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The  
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## Waiting to Join the Club



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The Global System Evolves



NEUMANN<sup>®</sup>

# Changing Global Order Demands New Approach

## *Stanley Foundation encourages an evolution in global leadership*

The ever-changing international summits known as the “Gs”—the G-8, the G-20, and other groupings—are becoming more and more important on the world stage. They have become an indispensable part of how individual nations consult and coordinate on global rules and actions, what experts call global governance.

Discussion and analysis of global governance issues is deep in the DNA of the Stanley Foundation. Max Stanley, our founder, was a well-known supporter of the United Nations and author of *Managing Global Problems* in 1979. Our conferences on the United Nations go back more than 40 years.

So it is with great interest, high hopes, and more than a little concern that we come blinking into an era where global governance issues are once again being taken very seriously by leaders and experts around the world. Great interest because of our history with the issue; high hopes due to the potential represented by emerging, more flexible forums; and concern because the evolving models could undermine other important institutions.

The Stanley Foundation is actively encouraging the evolution of the Gs toward a mechanism we are calling “G-x.” We want the G-x to include more of the world’s newly powerful nations, particularly those with no voice in the UN Security Council or the current G-8. In fact, our work on rising powers over the last few years prompted us to think about global governance in new ways. We also want this group to move beyond economic discussions and more deliberately address the most pressing global peace and security issues of our time.

We are not advocating for a specific number or set of candidate countries in the final mix for this ongoing summit series (hence the x in our G-x). The G-x might emerge from expanding today’s G-8. Or maybe the newly fashionable G-20, but with a broader agenda, will fulfill our goal.

In any case, we are examining a number of vexing questions that will determine the success or failure of the G-x. Among them:

- Will more seats at the table make consensus building too difficult?
- The very nature of a G-x means some nations will be left out. Is there a way to still provide a voice and stake to those excluded countries?
- An alluring part of the current Gs is that they have no permanent location and no self-perpetuating bureaucracy. Member nations merely rotate as the host and staff provider for each summit. To what extent can this flexibility be preserved in a G-x?
- The G-x (like the current Gs) would be a place for world leaders to consult and coordinate, but would not have the authority of international law. How would the G-x best interface with universal bodies like the United Nations?

In this issue of *Courier* are a number of articles devoted to the G-x evolution. These pieces represent a work in progress. We are both searching for answers and trying to prod an ongoing political process in what we consider is the right direction.

Veteran journalist James Traub, best known from the pages of *The New York Times Magazine*, examines the political will surrounding the G-8, G-20, and any





*Rising Powers. An Embraer aircraft factory in Brazil (left) and the Gate of India in Mumbai (above) are important national symbols of two countries challenging the global power structure. (Photos by Kristin McHugh)*

new G. He sees an Obama administration willing to engage anew with multilateral institutions. Traub notes President Obama's recent quote, "Leaders like Harry Truman and George Marshall knew that instead of constraining our power, these institutions magnified it."

Alan S. Alexandroff, from the University of Toronto and the Centre for International Governance Innovation, traces the evolution of the Gs starting from a simple 1973 meeting in the White House library. He examines the potential tensions among the Gs and other bodies.

David Shorr, one of our program officers, reinforces the need for a G-x and maps out the potential pitfalls facing the development of such a forum. He also looks at the idea for variable combinations of countries to come together around different issues. Shorr points out that an effective G-x will need to balance the global needs for both consensus and leadership.

If you are a regular *Courier* reader, you likely share our interest in how global governance will evolve in the 21st century. And you no doubt have valuable thoughts on the G-x and more. I welcome your input and feedback at [info@stanleyfoundation.org](mailto:info@stanleyfoundation.org).

—Keith Porter  
Director of Policy and Outreach, Stanley Foundation

G-8? G-20? G-X?

# Moving Beyond the Obsolete

*Transnational problems and the rise of new powers may ignite new institutions, but the spark must come from Obama*

More than 60 years ago, the abject inability of the League of Nations to prevent World War II, as well as the failure of central bankers to foresee the Great Depression, provoked a round of anguished introspection that led to the establishment of the global institutions we live with today—the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization.

Today we stand at the threshold of another spasm of invention—“Creation 2.0,” as it has been called. Not a war this time, but a global financial crisis, the development of novel and interconnected transnational problems, and the swift rise of a new cohort of powerful states have exposed the limits of the post-war institutions, even rendered them obsolete.

Even the most hardened realists have come to accept this imperative. “We’ve got a new world now,” says Brent Scowcroft, the first President Bush’s national security advisor. “But we still have habits of mind of the 20th century and the Cold War, and all the institutions we have were built for a world which has disappeared.”

One fundamental difference with the post-war moment is that the great powers now have a club of their own—the so-called G-8, which consists of the leading Western democracies and Russia. And that’s a problem, because the West no longer has the monopoly on power, especially on economic power, which it enjoyed in the years after the war. Since 2007, the G-8 has extended to China, India, Brazil, Mexico, and South Africa a kind of ex officio status. But the global financial crisis



**Magnifying US Power.** President Barack Obama, here at a G-20 news conference, says he agrees with Harry Truman that global institutions can magnify, rather than constrain, US power. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

has made this arrangement not only vaguely insulting but untenable; last November, President George W. Bush, no friend of multilateral institutions or of emerging powers, convened a meeting of an expanded G-20. The 20 leaders met again in London in April, and are scheduled to convene once again in Rome in July, alongside the G-8.

### New Problems, Old Institutions

Just as a select group of Western countries can no longer set the world's economic agenda, neither can they establish the rules going forward on trade, or on climate change. A recent Brookings Institution report argued that, in addition to the current financial crisis, "future G-20 summits should also drive the reform of the international financial institutions and address other major global concerns—climate change, poverty and health, and energy among others." This "global apex forum" would operate not as an executive, decision-making body, as the Security Council is, but rather as an instrument to shape consensus on major transnational issues, which would ultimately be decided by organs with universal or near-universal membership, such as the United Nations.

The membership roles, and rules, of the Creation 1.0 institutions have also become obsolete. Look at the Security Council, whose five permanent members—the most exclusive club of all—represent the winning side of World War II. France and England belong to the P-5, but Germany, Japan, India, and Brazil don't. The same is true of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), where Belgium currently enjoys the same voting power as China. Europe holds one-third of the 24 seats on the IMF board and, by tradition, determines the president of the IMF. The United States has the same privilege with the World Bank. The financial crisis has given the IMF a new centrality in global financial decision making. But it can scarcely serve as the central instrument for overseeing the global economy if the new Asian powerhouses are not fully dealt into the game.

There is also the need for entirely new, or greatly reformed, institutions for problems like climate change, or the proliferation of nuclear or biological weapons, which did not exist in 1946. In 2007, President Bush launched the Major Emitters Forum, a kind of "coalition of the willing" bringing together the 16 largest emitters of greenhouse gas to discuss climate change outside the framework of the United Nations. The Obama administration has embraced the group and rechristened it the Major Economies Forum; the president himself will be chairing the group's meeting on the sidelines of the G-8 meeting next month. The negotiators hope to get a head start on the terms of a new treaty to replace the Kyoto Protocols, the UN convention that set numerical targets for the emission of carbon.

### Political Will Needed for Something New

Creating something from nothing may prove much easier than changing the power structure of existing institutions. It takes immense political will to overcome the inertia that inheres in institutions—and even more in the distribution of power within those institutions. There's no guarantee that these changes will occur any time soon.

That political will must come, as it did 60 years ago, largely, though not exclusively, from Washington. The Obama administration is very much preoccupied by crisis management just now. Nevertheless, there are real grounds for optimism. Unlike his predecessor, President Obama believes in multilateral institutions, including the United Nations. In his very first major foreign policy speech as a candidate, Obama spoke of the post-war institutions, noting that "Leaders like Harry Truman and George Marshall knew that instead of constraining our power, these institutions magnified it." Obama has stuck to this theme ever since. In a recent speech in Prague, he asserted that, in order to control rogue regimes like that of North Korea, "All nations must come together to build a stronger, global regime." And he marked the difference with the previous administration by ticking off the treaties that his administration would seek to write, or rewrite.

But commitment from Washington is only a prerequisite for change; all major states, including the new powers now taking their place at the global table, will have to accept that they have a stake in a new global order. Institutions work only if states accept that they magnify, rather than constrain, their power.



—James Traub is a contributing writer for The New York Times Magazine. He has written extensively about international affairs and the United Nations, and has reported from the Congo, Iran, Iraq, Sierra Leone, East Timor, Angola, Egypt, Kosovo, and Haiti. He has a forthcoming Stanley Foundation policy analysis brief on the prospects of an expanded G-8. (Photo by Greg Martin)

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# GEORGES

*G-8? G-20? G-x?* *Groupings like the G-8 have the power to adapt to global challenges and improve international cooperation*

**I**n a world abounding with urgent problems, who will provide solutions? If 21st century challenges are too large and complex for any single nation, then how will nations combine their efforts? These are obviously rhetorical questions, yet they help clarify the nature of international cooperation. To begin with, the world's leaders and governments come together through a wide array of diplomatic forums, specialized agencies, and networks of experts. Consequently, there is considerable biodiversity among the forms of international cooperation, and rightly so.

Of course it is not the forms and structures that really matter, but the results. The world community confronts major challenges ranging from global warming to terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and extreme poverty—to name just a few—and for all the important work that channels through intergovernmental instruments, they are simply not marshaling the level of action so desperately needed.

And therein lies the problem: intergovernmental business as usual will not bring a more peaceful and prosperous

world. On the contrary, if diplomatic gridlock persists, many of these problems could grow much worse, and spawn other problems. So the test of leadership in today's shrinking, interconnected world is to overcome differences and take decisive (meaning difficult) action.

The intriguing thing about the G-8, G-20, or a potential successor grouping is that they may be ideally suited to fill this deficit of problem solving and political will. Since these groupings are comprised of limited sets of countries and meet at the highest levels, they are an enticing possible source of leadership and action.

In order to achieve this potential, though, a revamped G grouping (setting aside the question of its size, let's call it a "G-x") will itself need to overcome inertia and resistance to change. To boil down the skeptics' case, why should the world trust a few selected powers to act on behalf of everyone else? What is the basis of this group's authority—given that it is, in institutional terms, merely a diplomatic consultation?

By striking the right balance between sensitivity and decisiveness, the leaders of a G-x could perhaps convince the rest of the world that they will gain more than lose from heightened cooperation among pivotal powers.

### Decisions, Decisions

One common argument against giving a G-x a central role in global diplomacy is that the group's decisions would not be binding obligations for other nations (referred to as the "G-172" at a recent conference). The point is often extrapolated to say that the Gs should limit themselves to actions on behalf of their own governments, gradual consensus building, or technical matters that are not politically sensitive. In other words, the leadership groupings should not fancy themselves global deciders. It should be possible, though, for a G-x to avoid the hazards of either presumption or excessive caution.

The groupings' lack of legal authority—they are essentially a series of meetings—indeed leaves them without an ability to impose requirements on other nations. This informality is also a significant contrast with treaty-based institutions such as the United Nations and World Trade Organization. Nonetheless, to a great extent, today's global problems demand political and policy steps, and not just legally binding measures.

As Americans know from recent experience, a command-and-demand approach to international leadership is not terribly effective. Leadership hinges on the willingness of others to follow, or at least be persuaded. On the other hand, too much deference leads to the diplomacy of the lowest common denominator.

Limiting the Gs to modest and self-contained functions would waste the precious commodity of political will. The real comparative advantage of G summitry is the physical presence of key world leaders in the same place at the same time. Not only do these politicians possess unique authority to set policy for their governments, they are also uniquely able to craft solutions with sensitivity toward all of their countries' varied domestic politics.

### Variable Geometry

Since the controversial aspect of a G-x is the anointing of a fixed set of pivotal nations—and the associated problem of who's in and who's out—some advocate greater flexibility

for the Gs. Because the global agenda includes such a diverse range of challenges, they argue, different combinations of countries should come together for different issues. A so-called "variable geometry" should be used for the shape of the diplomatic table.

This is an important point for international cooperation as a whole, but it is a misguided approach for the question of a G-x. Hewing to the comparative advantage of the Gs and the decisive policy leadership that only heads of state and government can exert, the world needs a G-x with a determinate membership that represents a critical mass of combined international influence.

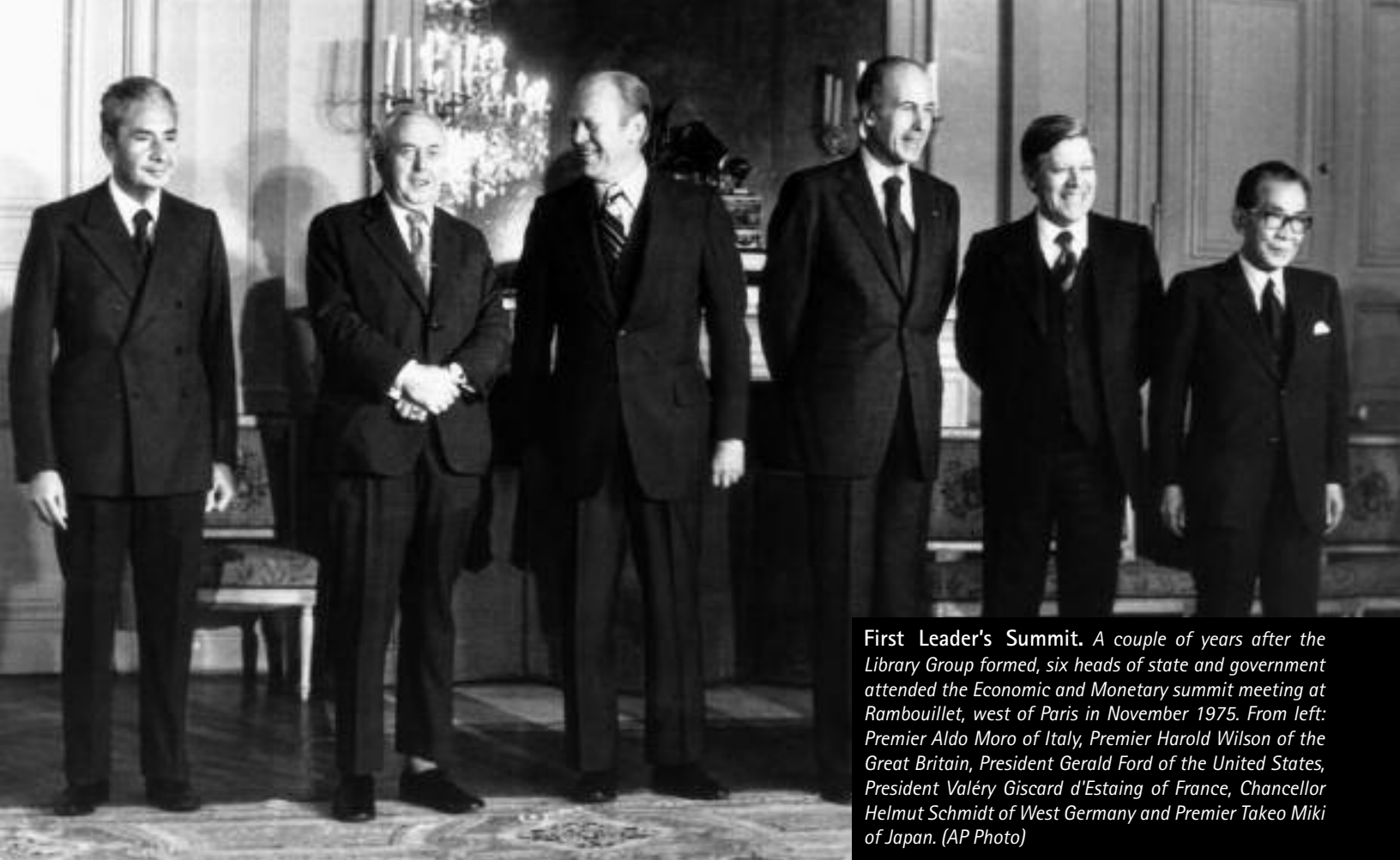
That said, variability will be very important for a G-x, especially in recognition that overly centralized or top-down approaches are inadequate. The proper places for variation, though, lie not in the composition of the G-x, but in the wider diplomatic consultations needed to prepare its decisions and the mechanisms for carrying them out. The point of a retooled G-x for the 21st century is not to make the Gs institutionally robust for robustness sake. Nor is it to usurp other intergovernmental organizations, but instead to give them the necessary political impetus to make them more effective. So for any decisions of a G-x, the wider diplomatic endorsement and policy follow-through should take place via the appropriate multilateral instrument.

The issue of a G-x raises some crucial questions about international cooperation and problem solving in challenging times. The need for a more consensual style of leadership does not negate the basic need for leadership. Wide and intensive consultation with the G-172 will be vital for workable solutions that enjoy a broad sense of ownership, yet powerful nations have a special duty to counter drift and inaction. Unless we get a grip on today's urgent problems, we will be in the grip of those problems.



—David Shorr  
Program Officer,  
The Stanley Foundation

*...the world  
needs a  
G-x ...that  
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**First Leader's Summit.** A couple of years after the Library Group formed, six heads of state and government attended the Economic and Monetary summit meeting at Rambouillet, west of Paris in November 1975. From left: Premier Aldo Moro of Italy, Premier Harold Wilson of the Great Britain, President Gerald Ford of the United States, President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing of France, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt of West Germany and Premier Takeo Miki of Japan. (AP Photo)

G-8? G-20? G-x?

## The Library Group Grows Up

*This century will be shaped by the various major power clubs, and who is invited to join will matter*

Today global governance gives an increasingly prominent role to the Gs process of high-level meetings. Where the latter half of the 20th century—in global governance terms—was focused on the United Nations and Bretton Woods organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, the 21st century will be shaped by these groupings of particular countries.

Recently, the G-20 has been especially prominent, with its leaders' meeting first in Washington then in London with a third now planned for the United States in September. These meetings have positioned the G-20 as the policy nexus for tackling the global financial crisis. Given the likely emergence of the G-20—or a slightly smaller or larger grouping (let's call it a "G-x")—it is worth exploring how these groupings became so influential.

### What Are the Gs and Where Did They Come From?

In some ways it is easier to answer what the Gs process is not. It contrasts significantly with the more traditional UN and Bretton Woods systems. There are no founding documents, no big buildings, nor any permanent organizations.

As the British government described the G-7/8 Summit before hosting it in Birmingham in 1998, that series of summits of leading industrial powers is "an informal organization, with no rules or permanent Secretariat staff." The heart of this G-x system is the meetings themselves, and the opportunity for leaders to sit down and tackle weighty issues. Summits have allowed leaders to know one another on a strongly personal basis and to understand the domestic political pressures each works under.



But this informal system is not just for leaders. It has also fostered more informally networked cooperation. That is leaders and officials at various levels—ministers, regulators, judges—meeting with their counterparts. Indeed, the original founding organization was a completely informal gathering of finance ministers. The finance ministers of France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States met in March 1973 in the White House library and were dubbed the “Library Group.” Soon thereafter Japan’s minister joined. This group met periodically until the first leaders’ summit at Rambouillet in November 1975.

### An Evolving System

This early origin points to an additional feature of the Gs: their capacity to evolve. The original G-5 finance group was a meeting of five ministers. Yet by October 1975 it was decided that the first leaders’ summit at Rambouillet would include six leaders, with the addition of Italy. Canada was added to the group the following year, and the group became the G-7. In 1977 the European Union representative was added, and Russia was invited to join in 1998—though there remain economic matters for which the G-7 meet as a subset, hence the G-7/8.

Since 2003 the G-8 Summit has reached out to the Group of 5 (G-5) powers, also known by the acronym BRICSAM: Brazil, India, China, South Africa, and Mexico. The German Summit in 2007 began a regular structured dialogue process that includes the G-5. It remains an open question—to be answered possibly at the upcoming Italian Summit—whether any of the G-5 will be invited into the G-8 as full members, rather than guests.

This evolution highlights one of the features that contrast with the UN and Bretton Woods systems. The Gs process is focused around governing “clubs,” and the various club architectures seek to bring to the table those viewed as necessary to be effective.

### Questions of Legitimacy

This architecture has not gone without criticism. For years now, the G-7/8 has been criticized for illegitimacy, since it includes only the developed and industrialized nations. Much has been made of the fact that increasingly powerful large nations, such as China and India, have not been invited permanently to the annual leaders’ summit.

With the potential emergence of a new G-x grouping to include such pivotal powers, the loose structure of the Gs could prove invaluable, even in the face of legitimacy concerns. Compare the history of the G-7/8 with the effort to reform membership of the UN Security Council (UNSC). As a creature of the UN Charter, with the asso-

ciated challenges of amending a treaty with 192 states parties, the UNSC has been unable to escape its past and the dilemma of permanent members who owe their seats to their World War II victory more than 60 years ago. Likewise, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank executive boards have hardly changed since 1944.

### Is G-20 the New G-8?

The geopolitics of a G-x process is complicated and growing more so. One source of confusion is the use of the same shorthand to refer to multinational coalitions within global trade talks: G-22, G-20, etc. Even the process of finance and leadership is difficult to comprehend. The networked organizations that form part of the constellation of the G groupings are extensive. In 1999, following the Asian financial crisis, 20 finance ministers and central bankers started meeting regularly, and it is this ten-year-old G-20 grouping that formed the foundation of the G-20 leaders’ summit that emerged in the last ten months. Meanwhile, there have been continued gatherings of G-7/8 foreign, environment, and trade ministers. This is indeed a fast-moving governance world.

So, has the evolution now reached a certain apex with the G-20 or will it take some other G-x form? It is notable that many analysts assumed immediately that the G-20 leaders’ summit had overtaken the G-7/8. With the emergence of the G-20, the G-7/8, many assumed, would fade away. That scenario is certainly possible, but it is too early to tell. The G-7/8 has a quite different purpose with its foundational mission being to promote open democracy, individual liberty, and progress. The G-7/8 has focused on development in Africa, climate change, and international stability issues, while the G-20 leaders have remained more narrowly focused on financial stability and global economic health. And a number of G-7/8 leaders, especially smaller members such as Canada and Italy, are not in a rush to melt into the G-20.



—Alan S. Alexandroff, research director, Program on Conflict Management and Negotiation, University of Toronto, and senior fellow, Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI)

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#### **At the World's Summit: How Will Leading Nations Lead** by James Traub

Sixty years ago, the dual shocks of the Great Depression and World War II spurred the creation of international institutions such as the UN, IMF, the World Bank, and a sturdy global political order. Now we seem to be at the threshold of another burst of invention—"Creation 2.0," as it has been called. Rather than a world war, the ferment this time comes from the combination of a global financial crisis, the emergence of novel and interconnected transnational problems, and the swift rise of a new cohort of powerful states, all of which have exposed the limits of the post-war institutions, and perhaps rendered them obsolete.

Here, veteran journalist James Traub, a contributing writer for *The New York Times Magazine*, examines Creation 2.0 and concludes it will be marked more by a protracted evolution than a big bang. June 2009 analysis brief

#### **The Next 100 Project: Leveraging National Security Assistance to Meet Developing World Needs**

A collaborative effort between the Henry L. Stimson Center and the Stanley Foundation targeted sustainable implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540. The focus of the project was to identify new sources of assistance for addressing endemic threats in the developing world, including poverty, corruption, infectious disease, and economic underdevelopment by tapping national security resources and addressing mutual concerns. February 2009 executive summary and online conference report.

#### **On Reforming the International Order**

For all the discussion of the need to reform the world's multi-lateral architecture, there has been a notable dearth of analysis of how such reform would work. Author Thomas Wright argues that a consensus has emerged that international cooperation should take a variety of forms, but key questions remain. The primary objective should instead be to bring about more effective international cooperation on critical challenges in a way that does not inadvertently worsen tensions with other states. February 2009 online analysis brief.

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## NUCLEAR SECURITY

### Realizing Nuclear Disarmament

The Stanley Foundation convened a mix of UN diplomats and other officials to examine the first steps toward a world free of nuclear weapons. This Policy Memo outlines the key points from the conference discussions, specifically noting that the world has an historic opportunity to make great progress on nuclear arms reductions. The window for progress may last no more than two years. April 2009 online conference report.

### Toward an Integrated US Nuclear Weapons Policy: Address US Security in an Interconnected World

Reducing American dependency on nuclear weapons will lead to greater security for the United States and its allies and should be the driving force behind US nuclear weapons policy. The ultimate American goal should be multilateral, verifiable nuclear disarmament, according to a new report by the Stanley Foundation. To achieve this, the US will need to take several steps, including adoption of a no-first-use policy, pursuing the removal of all remaining US nuclear weapons from Europe, negotiating an extension of the START verification protocol with Russia, and engaging China in ways that build a secure nuclear future. With the incoming presidential administration, the US will undertake a formal review of its nuclear weapons policy. With this in mind, the Stanley Foundation launched a US Nuclear Policy Review project to produce recommendations for changing US nuclear weapons policy. January 2009 project report.

## HUMAN PROTECTION

### The Responsibility to Protect and Foreign Policy in the Next Administration

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) framework offers conceptual, legal, and practical answers to the prevention and mitigation of mass atrocities. In an effort to contribute to the continuing debates around prevention of mass atrocities such as genocide, the Stanley Foundation convened a dialogue among leading US, intergovernmental organization, and civil society experts and officials to explore R2P-related issues, including new civilian and military capabilities required to implement the overall framework. January 2009 dialogue brief.

### The Roots of the United States' Deteriorating Civilian Capacity and Potential Remedies

This brief is from a joint Stanley Foundation-Center for a New American Century project titled What an Engagement Strategy Entails: Is the United States Government Equipped? It focuses on past lessons and current realities for the reform of US civilian international affairs agencies to orient them toward a coherent and integrated global engagement system. October 2008 dialogue brief.

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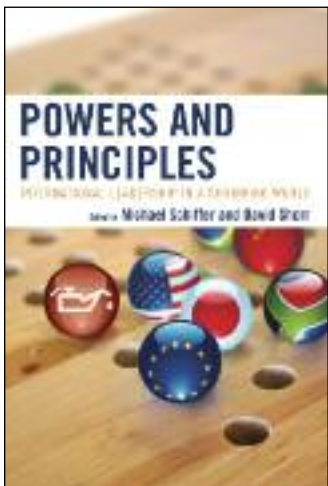
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## Powers and Principles *International Leadership in a Shrinking World*

What if the major global and regional powers of today's world came into closer alignment to build a stronger international community and shared approaches to 21st-century threats and challenges? Contributing writers were asked to describe the paths that 11 pivotal powers could take as constructive stakeholders in a strengthened rules-based international order.

*“Powers and Principles uses a novel and illuminating approach to examine the role of benevolent impulses in international affairs.”*

*—Robert Kagan, author of The Return of History and the End of Dreams and of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order*

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*“If the world of the 21st century is to be governed, and its daunting challenges addressed, the great powers will need to step forward to provide collective leadership.”*

*—G. John Ikenberry, Princeton University*

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