxpayers.

Expanding trade also has many benefits abroad. Open markets promote economic and political freedom around the world; economic and political freedom in turn creates competition, opportunity and independent thinking that strengthen democracy; and greater political freedom and democracy across the globe substantially enhance U.S. national security. As we dismantle trade barriers around the world, especially in the developing world, we help create the economic and social conditions necessary for countries to make progress on the environment, observance of labor standards, the protection of children, and other critical issues.

Now, more than ever, U.S. leadership is essential to reinvigorating the international trading system, including launching a new round of global negotiations, as well as regional and bilateral negotiations. America's trade agenda is intended to further each of these benefits of expanding markets
for American consumers, farmers and workers, and to advance a forward strategy for freedom, economic development and increased living standards around the world by pursuing a new round of global trade negotiations, a Free Trade Area of the Americas, and other important regional and bilateral agreements.

Finally, America throughout its history has been the great beneficiary of immigration. We will implement policies that constantly attracts people with these skills to the American workforce, and will tolerance of difference so that these new America’s feel welcome and at home.

III. Military Capabilities

America’s leadership in the 21st century requires a strong military to keep the peace. The United States no longer faces a single global military rival. The threat of major nuclear war has decreased dramatically. Our armed forces are the best in the world. This does not mean, however, that we do not face military dangers and threats. An unwillingness to challenge our conventional strength leads potential opponents to seek to develop and exploit so-called “asymmetric threats” -- weapons of mass destruction, cyber-war, anti satellite weapons -- against us. And we must always continue to prepare for the unexpected.

Our objective is to restructure the U.S. military so that it optimizes the technological and human capabilities that we wish to possess for the threats we expect to face in the future, thus enabling the United States to safeguard and promote its national interests more efficiently, effectively, and enduringly. This is the essence of defense transformation.

A successful transformation of the U.S. military would change not only the military itself, but also the way wars are fought and America’s role in the world. It should lead to a military force structure that is altogether more mobile, stealthy, and lethal. There should be fewer large military units, like Army divisions and Navy carrier battle groups, and less large platforms like tanks, cruisers, and bombers. Instead, firepower should be widely disturbed but seamlessly integrated by a command and control system that combines and processes data from all available sensors.

Today’s basic force structure is a remnant of the Cold War, which has maintained its qualitative edge against all possible adversaries though a steady (and expensive) stream of largely incremental technological improvements. For the decade since
the collapse of the Soviet Union, the armed forces have been organized and structured for two medium regional contingencies. Meaningful defense transformation requires an updating of this design-base threat. In its stead, our standard will be [TBD].

The military is America's most highly respected public institution, and is rightly seen as the most powerful force on Earth. We are fortunate that this is so, but it makes the defense transformation agenda even more formidable.

To meet these challenges successfully we must balance our efforts to ward off short-term threats and our longer-term work to address threats we might face in the next decade and beyond. We must rebuild and transform our forces, which have been over-worked, drawn-down, and under equipped, at the same time we must research new capabilities and try to bring these into the force quickly, while we simultaneously develop innovative ways to use them. We must ensure that what we keep and what we evolve into continues to meet four critical missions:

- reassuring allies and friends
- dissuading potential adversaries
- deterring hostile acts, and
- defeating attacks if dissuasion and deterrence fail

We must be able to defend at home -- against terrorists and asymmetric threats -- in order that we may confidently defend abroad.

The deep dilemma of defense transformation is that while making US military power more efficient, it simultaneously increases our vulnerability to a form of conflict that we are ill-prepared to defend against: cyber-attack. The U.S. ability to defend our critical infrastructure systems is lagging behind our rising dependency upon them. Therefore, the US government as a whole -- and not just the American military -- must make a major commitment to information assurance and critical infrastructure protection. This will require innovative new partnerships with the private-sector vendors of the information systems used by both private industry and our military services.

A second problematic consequences of defense transformation is the widening "capabilities gap" between America and our NATO partners results largely from our allies' defense policy decisions. The transformation of US forces should go together with a call for greater cooperation, coordination, technical assistance, and joint procurement with our allies. America must
maintain close coordination with its allies and work effectively in coalitions to pursue its global agenda. Mature institutions like NATO must constantly evolve and grow to take on new challenges.

III. Regional and Functional Policies

While it is important to have regionally and functionally specific strategies, detailed below, it is well to reiterate that America's national security interests are best served by dedication to the consistent pursuit of our goals world-wide. Clearly, the challenges are different and means must be appropriate to the circumstances. But the promotion of a peaceful environment in which there are incentives for countries to choose democracy, open economies and respect for their neighbors is a global concern and global project for the United States, its friends and allies.

1. Asia
2. Middle East and North Africa
3. Eurasia
4. Africa
5. Western Hemisphere
6. Comprehensive Strategy against Proliferation
7. Intelligence
8. Space
9. Counterterrorism
10. Information Security
11. Free Trade
12. International Financial System
13. Poverty Alleviation
14. International Health
15. Energy Policy
16. Environment

IV. Conclusion