

Chapter 7

The United States— The End of the Bush Administration and the Challenges That Remain

The eight-year reign of George W. Bush as president of the United States came to a close in January 2009, when the Barack Obama administration stepped into power. During President Bush's tenure, the international prestige and leadership role of the United States were rocked by various incidents and actions, most notably the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the US-led military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the homegrown financial crisis that spilled over into the global economy.

Although public order in Iraq finally started showing marked improvement throughout 2008, the security situation in Afghanistan crumbled as the result of a resurgence of Taliban forces and other disruptive developments, prompting the United States to begin shifting the focus of the War on Terrorism from Iraq to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

During the same year, the Bush administration released an updated *National Defense Strategy* and other strategic documents that called for cooperation with allies and partners and the maintenance of readiness for conventional warfare, while also stressing the importance of sustaining the War on Terrorism and other efforts to deal with adversaries employing irregular warfare. The Bush administration also continued to pursue the development of missile defense and the transformation of the US military, but encountered various obstacles in its path, especially with regard to foreign relations and the limited availability of defense funds and military personnel.

In response to the growth of terrorism and other nontraditional threats, and to changes in the geopolitical landscape, notably the emergence of China and India as rising powers, the Bush administration worked to strengthen the United States' strategic ties with major Asian countries, and to build up the capabilities of allies and partners at multiple levels.

In October 2008, the Bush administration turned a new page in the North Korean nuclear issue by removing that country from the US list of state sponsors of terrorism. However, a subsequent meeting of the Six-party Talks ended without tangible progress, as North Korea refused to comply with a demand to document the inspection protocol for its nuclear program. Consequently, denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula remained an unfinished task to be passed onto the next US administration.

Initially, President Obama will focus on stabilizing financial systems and repairing the US economy, while making the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan

his primary concern in security affairs. His administration is also expected to exercise diplomatic leadership across a broad spectrum of international challenges, including stabilization of Pakistan, the nuclear programs of Iran and North Korea, climate change, energy issues, and civil strife in Africa. As international society becomes increasingly multipolarized, the Obama administration will seek to restore the United States' position as a world leader by further bolstering and enhancing its relations with allies and partners, while also employing dialogue, cooperation, and multilateral diplomacy as tools for tackling a host of global security challenges facing the world today.

1. US Security Strategy

(1) A Crucial Juncture for US Strategy on Iraq and the War on Terrorism

Today, more than five years since the start of the Iraq War in March 2003, the United States continues to maintain a strong military presence in Iraq, currently totaling 146,000 personnel. This commitment has come at a human price, with 4,185 fatalities suffered by the US military in Iraq as of October 16, 2008, according to statistics from the US Department of Defense. In 2007, the Bush administration deployed more than 20,000 additional troops to Iraq under a new strategy focused on guaranteeing the safety of the Iraqi people amidst deterioration in public security that resulted from escalating sectarian conflict since the year before. The troop surge finally began paying off in 2008, when significant improvements were seen in the security situation throughout most of the year. In contrast, security conditions in Afghanistan have continued to worsen due to insurgent activity by Taliban forces and other elements, prompting the United States to begin shifting the focus of the War on Terrorism from Iraq to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Ultimately, the Bush administration concluded its eight-year reign without fully resolving the intricate

challenges posed in Iraq and Afghanistan, and instead left President Obama with the task of seeking out viable solutions.

The United States has remained involved in Iraqi affairs across many spheres, including politics, security, the economy, and diplomacy, in order to facilitate the development of a stable, unified Iraq that can successfully govern itself as federal democracy. During the latter half of 2007 and throughout 2008, the situation in Iraq showed signs of taking a turn for the better. Compared with conditions two years earlier, violent incidents and sectarian strife declined dramatically, and fatalities among the Iraqi populace and US military personnel decreased as well. For example, a report released by the US Department of Defense in September 2008 states that violence-related deaths among Iraqi civilians from June to August of that year fell by 77 percent compared with the same three-month period in 2007. These improvements spurred advances in the transfer of security responsibilities from the Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) to the Iraqi authorities. In September 2008, Iraqi authorities were given security control over Anbar Province in western Iraq, which had been a hotbed of attacks launched by armed Sunni forces. The same was done for the provinces of Babil and Wassit in the following month, putting Iraqi authorities in charge of security for 13 of the country's 18 provinces as of the end of November 2008. The US military's role in Iraq has increasingly shifted toward one of supporting the Iraqi military, as seen in the counterinsurgency operations that the Iraqi military and police led in 2008 against al-Qaeda, other armed Sunni forces, and Shiite militias in such regions as Basra, Baghdad, Diyala, Mosul, and Amarah.

Three key factors underlie the improvements in Iraq's security situation. The first is that considerable success was achieved in civilian protection and counterinsurgency operations, owing to the US troop surge and enhancements in the manpower and competencies of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). As part of the surge in 2007, the Bush administration deployed 4,000 marines to Anbar, where they engaged in successful sweeps against al-Qaeda forces.

The second is that the Awakening Councils, Sunni groups operating in Anbar and elsewhere with funding from the US military, collaborated in counterinsurgency operations against al-Qaeda forces and other insurgents. Of particular note here is that Sunnis who once fought against US troops have converted into antiterrorist fighters of the Awakening Councils—whose members are known as “Sons of Iraq”—and have thereby reshaped the Iraqi security landscape. In addition to

Anbar, Awakening Councils have been established in Diyala, Baghdad, and other parts of the country, raising the total membership above 98,000 as of September 2008. The cooperation of these councils in counterinsurgency operations has included intelligence support, and has contributed to the restoration of order in Sunni-dominated regions. The US military is strongly urging the Iraqi government to incorporate the Sons of Iraq into the ISF and other government organs. As of September 2008, there were more than 20,000 Sons of Iraq serving in the ISF and other government organs, but nearly 16,000 of them were brought on board in 2006 and 2007, indicating that 2008 was a somewhat slow year for this process. The sluggish pace can be attributed in part to the Shiite-dominated government's reluctance to put the Sunni councils on its security payroll.

The third factor is the declaration of a ceasefire by the Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM), the paramilitary force controlled by Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr. At the end of August 2007, al-Sadr announced a six-month ceasefire following a violent clash that was sparked by the JAM and resulted in civilian deaths. In the following February, al-Sadr proclaimed that the truce would be extended another six months. On March 25, fighting between the ISF and the JAM in Basra began spreading to Baghdad and other heavily Shiite areas, but on the 30th al-Sadr called upon the JAM and other supporters to lay down their arms. Subsequently, the US military and the ISF continued to conduct anti-militia operations against the JAM in Sadr City in eastern Baghdad, and a ceasefire agreement was eventually reached on May 10 between the al-Sadr bloc and Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki's government. In the following month, al-Sadr declared that the JAM would be transformed into a social and cultural organization.

The improvements in public security were coupled with political progress toward national reconciliation, but many obstacles nevertheless remained on the path to this goal. On January 12, 2008 the Iraqi Council of Representatives passed the Accountability and Justice Law, which was intended to promote the return to public office of former Ba'ath Party members, who had been banned from government jobs since 2003 due to their affiliation with the party that ruled Iraq under Saddam Hussein's regime. If the law goes into effect, former Ba'ath Party members, excluding certain former high-ranking officers, will be allowed to serve in the Iraqi government and military, and all former members who were not involved in past crimes will be entitled to receive their government pensions. On February 13, the Council of Representatives passed three critical bills: the

Amnesty Law, the Provincial Powers Law, and the 2008 Budget. Several members of the Sunni political coalition Iraqi Accordance Front who had resigned from the al-Maliki cabinet returned to their posts on July 19. In addition, ministerial posts that had been vacated by al-Sadr bloc members were filled with appointees from the Shiite coalition United Iraqi Alliance. On September 24, the Council of Representatives approved a revised version of the Provincial Elections Law after the initial bill was rejected by the Iraqi Presidency Council. The new legislation ordered provincial council elections to be held by the following January 31 in fourteen provinces, but excluding the oil-rich Kirkuk Province in northern Iraq and the three provinces under the control of the Kurdistan Regional Government. The law also specified the formation of a seven-member parliamentary committee to study ways to implement elections in Kirkuk. Comprising two Arabs, two Kurds, two Turcomans, and one Christian, the committee is tasked with working out a solution through coordination with the United Nations (UN), and is required to present its proposal to the Council of Representatives by March 31, 2009.

The Provincial Powers Law adopted on February 13, 2008 had prescribed that provincial council elections be carried out by October 31 of that year. However, passage of the legislation necessary for implementing the elections became delayed due to parliamentary deadlock over issues surrounding the election format and disputed regions, such as Kirkuk. On July 22, the Council of Representatives passed a bill that would have equally divided Kirkuk provincial council seats among the Arab, Kurdish, and Turcomans blocs. However, the bill incurred stiff Kurdish opposition over the method of seat apportionment and other issues, and was sent back to the parliamentary table following a veto by the Presidency Council. As this example illustrates, the drive toward national reconciliation is making advances, but is not safe from potential setbacks that could suddenly emerge from Iraq's turbulent political climate.

According to a US Department of Defense report on the state of Iraq, the country's economy is, like the political situation, undergoing slow but steady improvements. In contrast with a growth rate of 0.4 percent in 2007, the Iraqi economy is expected to expand by 8 percent in 2008, buoyed by increased oil revenues. However, the level of essential public services—electricity, water, and medical care—still remains below public satisfaction.

In recent years, the international community has stepped up its efforts to rebuild Iraq. Since 2005, the United States and other countries have been lending support

to provincial governments in Iraq through the nationwide deployment of provincial reconstruction teams (PRT) composed of military and civilian personnel. As of September 2008, a total of 27 PRTs were operating in Iraq, including 11 sent by the United States. Thirteen of the teams are referred to as “embedded PRTs” and support counterinsurgency operations alongside the MNF-I. The UN is also providing reconstruction and humanitarian assistance through the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and other agencies.

In response to the favorable changes sweeping across Iraq, the Bush administration began implementing of policy of “return on success” to reduce the US military presence in Iraq in step with improvements in the conditions there. This policy led to the withdrawal of five Army combat brigades, a Marine Expeditionary Unit, two Marine battalions, and other surge units as of the end of July 2008. In a September 9 speech at the National Defense University, President Bush announced his decision, based on recommendations by MNF-I Commander Gen. David H. Petraeus and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to remove nearly 8,000 US military personnel from Iraq by the following February, including the withdrawal of: (a) 3,400 combat support forces, comprising aviation personnel, explosive ordnance disposal teams, combat and construction engineers, military police, logistical support forces, and other personnel, over the subsequent several months; (b) one Marine battalion serving in Anbar, by the end of November; and (c) one Army combat brigade.

The Bush administration’s decision to postpone massive troop drawdowns until 2009 was shaped by its concern that, despite the signs of progress witnessed, the security situation in Iraq remained unstable and could suddenly regress at any moment. Although the ISF and the Iraqi police forces have grown in size and skills, they have not yet reached level where they can adequately preserve public order on their own. At the same time, the Iraqi government still lacks solid political footing and has yet to bring about national reconciliation. The provincial elections and Council of Representatives elections scheduled for 2009 could potentially spark a flare-up of sectarian conflict or al-Qaeda attacks. Although discord between Sunnis and Shiites has become comparatively subdued, both sides are now seeing a disturbing rise in intra-sectarian dissension and power struggles. A host of other challenges still need to be resolved, including bringing into the government the Sunnis who have turned their backs on al-Qaeda, facilitating the return home of refugees and internally displaced persons, dealing with Iranian

influence on Iraq's Shiite-dominated government, countering the movements of terrorist cells (so-called "Special Groups") believed to be backed by Iran, and settling the Arab-Kurd conflict over Kirkuk's territorial status.

Acting ahead of the December 31, 2008, expiration of the UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution mandating the MNF-I's presence in Iraq, the United States entered into talks with Iraq to hammer out a strategic framework agreement for continued US support of Iraq and a status of forces agreement (SOFA) for the US military in Iraq. Although a draft SOFA was completed in August, negotiations became stalled over such issues as the timetable for US troop withdrawal and the legal immunity of US military and private security personnel. Nevertheless, both sides managed to sign a SOFA on November 17, and the Council of Representatives ratified that agreement on the 27th, enabling the US military to stay in Iraq beyond the December 31 deadline. Under the US-Iraq SOFA, US combat units are to be pulled out of urban areas by June 2009, followed by complete withdrawal of the US military from Iraq by the end of 2011. In addition, several conditions were set for final approval of the agreement, such as the holding of a national referendum on it by July 30, 2009, and the reinstatement of former Ba'ath Party members to government positions.

As indicated by the preceding discussion, the situation in Iraq has more or less moved in a positive direction, but many tall hurdles still need to be crossed. President Obama now faces the daunting task of withdrawing the US military from Iraq while helping the Iraqis to achieve political reconciliation and a stable security environment.

Turning to Afghanistan, the country continues to be plagued with a wide range of serious problems, despite the passage of more than seven years since the United States launched the War on Terrorism with its allies and partners in October 2001. Those troubles include the high incidence of suicide attacks, abductions, and other criminal activity, the government's fragile hold on power, rampant corruption, increased production of narcotics, and extreme poverty. US Department of Defense statistics reveal that 609 US troops had died in Operation Enduring Freedom as of October 16, 2008.

Following the collapse of the Taliban regime in November 2001, leaders of various factions in Afghanistan, at the UN's urging, signed the Bonn Agreement on December 5 to set in motion a political process for rebuilding the country's government. Starting with the formation of a provisional government, the process

passed through such milestones as the establishment of a new constitution and the holding of a presidential election before leading to the December 24, 2004 inauguration of a formal administration under the presidency of Hamid Karzai. In January 2006, the members of an Afghanistan Support Group meeting in London adopted the Afghanistan Compact as a roadmap for international assistance to Afghanistan. The compact specified four focus areas to be tackled by 2010, based on a partnership between the Afghan government and the international community: (a) security; (b) governance, rule of law, and human rights; (c) economic and social development; and (d) counter-narcotics efforts.

A report on Afghanistan by the US Department of Defense lists four strategic goals that the Bush administration set with regard to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Specifically, Afghanistan was to be reshaped into a country that would be: (a) a reliable, stable ally in the War on Terror; (b) moderate and democratic, with a thriving private sector economy; (c) capable of governing its territory and borders; and (d) respectful of the rights of all its citizens. The report also stated that these objectives were to be achieved using a “whole-of-government approach, along multiple lines of operation, including security, governance, and development.” In order to restore public security as a foundation for advancing the peace process, the United States and its Operation Enduring Freedom coalition members are engaging in counterinsurgency operations against Taliban and al-Qaeda forces and training Afghanistan’s security and police forces, primarily in the south and east near the border with Pakistan. At the same time, the United States and six other nations are conducting Operation Enduring Freedom-Maritime Interdiction Operation to prevent the movement of terrorists and terrorism-related materials on the Indian Ocean. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), a coalition led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and authorized by UNSC Resolution 1386 (December 20, 2001), was mandated by UNSC Resolution 1510 (October 13, 2003) to begin enlarging its theater of operation in the following December. In October 2006, the ISAF assumed responsibility for security across all of Afghanistan when the US military handed over its remaining control. As of December 2008, the ISAF’s security support of the Afghan government was provided by nearly 51,350 personnel from 41 nations. Moreover, as of October 2008, 26 PRTs were operating across the country, assisting in security enhancement, reconstruction, and humanitarian support through coordination with the government, the UN, and nongovernment

organizations (See Table 7.1).

Despite the large-scale deployments of US military and ISAF personnel, the security situation in Afghanistan failed to improve during 2008, and in fact deteriorated instead. While conditions in the north and the west have remained comparatively stable, peace on the whole has been elusive due to warlord rivalries, crime, and far-ranging resurgence of Taliban activity. The most volatile region is the south, which is the location of Kandahar Province, a Taliban stronghold, and the opium-producing Helmand Province. This region has been beset by frequent suicide bombings and other attacks. The east has the second highest level of

Table 7.1. ISAF contributing nations and their PRT involvement

NATO members							
Nation		ISAF personnel	PRT Lead Nation	Nation		ISAF personnel	PRT Lead Nation
1	United States	19,950	Yes	14	Norway	455	Yes
2	United Kingdom	8,745	Yes	15	Czech Republic	415	Yes
3	Germany	3,600	Yes	16	Belgium	400	
4	France	2,785		17	Hungary	240	Yes
5	Canada	2,750	Yes	18	Lithuania	200	Yes
6	Italy	2,350	Yes	19	Slovakia	180	
7	Netherlands	1,770	Yes	20	Estonia	130	
8	Poland	1,130		20	Greece	130	
9	Turkey	860	Yes	22	Latvia	70	
10	Spain	780	Yes	22	Portugal	70	
11	Romania	740		22	Slovenia	70	
12	Denmark	700		25	Luxembourg	9	
13	Bulgaria	460		26	Iceland	8	

Non-NATO members							
Nation		ISAF personnel	PRT Lead Nation	Nation		ISAF personnel	PRT Lead Nation
1	Australia	1,090		9	Ukraine	10	
2	Sweden	400	Yes	10	Ireland	7	
3	Croatia	300		11	Austria	1	
4	New Zealand	150	Yes	11	Georgia	1	
5	Albania	140		13	Jordan	0	
6	Macedonia	135		13	Singapore	0	
7	Finland	80		13	United Arab Emirates	0	
8	Azerbaijan	45					

Sources: Compiled from the ISAF Web site. Figures as of December 1, 2008.

violence and has been an operating ground for not only Taliban forces but also foreign terrorists. Many of the terrorist attacks there have targeted diplomats, NGO members, and other civilians.

The worsening of conditions in Afghanistan can be attributed to four major factors. First, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan have functioned as a sanctuary for networks of terrorists, particularly members of the Taliban and al-Qaeda. Second, the situation has been exacerbated by feeble political control, rampant corruption, and deficiencies in the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP). Although the ANA comprised more than 65,000 troops as of September 2008, this level was far below the strength needed for self-reliant maintenance of security, and the army has depended on the MNF-I for equipment and training. The ANP has more than 75,000 police officers, but their lack of competency and reliability need to be ameliorated through enhanced training. The Bonn Agreement of 2001 called for the establishment of a 70,000-member army and a 62,000-member police force. Subsequently, the Afghanistan Compact's Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board decided to expand the ANP's manpower to 82,000, and expand the ANA recruitment ceiling from 88,000 (the target as of September 2008) to 122,000 by the year 2012, but the army continues to be considerably shorthanded. Third, the international community's system of support for Afghanistan lacks an integrated strategy and a clearly defined set of reconstruction priorities. With an eye on responding to these inadequacies, the participants at a NATO Summit held in Bucharest on April 3, 2008 adopted the "ISAF's Strategic Vision," a declaration in which they reaffirmed NATO's long-term commitment to reconstruction and stabilization of Afghanistan, pledged to support capacity building for Afghanistan's security forces, called for a comprehensive approach by the international community, and stressed the importance of involvement by neighboring countries. In the following June, delegates to the International Conference in Support of Afghanistan in Paris endorsed the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, a five-year reconstruction roadmap formulated by the Afghan government. The fourth factor is that terrorist activity and support for the Taliban have risen in Afghanistan amidst growing opposition to the US military's presence following US airstrikes that inadvertently resulted in civilian deaths and property damage. Moreover, the US military in Afghanistan began stepping up its bombing campaign near the border with Pakistan in September 2008, and launched a series of cross-

border strikes as well, sparking public furor in Pakistan and inciting Islamic extremists to intensify their terrorist attacks.

In response to the decline in Afghanistan's security situation, President Bush announced at the aforementioned NATO Summit that he would send an additional 3,500 Marines to Afghanistan later in the year, and would make further troop deployments there in 2009. By September 2008, the US military presence in Afghanistan had risen to 31,000 troops from a level of 21,000 in 2006. It subsequently climbed to around 37,000 following the deployment of some 2,000 Marines in November and a nearly 3,700-strong Army brigade combat team in the following January. These Marine and Army personnel had originally been scheduled for deployment in Iraq. The Bush administration also strongly urged NATO allies and other coalition partners to send additional troops to Afghanistan, and countries such as Germany, France, and Poland complied with this request.

As Afghanistan's security situation continued on a shaky course, various leaders and officials began expressing awareness that the country could not be stabilized through military efforts alone. Speaking at a press conference on October 1, 2008, President Karzai called upon Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar to participate in the political process and help to work out a political solution to the conflict. On the 9th, US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates indicated that the United States was open to dialogue between the Afghan government and the Taliban, but would not accept similar talks with al-Qaeda. The Bush administration is believed to have initiated a comprehensive review of its Afghanistan strategy in the preceding month.

During his campaign for the US presidency, Barack Obama pledged that, if elected, he would position the fight against al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan as one of his top priorities, and would demonstrate this commitment by sending at least two additional combat brigades to Afghanistan. Now that he has ascended to the White House, he will likely make Afghanistan the focus of the War on Terrorism and strengthen US involvement there across all spheres. The most pressing concern in this endeavor will be the potential destabilization of Pakistan. If that country were to become a failed state and its nuclear weapons were to pass into the hands of terrorists, the United States and its allies could face an enormously higher threat of nuclear terrorism.

The United States is pressed with the need to develop and implement comprehensive, long-term strategies for Iraq and Afghanistan. It is imperative

Pakistan in Turmoil

The year 2008 was marked by turmoil in Pakistan. The latter half of 2007 had seen the return from exile of two former prime ministers, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Benazir Bhutto and Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) leader Nawaz Sharif, but Bhutto was assassinated at the end of the year. Lower house elections were held in the following February, with the opposition PPP and PML-N gaining a landslide victory over the Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q), the government party supporting President Pervez Musharraf. In March, a new government was launched under a coalition led by the PPP and the PML-N. Musharraf resigned from office in August and was succeeded by PPP Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari, the widower of Bhutto. In contrast with Musharraf, who concurrently served as Chief of Army Staff for much of his presidency, Zardari lacks a base of support in the military and hence is struggling to exercise control over the armed forces.

Public order in Pakistan has rapidly declined since the July 2007 Lal Masjid incident, in which numerous Islamic school students were killed when security forces stormed a mosque in Islamabad believed to have links with Islamic extremists. Following that attack, the incidence of suicide bombings in Pakistan skyrocketed from its earlier rate of a handful per year, and included a bombing at the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad that left more than 40 dead, including several foreigners. The deterioration in security is remotely tied to the Pakistani government's withdrawal of support for the Taliban following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, and its participation in the US-led coalition for fighting the War on Terrorism. The Pakistani government has ordered counterinsurgency operations in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)—believed to be strongholds for Taliban and al-Qaeda forces—and has thereby sparked reprisal terrorist attacks across the country. The Taliban is suspected of using the FATA along the Afghan border as bases for launching attacks in Afghanistan. Since 2006, the US military has conducted airstrikes in the FATA using unmanned aerial vehicles, but unintentional deaths among civilians are generating local sympathy for the Taliban. Moreover, the Pakistan, in its position as a staunch ally of the United States, has censured the airstrikes as a violation of its sovereignty.

Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan have remained frosty since the overthrow of the Taliban regime. The roots of this disaffection lie in the fact that the Karzai administration is largely drawn from the Northern Alliance that has been at war with the Taliban, while Pakistan was a supporter of the Taliban up to 2001. Another source of contention is the disputed border between the two nations. When Pakistan announced a plan in 2007 to set up a border fence for preventing cross-border terrorist attacks by the Taliban, Kabul denounced the project as an attempt to tangibly fix the border in a manner advantageous to Pakistan's interests. Such discord as this has prevented the collaborative border control needed to fight effectively against terrorism, and set the stage for deadly border skirmishes between the Afghan and Pakistani militaries in June 2008. Meanwhile, Pakistani relations with India also remain a murky question. Tensions between both sides flared following the 2001 terrorist attack on the Indian parliament, but relations

started to gradually improve in 2004. However, during the series of terrorist attacks in Mumbai in November 2008, the two countries became embroiled in verbal battle over India's accusations that the attackers were Pakistanis. Although Pakistan eventually admitted that the only attacker arrested was a Pakistani, the incident is likely to continue casting a shadow of Pakistan-India relations for some time.

that those strategies incorporate not only security enhancement through capacity building for the domestic military and police forces, but also a broad nation-building program for improving the economy and social infrastructure through expanded support from the international community, particularly the UN. In order to fully stabilize Afghanistan, the United States should consider engaging the Taliban in dialogue, and promote greater cooperation with Pakistan while working to strengthen Afghanistan's security, government, economy, and social infrastructure.

(2) New Directions in Defense Strategy—The NDS and *National Security and Nuclear Weapons in the 21st Century*

In July 2008, the Bush administration released the *National Defense Strategy* (NDS) as an outline of the means by which the Department of Defense would achieve the objectives of the National Security Strategy announced in 2006, based on the basic policies set forth in that security strategy and taking into account the lessons learned from US operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Notably, the NDS emphasizes the need to confront violent extremism through not only military force, but also economic and diplomatic means, with the cooperation of US allies and partners. It also states that US security is “tightly bound up with the security of the broader international system,” and that helping fragile states to build up their governing capacity represents a strategy for strengthening US defense.

The NDS also highlights the importance of preparing for irregular warfare in addition to conventional warfare. However, Secretary of Defense Gates has conceded that the United States must budget for procurement of major conventional weapons, and that the 2009 defense budget is heavily slanted toward conventional and strategic weapons. Consequently, the Obama administration has been given the task of shifting the US military's focus toward irregular warfare and launching full-scale efforts to prepare for major conflicts. Although the NDS was released near the end of the Bush administration's tenure, Gates believes that it remains a blueprint to success for the new administration.

In September 2008, the Department of Energy and the Department of Defense issued *National Security and Nuclear Weapons in the 21st Century*, a report that reaffirmed the significance of US possession of nuclear weapons in the context of the emerging security environment. Much of the report's discussion was based on the Bush administration's Nuclear Posture Review in 2001, which redefined the role of nuclear weapons under a new concept, the "New Triad." Although the paper notes that the United States greatly downsized its nuclear arsenal as the role of nuclear weapons became less prominent in the post-Cold War era, it also asserts that nuclear forces continue to serve three vital roles that cannot be implemented using other means: (a) deterring acts of aggression involving nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction (WMD); (b) helping to deter major conventional attacks; and (c) supporting deterrence by holding at risk key targets that cannot be threatened effectively by non-nuclear weapons. In addition, it says that the US nuclear arsenal has been a key element of US alliances in deterring armed attacks against NATO members, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and other allies.

With regard to the emerging security environment, the report points out the existence of threats that necessitate the continued maintenance of US nuclear forces, namely: (a) "states of concern" that possess or seek to possess WMD, such as North Korea and Iran; (b) violent extremists and non-state actors that could potentially employ WMD, and countries that support such groups; and (c) Russia and China, which put much weight on their nuclear capabilities and hence have been modernizing those capabilities. Because of these threats, the paper argues, US nuclear forces continue to hold relevance in the 21st century.

Nevertheless, a variety of obstacles impede the maintenance of the US nuclear arsenal in the years ahead. One problem is that the current nuclear warheads were produced no more recently than the late 1980s, and hence are nearing the end of their design life. The United States has been implementing a program to extend the reliable lifetime of existing warheads, but the Departments of Defense and Energy are now proposing that those warheads be supplanted with Reliable Replacement Warheads (RRW), a radical new design that responds to modern nuclear force needs with low-maintenance, long-serving warhead systems. The aforesaid report asserts the need to carry out the RRW program, but progress has been stalled due to lack of authorization from Congress. Another challenge to preservation of nuclear forces is that enormous budget outlays will be required in 20 years to renovate the means of nuclear warhead delivery—intercontinental

ballistic missiles (ICBMs), strategic nuclear submarines, and strategic bombers.

At the same time, the United States faces the urgent task of strengthening its command and control of nuclear forces, while also improving safety management. The necessity of this undertaking has been underscored by two serious oversights in recent years; in November 2006, Minuteman III ICBM parts were mistakenly shipped to Taiwan, and in August 2007, several nuclear warheads in the US Air Force's inventory were erroneously transported from one air base to another. In response, Secretary of Defense Gates ordered the Air Force to review its chain of command and management system for nuclear weapons handling, and formed a task force under former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger to study methods for improving the Air Force's nuclear weapons management system.

According to the task force's first report, which was issued in September 2008, the lapses in nuclear safety were tied to a decline in the relative importance of nuclear weapons. In the post-Cold War period, the conduct of warfare has shifted to reliance on precision guided munitions, and the main mission of strategic bombers has evolved into delivery of conventional munitions. Along with these changes, the Air Force has drastically reduced manpower for its strategic nuclear forces—a trend that has become increasingly salient with the prolongation of US military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. In turn, this deprioritization of the strategic nuclear mission has eroded morale among the units charged with carrying out that duty. To rectify the situation, the report recommends that the Air Force's nuclear weapons management system be strengthened through realignment of internal organizations, reform of educational systems, and overhaul of nuclear weapons training programs.

The United States sees its possession of nuclear weapons as a vital element of its efforts to deter WMD attacks and provide extended deterrence to allies. While the United States hopes that the deterrent effect of its nuclear forces will preclude their actual usage, it must possess reliably operable nuclear weapons in the event that they must be employed. Accordingly, the US military must reassign personnel and resources—already strained by operations in Iraq and Afghanistan—to the task of ensuring nuclear weapon reliability. This means that Washington now has an even greater need to reduce the nuclear dependence of its security strategy while efficiently improving the reliability of US nuclear forces.

(3) Missile Defense and US-Russia Relations

Since its earliest days, the Bush administration was alert to the rising threat of ballistic missile proliferation, and actively endeavored to develop a defense system for protecting the United States and its allies from ballistic missile attacks. In particular, the administration was wary of ballistic missile development, including the steady extension of missile range, by North Korea, Iran, and other nations hostile toward the United States. To counter this threat, Washington promoted the creation of a multi-layered ballistic missile defense (BMD) system that could respond to each phase of ballistic missile flight—boost, midcourse, and terminal.

Boost-phase defense seeks to neutralize ballistic missiles during powered flight immediately after launch by destroying them with an Airborne Laser (ABL) system. The Missile Defense Agency (MDA), the bureau responsible for BMD development, is currently performing ground-based tests of a chemical laser and aerial tests of a tracking laser. In September 2008, the MDA conducted a brief but successful firing test using an ABL, and followed this up with further ground-based experiments. Tests involving actual target missile launches are scheduled for 2009. Moreover, the MDA is developing Kinetic Energy Interceptors (KEIs) for attacking ballistic missiles as they transition to the midcourse phase. The interceptors are being designed for three types of deployment—land-mobile, sea-mobile, and land-fixed—to ensure that they can be stationed near potential threats. It is estimated that each type will require eight to ten years of development before actual deployment.

The second element of the BMD system, midcourse-phase defense, is aimed at destroying ballistic missiles during unpowered space flight using surface-launched interceptor missiles. The MDA is now developing a ground-based midcourse defense (GMD) system. Interceptor missiles have been emplaced in Alaska and California, and a total of 44 are slated to be deployed by 2013. The sea-based missile defense system Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) is already operationally deployed by the US Navy on 3 Aegis cruisers and 15 Aegis destroyers as of the start of 2009.

The third BMD component, terminal-phase defense, is for intercepting ballistic missiles during atmospheric descent to their targets. The PATRIOT Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) system is already in production for use in this component and has a proven track record, as it is the only antimissile system to have been used in actual combat. It is designed to counter short- and medium-range missiles.

The MDA is also developing the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense System (THAAD), a system for interception inside and just outside the atmosphere. Scheduled to go into operation in 2009, this system can, like PAC-3, be transported by truck, and can be air-lifted for rapid deployment around the world.

The Bush administration gave high priority to development of these BMD systems in its defense spending. Specifically, BMD development has received annual funding ranging between \$8 billion and \$10 billion, making it the Pentagon's largest research and development program. According to the Government Accountability Office, the Department of Defense has invested a total of \$100 billion in BMD research and development since the 1980s, and estimates it will need to spend a further \$50 billion on the program over the next five years. However, since the program has been saddled with cost overruns and must deal with countless technical issues, many critics have expressed doubts about the Department of Defense's ability to complete it on schedule.

Following the conclusion of major combat operations in the Iraq War, Iran increasingly attracted international scrutiny for its nuclear development program and for revelations about the advances achieved in its ballistic missile development program. The United States reacted to Iran's movements by placing the regime alongside North Korea as ballistic missile threat requiring a high-priority response in defense preparations for not only US territory, but also US military installations and allies in the Middle East and Europe. To this end, Washington has indicated its intention to deploy an antimissile radar station in the Czech Republic and 10 interceptor missiles in Poland by 2012. According to a Pentagon spokesman, the two countries were selected because they were the technically optimum deployment locations for defense against Iranian missiles launched at the United States or Europe, and because of their distance from Iran—the United States does not yet have an operable boost-phase defense system for close engagement, and deployment in locations further away from Iran would leave more countries vulnerable to Iranian missile attacks.

Washington has asserted that the interceptor missiles planned for deployment in Poland lack the capability to shoot down ICBMs launched at the United States from Russia because of their shortened range—they lack the third booster stage used in land-based interceptor missiles stationed in the United States. Nevertheless, Moscow has sharpened its opposition to US deployment of BMD systems in Europe, prompting the United States to seek greater dialogue with Russia in order

to assuage the latter's concerns. For example, the Pentagon has indicated its willingness to increase the transparency of its BMD system, and to delay activation of the system until the emergence of a tangible Iranian missile threat.

During his tenure as a US Senator, President Obama expressed the need to further test the technical feasibility of the strategic missile defense system and called for stronger emphasis on development of systems for intercepting short- and medium-range missiles. Also, as president-elect, he showed some consideration for Russian concerns when he told Polish President Lech Kaczynski in a telephone conversation that he would not commit to BMD system deployment in Poland until after the technology had been fully proven. As such, the new administration is expected to comprehensively review the BMD program that had been vigorously pursued under President Bush's leadership, and will likely contemplate implementing budget cuts and other changes.

(4) US Military Transformation under the Bush Administration

Throughout its eight years in power, the Bush administration implemented a program to transform the US military by upgrading the massive arsenal it built up near the end of the Cold War and by modernizing its forces through aggressive adoption of information technology. However, the outlook for further modernization efforts is not necessarily positive. It will be difficult to maintain the current high level of defense spending in coming years due to the US economy's decline and budget pressure from the impending rise in social security costs. Moreover, inter-service competition for funding is expected to intensify since all branches will likely draw up colossal procurement plans for upgrading the aging weapon platforms they amassed in the Cold War period and for acquiring new equipment, such as tanker aircraft and next-generation long-range strike systems.

As is clearly seen in the ongoing efforts to maintain security in Iraq, the costs of executing the Global War on Terrorism threaten to shrink the US military's funding for weapons procurement. Furthermore, the US military's long-term troop deployments to Iraq are straining its manpower as well. During his term as defense secretary, Donald Rumsfeld included troop reductions as part of his drive to transform the armed forces, and reallocated the funds saved to modernization programs. However, the delayed recovery of public order in Iraq has protracted the US military's involvement there, forcing the Pentagon to continue filling the shortage of active-duty personnel by calling up National

Guard and Reserve members.

In response to this situation, the Army and the Marines have started to boost their recruitment. In January 2007, Secretary of Defense Gates announced that 74,200 personnel would be added to the Army's active and reserve forces by fiscal 2013. When campaigning for the 2008 US presidential election, candidates Obama and John McCain both pledged to augment the Army's manpower. In April 2007, Obama voiced his support for plans to enlarge the Army by 65,000 troops and the Marines by 27,000 troops, and it appears that he will not significantly diverge from this course during his presidency.

However, if President Obama carries out troop increases as was envisioned by the Bush administration, the US military's payroll is expected to inflate by nearly \$100 billion over the next five years, and hence will put additional pressure on the defense budget. The push to expand the armed forces poses other challenging issues as well, such as the concern that focusing on increased recruitment alone could lead to a decline in personnel quality, given that the long troop deployments to Iraq have led to a drop in the number of people applying for military service. The six years of military transformation under Rumsfeld were premised on downsizing, yet the lessons of Iraq convinced the Bush administration to shift toward expansion of the Army, revealing that the direction of the transformation effort was not necessarily in tune with today's strategic requirements. Nevertheless, the Department of Defense is continuing to pursue the Future Combat Systems project and other large-scale programs promoted during the Rumsfeld years, making it even more difficult to strike a balance with the spending increases that will result from greater personnel increases.

The lengthy deployment of troops to Iraq is also having a considerable impact on the US military in Asia. The Pentagon has been realigning its armed forces in East Asia as part of its effort to restructure the military's global presence in line with changes in the strategic environment. This realignment has included US Forces in Korea (USFK), which have been under a largely static deployment. Portions of the core combat element, the 2nd Infantry Division, were reorganized into highly mobile Stryker Brigade Combat Teams, which can be rapidly deployed to other regions when needed. One of the teams, the 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, was sent from South Korea to Iraq in August 2004, and returned to the United States in the following July.

Further realignments are likely to be made in East Asia, and will probably be

steered in part by developments in the Middle East. However, the US military presence in East Asia is seen as a stabilizing force in that region, as was made clear at the April 2008 US-ROK Summit, where both sides agreed to indefinitely maintain the USFK at its current size of 28,500 personnel. The Pentagon is currently studying the possibility of extending the USFK rotation rate to three years from its current two-year cycle, with the aim of maintaining a more stable presence in South Korea. This indicates that the United States is planning its military realignments in Asia so as not to upset the region's security environment, and thus is unlikely to implement massive troop drawdowns there for the foreseeable future.

2. US Policy toward the Asia-Pacific Region

(1) Relations with Major East Asian Countries

Over the decades since World War II, the United States has branded itself as a “Pacific power,” and has played a vital role in the stability and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region by maintaining the presence of forward deployed forces based on bilateral alliances and partnerships with countries in the region. In recent years, the growth of nontraditional threats—terrorism, WMD proliferation, and natural disasters—the emergence of rising powers such as China and India, as well as other changes in the geopolitical landscape in the region prompted the Bush administration to strengthen strategic ties with major Asian countries and to build up the capabilities of allies and partners at multiple levels in order to facilitate responses to new situations and diverse threats.

During the past several years, US security relations with Japan have taken large strides forward, owing to progress in Japan-US Security Consultative Committee (2+2 Meeting) talks on US military realignment, and in expansion of the Japan Self-Defense Forces' (SDF) involvement in international peace cooperation. The Japan-US security partnership has evolved into a more effective system for contributing to regional and global security manifested in a series of policy documents, including the establishment of Common Strategic Objectives in February 2005, the release of a joint statement on the roles, missions, and capabilities of the SDF and the US armed forces in the following October, the May 2006 announcement of the “United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation” concerning restructuring of US Forces in Japan (USFJ), and the

issuing of the joint statement “Alliance Transformation: Advancing United States-Japan Security and Defense Cooperation” in May 2007. Washington has lauded the SDF’s humanitarian assistance activities in Iraq and replenishment support operations for coalition ships in the Indian Ocean as symbols of the Japan-US alliance’s transformation. Progress has also been seen in BMD cooperation, as noted in the May 2007 “Alliance Transformation,” which confirmed the operational deployment of a US X-Band radar system at the Japan Air SDF’s Shariki Base, the operational deployment of a US PAC-3 battalion at the US Air Force’s Kadena Air Base in Japan, and Japan’s decision to expedite deployment of PAC-3 units. Both sides are continuing to work closely together to accelerate the enhancement of the BMD system’s capabilities, with the goal of maintaining and strengthening the deterrent effect of their alliance. The US military’s presence and deterrence were further bolstered in September 2009, when the US Navy deployed to Yokosuka Naval Base the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS *George Washington*, which features capabilities superior to those of conventional aircraft carriers. In contrast with these advances in the Japan-US security partnership, however, recent media reports indicate that both countries are starting to diverge somewhat in their opinions on how to approach the North Korean nuclear issue and in their perceptions of the North Korean threat.

The United States is also seeking to strengthen its ties with China across many arenas, including political, economic, and military affairs. The underlying goal of this endeavor is to bring the rapidly growing economy into the international community as a “responsible stakeholder” that can play constructive roles. In recent years, both nations have increasingly engaged in bilateral exchange and dialogue, including talks on non-proliferation, human rights, and other focus issues. The bilateral dialogue has taken place at many tiers, such as summits, the US-China Senior Dialogue between the US deputy secretary of state, the Chinese executive vice foreign minister, and other high-ranking officials, the US-China Strategic Economic Dialogue between the senior finance

officials, as well as working-level talks between the foreign ministries. At the same time, however, Washington is employing a hedging strategy of preparing for the possibility of Chinese hostilities against the United States and its allies, with the aim of striking a balance with increases in Chinese military strength and maintaining the US armed forces' predominance in the Asia-Pacific region. The Pentagon, in its March 3, 2008, *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China*, outlined a litany of concerns about the Chinese armed forces, including: (a) the growth of Chinese military capabilities is changing East Asian military balances, and it is highly unclear how those capabilities will be exercised in the future; (b) improvements in the Chinese military's access/area denial capabilities (the capacities for blocking a hostile force's entry into and movement within a combat zone) are expanding beyond the land, air, and sea dimensions of the traditional battlefield to encompass space and cyber-space as well; and (c) the lack of transparency in China's military and security affairs is increasing the potential for misunderstanding and miscalculation.

While such concerns have been voiced, the United States and China nevertheless achieved firm advances in their security relations during 2008. On March 29, the defense departments of both sides signed an agreement to set up a hotline between their establishments, and also signed, based on 17 years of negotiations, a memorandum that included a pledge by China to provide the United States with information concerning US troops who went missing in action during the Korean War. The first half of the year was marked by a series of high-level defense discussions between both nations, namely, a session of the US-China Defense Policy Coordination Talks in Shanghai in February, the first-ever US-China talks on nuclear strategy and policy in April, and a meeting of the US-China Security Dialogue in Beijing in June. Among the agreements reached through such dialogue, the two sides decided to hold meetings between the drafters of the Pentagon's annual report on Chinese military power and the drafters of China's biennial white paper on defense.

Although some forward momentum was achieved in security dialogue, issues concerning Taiwan still remain the biggest destabilizing factor in US-China relations. On October 3, 2008, the Bush administration informed Congress that it planned to sell \$6.5 billion in arms to Taiwan. Beijing reacted by announcing that it would cancel or postpone all US-China military exchange activities scheduled up to the end of November, including visits by senior officials and cooperation in

humanitarian and disaster relief. The arms package included 330 PAC-3 missiles, 30 AH-64D Apache Longbow attack helicopters, and 32 Harpoon submarine-launched missiles, but did not fill Taiwan's request for submarines and upgraded F-16 fighters.

In addition to security issues, various other factors are having a destabilizing effect on US-China relations, such as unresolved issues surrounding trade imbalances, the renminbi, Tibet, religious freedom, energy, and the environment. Moreover, the United States is wary of the movements of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which was formed for cooperation between China, Russia, and Central Asian nations.

US relations with South Korea have also been undergoing a major transformation in recent years. In April 2008, President Bush met with President Lee Myung-bak at Camp David, marking the first such visit by a ROK president. During talks on the 19th, the two leaders reaffirmed their intentions to develop a new strategic alliance that maintains and strengthens the USFK while adapting to 21st century needs, work on solutions to the North Korean nuclear issue, and acquire approval of the ROK-US Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA). Both presidents met again on August 6 for a bilateral summit in Seoul, where they released a joint statement declaring that they: (a) pledged to develop the US-ROK alliance into a strategic and future-oriented structure attuned to the 21st century security environment, and broaden and deepen the alliance to involve not only security cooperation, but also political, economic, social, and cultural cooperation; (b) avowed to strengthen their strategic cooperation for resolving the North Korean nuclear issue quickly and creating a new peace structure on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia; (c) agreed that a rigorous verification regime was needed to check the DPRK's nuclear program declarations, and that they would urge Pyongyang to completely abandon all its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs, and to achieve significant progress in improving its human rights situation; and (d) promised to work with their respective legislatures to receive approval of the KORUS FTA as soon as possible.

Since the signing of the Korean War armistice, the United States has played a critical role in deterring North Korean military attacks by stationing a large contingent of US military personnel (mainly Army units) in South Korea under the US-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty. The two allies are now preparing to transfer wartime operational control of the US-ROK Combined Forces to the ROK, and

are working out issues concerning USFK realignment and cost sharing. These steps are being taken in response to recent changes in South Korea's security environment, the growth of South Korean democracy and national power, and the global transformation and restructuring of the US armed forces. At a meeting in February 23, 2007, the top defense officials of both sides agreed to transfer wartime operational control for all Korean Peninsula contingencies to South Korea on April 17, 2012 and thereby dissolve the current US-ROK Combined Forces Command. After the handover, the two militaries will have independent command structures, but the ROK armed forces will have responsibility for leading operations, while the USFK will serve in a supporting capacity.

In connection with the USFK realignment, both countries worked toward the fulfillment of an agreement made in 2003 for relocating the Yongsan Garrison from central Seoul to the Pyongtaek area south of the capital, and for redeploying installations north of the Han River to locations south of the river. However, due to land acquisition delays and other snags, the transfer to the Pyongtaek area could not be completed by the end of 2008 as scheduled. According to a media report in January 2009, both sides have agreed to roll the relocation deadline back to 2014. During a November 14, 2008 speech at the Korea Institute for Defense Analyses, Gen. Walter L. Sharp, commander of the US-ROK Combined Forces Command and the USFK, stated that the US military in Korea would continue to migrate from ground-centric capabilities to air- and naval-centric capabilities, but emphasized that the presence of US air and naval forces in the region would preserve the US-ROK alliance's strategic flexibility and powerful readiness.

At the Bush administration's suggestion, the US-Japan-ROK working-level talks were restarted in Washington in November 2008, ending a six-year hiatus that followed the May 2002 meeting. Senior defense officials from the three nations discussed pending issues in regional security, pledged to pursue cooperation in such operations as disaster relief and international peace-keeping, and agreed to continue the talks in the future.

As part of the US-led War on Terrorism, South Korea had deployed medical and engineering units to Afghanistan, but ended their mission and withdrew them in December 2007. Subsequently, Seoul sent around 20 civilians to Afghanistan to serve in medical-related PRT activities, such as the establishment of new hospitals. According to media reports, the United States is counting on South Korea to provide a total of 200 to 300 PRT personnel. The roughly 650-strong

ROK military force deployed to Iraq completed its tour of duty at the end of 2008 and was recalled to South Korea.

(2) The US Response to the North Korean Nuclear Issue

The United States sees the North Korean nuclear issue as not only seriously impinging on the security of such allies as Japan and the ROK, but also representing a critical problem in terms of WMD proliferation. Of particular concern to Washington is the potential for the DPRK's transfer of nuclear weapons and materials to other countries and non-state actors, and the risk that growth of North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile threat could incite neighboring countries to arm themselves with nuclear weapons. In 2003, the Bush administration began working to promote the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of DPRK nuclear programs by maximizing the diplomatic opportunities presented by the Six-party Talks on the North Korean nuclear issue. The United States has looked to China to play constructive role as the chair of those talks, and hopes that the talks will ultimately evolve into a mechanism for peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

The Six-party Talks process ground to a halt following North Korea's failure to disable all its nuclear facilities and submit a complete declaration on its nuclear programs by the end of 2007, as it had promised to do at the October 2007 meeting of those talks. Seeking to revive the process in 2008, the Bush administration sent Sung Kim, director of the Department of State's Office of Korean Affairs, to Pyongyang to strongly urge the regime to fulfill its obligations, while sweetening the request with hints that the United States was prepared to remove the DPRK from its list of state sponsors of terrorism and lift sanctions imposed under the Trading with the Enemy Act (TWEA). This was followed by further US-DPRK discussions for coordinating the resumption of the Six-party Talks. On June 18, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice delivered a speech in Washington in which she indicated that North Korea would soon submit its nuclear program declaration to China as the Six-party Talks chair. President Bush subsequently announced that he would take the DPRK off the state sponsors of terrorism list and rescind the TWEA sanctions.

Pyongyang soon thereafter made its declaration to China, and on June 26 the Bush administration, in keeping with the Six-party Talks principle of "action for action," formally decided to delist North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism and

end the TWEA sanctions. On July 10–12, a Heads of Delegation Meeting for the Sixth Round of the Six-party Talks was convened in Beijing to hammer out an agreement on, among other things, a verification mechanism for North Korea's denuclearization. At the closing of the session, the participants announced in a press communique that they had: (a) agreed to establish a verification mechanism consisting of experts who would visit facilities, review documents, conduct interviews with technical personnel, implement other measures, and, when necessary, welcome the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to provide consultancy and assistance; (b) agreed to set up a monitoring mechanism consisting of the heads of delegation; and (c) formulated a timetable for disablement of the nuclear facilities at Yongbyon and for provision of economic and energy assistance to the DPRK. Subsequently, however, US-DPRK negotiations became bogged down over the verification protocol and mechanism. This stalemate was not resolved by the end of the 45-day waiting period that President Bush had set before actually removing North Korea from the state sponsors of terrorism list, so the Bush administration decided to hold off on the planned August delisting. Upset at the decision, the DPRK announced in the same month that it was suspending the disablement process at Yongbyon, and began work to reopen its nuclear facilities.

Gripped with a growing sense of crisis over the DPRK's actions at Yongbyon, the Bush administration finally rescinded its designation of North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism on October 11. This decision was motivated not so much by consideration for the abduction issue between Japan and the North Korea as it was by the need to put higher priority on preserving the Six-party Talks framework. Despite the delisting, however, Pyongyang will for some time have difficulty in acquiring loans and investments from the Asian Development Bank and other international financial institutions. Furthermore, the regime remains subject to numerous sanctions, including measures imposed by a UNSC resolution against its nuclear testing, and sanctions pertaining to its nuclear proliferation activities and human rights violations. On September 22, the US Senate passed a bill to amend the North Korean Human Rights Act, which includes provisions for protecting North Korean refugees in China and elsewhere. As part of the revisions, the office of Special Envoy on Human Rights in North Korea established by the original act was elevated to the rank of ambassador, and the envoy's obligation to submit annual reports on activities for advancing human rights in North Korea

was extended to the year 2012.

In a document issued on October 11, the Department of State listed several items of agreement reached by the United States and North Korea regarding verification of the latter's nuclear programs. These items included: (a) allowing experts from all six parties to participate in verification activities; (b) giving the IAEA an important supporting role in verification; (c) providing experts with access to all declared facilities and, based on mutual consent, to undeclared sites; (d) using sampling and other scientific procedures; and (e) applying all verification protocol measures to the plutonium-based program and any uranium enrichment and proliferation activities. The third item, which limits access to undeclared sites to only cases where mutual consent is given, raises doubts about the effectiveness of verification activities under the agreement, since it enables North Korea to block inspection of undeclared sites, including facilities away from Yongbyon—such as nuclear weapons depots and nuclear testing sites—and facilities using highly enriched uranium.

North Korea later restarted the disablement process, but once again took on a defiant posture when arguments arose with the United States over the methods for sampling and other verification activities. Although the Six-party Talks resumed on December 8, they ended without making headway, as the DPRK refused to put the verification protocol into writing. As of the end of 2008, the Second Phase Actions of the denuclearization process, which center around disablement of the Yongbyon nuclear facilities and the provision of economic and energy assistance to North Korea, were still unfinished. Many other issues also need to be tackled, such as North Korea's abandonment of existing nuclear weapons and related materials, inspection of undisclosed nuclear facilities, verification of nuclear development programs involving highly enriched uranium, movement of spent fuel rods out of North Korea, and verification against the transfer of nuclear materials to Syria and elsewhere. Consequently, the outlook remains murky for denuclearization of the DPRK.

The Bush administration left office without realizing a denuclearized Korean Peninsula, so it is now up to the new leadership to bring that goal to reality. It is likely that Pyongyang will continue to drag its feet on the verification process while demanding the promised "rewards" for disabling its nuclear facilities—a light-water reactor, plus energy and economic assistance until the reactor is brought online. In addition, the regime will probably attempt to prod the United

States into dropping its “hostile policies” toward the DRPK by pressing for talks on the creation of a peace structure on the peninsula and by continuing to call for the withdrawal of US armed forces from South Korea and Japan. For its part, the United States should endeavor to sustain the Six-party Talks process in order to bring about the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of DPRK nuclear programs. At the same time, however, the United States will also need to prepare for the potential emergence of contingencies within the DPRK’s borders and work to prevent the spread of nuclear and related materials from North Korea to the Middle East and terrorist organizations.

3. The Outlook for the Obama Administration’s Security Strategy and Foreign Policy

President Obama, who took office on January 20, 2009, will initially focus on stabilizing financial systems and repairing the US economy, while making Iraq and Afghanistan his primary security concerns as a wartime president. His administration is also expected to exercise diplomatic leadership across a broad spectrum of international challenges, including stabilization of Pakistan, the nuclear programs of Iran and North Korea, climate change, energy issues, and civil strife in Africa.

Obama chose to retain Gates as the defense secretary in order to maintain the continuity of defense policy and garner bipartisan support. His choices for other key cabinet positions included Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton as secretary of state, former Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Command Dennis C. Blair as director of national intelligence, and Federal Reserve Bank of New York President Timothy F. Geithner as secretary of the treasury. He also appointed Representative Rahm Emanuel as his White House chief of staff, former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO Forces in Europe James Jones as national security adviser, and former Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers as director of the National Economic Council. The Obama administration also includes Jeffrey Bader, former deputy assistant secretary of state under the Clinton administration, as director for Asian affairs in the National Security Council, former Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Michèle A. Flournoy as undersecretary of defense for policy, Kurt M. Campbell, a former deputy assistant secretary of defense who is well-versed in Japanese affairs, as assistant secretary of state for East Asia and the Pacific, retired Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Wallace C. Gregson, who previously served

in Okinawa, as assistant secretary of defense for Asia and the Pacific, and former assistant secretary of state for African affairs Susan Rice as US ambassador to the UN. As these examples suggest, the new administration is, on the whole, a solid team of individuals whose selections reflect emphasis on quality and experience.

While acknowledging that Obama's security strategy and foreign policy may not necessarily develop in strict conformance with his campaign promises and the Democratic Party's platform, the following discussion will examine the potential direction of his security strategy and foreign policy in the light of his public statements to date.

First, the Obama administration will likely divorce itself from the unilateralism that characterized the Bush administration's first term, and instead place great weight on close-knit coordination and cooperation with traditional allies, while expanding and strengthening partnerships with such emerging nations as India and Vietnam. In addition, it may seek out possibilities for solving international problems through not only via multilateral diplomacy, but also direct dialogue with Iran and other nations heretofore considered hostile states by the United States. By founding Washington's diplomatic efforts on multilateralism and dialogue, Obama can be expected to repair the damage done to the international prestige of the United States under the Bush administration.

Second, the question of whether Obama will succeed in fulfilling his campaign promise to withdraw US armed forces from Iraq within his first 16 months in office will partly hinge upon how the situation unfolds in Iraq, including with regard to the US-Iraq status of forces agreement that allows the US military to remain there until the end of 2011. His administration is already considering extending the troop withdrawal window to 23 months, but there are positive signs that progress will take place in the transfer of Iraq security responsibilities from the MNF-I to the ISF. Since he has designated Afghanistan as the main battleground in the War on Terrorism, he will likely work to stabilize that country

and eradicate al-Qaeda by deploying additional troops, bolstering collaboration with NATO members, other allies, and partners, and by taking a deeper interest in Pakistani affairs. In an article he wrote for *Foreign Affairs* in 2007, Obama expressed his stance on the Global War on Terrorism with these words: “To defeat al Qaeda, I will build a twenty-first-century military and twenty-first-century partnerships as strong as the anticommunist alliance that won the Cold War to stay on the offense everywhere from Djibouti to Kandahar.”

Third, the Obama administration will probably strengthen the US military in order to boost the effectiveness of efforts for stabilizing Afghanistan and Pakistan and for capacity building in weak states in Africa. With an eye on revitalizing the US armed forces, Obama has stated his intention to increase the manpower of the Army and Marines by, respectively, 65,000 and 27,000 on the conviction that the United States “must also be willing to consider using military force in circumstances beyond self-defense in order to provide for the common security that underpins global stability—to support friends, participate in stability and reconstruction operations, or confront mass atrocities.” He has also stressed the need for the United States to exercise global leadership based on the knowledge that impoverished societies and weak states can be hotbeds of disease, terrorism, and conflict. As part of the Democratic Party’s platform, Obama is advocating the creation of a Civilian Assistance Corps of volunteer doctors, engineers, and other specialists who would contribute to global stability and respond to emergencies around the world. Moreover, he has declared that the United States will use its total strength to deal with chronic problems in Africa, including poverty, hunger, conflict, and HIV/AIDS, and will “work with the United Nations and Africa’s regional organizations to prevent and resolve conflict and to build the capacity of Africa’s weak and failing states.” He indicated that this commitment will include making effective responses to humanitarian crises, such as the persisting genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan.

Over the years, the United States has consistently endeavored to protect and expand liberty and democracy throughout the international community. At times, however, the shape of this mission has not only destabilized US relations with Russia and China, but also provoked opposition from many other countries as well. This is especially true of the Bush administration’s style of foreign policy, which aimed to forcibly spread democratic values, and presidential candidate John McCain’s vision for strengthening ties between NATO members and other

democracies in Asia and elsewhere through the formation of a “League of Democracies.” While the spread of democratic values is indeed an important undertaking, it is to be hoped that the Obama administration will demonstrate strategic, global leadership based on dialogue and cooperation in order to assist the weak and failing states of Africa and Asia, and steer them toward the development of robust governance.

In addition to dealing with the US-spawned global financial turmoil, domestic economic troubles, and the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Obama administration is challenged to construct a comprehensive, long-term security strategy that takes into account the structural changes occurring in the international community. In November 2008, the National Intelligence Council issued a report detailing its scenarios for global trends up to 2025. The document forecasted that the world would become increasingly multipolarized from the rise of China and India, and that the United States would relatively wane in power, yet would remain a dominant force alongside China and India. It also painted the next 20 years as a period of transition to a new international system, and declared that international leadership and cooperation would be needed to deal with an expected surge in globally destabilizing trends, such as intensified competition for resources and food, higher likelihood of WMD terrorism, and greater security risks with regard to nuclear proliferation in the Middle East and other unstable regions. With such prospects in mind, the Obama administration will likely strive to build a solid security system for the multipolarizing world by strengthening the mechanisms for international cooperation and by deepening strategic dialogue with US allies and partners, as well as with rising heavyweights like China and India.

The overall tone of Obama’s Asia strategy is unlikely to radically diverge from that of the preceding administration, particularly with regard to the following three tasks. First, the United States will maintain its military presence in Asia centered around the alliance with Japan and other traditional bilateral alliances, while also expanding strategic partnerships with countries like India. Second, the United States will try to broadly engage China as a responsible stakeholder in cooperative efforts toward such goals as prevention of nuclear proliferation and resolution of environmental problems, while maintaining a hedging strategy to be ready for unforeseeable developments in the future. Third, the United States will sustain the Six-party Talks framework to advance the denuclearization of North Korea, and will seek to develop the Six-party Talks into a multilateral system for

peace and security in Northeast Asia.

There are four elements of the Obama administration's Asian policies that merit close attention over the months ahead. The first is the question of how the administration will prioritize Asian security issues within its long list of diverse challenges needing resolution. The Bush administration was criticized for neglecting Asia due to its burdensome involvement in Iraq and the War on Terrorism. As exemplified by the rise of China and India, a significant geopolitical power shift is occurring in Asia, so the Obama administration is bound to be strongly committed to its Asian policy. The second is the direction of the Obama administration's policy toward China. Given the rapid growth of China's armed forces and politico-economic influence over the region, it is desirable that the United States seek to maintain a balance against that growth, while also constructing a system for broad cooperation with China. The third is the administration's policy regarding North Korea. In October 2008, then Senator Obama, speaking on the US-DPRK agreement on denuclearization verification measures, described President Bush's removal of the DPRK from the state sponsors of terrorism list as "an appropriate response, as long as there is a clear understanding that if North Korea fails to follow through there will be immediate consequences." In the same month, he also voiced his opinion that the United States should respond severely if the DPRK did not firmly comply with its verification obligations, and should include among its options military responses and bilateral dialogue with Pyongyang. As president, Obama will likely pursue a comprehensive North Korea policy that covers such concerns as the mired Six-party Talks process, the potential growth of the DPRK's nuclear and missile capabilities, and the post-Kim Jong Il future. In the course of implementing this policy, it will likely become even more important for the United States to engage in trilateral cooperation with Japan and South Korea, and to solicit stronger involvement by Beijing. The fourth item of interest is Obama's policy for Japan. It is expected that the Obama administration, recognizing the importance of the Japan-US alliance founded on shared values and interests, will continue to make that alliance a cornerstone of its Asian policies, and accordingly will work to deepen and broaden the Japan-US alliance. As part of this expansion, the United States will, in all probability, look to Japan to play an active role in the resolution of global security challenges, including the War on Terrorism, climate change, prevention of WMD proliferation, and support for weak states in Africa.