



Taking Steps Toward a Responsibility to Protect

#### Cover.

Risky Mission. In Darfur, young girls are often exposed to violence while trying to collect firewood when they leave camp. (Photo by Ron Haviv / VII)

# Global responses to escalating civil conflicts are needed, and they'll have implications for US policy

The 1990s were supposed to bring a great "peace dividend" after the end of the Cold War. In a world no longer divided by bipolar ideological conflict, then-UN Secretary-General Boutros-Boutros Ghali oversaw the greatest expansion of UN peacekeeping missions ever to conflict-torn areas.

However, this hope for greater world peace was soon dashed on the rocks of war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Rwanda, Darfur, and the Congo. Rather than an expansion of global peace and security, the first post-Cold War decade saw further expansion of mass civil conflict both within and beyond state borders, especially in Africa but also in the troubled case of East Timor in Southeast Asia and the Balkans in Southeastern Europe.

Amidst this seemingly endless strife, global peacekeepers and troops from major powers alike soon found themselves in untenable situations of neither peace nor all-out interstate warfare, without the proper doctrine,

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tools, or training to keep the conflicts from escalating into mass human atrocities. It was not only the legitimacy of peacekeeping that was threatened. Traditional forms of refugee protection often proved to be a bandaid at best, as even UN refugee camps were soon used and abused by unscrupulous militias, paramilitaries, and other state and nonstate disputants to gather UN supplies for their own benefit and leverage the refugees' desperate plights to their own violent ends.

#### The Responsibility to Protect Is Born

In response, in 1998 and 1999, then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan delivered several path-clearing speeches that posed the stark choice between standing by when mass atrocities were unfolding or intervening militarily even if Security Council authorization was blocked. Despite sharp controversy among UN member states over such "humanitarian interventions," the Constitutive Act of the African Union asserted one year after Annan's speeches "the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State...in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity."

Meanwhile, partly in response to the Security Council's split over how to address the crisis in Kosovo, the Canadian government decided to launch an independent International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty in 2000. Over the course of their deliberations, the geographically diverse commissioners came to see protection from a much broader perspective than as simply a contest between state sovereignty and individual rights. Coining the phrase "responsibility to protect," their conclusions addressed the responsibility of the state experiencing conflict to protect its own citizens from abuses, as well as the responsibility of neighboring countries and the global community at large to prevent mass atrocities, to react when mass atrocities started to occur, and to cooperatively rebuild war-torn nations.

Some of the commission's key recommendations were then incorporated by Kofi Annan's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (2004) and his subsequent *In Larger Freedom* report (2005). Soon thereafter, the 2005 UN Millennium World Summit unanimously affirmed the primary and continuing legal obligations of states to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, and from their incitement.

#### Moving From Words to Deeds

"Actualizing the Responsibility to Protect" was the topic of the Stanley Foundation's 43rd conference of the United Nations of the Next Decade. It is also the subject of a recent article by Edward C. Luck, senior vice president and director of studies at the International Peace Institute and special adviser to the UN secretary-

general, in which he primarily focuses on the responsibility to protect.

It has been Kofi's successor, Secretary-General Ban Kimoon, who has spoken repeatedly of his determination to "operationalize" the responsibility to protect and to translate it "from words to deeds." And this brings in the absolutely crucial question of the US role in preventing mass atrocities, mitigating them when they occur, and rebuilding conflict-torn nations after conflict subsides.

Core questions for the future of US foreign policy and US national security doctrine include:

- Does the United States view as central to its policies the security threats posed by fragile, weak, failing, and failed states in sensitive regions of the globe, including states weakened by such problems as drug trade, terrorism, human trafficking, money laundering, and other various forms of illicit behavior?
- Does the United States believe that the Genocide Convention should be enacted, which in practical terms would include prosecuting perpetrators of this crime at the International Criminal Court?
- Does the United States ever want to get to the point of having the US military intervene in such conflicts to prevent or stop mass violence?
- Does the United States want better civilian capacities to deal with these conflicts in terms of diplomatic prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction?
- Does the United States care to improve its relationship with the United Nations, both in terms of supporting individual UN agencies on the ground in "countries at risk" and in terms of supporting the Secretariat in New York in pressing forward on this agenda?

One thing is certain: whether or not the United States truly embraces this evolving legal and normative framework, the globe will be plagued for an indefinite period by the specter of weak and failing states.

Nontraditional conflicts in these areas are likely to involve mass and illicit violence against unarmed civilians. In this circumstance, the responsibility to protect has a chance of providing the international community, including the United States, with the conceptual platform for concerted action.

-Michael Kraig

Director of Policy Analysis and Dialogue, The Stanley Foundation

#### Resource

Find The United Nations and the Responsibility to Protect and Actualizing the Responsibility to Protect at www.stanleyfoundation.org or order it on page 11.



# America Can Thrive in a Changing Global Order

The United States has an opportunity to forge enduring partnerships with rising powers to solve pressing global problems



wo recent events—the Beijing Olympics and the Russian invasion of Georgia—served to bookmark a new global reality: the primacy in world affairs that the United States has enjoyed since the end of the Cold War is diminishing.

China, India, Russia, the European Union, and Japan, among others, have been gaining strength relative to the United States. According to some analysts, these changes in the global distribution of power mark the biggest power shift in global affairs since the rise of the United States, Germany, and Japan in the 19th century—a change in global equilibrium that helped contribute to the two world wars that dominated the first half of the 20th century.

To better understand the dynamics at play and generate ideas for how the United States can continue to prosper in an age of multiple major powers, the Stanley Foundation convened a Task Force on Major Powers that began work in the fall of 2006, and which recently published its final report.

The task force, comprised of leading academic analysts and former government officials, addressed how shifting patterns of power—including the diffusion of destructive power to nonstate actors—affects US interests. It also looked at the implications of multipolarity for global security and how multilateral approaches to global problem solving can provide solutions for the challenges of the new global order.

#### Military Primacy Alone Won't Work

Although the task force proceedings were, at one level, abstract and academic, 500 years of history tell us that when dominant powers are faced with the rise of other nations, things do not always go smoothly.

The task force concluded that the strategy of "primacy"—maintaining unparalleled military power—cannot deliver over the long haul. Indeed, as events in Iraq and Afghanistan are bearing out, primacy might not even be able to deliver much in the short run, either. Military power alone is insufficient to win hearts and minds or solve inherently political problems, let alone deal with the new global challenges such as climate change, pathogens, or energy security.

Some theorists maintain that conflict between great powers is all but inevitable. But the task force concluded that a clear-eyed appreciation for the serious differences that continue to separate major powers can disprove that theory. We live at a uniquely plastic moment in world history, when there is every possibility that the major powers—China, Japan, Europe, India, Russia, and the United States—can in fact align on the most important shared and common challenges on the global agenda.

These shared challenges are also critical to US security and prosperity. The United States has an opportunity to take advantage of this moment and forge enduring partnerships and structures to solve pressing global problems, even in the midst of the inevitable frictions that will arise when great powers rub shoulders.

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#### Working on Shared Interests Is Key

Terrorism, climate change, stopping the spread of weapons of mass destruction, economic growth, pandemics—the list of issues on which major powers have shared interests is long. So what should the United States do to take advantage of the "strategic convergence" that exists among major powers at the dawn of the 21st century?

An approach to global affairs characterized by "strategic collaboration" and a new US national security strategy calibrated to take advantage of this moment in history must be as multifaceted as the challenges we face. Among the elements of such an approach recommended by the task force are:

- The United States must seek to revive and enhance constructive relationships with the other major powers.
- The United States must seek to lock in the gains following World War II by embedding other major powers deeply in the rules-based world order, and collaborating with them through regional and global multilateral institutions to strengthen it. Global institutions and architecture have a strong track record of furthering US interests. They reinforce the rule of law, transparency, respect for individual right, and free trade.
- The United States must put its own house in order. Be it education, fiscal responsibility, or living up to its own values, there is much America needs to do to build its capacity to prosper in the next century. Moreover, if America falls short in its efforts to change the country that we have the most direct ability to change, it is unlikely it will be successful in changing others either.
- Any pragmatic approach to global affairs will also recognize that while strategic cooperation with other major powers should be the centerpiece of US strategy, the United States needs to "cover its bets" against dangerous surprises, and make sure that it maintains the capabilities to deal with the full range of global scenarios and the potential for mischief making by others.

No strategy for dealing with major powers will guarantee success in the complex world of the 21st century, nor will it guarantee a world without strife. But a strategy of strategic collaboration and principled multilateralism offers the best chance for securing a world that supports and furthers American interests.

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The Evolution of the International Political Order
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#### Rising Powers Preview

### South Africa Rising

Post-apartheid South Africa, with the strongest economy on the continent, is a powerful example of peaceful transition from repression to democracy. Since 1994 the country has emerged as a regional leader with a voice, albeit sometimes uneven, on the world stage. The 2010 World Cup in soccer, to be held across South Africa, will be a global showcase for the country's progress.

Yet South Africa faces sky-high unemployment, poverty, racial inequality, and crime. President Thabo Mbeki has made outrageous comments about the HIV/AIDS epedemic and critics say he has been far too protective of Zimbabwe's strongman, Robert Mugabe. Meanwhile, Mbeki's heir apparent for the presidency, Jacob Zuma, is embroiled in alleged scandals and corruption trials.

The global order is changing. The 21st century will be marked by many competing sources of global power. Across politics, economics, culture, military strength, and more, a new group of countries has growing influence over the future of the world. And South Africa is an important part of that mix.

Rising Powers: The New Global Reality is a Stanley Foundation project designed to raise awareness, motivate new thinking, and ultimately improve US foreign policy regarding this global transformation. Our aim is to discuss several of the countries challenging the global order, major issues that cut across national boundaries, and how all of this will impact American lives.



Welcoming the World. One of several new stadiums needed for South Africa's hosting of the 2010 World Cup rises near Johannesburg. (Kristin McHugh/The Stanley Foundation)

Over the next several weeks, the Stanley Foundation Web section at *www.risingpowers.org* will add new material on South Africa. Interviews with a former US ambassador to South Africa and influential South Africans from within government and civil society will be featured.

-Keith Porter

Director of Communication and Outreach, The Stanley Foundation

# Time to Rebalance America's Civilian, Military Capacities

A long-touted civilian reserve corps is just part of the solution, but focus should be on boosting permanent US diplomacy efforts

The steady and steep growth of defense budgets, and lack of equivalent support for diplomacy and development, has led to a severe imbalance between the United States armed forces and their civilian counterparts.

The Stanley Foundation is working with the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) to address and find solutions to the problem of the weak state of the US civilian international affairs agencies.

To gain insight into the challenge, it's useful to note a flaw of one of the most prominent proposed remedies: creating a Civilian Reserve Corps.

The idea of the reserve corps is to line up private-citizen specialists with key skills for post-conflict reconstruction so they can be sent at a moment's notice wherever they might be needed. This would be a fine thing, but it's naïve to think such a move could even begin to address the shortfall in the United States' civilian

capacity. It is a proposal to mobilize expertise from outside the US government, rather than equipping agencies with their own permanent capacity.

A related shortcoming is the focus on crisis response. The reserve corps would be used as "surge capacity" to



**Two Missions.** A US Navy ship Mercy crew member carries construction materials as they help build a house and repaint walls at a slum district in Manila, Philippines. The US military has been providing combat training and weapons here to counter terrorist elements. Increasingly, the military is asked to both fight and win hearts. (AP PHOTO/Aaron Favila)

help deal with the emergency needs (hopefully temporarily) of destabilized regions. There's no question about the need to do better at stabilizing global hotspots, but the current focus on the problem is sparked by the incredible array of duties dropped in the laps of US armed forces in Iraq and Afghanistan in the absence of civilian counterparts. The problem should

not be viewed primarily as one of responding to emergencies. The United States needs to boost its steady-state capacity for international affairs—its ongoing interactions with the world beyond our borders—just as urgently as its surge capacity.

#### Major Effort Needed to Rebuild World Trust

The best way to look at the problem is in connection with a much broader crisis: the poor state of US relations with the rest of the globe. Everyone is familiar with the distressing opinion research showing America's international unpopularity; this issue confronts us with the practical implications. The United States has fallen badly out of step with other members of the world community, and as we pursue our interests, we confront a great deal of skepticism and mistrust.

Recovering international trust and goodwill will be a major project, for which America will need the strongest cadre of civilian representatives it can get.

Indeed, the severe imbalance in the relative strength of our own military and civilian services is part of the problem. Our military officers too often find themselves out in the world looking around for a Department of State or US Agency for International Development colleague.

There are indicators of this imbalance: comparatively low funding levels for diplomats versus military bands, numbers of officers in the entire Foreign Service versus sailors in a single carrier battle group. A less well-known statistic, though, captures the problem better: there are nearly 200 cities in the world with populations over a million and no official US presence. For a global power, the United States does not really seem to have its finger on the global pulse. The promise of "transformational diplomacy," a phrase coined by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, is to engage the world more deeply, more consistently, and more constantly. This cannot be achieved with "virtual presence posts"—it will be achieved with people and interactions.

Another way to understand the challenge is to look at recent events in Pakistan, with the resignation of Pervez Musharraf as president. This episode illustrates the trap into which the United States has fallen again and again: channeling too much of its relationship with another country through an individual leader. In the end, Musharraf's unpopularity fed America's unpopularity—and vice versa—and the United States is left having to rebuild its relations with a pivotal country. Maintaining a broader set of links to different leaders is certainly more labor intensive, but in a fast-changing world the United States can only succeed by having deeper, multilevel relations with other nations.

#### Reform Will Require New Resources

The Stanley Foundation-CNAS project has identified the essential elements for any truly holistic revamping of the international affairs agencies.

First, reforms must include resources. Increased effectiveness cannot be achieved solely by tinkering with the agencies and their organizational charts; after decades of flat budgets, the civilian instruments of power need added funding to achieve America's international objectives. Second, human resources are particularly important; the number of people on the case, and their skill sets, is key to the ability of the US government to conduct America's relations with the rest of the world. Third, as agencies are reformed, they and their staffs must also be given commensurate authority to achieve the reforms' intended aims.

The connection between the discussion of civilian capacity and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan point to another challenge. Governmental reform efforts of this type are usually precipitated and driven by a dangerous threat—the recent creations of the Department of Homeland Security and Director of National Intelligence are two such examples. The civilian capacity shortfall arguably is tied to a danger to the country, but it is not the kind of danger over which policymakers lose sleep, though perhaps they should. Our inability to keep up with events, trends, and attitudes in the world hinders our ability to influence those events and attitudes. This is a danger, but it is also a lost opportunity to help build a strong global sense of common cause.

Underneath the gross imbalance between the budgets for defense, diplomacy, and development is the perceived ineffectiveness of the civilian agencies, particularly by those who control the purse strings. But civilian capacity must be seen as a problem in which we all have an ownership stake. One of the United States' national assets is a dynamism that enables it to adjust and thrive amidst economic, technological, and political changes. The challenge of strengthening our governmental infrastructure for relating to the world is one of many current tests of that dynamism.

—David Shorr Program Officer, The Stanley Foundation

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## US Must Get Smart on Engaging

Syria Helping Syria attract foreign investments, integrate into the global economy, do business with America will further reforms



But the recent announcement of indirect talks between Israel and Syria is but the latest sign that Damascus' ties with Tehran—like its ties with all countries—remain ambiguous. A critical way to roll back Iranian influence in Damascus and make a possible Syria-Israel deal worth the paper it's printed on is to recalibrate US policy to address the heart of the Assad regime's economic problems: corruption.

Signs emanating from the Iranian-Syrian alliance this year are increasingly bizarre—especially as Western and Arab isolation of Syria intensified over Damascus' reticence to help end the presidential gridlock in neighboring Lebanon. On February 12, high-profile Hezbollah operative Imad Mughniyya was assassinated by a massive car bomb in Damascus—a mere stone's throw away from the headquarters of Syria's security services in a country that often brags to be the Arab world's safest. Surprisingly, Damascus branded as "baseless" Tehran's announcement a few days later of a joint Iranian-Syrian investigation into the murder, despite Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchar Mottaki's visit to Damascus the day following the murder. Then a high-profile Iranian project to replace Damascus' aging public bus fleet with Iranian vehicles was mysteriously cancelled and awarded to a Chinese company.

Today two high-profile Iranian-Syrian joint ventures to assemble automobiles in Syria—the first in the country's history—are barely scraping by due to Syrian government foot-dragging on promises to cut tariffs on the plants' imported components. This is particularly odd, as the Syrian state owns a 35 percent stake in one of the projects. Even more ambiguous are statistics recently released from Syria's State Investment office that put direct Iranian investment in Syria at \$544 million, a mere 8 percent of Arab investment in Syria—a far cry from Iranian reports last year (also citing Syrian government statistics) that estimated Iranian investment at 66 percent of Arab investment in the country.

#### Focus on Syrian Economics

What can the United States do to entice Damascus to keep Tehran at arm's length? It could smarten up its Syria policy. For 40 years, US Syria policy has focused almost exclusively on Syria's behavior in the region and ignored the regime's looming economic problems. The Assad regime's historic lifeline—oil production—is rapidly running dry. Damascus announced last year it had become a net importer of oil—four years earlier than analysts predicted. Just last month, the state was forced to slash oil product subsidies, which will make up the lion's share of Syria's estimated 2008 record budget deficit of \$3.77 billion.

The only way out for Damascus of its looming fiscal crisis is to deepen market reforms and attract interna-

tional investment, but rampant corruption continues to hamstring the legal reforms international businesses need to see before investing. A sign that the regime is deeply worried about corruption as well came last February when the state-owned *Al-Thawra* newspaper published an unprecedented poll in which 99 percent of Syrians surveyed accused the state's courts, municipalities, and police of corruption.

Iran, which suffers from many of the same problems as Syria, recently announced that it was increasing the value of its hitherto unknown "technical services" to Syria from \$1 billon to \$3.5 billion. Unfortunately for Syria's leadership, such assistance is a poisoned chalice that is only likely to satisfy the corruption that undermines the market reforms necessary to stave off the regime's eventual economic collapse.

Washington's recent seizures of senior Syrian officials' assets in the United States, as well as decades-old European Union and UN assistance programs in Syria, have yet to entice the regime to clean up its stables.

#### Integrate Syria Into the Global Economy

The United States, which has no economic assistance programs in Syria, should prepare to assist in the event of a Syria-Israel deal as an outside and experienced player to help promote the rule of law in Syria. This would help Syria attract much-needed foreign investment, integrate it into the global economy, reduce unemployment, and earn the US points with the Syrian people. To lay the groundwork and compete with Iran in Syria ahead of a possible Syria-Israel deal, the United States should also recalibrate trade sanctions on Syria to help its companies that shun corruption and business with Iran to more easily do business with America.

Understanding an Arab country's economic woes and their impact on regional policy should be old hat for Washington. A key reason why Egyptian President Anwar Sadat attacked Israel in 1973 and then sued for peace five years later was that decades of war and domestic authoritarian rule had put Egypt on its back economically. Washington understood this and manipulated the situation to its advantage when it brought about a major breakthrough in Middle East peacemaking at Camp David in 1979. The United States and its allies should plan to do the same with Syria in the years to come.

—Andrew Tabler
Consulting editor of Syria Today Magazine and a former fellow of the
Washington-based Institute of Current World Affairs. This story was
adapted from an op-ed published in The Daily Star, Beirut, Lebanon's
English-language newspaper. He is author of the recent Stanley
Foundation analysis brief entitled The High Road to Damascus: Engage
Syria's Private Sector. Find this brief at www.stanleyfoundation.org.

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#### The United Nations and the Responsibility to Protect

The 2005 World Summit's adoption of the responsibility to protect was an historic step in the evolution of human rights and humanitarian law. Much attention is focused on one aspect—forceful intervention—that creates political firestorms. However, responsibility to protect is richer, deeper, and more varied than forceful intervention. Much of what was articulated in the World Summit Outcome Document is not politically contentious, but rather requires further conceptual development and capacity building.

This brief by Edward C. Luck, senior vice president and director of studies at the International Peace Institute and special adviser to the UN secretary-general at the assistant secretary-general level, addresses the conceptual underpinnings of the responsibility to protect, the political importance of it, and the steps that need to be taken to make it operational. August 2008 analysis brief

#### **PUBLICATIONS**

#### **Great Expectations**

The Stanley Foundation convened a workshop for Asian and European policymakers to meet with American analysts. This brief by Alexander T. J. Lennon draws on this workshop, addressing future directions for US foreign policy and how best to align expectations between the United States and other major powers. Recommendations on climate change, nuclear policies, trade and economic policy, and a renewed focus on Asia are made. August 2008 dialogue brief.

## Value Cooperation, Not Antagonism: The Case for Functional-Based Cooperation

In April 2008 the Stanley Foundation and the Center for a New American Security co-hosted a three-day seminar, "Asian Values-Based Architecture." Participants were from Australia, India, Japan, and the United States, and represented a range of perspectives. This brief by Nirav Patel builds upon the seminar's proceedings and advances a more inclusive regional architecture that explicitly eschews antagonistic and values-based security architecture in Asia. August 2008 dialogue brief

#### US Nuclear Weapons, Force Posture, and Infrastructure

There is general agreement that the size of the US nuclear weapon stockpile, largely stagnant since the end of the Cold War, can continue downward and that the salience of nuclear weapons in US security policy should decrease. Yet disputes exist about safe and confident ways of changing the US nuclear posture. Some suggest revamping the nuclear stockpile and infrastructure, others worry that this will undermine global nonproliferation efforts, and still others argue that the United States could take more ambitious steps in reducing its nuclear weapons stockpile. August 2008 dialogue brief

#### Actualizing the Responsibility to Protect

The 2005 adoption of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine by world leaders meeting at a United Nations summit was an important milestone. Making R2P a reliable operational concept is the next major challenge, one that will take time, a mix of idealism and pragmatism, and a great deal of political will. This report identifies the steps needed to move R2P forward. August 2008 report

### The Challenges of Strengthening the US Government's Civilian International Affairs Agencies

There is growing consensus on the need for increasing the US government's civilian capacity to create and implement programs for development, aid, and post-conflict reconstruction. However, a number of key hurdles must be overcome, both with the potential capacity-building measures and in the ways proponents think about, and argue for, stronger civilian agencies. The urgent challenge is to strengthen the infrastructure through which the United States relates to the rest of the world. July 2008 dialogue brief

#### A New Look at No First Use

In April 2008 the Stanley Foundation's US Nuclear Policy Review project gathered a group of nuclear experts to discuss whether the United States should adopt a policy of never using nuclear weapons first in a conflict. The 2001 Nuclear Posture Review sparked a widespread perception that the United States has lowered the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons. But does the United States need nuclear weapons for anything other than to respond to a nuclear attack? What would be the costs and benefits of explicitly adopting a no-first-use posture? July 2008 dialogue brief

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#### **WEB RESOURCES**

#### **Rising Powers**

The global order is changing. The 21st century will be marked by many competing sources of global power. Across politics, economics, culture, military strength, and more, a new group of countries have growing influence over the future of the world. Visit www.stanleyfounda tion.org/risingpowers for our complete Rising Powers feature and to explore these countries, the big issues that play a cross-cutting role, and the implications for the United States.

#### RADIO DOCUMENTARY

#### **Brazil Rising**

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#### Beyond Fear: Securing a More Peaceful World

This toolkit features a DVD with two segments that explore US leadership in today's uncertain world.



#### How to Get a Toolkit

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#### Resource

This Now Showing toolkit is a part of Rising Powers: The New Global Reality, a Stanley Foundation project designed to raise awareness, motivate new thinking, and ultimately improve US foreign policy regarding this global transformation. More information about the project is available at *www.risingpowers.org*.





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