

Strengthening Forces for Democracy in the Middle East

Lessons from the Past
and
Strategies for the Future



Strengthening Forces for Democracy in the Greater Middle East: Lessons from the Past and Strategies for the Future

**A Report from the
IFPA-Bradley Workshop, held on
February 9, 2006
in the
Polaris Suites of the
Ronald Reagan Building**

“Ultimately, the only way to defeat the terrorists is to defeat their dark vision of hatred and fear by offering the hopeful alternative of political freedom and peaceful change. So the United States of America supports democratic reform across the broader Middle East. Elections are vital, but they are only the beginning. Raising up a democracy requires the rule of law, and protection of minorities, and strong, accountable institutions that last longer than a single vote.”

*President George W. Bush
State of the Union Address
January 31, 2006*

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Introduction

In his State of the Union address on January 31, 2006, President Bush reiterated his administration's commitment, first articulated in 2002, to democracy-building efforts across the wider Middle East and into Africa, Asia, and the Caspian Basin regions. On that occasion, the president explicitly stated that the values of a society and the priorities of its government clearly influence a state's foreign policy and its conduct toward other nations. The notion of a connection between a government's values and its foreign policy was developed even further in the Bush administration's 2006 *National Security Strategy*, which stated that, "governments that honor their citizens' dignity and desire for freedom tend to uphold responsible conduct toward other nations." In contrast, "governments that brutalize their people," the *National Security Strategy* went on to say, "also threaten the peace and stability of other nations."¹

From this perspective, then, democracy building must be regarded as a central component of America's foreign and national security policies, whose strategic goals are (1) to expand the community of democracies generally, and specifically to bring the Muslim world eventually into a modernized global economic system where democracy flourishes and religion is practiced freely, tolerantly, and privately; (2) to preempt, marginalize, and defeat terrorists, while promoting democratization and economic development based on the private sector; and (3) to draw larger numbers of countries, both within and beyond the Muslim world, into a network of regional and global economic systems that will provide increasing benefits to their peoples while curbing any incentives for the pursuit of disruptive political and foreign policy choices. While there is no guarantee that such a strategy will produce immediate results, there appears to be no more promising alternative. For this reason alone, the United States and the world's other major democracies have a huge stake in the ultimate success of such a strategy.

Over the four years since the Bush administration publicly articulated its commitment to democracy building, we have seen both notable successes and discouraging setbacks. Free elections have taken place in Iraq and a new constitution has been adopted. In Afghanistan, provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) are making strides every day, despite the emergence of new threats from the resumption of opium production and trafficking as well as from the resurgence of Taliban activity in the southern and eastern portions of the country. In Lebanon, since the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri on February 14, 2005, anti-Syrian forces mobilized and caused the withdrawal of Syrian troops from the country in April of that year. Less encouraging, however, was the decision by Uzbekistan's despotic leader Islam Karimov to sever his country's military relationship with the United States when American and other Western officials publicly protested his regime's harsh repression of human rights, thus depriving the United States of access to the strategically important Karshi-Khanabad base (or K2, as it was called).

In the context of U.S. strategic interests, and with respect to the global war on terror (GWOT) in particular, the loss of access to the K2 base in Uzbekistan was a serious, but not a fatal blow, given the progress that is being made in Afghanistan, despite the challenges cited above. At the very least, however, it illustrates the tensions that exist between democracy-building efforts and the military requirements of prosecuting the GWOT. And, while the Bush administration has been very

¹ National Security Council, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, March 2006, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/nss2006.pdf>, p. 3.

clear in suggesting that when it comes to democracy building, a country's particular circumstances (historical, economic, societal, cultural) are ever so important in determining its democratic evolution and institutional development, certain fundamental elements must be present – respect for human rights, the rule of law, and free elections, for example – if the democratic experiment is to succeed. With these factors in mind, on February 9, 2006, the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis (IFPA) convened an exploratory meeting to assess the extent to which lessons learned from the Cold War era struggle against Communism have relevance to the war against radical Salafist ideologies and to efforts to establish democracies in the wider Muslim world. Specifically, this meeting was designed to examine the prospects for democracy in the area spanning North Africa, the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Organized with the support of the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, the meeting was designed to contribute to IFPA's ongoing research focused on post-conflict reconstruction and stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. At the same time, it was designed to inform and help shape U.S. government democratization efforts and public diplomacy strategies. As such, this workshop was also conceived as the precursor to a larger IFPA project focused on U.S. public diplomacy and democracy building in the "long war" against terrorism. What follows is a thematic summary of the discussion by participants who included government, academic, and think tank experts. The report is organized according to major themes, and it provides specific recommendations for policy officials and practitioners.

Adapting Lessons from the Cold War Experience: Similarities and Differences

At the outset, workshop participants noted the many similarities and differences between the Cold War and the global war on terror. Both, it was observed, involved a confrontation between freedom-loving and anti-freedom ideologies. In the Cold War, Communism provided the ideological basis for Soviet actions; in the GWOT, the radical Salafist desire to establish a new caliphate, running from Spain and Northern Africa through Turkey and the wider Middle East and into Asia, explicitly challenges Western democratic principles and the notion of secularism as the preferred basis for global governance. So, too, in both, the geopolitical stakes are high, although unlike the threat posed by the Soviet Union to Western Europe, today's GWOT is being waged along Europe's periphery, and within European states' borders, as radical Islamists and disaffected immigrant populations strive to undermine local and national authorities. During the Cold War, the gravest threat was posed by the Soviet Union's concentration of military power, including nuclear weapons, on the European continent. Today's threats include the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their acquisition by terrorist groups. Whereas deterrence proved to be effective against the Soviet Union, there is great uncertainty about what it may take today to deter terrorist threats, if indeed they can be deterred at all. Consequently, as with the Cold War, there is recognition that to prevail in the GWOT the United States will have to make a substantial commitment to see it through, especially given the need to "shape and influence the strategic perspectives" of those in the Muslim world who desire to work with the West to improve the standard of living in the wider Muslim world and to foster the creation of governmental systems that tolerate diversity, facilitate human rights, and allow for religious tolerance.

To the extent that influencing hearts and minds was a crucial component of the West's Cold War strategy, it is also a key element of the GWOT. In that sense, both the Cold War and the GWOT

are “long wars,” requiring patience and long-term commitments on the part of the United States. Accordingly, in the Cold War the United States built a successful alliance strategy of economic integration and political unity based on a core of preexisting modernized and/or democratic governments in Europe and Asia (NATO and Japan). Today the United States is dealing with mostly autocratic, non-democratic and pre-modern societies in the Middle East and throughout the Muslim world, whose leaderships have a stake in keeping change to a minimum. Working to establish incentives for change, therefore, creates an additional burden for the West, and in some states our close association with current autocratic regimes serves to undermine U.S. public diplomacy and democracy-building initiatives with what has sometimes been referred to as “the Arab street.”

Nevertheless, the United States will find it necessary to work wherever possible with all sorts of allies and coalition partners, including with our Cold War allies, some of whom are now critical of U.S. democratization efforts. Such allies are both more and less critical to the success of American strategy in the war against terrorism. Militarily, U.S. allies are less important to U.S. GWOT efforts, although in niche areas, including in the field of intelligence gathering, their capabilities can be quite useful. As an organization, NATO’s role, critical as it was during the Cold War, has been limited in the GWOT by the political constraints of European members, including very restrictive rules of engagement placed on the use of their military forces. For this reason, some newer allies, especially Poland, and enduring allies such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and Japan have emerged as more important to U.S. GWOT strategy. Wherever possible, however, the United States should strive to work with established democracies, India comes to mind, to assist in the transformation of Muslim societies, even if efforts with more established allies falter, for example, because of changes in government (as may occur in the United Kingdom).

Promoting Democracy in Cold War Communist States: Lessons for Today

From this survey of similarities and differences between the Cold War era and the world of today, the opening session of this workshop turned to an assessment of efforts to promote democracy in Communist societies in order to set forth lessons and implications for the twenty-first century. As one participant observed, in contrast to the Cold War era, the current struggle against radical Salafism is being waged against a largely invisible enemy. It is a struggle in which there is no easily discernible geographical central front as existed during the Cold War, with a line clearly drawn between the Western democracies of Europe and the states forced to exist under the yoke of Soviet imperialism. This has important implications for the government’s efforts to sustain domestic public support for, and interest in, the war against terrorism, as we have witnessed in the recent debates in the United States. Moreover, success is far less easy to measure today than it was during the Cold War, as we have yet to develop adequate metrics for measuring success.

Today, as in the Cold War era, the United States faces a long-term struggle in which the end is not clearly visible. In fact, we may not know except in retrospect, that the war against terrorism has been won. As a “long war,” the Cold War lasted for at least two generations, during which time much of our focus was on Europe, although we confronted major challenges and temporary setbacks elsewhere. However, what distinguishes our democratization efforts in the communist states of Eastern Europe, was the fact that we and the East Europeans had a common heritage based on Western civilization, and included a shared history, common religions, and the same values. In Poland, Hungary, and

Czechoslovakia popular uprisings challenged the Soviet-imposed socialist regimes from within, while their pro-democracy aspirations were supported in the West by governments and peoples, many of whom had emigrated from the East. America's strategy was to identify, strengthen, and work with these pro-democracy forces, including trade unions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) standing against Communism. Many groups, notably the Catholic Church and the Solidarity trade union in Poland, were essential to Western efforts to promote change from within Eastern Europe's repressive regimes. At the same time, the United States worked with alternative secular, professional, and democratic forces in Western Europe and elsewhere to keep Communists out of Western governments and marginalized in non-communist states. In the war against terrorism, participants pointed out, few such groups exist in Muslim countries. In many cases, extremist groups (such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Hamas in Palestine) offer the only alternative to the government in power. Their ascent to power has the potential to exacerbate a bad situation. Viable opposition groups that promote effective democracy simply do not exist in most Middle East countries today. Our challenge today is to identify potential champions of democracy and to empower them with financial support, technical advice, and ideas to attract "foot soldiers" to their cause.

Then, as now, we were engaged in a battle of ideas. The war against radical Islamists involves, to be sure, the use of military force and other instruments of national power. But more than this, it is a war of ideas, whose strategic objectives are to influence the evolution of Muslim thought and to help move it in a direction that supports the emergence of modern-day liberal economic systems and democratic institutions across the wider Muslim world. Democracy is based on empowerment and the expansion of freedom in place of the efforts of terrorists to impose their narrow beliefs on an entire population. In the Cold War era we were able to project democracy as the wave of the future. We need to act in similar fashion today. We need to promote the values of democracy and to develop new initiatives to support and empower moderate elements and leaders in the Islamic world and simultaneously to undermine the appeal of the radical jihadists.

Attention at the workshop was devoted to identifying and assessing the strategic context within which Cold War era strategies were conceived, and comparing them to the current anti-Americanism in the wider Middle East. As several participants pointed out, the objective of radical Islamists is to re-create the Islamic caliphate that once stretched across much of Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and extended into Asia with its medieval practices that effectively exclude a large part of the population, notably women, from public life. Such groups are America's twenty-first-century enemies, just as communist regimes were its Cold War opponents.

Building Coalitions of Support for Democracy

Our goal should be to isolate and defeat such enemies while building coalitions of support wherever possible. Although economic liberalization and popular participation should be the ultimate objectives of democracy-building efforts, the American model of democracy may not be directly transferable to the Muslim world. What is transferable, however, is a mix between centralized and decentralized institutions based on a federal structure. For more than two centuries the United States has upheld and refined institutions that protect local and states' rights while ensuring that the federal government exercises necessary functions. Such a relationship has direct relevance to societies seeking to reconcile local autonomy, as in Kurdish, Shiite, and Sunni Iraq, with the establishment of a strong central government.

As was the case with Eastern Europe, U.S. approaches must be tailored to reflect the unique circumstances of each state and be flexible enough to allow for modifications that recognize the needs of diverse societies and cultures. One size does not fit all. At the same time, there are certain common characteristics that form the basis for evaluating the extent to which democracy exists in a particular setting. These include freedom of speech and the media, rule of law, an independent judiciary, the ability to organize private-sector entities, freedom of association, protection of human rights, safeguards for minorities, the ability to practice one's religion, and elections that are free and fair.

Workshop participants pointed out that interest in and support for such fundamental rights formed the basis of pro-democracy movements that emerged in Eastern Europe during the Cold War. From the Hungarian uprising in 1956 to Solidarity in Poland in the 1980s and the establishment of the Charter 77 group, organized non-governmental entities in communist states reached out to Western groups for political, moral, and financial support. Among the most successful efforts to strengthen democratization was the Helsinki process, which one workshop participant asserted contributed decisively to the revolutions in Eastern Europe in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

The Helsinki process was the outgrowth of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) held in that city in 1975. From this meeting came agreement that provided, among other things, a basis for promoting human rights and religious freedom in communist states. Because the Helsinki Final Act was signed by the Soviet Union as well as by the communist governments of Eastern Europe, dissident pro-democracy groups were able to use it to legitimize and therein effectively advance their cause. While participants at the workshop recognized that the conditions that contributed to the ultimate success in dismantling Eastern Europe's authoritarian regimes may not be present in the Muslim world, they were agreed that the Helsinki process, with its emphasis on transparency, human rights, and religious freedom, can and perhaps should be replicated in some fashion in today's struggle to promote democracy in the wider Muslim world. Moreover, for the oppressed peoples of Eastern and Central Europe, Western support for their pro-democracy aspirations and to specific NGOs was indispensable to the potential success of their grassroots efforts. Now, as then, it is important to identify, enable, support, and nurture pro-democracy groups in the Muslim world, however limited in numbers they currently are and weak though they may be. A more concerted effort on the part of Western governments in this regard may yield great dividends over the longer term, even if the prospects for success appear less certain at the present time.

The Role of “Soft Power” and Strategic Communications

There was general agreement among participants that it was America's “soft power,” together with its “boots on the ground” in Western Europe, that influenced and shaped anti-communist groups and gave encouragement to their efforts to bring about regime change. Similarly, the war against terrorism must be waged with a combination of military power to preempt, interdict, and defeat terrorists, while we also work to encourage effective democracy around the world, but especially as a priority task in states of greatest strategic importance to the United States in the war against terrorism.

As several participants pointed out, strategic communications formed an important aspect of the struggle against Communism and efforts to promote democracy in Eastern Europe. Prominent in such communications were the American outreach initiatives embodied in the Voice of America and Radio Liberty, in addition to targeted governmental support for selected non-governmental organizations

(NGOs), including the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and teachers' unions, and Catholic Church charities and organizations. These efforts complemented other public diplomacy and democracy-building strategies during the Cold War and were strengthened by the attractiveness of American ideals, culture, and values as "soft power." They proved to be important in shaping strategic perceptions of targeted audiences. According to one participant, everything American, from popular culture to value structures, inspired and helped propel the pro-democracy movements in Eastern Europe.

Utilizing Public Diplomacy

Widespread anti-Americanism exists today in much of the Muslim world. What is perceived (or misperceived) to be American values and culture is rejected by many of those whom the government hopes to persuade and empower. Administration efforts to set the record straight have been sporadic and largely ineffective. In fact, several participants lamented the apparent inability of the administration to engage in effective public diplomacy either at home or abroad. Again, this current problem was contrasted with the Cold War period, and several examples of democratic successes were cited. Democracy took root in Japan at the end of World War II despite (or because of) the legacy of World War II. Muslim countries such as Turkey and Lebanon as well as Indonesia have become democracies. India, which is the most populous democracy, is also home to the second largest Muslim population in the world. The existence of a large dissident movement in Iran, reflecting dissent between the mullahs, on the one hand, and the younger generation and the middle class in Iran, on the other likewise suggests that democracy is possible in Muslim states. Nevertheless, powerful anti-democratic forces exist that are strengthened by radical anti-Western indoctrination in the madrassahs funded especially from Saudi Arabia in many parts of the Muslim world. Added to this problem are the looming crises over nuclear and other WMD proliferation. An Iran in possession of a nuclear weapons capability may be more willing to crack down on democratizing forces without fear of outside intervention. Thus there is a nexus between WMD proliferation and the extension of anti-democratic forces that should be explored.

Participants acknowledged the challenges facing Western efforts to wage and win the battle of ideas between the culture and values of democracy and those espoused by radical Islamists. We have yet to integrate all relevant capabilities within a grand strategy in the "long war" to influence and shape elite and mass opinion against such anti-democratic forces. As one participant pointed out, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, and during the NATO debate on deployment of intermediate nuclear forces (INF) in Europe in the 1980s, all elements of U.S. power were engaged, including a focused public relations effort designed to support broader U.S. strategic objectives. As already noted, the inadequacy of public diplomacy is one of the greatest deficiencies of U.S. policy today. As we take corrective action, we should assess current needs in light of the successful strategies of the Cold War era. Past experience suggests that a coordinated governmental and non-governmental initiative focused on targeted countries and based on programs tailored to specific settings would go very far in the Muslim world to alter and shape perceptions about the United States. In this context, for example, one participant stressed the need to explain what it means to govern by the rule of law. This, he asserted, should become an essential element of U.S. media strategy in Iraq, where to date the administration has made no serious effort to address rule-of-law issues in a manner that would be useful to the Iraqi people and that would support broader U.S. strategic objectives.

Prioritizing and Targeting Diverse Audiences

This discussion was the catalyst for broader consideration of the audiences that U.S. public diplomacy efforts should be targeting. It was pointed out that America's challenges during the Cold War were much easier in this regard because grassroots organizations existed in such states to which messages could be successfully transmitted and received. Moreover, in Eastern Europe, there was an educated population, many of whom could speak English, German, French, or Russian, and who communicated with each other within countries and across borders. The Catholic Church and Pope John Paul II played an important role in helping to focus anti-communist, pro-democracy sentiment. In contrast to widespread literacy in Europe, in Afghanistan, for example, one participant noted that upwards of 75 percent of the population is illiterate or lacks basic education. Therefore, efforts to influence hearts and minds are quite often thwarted because the messages are far beyond the understanding of local audiences.

In the wider Muslim world, one participant suggested that the target of Western public diplomacy efforts ought to be the youth, which constitutes a large and growing part of the population. Young people form the most radical element of Muslim societies. It is this population segment that is most likely to be disillusioned with its future prospects. Nevertheless, most U.S. efforts are not geared toward this audience, and we certainly have not yet figured out how to use most effectively the internet and other information-age technologies to empower either ourselves or our allies to wage the "long war." In contrast, the radical Salafists are making major efforts to attract youth. In this context, another participant pointed out that as much as 80 percent of the Muslim world is anti-American, and upwards of two-thirds of those who express anti-American views also reject the "ideology of freedom." If this is true, we must identify the levers that we can use to empower that other one third of Muslims who may be wary of the United States but who aspire to greater freedoms and access to public education.

The Role of Trade and Technology

There was broad agreement on the necessity to strengthen and work with indigenous groups, however limited such opportunities may be. This includes promoting trade and mobilizing technology to give these groups the means to improve their own lives and societies. Trade and technology strategies were essential to victory in the Cold War. In fact, according to one participant, trade and technology may have been the most decisive levers of U.S. Cold War strategy. Gorbachev's comment to the Politburo in October 1985 revealed explicitly the pressures exerted on the former Soviet Union by U.S. technological superiority and growth-oriented trade and alliance strategy:

Our goal is to prevent the next round of the arms race. If we do not accomplish it, the threat to us will only grow. We will be pulled into another round of the arms race that is beyond our capabilities, and we will lose, because we are already at the limits of our capabilities. Moreover, we can expect that Japan and the FRG [West Germany] could very soon join the American potential . . . If the new round begins, the pressure on our economy will be unbelievable.²

2 Quoted in Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, "Power, Globalization, and the End of the Cold War: Reevaluating a Landmark Case for Ideas," *International Security* (winter 2000/01): 29.

Trade and technology offer capabilities to be used against the radical jihadists. However, as another participant cautioned, the incentive structure is quite different from that which existed during the Cold War. For the captive peoples in Eastern Europe, trade and technology transfer were seen as instruments for eventual economic liberalization and market economies that are crucial to building and sustaining flourishing democracies. Membership in NATO and the EU was based on standards that included democratization. Several participants pointed out that post-communist states aspiring to join such Western institutions had to meet certain requirements: without tangible democratization the doors would be closed to NATO and EU membership. These criteria were spelled out in various NATO and EU documents that became the essential basis for initiating negotiations leading to membership. Such incentives may exist today in the case of states in Southeastern Europe and elsewhere on the periphery of Europe, although how rapidly and extensively such organizations will be prepared to absorb new members remains to be seen.

International Institutions and Democracy

For post-communist states in Europe, joining NATO as insurance against a revanchist Russia and achieving European Union (EU) membership to enhance their economic prospects was an important incentive for democratization, even when it imposed temporary hardships on states in transition from the communist era to new market economies and from totalitarian societies to democracies. However, a strong private-sector economy based on a broadening middle class has yet to emerge in most countries in the wider Middle East. In Iran, for example, there has been a systematic effort to eliminate groups who might challenge the ruling Islamist authorities. And as the recent electoral success of Hamas demonstrates, an extremist group may come to power in an election, especially in a setting in which there are no moderate alternatives and in which the ruling group, as was the case with Fatah, is itself authoritarian and corrupt. There was discussion about the timing of elections: should they be the first step on the road to democratization or should they be the outgrowth of a democratization process that encompasses other features such as freedom of expression and an independent judiciary as well as a broadening middle class based on a private-sector economy?

On this issue participants offered differing perspectives. Some asserted that elections could not be deferred because they are essential as a means of legitimizing governmental authority and linking political leaders to the people they serve. Others suggested that elections held early in a democratization process are likely to reflect the radical divisions that exist, as we have seen in the case of Hamas (which has yet to renounce its commitment to terrorism and has been designated as a terrorist organization by the United States and the European Union). To the extent that elections are likely to be essential early in the democratization process, we must be prepared for radical parties such as Hamas or the Muslim Brotherhood to come to power. How to deal with such eventualities is a challenge that needs to be addressed as the United States and its allies develop democratization strategies. Several participants pointed out that however crucially important elections are in advancing effective democracy, they are insufficient in themselves. They must be reinforced by democratic values and institutions, as well as choices.

There was also discussion about the need for authoritarian governments in the wider Middle East to reform education to eliminate madrassahs, open their markets, cooperate regionally, and

address the widespread youth unemployment problem. All participants agreed that it is essential to shut down radical educational programs that are funded by Saudi oil revenues. Somehow we must promote alternative approaches. Without job creation, many said, there is no chance of reducing the ranks of potential jihadists, although participants also acknowledged that economic factors are not the sole motivation for radicalization. Terrorism is not the inevitable outgrowth of poverty. There was extensive discussion about how to provide alternatives to the madrassahs and how to empower women's groups and create market enterprises. The exclusion of women from the workforce and educational system results in a huge loss of labor and manpower for Middle East societies.

Although a direct relationship exists between democratization and reducing if not eliminating terrorism, no one disputed the fact that terrorist cells exist even in advanced, post-industrial societies. Indeed, as we have seen in the cases of Aum Shin Rikyo in Japan in the 1990s, and with those responsible for the London subway bombings in July 2005, the recruiting ground for much of the terrorist network is fertile in Muslim diasporas in Western Europe and North America. While many of the "foot soldiers" in the GWOT still come from the Middle East and North Africa, the recruitment of second-generation Europeans has injected a new element into the mix. This places a new requirement on Western governments to de-legitimize terrorism and its appeal to disaffected populations.

Essential Requirements for a Comprehensive Strategy

Much discussion at the workshop was devoted to the essential requirements for a comprehensive strategy to promote democratization as part of the overall effort to defeat Islamist radicalism. Participants generally agreed that the United States should craft a grand strategy encompassing several principal elements:

- Aggressively pursuing and defeating known terrorists and gathering intelligence to identify "unknown" terrorists and plots, using new technologies where possible to screen Internet and other communications. Such activity must be conducted with due regard for the trade-off between security and civil rights.
- Identifying and working with an indigenous base whenever possible but recognizing the essential differences between Cold War Eastern Europe and the Muslim world today.
- Promoting the view that the Middle East can become more fully a part of the globalized economy and working whenever possible to integrate the region more fully into this economic structure.
- Creating a process or mechanisms to monitor what is happening on the ground.
- Promoting multilateral frameworks where feasible.
- Emphasizing small, quantifiable steps rather than an ambiguous grandiose scheme.
- Being prepared for setbacks and policy failures.
- Leading from the top – the White House imprimatur on these efforts is important.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

- The war on terror encompasses a clash between competing forces within Islam. The radical Salafist vision seeks to recreate a caliphate expanding across North Africa, into Europe, through Central Asia and into the Middle East, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Moderate Muslims, on the other hand, strive to modernize by liberalizing out-of-date economic and political structures and by working with partners in the Western world to bring Arab democracies into being and to create the peaceful conditions for their states to prosper. The war on terror can only ultimately be waged and won by Muslims themselves. Therefore, the focus of U.S. public diplomacy and democracy-building efforts must be to identify and empower key individuals and groups within the Muslim world who can promote these objectives.
- All elements of U.S. (and Western) power are critically important to winning the long war for hearts and minds in the wider Middle East. At times, it may be necessary to use military power to achieve U.S. strategic goals. For the most part, however, soft power will shape the perspectives of elites and public opinion and influence their policy choices. As one workshop participant put it, “it is a matter of seduction not coercion” that should shape Western approaches to countries and groups in the wider Middle East. This implies the need for a top-down, comprehensive strategy that brings to bear all elements of U.S. power to the problem, including recognition of the need for an aggressive public diplomacy strategy aimed at defusing anti-Americanism, empowering pro-democracy forces, and rewarding friends and allies when they put themselves on the line for democratic principles.
- To be successful, any U.S. public diplomacy strategy targeted on the wider Muslim world must be developed with clear and concise messages, and leverage the important work of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), as was done during the Cold War with the AFL, the Catholic Church, and other prominent groups. Clearly, differences exist between the Cold War experiences of Eastern Europe and the struggle against radical Jihadists, but some overarching lessons from that earlier period apply today.
- In both Iraq and Afghanistan, there is a pressing need to explain to indigenous groups why we believe the rule of law is so important. Currently, the programs broadcast to, or in, Iraq and Afghanistan fail miserably in their content. Youth is the most important target audience in the wider Middle East, and thus far, our tools with the broadest reach, including the internet, are not being used effectively to engage this cohort. We have yet to figure out how best to utilize the Internet in the Arab world, as “blogging” (i.e., posting “blogs” as a public diplomacy tool) appears to be too random and unscientific to become the basis for implementing a “hearts and minds” campaign without reference to other media and communications strategies, although as a means of gauging insights into the minds of Muslim youth, “blogging” should be regarded as a useful tool.
- One key question is who specifically the audience is that we seek to influence. Who is the target audience in the wider Middle East? Should we, for example, be trying to engage religious moderates and work with them to establish inter-denominational dialogues, similar to those that Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II initiated between Catholics

and Protestants and with the Jewish communities? Moreover, the Charter 77 experience in Eastern Europe suggests the need to promote regionally based exchanges so that alliances can be built and common agendas established. The notion that a broader agenda needs to be in place is important to the tactics for promoting democracy building in the Middle East. To this end, some workshop participants proposed the establishment of a regional forum, perhaps under G-8 auspices, or as part of an expanded NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative, whereby regional pro-democracy advocates could meet to discuss common challenges. Absent very specific institutional frameworks in the Middle East region to provide incentives and support for the democratization process, it is important to set in place an incentives-based strategy that includes ideas on how to provide people with the tools they will need to help themselves.

- In the absence of a coherent civil society, elections are unlikely to produce successful democracies. As recent events have demonstrated, we need to refine our concept of democracy and emphasize the construction of civil institutions. For example, as one participant observed, in Iraq, the price of democracy is likely to be de-centralization, as only the Sunnis support the centralization of the state's authority. Clearly, a legacy of Saddam Hussein's rule is that neither the Shia south nor the Kurds in the north will support another centralized regime. This they fear would become as authoritarian as Saddam's rule. Recognizing the limits of democracy and the uniqueness of the models is crucial to development of a tailored strategy that seeks to encourage a civic culture that permits a free press, allows people to be treated decently, and fosters contacts across religions, ethnic groups, and regions. No one model of democratization fits all circumstances. Treating Turkey, for example, as the preferred model for a secular Islamic democracy is ill-conceived and readily dismissed by audiences in the Arab world.
- The U.S. approach to public diplomacy is fundamentally flawed, partly perhaps because of what one participant called "the subtle bigotry of low expectations" for the Arab-Muslim world. Why, it was asked, is the State Department sending critics of American policy to lecture in the Muslim world? Why have we not sent victims of Saddam's regime to speak to Arab audiences? The United States should be sponsoring native Arabic speakers who have major accomplishments and success stories of their own — people who have a vested interest in seeing democracy succeed in the Middle East. This is one area, too, in which the United States should begin to work much more closely, and systematically, with NGOs that are supportive of democracy-building efforts and that are sympathetic with what the United States is trying to achieve in its "long war."
- In several democracy-building experiences, cultural or institutional checks have been in place to keep the process true to its objectives. In Turkey, the military was identified as the spearhead for maintaining the country's security traditions, while constitutional courts were seen as arbiters of Turkey's democratic evolution. Outside of Turkey, NATO and Turkey's application to join the EU are identified as further influences on Turkey's democracy. However, one participant warned against weakening Turkish military influence as a prerequisite for EU membership, given its historic role as a guardian of democracy in Turkey. In Southeast Asia, Indonesia's and Malaysia's inherent disregard for military

power has made popular participation the arbiter of their constitutional processes, with both also having placed their participation in the global economy above any indigenous feelings in support of a pan-Islamic movement. Moreover, anti-Americanism in this region has abated, especially since the December 2004 tsunami and in light of U.S. humanitarian relief efforts undertaken throughout the first half of 2005. In Indonesia, for example, the number of people with a favorable view of the United States has nearly tripled, rising to 44 percent from 15 percent since 2003. While certainly not on the scale of the Marshall Plan devoted to Europe's post-war recovery, recent American disaster relief efforts in South and Southeast Asia after the tsunami and in Pakistan after the earthquake have served to weaken anti-Americanism in important ways. To the extent that anti-Americanism undermines democratization, the United States has a strong interest in repairing its overseas image, as noted by many participants.

Agenda

0900-0915 Welcome and Opening Remarks:

Dr. Jacquelyn K. Davis, Executive Vice President, IFPA

0915-1100 Session I: Adapting Lessons from the Cold War Experience to the GWOT: Limitations and Possibilities

Chair: Dr. Davis

Trade and Technology as Tools of American Power: Then and Now

Dr. Henry R. Nau

Professor of Political Science and International Affairs

The Elliot School for International Affairs

George Washington University

Soft Power and Cultural Influences: The Impact behind the Iron Curtain

His Excellency András Simonyi

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

Republic of Hungary

Leveraging Public Diplomacy, Strategic Communications, and International Exchanges

Dr. Roy Godson

Professor, Department of Government

Georgetown University

Helsinki Process, the OSCE and Multilateral Diplomacy

Ambassador James E. Goodby

Non-Resident Senior Fellow

The Brookings Institution

1100-1115 Break

1115-1300

Session II: Public Diplomacy and Democratization

Chair: Dr. Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., President, IFPA

***The Bush Administration's Strategy for Influencing
Democratic Developments in the Greater Middle East***

Mr. Richard Perle

Resident Fellow, The American Enterprise Institute

***The United States and Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim Worlds:
Are We Getting It Right?***

Dr. Robert Satloff

Executive Director

The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

***European Public Diplomacy and Implications for Democracy
Building for the Greater Middle East:
Cooperation or Competition with the United States?***

Dr. Dimitris Keridis

*The Constantine Karamanlis Associate Professor in Hellenic and Southeastern
European Studies*

The Fletcher School, Tufts University

1300-1400

Luncheon Address

"Democracy-Building in Iraq: Lessons-Learned and Challenges Ahead"

Mr. David Gompert

Emeritus Vice-President

RAND Corporation

**1400-1600 Session III: Democratization in the Broader Islamic World:
Diverging Models and Trends**

Co-Chairs: Dr. Davis and Dr. Pfaltzgraff

Uzbekistan and Central Asia: Missed Opportunities?

Mr. Matthew Bryza

*Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
for the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Southeast Europe*

Islam and Democracy: Is a Muslim “Christian Democratic Party” Possible?

Dr. Anwar Ibrahim

*Visiting Professor, Malaysia Chair of Islam in SE Asia
Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding
Georgetown University*

Understanding the AKP:

Islamist Democrats or a Challenge to Turkish Secularism?

Dr. Soner Cagaptay

*Director, Turkish Research Program
The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*

Prospects for Syrian Democracy

Mr. Farid Ghadry

*President
Reform Party of Syria*

1600-1630 Wrap-Up and Closing Remarks

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