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“Climate change also has very real implications for our national security, and those concerns must be an important part of the discussion.”

- Governor Christine Todd Whitman, ASP Board Member

“The current national security space-launch arrangement for our satellites and other space assets is precarious at best...”

- BGen Stephen A. Cheney, USMC (Ret.) and LtGen Norman Seip, USAF (Ret.)

“...if freedom and democracy are becoming unattractive dead terms in U.S. foreign policy, especially where our leadership matters most, we need to re-brand U.S. foreign policy.”

- Matt Freear, ASP Adjunct Fellow

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Robert B. Crowe

Robert B. Crowe is a Partner of Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough in its Boston and Washington, DC offices. He is co-chair of the firm's Government Relations practice.



Lee Cullum

Lee Cullum, at one time a commentator on the PBS NewsHour and "All Things Considered" on NPR, currently contributes to the Dallas Morning News and hosts "CEO."



Nelson W. Cunningham

Nelson Cunningham is President of McLarty Associates.



Admiral William Fallon, USN (Ret.)

Admiral Fallon has led U.S. and Allied forces and played a leadership role in military and diplomatic matters at the highest levels of the U.S. government.



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Raj Fernando is CEO and founder of Chopper Trading, a technology based trading firm headquartered in Chicago.



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Vice Admiral Gunn is the President of the Institute of Public Research at the CNA Corporation, a non-profit corporation in Virginia.



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Stuart Piltch

Stuart Piltch is the Co-Founder and Managing Director of Cambridge Advisory Group, an actuarial and benefits consulting firm based in Philadelphia.



Ed Reilly

Edward Reilly is CEO of Americas of FD International Limited, a leading global communications consultancy that is part of FTI Consulting, Inc.



Governor Christine Todd Whitman

Christine Todd Whitman is the President of the Whitman Strategy Group, a consulting firm that specializes in energy and environmental issues.

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August 4, 2014

The Russian annexation of Crimea and the scores of pro-Russia militants taking up arms in Eastern Ukraine — before it physically happened, you would be hard-pressed to find someone who labeled it a likelihood.

This example of a ‘black swan event’ is far from the only one that we have seen recently. The fact of the matter is that events small and large, but equally unexpected, have sprung up at an alarming rate around the globe. Political pundits and decision-makers will continue to rank the importance of such events, devise increasingly complex political solutions to deal with individual situations, and feed political campaigns from the missteps of their colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

Perhaps you would not be surprised to hear that I believe these sorts of behavior to be largely counterproductive to our long-term national security and standing within the international community. Although we cannot forget the importance of quick and precise decision-making in order to deal with crises as they appear, these crises also have the opportunity to give us a ‘forest through the trees moment’ – we can either continue to respond to black swan events as they appear, or look towards their root causes in this rapidly developing century.

At the American Security Project, we’ve examined some of those root causes over the past few months. An excellent example of this fact is our work in public diplomacy. By recognizing that a country simply cannot refuse to give its people a voice (at least in the long-term), one can gain a clearer view on how a place like the United States should interact with allies and enemies alike. To this end, we have discussed innovative State Department cultural diplomacy initiatives with members of Next Level who travel the world, bridging regional music with American hip-hop; the intricate and changing views of Arab youth with leaders of Burson-Marsteller and Penn Schoen Berland; and how internet censorship and circumvention are used around the world.

These projects do not only give us insight on public diplomacy, but also matters related to national security, asymmetric operations, and even economic security. It is exactly the type of thinking necessary to deal with increasingly complex issues that not only cross disciplines, but also cultures, languages, and currencies.

These issues are only exacerbated by larger factors that plague our world. All one has to do is look towards our work in climate change and national security. ASP’s distinguished cadre of retired flag officers have repeatedly gone around the country in order to explain to average citizens and decision-makers alike that climate change acts as a “threat multiplier” and “accelerant of instability.” Although these issues may most blatantly affect developing nations, their effects reverberate in places like the United States. It simply isn’t enough to say that we must allow these countries to deal with climate issues on their own – it has and will continue to have effects at home.

Lastly, I would be remiss if I didn’t say that wholly national security issues are also changing. Just as we are seeing a rise in the voice of the common citizen, we are also seeing new, social-media based communications from non-state actors and major powers alike. If we as a nation do not recognize and work towards adapting policy to these developments, we cannot effectively secure our country and remain a relevant force internationally.

Our world becomes more uncertain each and every day. Whereas we could once determine foreign policy based on the actions of a handful of nations, we must now consider the increasingly important role of the foreign public, non-state actors, and even our own climate. All these factors combine to create an international community where the next crisis could result in a 180° turn from the norm. In this issue of American Security Quarterly, we hope to give you a broad view of the relationship between the various elements that must be understood when making key policy decisions – I hope that you’ll agree.

Sincerely,

Adin Dobkin
Government & Media Affairs Officer | Adjunct Junior Fellow



Climate Security

Senate Hearing: DoD's Preparation for Climate Change's Impacts on Security

Colin Taylor, Research Intern

[Flashpoint Blog](#)

May 21, 2014

The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense met on May 21st, 2014 to receive testimony from several Department of Defense officials on the Department's [Operational Energy](#) programs and the incorporation of climate change into strategic planning. The DoD officials spoke mostly of increasing efficiency, adaptability, and flexibility in operational energy programs. Assistant Secretary of the Navy Dennis McGinn's opening statement detailed the Navy's plan to purchase domestically produced alternative fuel to minimize the uncertainties connected to the global petroleum supply chain and account for price volatility.

McGinn testified that the Navy will start integrating [advanced alternative fuels](#) into its normal supply chain next year at a cost that is competitive with petroleum. These fuels will have "drop-in" capability, allowing current infrastructure and vehicles to use the fuels without modification. In response to a question posed by Subcommittee Vice Chairman Thad Cochran about reducing the environmental impact of training and operating bases in the U.S., McGinn cited the Navy's increased use of simulations to reduce fuel consumption and curb carbon emissions. McGinn also highlighted how the Navy is improving efficiency through new technologies like stern flaps on ships that reduce fuel use as well as improving the culture of the Navy to get sailors and marines to use energy wisely.

According to McGinn, the Navy has also made strides in water consumption reduction. The Navy and Marine bases in California have reduced their water consumption overall by 25% over the last 5 years and plan to lower that number by an additional 20%. He went on to suggest large scale desalination plants powered by renewable energy to remedy the looming possibility of water shortages in the future. These shortages, in combination with natural disasters and other adverse effects of climate change, can destabilize fragile societies and even lead to regional war. It is for this reason that McGinn named [climate change a serious threat to U.S. security](#).

A large portion of the hearing was devoted to a discussion of the Arctic and [the implications of the shrinking ice cap](#). Brigadier General Kenneth Lewis spoke about the new [challenges and opportunities](#) presented by the opening up of the Arctic Ocean. He acknowledged that increasing human activity in the Arctic creates the potential for new security challenges but sees the opening of the region as an opportunity to work collaboratively with allies to ensure regional security and American interests. Lewis went on to say that recent reporting has overemphasized changes in the security landscape and designated the Arctic as a low level security threat. He stressed that "we must balance the risk of having inadequate capabilities and insufficient capacity with the cost of making premature and/or unnecessary investments."

General Lewis's statement is contradicted by a [G.A.O. report](#) released this week detailing the lack of a formal U.S. government strategy and process for tracking progress in achieving Arctic goals. Senator Richard Shelby of the subcommittee expressed concern that the U.S might fall behind Russia in Arctic infrastructure to process the potentially vast oil and natural gas reserves revealed by melting Arctic ice. When Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy Daniel Chiu spoke of the need to balance being proactive in the region with a potentially decades-long melting process, ranking subcommittee member Lisa Murkowski countered that in most cases building infrastructure is itself a decades-long process.

Obama Speech Shows Climate Change as a Key Part of America's Foreign Policy

Justin Tolentino, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
May 29, 2014

On May 28, 2014, President Obama [spoke](#) at West Point's commencement. In his speech to the graduating cadets, [Obama touched](#) on a range of foreign policy issues in a speech some said amounted to an emerging "Obama Doctrine." This includes climate change as a "creeping national security crises." Obama said that America should be a leader in addressing climate change. The President explained that we cannot expect other nations to address the threats, if we do not do so ourselves.

Obama explicitly listed problems stemming from climate change such as refugee flows, conflict over food and water, and natural disasters as ways that climate change will impact national security. Climate change deserves to move to the forefront of the agenda of many nations. For example, China is trying to reduce [air pollution](#) and its [dependence on coal](#). Here at the American Security Project, we have written reports labeling climate change a severe threat to national security.

ASP has published many reports and fact sheets that agree with the statements made by the President in his commencement speech about climate change security. For example, ASP's "[Protecting the Homeland – The Rising Costs of Inaction in Climate Change](#)" clearly states that the influx of rain water in certain areas, and the lack of it in others, will exacerbate natural disasters like floods and droughts. This shows how refugee flows and conflicts over food and water that the president mentioned can occur.

HUD Announces Winning Proposals for Flood Mitigation Project

Colin Taylor, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 6, 2014

On June 2nd, 2014, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan announced the winning proposals of the Rebuild by Design contest. Initiated in response to the widespread destruction caused by Superstorm Sandy in 2012, Rebuild by Design seeks to develop policy-based solutions that will protect U.S. cities most threatened by extreme weather events. The six winners all proposed resiliency strategies to better protect the areas most affected by the flooding and storm surges of Hurricane Sandy.

The most ambitious and expensive project, dubbed the Big U, aims to form a u-shaped protective system around 10 miles of low-lying areas in Manhattan. The \$335 million project proposes coordinated plans for three independent flood zone compartments featuring physical flood protection measures that are socially integrated into the community. Deployable walls attached to the underside of FDR drive will be able to flip down and provide instant flood barriers in extreme weather events while serving as well-lit easels for local artists in normal conditions.

These projects represent important steps that need to be taken across the United States. While it is important that we move to mitigate the sources of climate change, we will inevitably need to address the threats already presenting themselves. Resiliency strategies that plan to adapt to climate change are increasingly necessary, especially for coastal areas plagued by flooding. In the U.S. 39% of the total population lives in counties directly on the coastline and with Arctic ice melting faster than ever, a large swath of America is under direct threat. If we act proactively to prepare for the challenges posed by climate change, we can meet them head-on and successfully adapt to our changing planet.

American Security Project Featured in Desert Companion

Adin Dobkin, Government and Media Affairs Officer
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 17, 2014

Yesterday, the American Security Project was featured in the Desert Companion for our work across the country addressing climate change and national security.

BGen Stephen A. Cheney, USMC (Ret.), LtGen Norman Seip, USAF (Ret.), and Andrew Holland's discussions with public servants, military officials, and the general public were discussed in the piece.

Heidi Kyser, Desert Companion Correspondent, stated:

This [national security perspective] is where ASP gets its chance, however slim, of opening a door most other climate-change groups have slammed in their faces. Like these other groups, the generals have irrefutable climate data on their side. But they also have the things they've seen with their own eyes — from airplanes and ships and command posts around the world. In 2013, for instance, the Navy sent an aircraft carrier strike group that was stationed in Japan to the Philippines to offer disaster relief and humanitarian aid following typhoon Haiyan. Extreme weather events, along with drought, floods and wildfires, will only increase as the globe warms, Cheney says. These events — and their corollaries, such as decreased crop production — lead to global instability; and instability is a factor in national and international security.

For the full piece, please visit DesertCompanion.com

Ocean Acidification Discussed at Our Oceans Conference

Will Field, Research and Events Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 18, 2014

With temperatures expected to rise up to six degrees Celsius by the end of the century, increasing global attention is paid to how carbon dioxide affects our climate. It is an accepted fact in the international scientific community that the more of this greenhouse gas there is in the atmosphere, the hotter the planet will be.

Yet, as Carol Turley of the Plymouth Marine Laboratory explained to the participants of the Our Oceans conference at the State Department Tuesday morning, only about half of carbon dioxide emissions enter the atmosphere. The oceans absorb the rest, causing a chemical reaction that results in ocean acidification. According to Turley, rapidly falling pH levels will result in 100-150% greater ocean acidity by 2100.

Ocean acidification was the primary issue discussed on the second day of the Our Oceans conference, hosted by Secretary John Kerry at the State Department in Washington. Tuesday's proceedings opened with President Obama's taped announcement of the creation of the world's largest marine sanctuary in the Pacific Ocean, which received great applause.

Secretary Kerry then introduced guest speaker Leonardo DiCaprio, a passionate supporter of environmental causes through his personal foundation, who delivered a rousing call to action. "We cannot afford to be bystanders in this pre-apocalyptic scenario," the actor said: "We have to be the catalysts for our own planet's salvation."

After the speech, the day's main panel on acidification began, moderated by Scott Doney of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Various experts from across the globe presented their data and personal experiences on this pressing climate issue.

Ove Hoegh-Guldberg of the University of Queensland discussed the impact of acidification on coral reefs, juxtaposing an image of a healthy reef with a photo of a reef after Carbon Dioxide levels reach 500 ppm. Phillip Williamson of the Natural Environment Research Council explained the variability of ocean acidity and argued for a coordinated global effort to facilitate greater understanding of the important issue.

The panelist's most passionate speaker was a recently graduated Davidson student, Alexis Valauri-Orton, who travelled to coastal communities in places as diverse as Norway, Thailand, and Peru through her Watson Fellowship. She detailed the scallop-based economy of a small Peruvian community, and explained how the community would suffer if their scallops failed to thrive as a result of a lack of calcium carbonate, the material from which shellfish build their shells.

Finally, Bill Dewey of Taylor Shellfish Farms in Shelton, Washington, spoke about how ocean acidity affects his oyster fishery. In the first 48 hours of an oyster's life, he explained, 98% of its weight gain goes to its shell. But with reduced calcium carbonate, oysters have to allocate more of their energy to shell growth instead of strengthening their feeding organs, resulting in a weaker catch.

Secretary Kerry then took the podium for a segment focused on the formation of action steps relating to ocean issues, along with the President of Palau; the Foreign Ministers of Chile, Norway, and Togo; and the Managing Director of the World Bank. President Tommy Remengesau, one of Time's Heroes of the Environment, declared a new 193,000 square mile marine sanctuary, which will protect an area about the size of Texas in the Pacific Ocean. Borge Brende, the representative from Norway, pledged \$150 million of his country's funds to promoting sustainable fishing practices.

In conjunction with these major action steps, political and charitable leaders in the audience were inspired to make their own pledges: the Ocean Foundation and NOAA pledged to help set up a global ocean acidification network while The Bahamas' minister of the environment committed his country to protecting 20% of its sea territory by 2020.

Kerry concluded the final group session with an announcement that the conference resulted in pledges of \$1.45 billion and an eloquent speech about the need for action.

All in all, the conference demonstrated the kind of productive action that results when people stop debating scientific certainties and focus on real solutions. When political, economic, scientific, and philanthropic leaders come together to share their ideas and perspectives, real change can take place. The Our Oceans conference's mission is closely aligned with the American Security Project's; to solve our pressing climate issues, it is imperative that we bring together people from all segments of society and then take action.

ASP Board Member Christine Whitman Testifies on Climate Change

Colin Taylor, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 20, 2014

On June 18, 2014 American Security Project Board Member and former Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Christine Todd Whitman [testified](#) on climate change in front of the Senate Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Security. Whitman was joined by three other former EPA heads, the Attorney General of Alabama, and two professors of biology and banking in a heated discussion about the recently released [EPA regulations](#) on carbon emissions from power plants.

In her opening statement, Whitman stressed that climate change is not just an environmental and economic concern but a matter of national security for the U.S, a sentiment echoed by her three EPA colleagues. Former EPA administrator [William Reilly](#) referenced a [recent Washington Post article](#) about Norfolk, Virginia's struggle with rising seas and the endangered Navy base there as evidence of the security problems created by climate change.

"Climate change also has very real implications for our national security, and those concerns must be an important part of the discussion" – Christine Whitman

Most of the hearing was spent in partisan fights over science. Republican senators cited what they called “flawed science” and “alarmist reports” as reasons to fight and reverse the EPA regulations. Senator David Vitter proposed that even if claims about climate were true, the U.S alone can do little about it given the amount of carbon emitted by developing countries like China, India, and Brazil. Moreover, added Senator John Barrasso, President Obama’s weak foreign policy makes it unlikely that he will be able to stand up to the world’s largest carbon emitters.

The four former EPA administrators, all Republicans, countered this claim. They cited U.S. leadership in the fight against ozone depleting pollutants in the 1990 s as evidence of America’s ability to successfully influence global climate change policy by acting first. The four had made this case in an op-ed, “A Republican Case for Climate Action,” published in the New York Times in August, 2013. Both Reilly and EPA colleague William Ruckelshaus restated this position in their testimonies. Reilly contended that if the U.S. is to have the credibility to negotiate with other countries on climate change, it will need to act first. Ruckelshaus spoke in support,

“We like to speak of American exceptionalism. If we want to be truly exceptional then we should begin the difficult task of leading the world away from the unacceptable effects of our increasing appetites for fossil fuels before it is too late.”

Watch the Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety hearing “Climate Change: The Need to Act Now”

Liberal and Conservative Economists Debate Best Climate Change Practices

Will Field, Research and Events Intern
Flashpoint Blog
June 25, 2014

On Sunday, June 21, Former Republican Treasury Secretary Henry M. Paulson Jr. wrote an opinion piece in The New York Times, titled “The Coming Climate Crash”, that garnered a lot of national attention for the author’s assured stance on climate change. As a prominent conservative, his argument that the shifting environment is not only a pressing physical concern, but also economic, is an important step for all those concerned with the state of the planet.

As Treasury Secretary, Paulson was on the front lines of the government’s efforts to stop the 2008 financial crisis, a challenge that he likens to the climate crisis in his article, noting that the latter “is a more intractable problem.” He advocates for the establishment of a carbon tax, a measure intended to penalize the emission of fossil fuels and thereby incentivize renewable energy sources. Proponents of the measure argue it is simply a way of assessing companies that pollute the environment for the damage they cost society, rather than a government invasion into the private sector.

A Harvard MBA and former Goldman Sachs CEO, Paulson carries a lot of weight in the economic community. While he acknowledges there is some uncertainty in climate predictions, just as there was in financial crisis, he explains that cautiously waiting for more information would actually be “a very radical risk.” Simply looking at the issue financially, the costs of inaction are far greater than the costs of preparation, a reality demonstrated by the American Security Project’s Pay Now, Pay Later reports.

Perhaps most notably, Paulson dispels the myth that government expenditures to combat climate change are economically liberal. In fact, the government will be forced to spend and interfere much more in the private sector down the road if nothing is done to combat climate change, so the carbon tax, he argues, is in many ways a conservative measure.

In response to the Paulson piece, Nobel Prize winning professor and Keynesian economist Paul Krugman wrote an editorial called “The Big Green Test” critiquing Paulson’s piece as advocating idealistic

legislation unlikely to pass Congress. He highlights the “[theory of the second best](#)”, an economic principle stating that if a market inequality cannot be fixed (i.e. the societal cost of carbon cannot be penalized through emissions tax), then a second offsetting inequality will function in its place. Thus, Krugman argues for measures such as renewable energy subsidies, EPA regulations, and continued net metering agreements for homes and businesses that supply the grid with alternative energy.

Both arguments are compelling and should be debated as the United States determines how best to fight climate change. But, as Hank Paulson states in his piece, “there is a time for weighing evidence and a time for acting.” We have reached the point where the climate threat is too great not to act upon. The exchange between two leaders from opposite sides of the aisle is admirable, and represents the sort of public discussion that needs to take place. Once we acknowledge the indisputable reality of manmade climate change, as [95-100% of climate scientists](#) and numerous military and business leaders have, we can begin to negotiate the various solutions to the problem, on a partisan basis if necessary. The conversation between Paulson and Krugman is a great start in this direction and hopefully will lead to a national discussion on the climate issue.

“Silver Buckshot” Event Outlines Different Approach to Climate Change Fight

Colin Taylor, Research Intern

[Flashpoint Blog](#)

June 26, 2014

On Tuesday June 24, 2014, the [Wilson Center](#) in Washington, D.C. hosted “[Silver Buckshot: Alternative Pathways Towards Greenhouse Gas Mitigation](#),” a discussion about using smaller bottom-up initiatives to jump-start real progress on greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction. The three speakers all challenged the effectiveness of singular “silver bullet” solutions to climate change and instead proposed multiple flexible solutions understood as “silver buckshot.”

[Ruth Greenspan Bell](#), a public policy scholar and senior fellow at the World Resources Institute, called for “[skillful incrementalism](#)” in implementing this strategy. Because it is impossible to solve all global environmental problems at once, it is wiser to first focus resources on narrower issues that are ripe for resolution, like GHG reporting and monitoring. Bell contended that smaller measures of progress could be used as stepping stones for larger ones and demonstrate mutual trust between countries engaged in climate change negotiations. Moreover, these negotiations should be limited to discussions among the major players in climate change whose impact on the climate is greatest. The greatest headway on GHG mitigation will be made if the U.S, China and India are all involved.

Psychologist [Elke Weber](#) added a [behavioral dimension](#) to the conversation, insisting that individuals’ actions can be reshaped to great environmental benefit. One of the easiest ways to make behavior environmentally friendly is to make it the default option; instead of opting into green choices, people should need to opt out. Making energy efficient appliances, vehicles, houses etc. the default option for consumers increases their usage and decreases GHG emissions.

The problem is that right now industry and government are unwilling to take this necessary step in GHG mitigation. This issue can be solved by framing climate change as a security concern, says CNA Military Advisory Board Executive Director [Sherri Goodman](#). Goodman [described](#) climate change as a “threat multiplier” for instability in volatile regions of the world, posing a significant national security threat to the U.S. The best way to manage these risks is for the U.S. to lead global efforts to develop energy efficient solutions that slow climate change.

Overall, the discussion was encouraging. Each speaker brought a fresh perspective to the environmental debate. The diverse panel of psychologists, consultants, and research fellows was appropriate to address such a multifaceted issue. If we are to solve a problem as great as climate change, we will need all hands on deck.

ASP in Dallas: Climate Change and America’s National Security

Andrew Holland, Senior Fellow for Energy & Climate
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
July 1, 2014

On Monday and Tuesday, June 2 and 3, representatives of the American Security Project visited Dallas, Texas for a series of meetings, public events, and briefings on how climate change is affecting security, and how institutions in the region are planning for it.

Attending were [BGen Stephen Cheney, USMC \(ret.\)](#), ASP’s CEO and [Maj. General Paul Eaton, USA \(Retired\)](#). Cheney is the CEO of the American Security Project, and a 30 year veteran of the Marine Corps. Eaton currently serves as Senior Advisor to the National Security Network. His most recent operational assignment was Commanding General of the command charged with reestablishing Iraqi Security Forces 2003-2004. Both are members of ASP’s Consensus for American Security. [Andrew Holland](#), ASP’s Senior Fellow for Energy and Climate, and [Porter Brockway](#), ASP’s events manager, rounded out the delegation.

The first appointment was an event cosponsored with the [Dallas Committee on Foreign Relations](#). Hosted at the Rosewood Crescent Hotel in downtown Dallas, the event was an expert-level roundtable that featured an informed discussion of the impacts climate change will have on national security. The roundtable included Cynthia Connor, representing the United Kingdom’s Texas consulate, representatives from the private sector, academia, and a number of retired military.

General Eaton characterized the military planning process as looking at what counts for “vital national interests” – and made clear that climate change is impacting vital interests. He talked about risk management, saying that the military is very good at asking “what if” and then asking the crucial follow-up, “what next?”

Listen to the Audio here:

[AUDIO OF DALLAS COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS EVENT](#)

That evening, ASP hosted a VIP dinner to discuss in an off-the-record format various threats to national security with a high-level group of speakers. The group heard serious questions about how climate change was altering the operating environment for the military.

Using Dallas’ Waste to Power a City

On Tuesday morning, the ASP delegation drove to the [McCommas Bluff landfill](#), operated by the city of Dallas. The city claims to be adding about 6400 tons of waste per day to the landfill.

That waste is digested by bacteria into a combination of gases that can be harvested for fuel. A bit more than half of the gas that is vented from typical landfills is methane – natural gas: a clean-burning fuel that also is a potent greenhouse gas if emitted directly into the atmosphere.

Throughout McCommas Bluff, the company [Clean Energy Fuels](#) has sunk over 450 pipes into landfill to harvest that gas before it escapes into the atmosphere. They pipe it from the landfill over to a processing facility that separates the gas into its constituent parts: sulfur dioxide (the source of that characteristic smell), carbon dioxide, nitrogen, trace contaminants, and methane. They process the methane until it is pure enough and concentrated enough to connect to the nearby interstate gas pipeline and send it on its way.

From Dallas, this gas is contracted to supply Sacramento with clean gas for energy. About 70% of the landfill's harvested gas is used for this purpose, while the rest is used by Clean Energy Fuels as transportation fuel that they sell. In this way, the people of Sacramento are turning on their lights by using gas that is a direct result of the waste of the people of Dallas.

Effects of Drought on Texas

After the tour of McCommas Bluff, the ASP visited [Lake Grapevine Lake Reservoir](#), north of Dallas. The lake was at 62% of capacity when the delegation visited, a direct result of the ongoing Texas drought, one of the four lowest levels since the reservoir was created in the 1950s.

For Dallas, the water shortage has not yet become a crisis. However, other cities further west and north in Texas have struggled to meet the challenge of the drought. For example, [Lake Abilene](#), only 180 miles west of Dallas, is 3.4% full. North of Dallas, along the Red River, the city of [Wichita Falls](#), Texas has effectively run out of water and is actively searching for alternative sources.

Even in the Dallas area, though, drought is having a real effect. As the ASP delegates saw in their visit, Lake Grapevine was more than 10 feet below its level. This harms the ability of locals to use the lake and will eventually force the residents of the Dallas area to make some difficult choices about their water use. As the drought continues, and as ASP's Texas and climate change paper makes clear, the problem of drought is likely to be a persistent one for Texas. It is time for the state to make plans for a hotter, drier future.

ASP's trip to Dallas highlighted the challenges that the state faces from a changing climate, but it also showed how companies, local governments, and individuals are beginning the process of planning for the inevitable.

ASP in Las Vegas: Threats from Climate Change in the Desert

Andrew Holland, Senior Fellow for Energy & Climate
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
July 1, 2014

On Wednesday and Thursday, June 11 and 12, representatives of the American Security Project visited Las Vegas, Nevada for a series of meetings, public events, and briefings on how climate change is affecting security, and how institutions in the region are planning for it.

Attending were [BGen Stephen Cheney](#), USMC (ret.), ASP's CEO and [Lt. General Norman Seip](#), USAF (Retired). Cheney is the CEO of the American Security Project, and a 30 year veteran of the Marine Corps. Seip currently serves as an advisor to the Air Force. His most recent operational assignment was as the Commander of 12th Air Force (Air Forces Southern), Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. As the Deputy Combined Forces Air Component Commander for U.S. Central Command, General Seip had a direct impact in supporting combat operations in operations Iraqi Freedom. Both are members of ASP's Consensus for American Security. Andrew Holland, ASP's Senior Fellow for Energy and Climate, and Porter Brockway, ASP's events manager, rounded out the delegation.

Nellis Air Force Base Array

The first stop on the tour was Nellis Air Force Base, north of the "Strip." While there, ASP toured the Nellis Solar Array. Taking up approximately 140 acres of land, the array contains about 70,000 photovoltaic solar panels, with a peak power capacity of about 13 megawatts. When first installed in 2007, this was the largest solar array in the country, and one of the largest in the world. As a testament to how far solar has advanced in the last seven years, it is not even in the top 50 – it is not even the largest on a military base, with facilities in the Army's Fort Huachuca and the Air Force's Davis-Monthan in Arizona overtaking it. Only the week before, SunPower and NV Energy had announced a new plan to more than double the capacity of Nellis' solar system.

The Nellis Array provides about 25% of the electricity used by the base, and it has shown itself to be an example for the rest of the military in how to effectively reduce fossil fuel dependence while saving money and not harming operational effectiveness.

Las Vegas World Affairs Council

That evening, ASP presented to an expert audience put together by the Las Vegas Council on Foreign Affairs at the Spanish Trail Country Club. After an introduction from [Stacy Standley](#), the former director of the WWF (Worldwide Fund for Nature) Living Planet Campaign, ASP presented to an audience of about 40 people a presentation about how climate change interacts with America's security. It started with an outline of the science of climate change, then Generals Cheney and Seip noted how climate change is already affecting global security. Finally, General Cheney discussed how Las Vegas is clearly threatened by climate change, noting how drought and heat in the desert city were causing harm already. There were a number of questions focused on how climate change would impact America's military force posture and our ability to intervene around the world. After the presentation, Vinny Spotleson, a staff member for Senator Harry Reid, gave a certificate of recognition to ASP for their work on this issue.

The entire presentation is available as a podcast, clicking above.

Bureau of Reclamation and the Hoover Dam

The following morning, ASP drove out to Boulder City, the home of the Bureau of Reclamation office that oversee the lower Colorado River Basin to discuss the effects of the ongoing drought on the Colorado River and the states the rely on its waters. They were accompanied by Heidi Kyser, a journalist with the Desert Companion, who wrote an excellent article, "[We Want You to Join the Fight Against Climate Change](#)" about it.

They met with [Jennifer McCloskey](#), Assistant Regional Director for Reclamation's Lower Colorado Region. As written in the recently released ASP Perspective Paper, *[Water Management in the American Southwest, Lessons for the Age of Climate Change](#)*, there is a large amount of redundancy built into the water systems of the region. So, as McCloskey explained, even though the drought of the last 14 years has been unprecedented in the historical record for the region, water delivery to customers has not been affected.

However, if the drought continues, that could change. Last year was the lowest release out of Lake Powell into Lake Mead since the lakes were created. The current level of Lake Mead is at about 1086 feet, and official shortage restrictions will go into effect once the lake reaches 1075 feet. That means that delivery of water will have to be curtailed to several of the junior states in the River basin, notably Arizona and Nevada. Reclamation estimates that the lake could go below 1075 feet as early as 2015. This will set up a series of legal conflicts between municipal and agricultural water users as well as between various states.

After the meeting, we made the short drive down from Boulder City – a drive that thousands of workers made during the depths of the Great Depression – to the Hoover Dam.

As you approach Hoover, one cannot help but be in awe of the size and scale of the achievement to build such a dam. On the tour of the Dam, the director of engineering showed how low the water level of Lake Mead had fallen. He noted that this not only affects the ability of Reclamation to deliver water, but it reduces the Dam's ability to sell power.

As the ASP delegation was in underground pipe room, one of the turbines turned on – you could feel the raw power that millions of gallons of water can deliver. One of the most interesting things is how this 1930s era of renewable power can work together with today's renewables. The hydropower that Hoover Dam delivers is one of the best ways to integrate the variable power of renewables – when an electric utility needs power, it is easily "dispatchable" – so long as the water remains.

It is not an exaggeration to say that without Hoover Dam and the water supplied from Lake Mead, Las Vegas would not exist at anywhere near the size it does today. The Las Vegas region is challenged by climate change, more so than almost any other major American city. It is important that the city, state and federal government are aware of the challenges – and are preparing for it. Actions by Nellis Air Force Base show that the military can lead the way on addressing climate change, but the trip to Hoover Dam makes any visitor wonder how to rebuild the national consensus that Americans can do big things. Whereas we once built this series of great dams along a great river, enabling the West to be settled, we now cannot seem to find the consensus to do great things.

UAE Takes Lead Role in the Gulf on Climate Action

Andrew Holland
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
March 27, 2014

Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber of Abu Dhabi writes an important op-ed in [Gulf News](#) about the importance of finding solutions to climate change, titled “[The Climate Change Challenge](#).” He says that Abu Dhabi will “*bring the world together to drive more solutions*” to this issue at a meeting in May called [Abu Dhabi Ascent](#) to drive momentum towards finding solutions to climate change. Sultan Al Jaber wears several hats in the UAE; he is Minister of State, the Chairman of Masdar, the Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Ports Company, and the UAE’s Special Envoy for Energy and Climate Change.

In his op-ed, Al Jaber says that in “*driving investment in new technologies, innovation and educational opportunities for all*” it is necessary for all nations to “*work together on big win-win opportunities that will reduce emissions*” and combat climate change. He then writes of the “*positive solutions to reduce emissions while creating economic and social opportunities*” – “*where the UAE excels.*”

The UAE would not be an observer’s first pick for a leader on sustainable energy and climate change. As a member of OPEC with the 7th largest proven oil reserves in the world, it would be understandable for them to fight against sustainable energy, or to act as a “spoiler” for global negotiations on climate change. After all, any real efforts to combat climate change will leave at least a portion of their vast oil and natural gas reserves unused. However, they realize that fossil fuel reserves are limited, by their very nature and over the last decade, the UAE has become a leader in developing renewable power.

UAE’s principal contribution to sustainable energy is the state run renewable energy company Masdar, of which Dr. Jaber is the Chairman of. According to Al Jaber, Masdar “*is building the world’s most sustainable city to discover how design, infrastructure and technology accommodate for denser populations, while dramatically reducing energy, water and waste usage.*” Masdar supports nearly 1 gigawatt of clean energy capacity from wind and solar power around the world.

In addition, after signing a Section 123 Agreement with the US in December, 2009 the UAE has begun to install a series of four nuclear power plants that will meet 25% of UAE’s electricity demand with carbon-free power by 2020.

The attention that the UAE can bring to climate change and clean energy within the Persian Gulf region is extremely important because, (as ASP’s [Climate Security Report](#) found) the Middle East “*faces severe water scarcity issues, which has led to droughts and food price spikes.*” Climate change will inevitably make the many security challenges that the Middle East faces worse and more difficult to address. Security planners say that climate change will *multiply existing threats.*

Unfortunately, in ASP’s [The Global Security Defense Index on Climate Change](#), we found that “*The plurality of states in the region... have no defined position*” on climate change as a security threat, despite “the many pressing challenges faced by every country of the region.”

Similar to its leadership on energy and sustainable development, the UAE is a leader on examining the security consequences of climate change. In a white paper on [Food Security and Water](#), the UAE's government said: "Climate change and an estimated global population increase to nine billion people by 2050 together raise considerable uncertainty about the planet's ability to continue to feed its inhabitants...the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa, have highlighted the importance of food security."

Considering the security costs and threats climate change exerts over the region, it is important to see Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber's leadership on climate change. The UAE should be a model for other energy producing countries in the region; it is preparing for the threats of climate change, and it is investing heavily in developing solutions.

ASP in Tennessee: Climate Change Threatens Security

Andrew Holland
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
April 16, 2014

On Monday and Tuesday, April 7 and 8, representatives of the American Security Project visited Western and Central Tennessee for a series of meetings, public events, and briefings on how climate change is affecting security, and how businesses are planning for it.

Attending were LtGen John "Glad" Castellaw, USMC (ret.) and Brig. General John Adams, USA (Retired). Castellaw was a 36 year veteran of the Marine Corps and now serves as the Director of the Crockett Policy Institute and a member of the ASP Board. Adams is a 30 year veteran of the Army, is completing his Doctorate in International Relations, and is the President of Guardian Six Consulting LLC. Both are members of ASP's Consensus for American Security. Andrew Holland, ASP's Senior Fellow for Energy and Climate, and Porter Brockway, ASP's events manager, rounded out the delegation.

The first appointment of the tour was to meet with representatives of FedEx at Memphis Airport to discuss the energy and environmental challenges that the company faces, and efforts they are taking to mitigate those challenges. We agreed that a large portion of the event would be off the record in order to have a more open discussion, but there are certain parts that can be reported.

The visit started with a tour through the FedEx sorting facility – a place that has about 10,000 employees per day. As we toured on Monday morning, we saw the facility the only time that it is quiet – as there is no pickup on Sundays and packages picked up from Monday had not yet arrived. Repeatedly throughout the meeting, we returned to this theme: greater investment in energy efficiency and reduced energy use has co-benefits to overall productivity and profits for FedEx. After the tour around the facility, ASP moved inside to meet with executives and leaders or FedEx's "Practical Sustainability" initiatives. We went through their efforts on biofuels, flight fuel management, and ground transport efficiency. For a full discussion of FedEx's work, see this (forthcoming) article. Overall, the theme was clear: as FedEx has invested in clean energy, its environmental footprint has gone down while revenues and profits have continued to climb.

After leaving FedEx, ASP drove to the West Tennessee Solar Farm, an initiative of the University of Tennessee to provide 5 MW of solar power to the electricity grid. Taking up more than 25 acres, the approximately 21,000 fixed photovoltaic solar panels provide electricity as one of the largest solar arrays in the Southeast. ASP met with Elliot Barnett, the facility manager, who discussed the history of the facility. While the facility provides important electrical power, its purpose is also as an educational destination. Built within easy view of Interstate 40, the Tennessee Department of Transportation is building an off-ramp and visitors center that will allow travelers to see and learn about solar power and renewable energy. There is room to expand, and the facility could one day host a variety of renewable energy production.

From there, ASP drove to Martin, TN for a public event at the University of Tennessee in Martin. Hosted by Malcom Koch of the International Education program, the event drew over 100 students, faculty, and community members to the discussion. Generals Castellaw and Adams discussed how climate change is going to change the operating environment for the military, and discussed some of the threats that poses. After their presentations, there was important questions and answers from the Audience. UT Martin is a school that specializes in agriculture, so a focus of some questions was on how climate change is going to alter the ability of Tennessee and the world to produce food. A full video of the event is forthcoming.

The following day, ASP drove to Nashville for a meeting with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) to discuss their energy security and sustainability initiatives. TVA is a unique entity, in that it is a federally-owned enterprise that is that also acts as a commercial entity. It was chartered in 1933 to provide flood control, electricity generation, and economic development to the Tennessee River Valley. TVA's service region covers most of Tennessee, plus some parts of the adjoining states of Alabama, Mississippi, Virginia, Georgia, and Kentucky.

TVA, as a part of the federal government, has an active role in the Climate Action plan to both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to prepare for the effects of climate change. On the first order, TVA is reducing emissions through the retirement of old coal power plants, increasing its share of nuclear generating capacity, increasing the share of generation from natural gas power plants, and increases in energy efficiency. By 2020, TVA forecasts that they will reduce CO2 emissions by 40% below 2005 levels. By 2012, TVA had already reduced these emissions to 23% below 2005 levels.

In preparing for the effects of climate change, TVA is investing in thermal power plants that have more of a closed-loop cooling system, so that warmer river waters do not force a shutdown of generation. They are making the grid more resilient to extreme weather by widening the rights of way for transmissions lines. Overall, TVA believes that the best way for a utility to be resilient to future climate changes is to have a balanced portfolio of generating capacity, which includes renewables, nuclear, coal, and natural gas. As was the case throughout the tour, TVA made clear that current investments now would pay off in both environmentally and in increased profits.

The final event took place at Belmont University in Nashville. ASP spoke to a group of about 50 students about how climate change was impacting national security. The audience was interested and engaged in the topic – several questioners were veterans or ROTC members who asked specific questions about how the military is preparing for climate change.

The full two days were important because it underscored both the threats that climate change pose to national security and to states like Tennessee and the opportunities that businesses, students, and the government have in preparing for a changed world. As this tour showed, preparing for climate change – either

by reducing emissions or increasing resilience – can be a real “win-win.” Those who present climate change as only a cost are presenting a false choice – and no one knows that better than the military. We can increase mission effectiveness and reduce the footprint at the same time: Tennessee can help lead the way.

Military Engagement on Climate Strengthens Ties in Asia

Andrew Holland

[Flashpoint Blog](#)

June 4, 2014

Last weekend, senior leaders from across Asia and the Pacific gathered in Singapore for the [IISS Shangri-la Security Dialogue](#). It looks like there was some fireworks, according to my old boss, [Nigel Inkster](#), who said “The gloves came off.”

In this time of heightened tensions, there is an area where countries and militaries can work together. Humanitarian assistance and cooperation can build relationships between the U.S. and countries across Asia. Much of that cooperation will come around preparedness for climate change.

Planning for climate change is important in the Pacific area of operations because it will fundamentally alter the operating environment in ways which will cause harm to the national security of countries around and within the Pacific. However, planning for climate change in the region is also important because the other countries in the region perceive it as important. As Dale Carnegie says in *How to Win Friends and Influence People*: “*To be interesting, be interested.*” In other words, in order for the U.S. to gain influence in the Pacific, the U.S. must be interested in what countries in the region are: and the threats posed by climate change interest them deeply, as ASP's [Global Security Index on Climate Change](#) shows.

The area around the Pacific is perhaps the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change because of how multiple threats overlap one another, as our [Climate Security Report](#) notes. Environmental factors like rising sea levels, declining fresh water availability, declining food productivity, and the threat of more powerful tropical storms are combining with other factors like rapid urbanization in low-lying river-delta cities, deforestation of tropical forests, and international competition over access to energy resources.

Throughout the fall of 2013, favorable atmospheric conditions combined with abnormally warm water in the deep Central Pacific to spawn five ‘super-typhoons’ with sustained winds greater than 150 mph.

This spate of storms included Super-Typhoon Haiyan, the storm that made landfall in the Philippines with maximum sustained winds estimated at 195 mph – the highest in recorded history to make landfall anywhere in the world. Bryan Norcross, the Senior Hurricane Specialist from the Weather Channel called it [“the most perfect storm he’s ever seen.”](#)

Where the storm first hit land, on the east coast of the Philippines’ Samar Island, towering waves on top of a massive storm surge crashed against the coast, creating high water marks [46 feet above mean sea level](#); the highest level recorded from a tropical cyclone in at least a century.

The result was that more than 7,000 people died around Tacloban, making this the deadliest Typhoon in Philippine history. Filipinos are accustomed to Typhoons – they make landfall nearly every year; the country’s government institutions and its culture are prepared to weather the storms. Haiyan simply overwhelmed their ability to cope; this Typhoon was of a strength unprecedented in human history – how could they have prepared for this?

When a disaster of that scale happens, the US Navy and Marines are the only organization in the Pacific with the logistical capabilities to respond in time in a large enough force to make a difference. Shortly after the storm, Secretary Hagel ordered the USS George Washington’s battle group, then on a port visit to Hong Kong, [“to make best speed”](#) to respond to the Typhoon. In all, over [13,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines](#) were engaged in the Humanitarian Assistance/ Disaster Response (HA/DR in military acronyms) mission to the Philippines.

That response certainly saved lives: even weeks after the Typhoon, doctors, transported to remote areas by Navy and Marine helicopters, were treating patients hurt in the storm. Moreover, these HA/DR missions provide more than simply food, fresh water, and supplies; they can prevent a downfall into lawlessness. In the days immediately after the storm, there were reports of radical Filipino insurgents hijacking aid supplies from Filipino government convoys. U.S. Marines are a harder target – and their presence helped to quell such violence before it became common.

American Engagement on Climate Security Increases Influence

Immediately after the storm, the Filipino Climate Change Ambassador, Yeb Sano, made an impassioned speech to the global negotiators assembled in Warsaw for the round of UN negotiations leading to a successor to the Kyoto Protocol. In a tearful address, he said [“What my country is going through as a result of this extreme climate event is madness.”](#) If the United States military had not responded in the way it did, and if the U.S. leadership in the Pacific had actively denied the link between climate change and security, it is easy to see how there could have been a backlash against American interests in the region.

Instead, in April 2014, President Obama visited Manila to sign a new U.S.-Philippines defense pact. Certainly, most of the thrust driving that treaty forward was the rise of China, particularly their aggressive actions in the South China Sea. Nonetheless, the quick American response after Typhoon Haiyan served to remind the Filipino government and people (who have not always supported American military engagement) why it is important to have the U.S. Navy on your side.

U.S. military engagement on this issues is important because prepares for the next storm and it boosts American “soft power” in a region that too often only sees the U.S. through its military perspective. The fact that U.S. Pacific Command and the Department of Defense are preparing for climate change can help to align American interests with the other nations in the region that view climate change as a clear threat to their security.

To underline the importance of climate preparedness to this agreement, the first joint U.S. – Philippine exercises since the pact was signed – the Balikatan war games, held in early May – included a HA/DR exercise to Tacloban City, the very city which had been devastated by Typhoon Haiyan.

GMACC Report Details World Security Threats Posed by Climate Change

American Security Project
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 5, 2014

On June 5th, 2014, the Global Military Advisory Council on Climate Change (GMACCC) released a [summary](#) of the key findings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) and its implications for defense. The GMACCC report found that climate change poses an increasing threat to world security.

BGen Stephen Cheney, USMC (ret), ASP's CEO and a member of the GMACCC said: *“Militarys around the world are responsible for planning for threats to their nation's security. Climate change poses a clear threat; and militarys know that we cannot afford to ignore the risk. It is time for governments to listen to this latest warning from the military.”*

Andrew Holland, ASP's Senior Fellow for Energy and Climate said: *“The threats from climate change are real and happening now. The longer the world waits to effectively address the problem, the worse it will get. In the 21st Century, national security is about more than just guns and bombs – it is also includes the ability to provide a stable environment. Only with concerted international action can we succeed in meeting the challenge.”*

This global security threat comes primarily from the destabilizing effects of climate change. Rising sea levels and increasingly common extreme weather events can produce mass migrations, food and water insecurity, and spread disease. The report notes that these factors are particularly dangerous in less developed countries with weak or failing governments that lack the capacity to provide humanitarian relief. In combination with existing problems, climate change can spell disaster.

“Climate change indirectly increases the risk of violent conflict in the forms of civil war, inter-group violence and violent protests, by exacerbating well-established drivers of these conflicts such as economic and political shocks”

The GMACCC report also noted that the ability of developed countries to provide disaster relief to unstable regions will be undermined by climate change. Militarys are often deployed to support relief efforts and are themselves directly affected by climate change. Many militarys' presence in low-lying coastal areas and on islands and archipelagos in the Pacific Ocean is [directly threatened by rising sea levels](#). Often the single largest consumer of fossil fuels in any country, militarys will also need to address how they fuel their planes, tanks, and ships. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions created by the burning of fossil fuels heat the earth which in turn melts polar ice, resulting in the elevated seas that endanger military operations and infrastructure.

The report offers multiple solutions to the multifaceted security problems posed by climate change. One simple answer is for militarys to switch from petroleum-based fuels to [biofuels](#), which could cut GHG emissions by more than 30%. This process is already underway in the U.S. Air Force, which pledged to use biofuels for 50% of its domestic fuel consumption by 2016, and in the Navy, which Assistant Secretary Dennis McGinn [recently testified](#) will start integrating advance biofuels in 2015. More complex solutions included developing 'resilience strategies' to plan for population displacement. The report proposed that the military should take an active role in refugee support by making use of military bases as medical centers and support areas for refugees.

GMACCC's report affirms much of what has been written about [climate change](#) at ASP. Both GMACCC and ASP agree that climate change will act as a 'threat multiplier', putting pressure on militarys to address growing security threats on multiple fronts. Mass migrations, reduced food production, and conflict over scarce resources are all jointly forecasted by GMACCC and ASP.

Fortunately, we also agree on what needs to be done. The world's militaries will need to lead the way, using their well-developed risk management strategies and coordination capabilities to adapt to the effects of climate change already underway and plan for those still to come. Militaries have the capacity to provide emergency infrastructure and disaster relief on a global scale and should not shy away from taking a leading role in the fight against climate change.

You can read the GMACCC press release [here](#).

G7 Promotes Energy Security, Global Development and Peace

Kendall Strong, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 12, 2014

Leaders from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the US, including President Obama, met in Brussels on June 4-5 for the first regular G7 summit of the last fifteen years (the group had met since the 1990s as the G8, but Russia was excluded from this meeting). On the table this year were issues concerning energy security, climate change, trade, peace and global development.

The countries discussed the viability of increasing global energy efficiency through diverse, flexible, transparent and competitive markets. They also discussed energy options for Ukraine and other European countries that obtain oil and gas from Russia. The countries denounced “the use of energy supplies as a means of political coercion or as a threat to security” as unacceptable.

The summit also touched on climate change. The Copenhagen Accord – agreed to in 2009 – calls on countries to activate \$100 billion per year by 2020 in order to help less developed countries address climate change. The G7 discussed their hopes for a global climate change commitment by 2015 when there will be another G7 meeting in Germany. The countries agreed on working under the Rome G7 Initiative to build a more diverse, low-carbon energy market together, as well as with the International Energy Agency and the International Renewable Energy Agency. Options included pushing out fossil fuel subsidies and increasing the Liquefied Natural

Gas market.

Current hostilities between Russia and Ukraine left the government of Vladimir Putin out of the discussions, and out of Sochi, where the summit was initially to be hosted. The seven countries agreed on an agenda to de-escalate hostilities with Russia and have denounced their annexation of Crimea. The countries also voiced their support for Ukrainian President-elect Petro Poroshenko and the imposition of sanctions on those who have impinged upon the rights of Ukrainians.

The Brussels G7 Summit Declaration can be read [here](#).

Law of the Sea Treaty in Focus at Arctic Seminar

Will Field, Research and Events Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 30, 2014

On Thursday June 26th, the Royal Norwegian Embassy hosted a breakfast seminar titled “Security Challenges in a Changing Arctic”, during which key issues regarding American security in the High North were discussed. Senator Angus King, who delivered the keynote speech before a packed room at the Army and Navy Club, illustrated the United States’ lack of military preparedness in the region: American armed forces only utilize one polar-class icebreaker, which has been in service since 1976. Furthermore, the US, despite already adhering in practice, is one of the few countries in the world yet to ratify the Law of the Sea convention, a treaty which would benefit the US economically and diplomatically. [Research by the American Security Project](#) reveals the numerous advantages of the treaty both for domestic business interests and foreign policy.

The [USGS estimates](#) that over 20% of undiscovered petroleum reserves rest in the Arctic basin, which is now seasonally accessible due to ice melt resulting from climate change. While the speakers acknowledged the irony of burning fossil fuels that are only available due to glacial melt from previous carbon emissions, Senator King advocating using the reserves in the short and mid term as America gradually shifts towards renewable sources. As various Arctic countries compete for exploitable territory, it is vital to have a legal framework with which to settle territorial disputes, a point acknowledged by virtually all speakers. The Law of the Sea Treaty establishes rules

to determine aquatic rights and, if ratified, would allow the United States to lay claim to a vast, mineral-rich continental shelf that extends 600 miles off the coast of Alaska, in addition to the customary 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone.

The Senator's speech was echoed in the proceeding panel by Ambassador David Balton, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Fisheries at the State Department, who added that America is the only Arctic nation not presently a party to the treaty and called for the Senate to take the matter up. Also present at the event was Rear Admiral Jonathan White, Oceanographer and Navigator of the Navy. He argued that as Arctic ice recedes at an ever quickening pace, the US must increase its presence in the region, although in a non-militarized way. Given the dangers of the harsh marine environment, it is important to have an emergency infrastructure in place.

The American Security Project, in a paper titled "[Critical Security Challenges in the Arctic](#)", articulated 5 key challenges of the changing Arctic landscape: Energy Exploration, Territorial Disputes, Infrastructure for Emergency Response, American Military Presence, and Managing the U.S. Presence on the Arctic Council. The speakers highlighted all of these issues in their discussion of the High North. With momentum building from the State Department's Our Oceans conference, there is increased international will to resolve the myriad aquatic challenges facing the United States and the world. Signing the Law of the Sea Treaty, which has the full support of the Navy and business leaders such as Lockheed Martin, would be an important step as America confronts the challenge of a changing environment in the Arctic and beyond.



Energy Security

Argonne National Lab Facilities Address the Climate Call to Action

Andrew Holland
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
May 30, 2014

With the range of recent studies out on climate change, including [IPCC's](#), the [National Climate Assessment](#), and others, there is a growing drumbeat to get to work on reducing emissions. President Obama will announce on June 2, new efforts to mitigate emissions.

That means we need all available means to address rising carbon levels, including zero- or low-carbon energy sources like nuclear and renewable energy must triple to quadruple by 2050. The IPCC concluded that nuclear energy should increase to meet the globe's future energy needs – [a recent study by one of the world's largest oil and gas companies](#), ExxonMobil, concluded that nuclear energy will need to double to meet rising electricity demand while reducing CO₂ emissions.

[A study by the Carnegie Institution for Science](#) that evaluated different types of low-carbon energy sources found that the only way to address climate change is for the world to move to the lowest emission energy technologies. Absent great advances in carbon capture and energy storage technology, the nuclear industry is likely to bear much of this burden as the only mature and reliable source of low-carbon baseload power.

However, the IPCC mitigation study also highlights barriers to increasing nuclear power's share of electricity generation, including safety concerns and unresolved waste management issues. It points to next-generation

reactor technology as a way to address these problems. If nuclear energy is to rise to the challenge of addressing global climate change, we need to find more efficient ways to develop and test the technology.

In the past, national laboratories and industry expended tremendous cost and effort – typically underwritten by the U.S. government – just to develop a single nuclear reactor design. But in today's budget environment, this method simply isn't feasible.

Argonne National Laboratory, which ASP partnered with in April to launch a new center on climate change and security, has responded to this challenge by developing dynamic facilities that researchers can use to evaluate multiple different reactor systems or designs. In particular, the MAX Fluid Dynamics Facility is remarkable because it allows researchers to evaluate turbulence inside of different types of reactor cores. By looking at this data, Argonne can help utilities build better reactor fuel that lasts longer and is therefore more economical.

Argonne's nuclear work is not limited to core design – it's extending its approach to safety as well. At the Natural Convection Shutdown Heat Removal Facility (NSTF), scientists can configure the facility in multiple ways to evaluate different inherent safety designs for next-generation reactors. The safety systems evaluated at this facility would remove heat from the nuclear reactor core without any intervention from an operator. In the event of an accident, the reactor's heat removal systems would continue to work – even without backup power. These designs have an additional benefit – they're cheaper to build than traditional reactor safety systems. When considering the next generation of reactor technology, the NSTF's flexibility makes it a particularly valuable asset.

These facilities encompass two of the agile approaches that make the kind of nuclear acceleration called for by the IPCC possible.

Energy Priorities in North Africa and the Middle East

Justin Tolentino, Research Intern
Flashpoint Blog
June 17, 2014

On June 11, 2014, the House Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa held a hearing assessing their energy priorities. The committee received testimony from Mr. Amos J. Hochstein, an expert on oil and gas and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Diplomacy with the State Department. In this role, he oversees the intersection of energy and national security.

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) chaired the hearing. She, two other Members, and Hochstein provided opening statements for the record. Their opening statements spoke on background facts and statistics regarding the status of energy from fossil fuels worldwide.

The Q&A section of the hearing was dominated by three issues: implications of the United States becoming energy independent, Israeli foreign policy in regards to newly found natural gas in the Eastern Mediterranean, and the status of Iran's oil exportation in regards to the Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) sanctions.

Hochstein revealed that America is close to becoming a net energy exporter. As of right now, the US is on its way to being a net energy exporter, and Hochstein speculated that we would be oil independent by 2035. Other estimates state the year to be 2020, but that the oil will be gone by 2030. He expressed that, although energy independence would bolster national security, America is intertwined in the global economy, and major geopolitical disruptions will drive up prices and harm economies worldwide regardless. Hochstein recommended encouraging cooperation, not conflict, in the Middle East and North Africa to promote national security and foster the global economy.

Large amounts of natural gas are present in the Eastern Mediterranean, along the coasts of Lebanon and Israel. Both Lebanon and Israel are in dispute over their maritime borders. Committee members sought insight on these two topics. Hochstein stated that the US government views Lebanon's newfound possession of substantial natural gas as positive, but that it would be difficult to access their market due to the ongoing dispute. Israel recently discovered natural gas decreases its energy

dependences on other sources in the area, like Egypt. This is important as a major pipeline that runs from Egypt to Israel has been attacked numerous times since 2011.

The majority of the hearing was used to discuss the JPOA sanctions on Iran limiting its export of petroleum products. Committee members expressed concerns that Iran is surpassing the imposed limits. The JPOA sanctions state that Iran exports would remain at the same level as when the sanctions took effect—approximately between 1 and 1.1 million barrels per day. Hochstein specified that the barrel numbers could seem inflated as Iran's export statistics group crude oil and condensates together, typical in the petroleum industry. Condensates are liquid extractions from natural gas; the JPOA sanctions only apply to crude oil, not condensates.

There is expected to be a classified forum wherein the committee members and Hochstein could further the hearing. There were a handful of questions that he would not answer in a public forum.

For information on ASP's energy security; see:

1. [America's Energy Choices – 2014](#)
2. [Five Choices on Energy that We Need to Make](#)
3. [The U.S. Tight Oil Boom: Geopolitical Winner or Long-Term Distraction?](#)
4. [What is Energy Independence?](#)

Russia and the Geopolitics of Natural Gas

Kendall Strong, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
July 11, 2014

Russian natural gas-giant Gazprom recently cut off supplies to Ukraine, demanding up-front payments and creating ripple effects across Europe. However, by isolating Ukraine, Russia may have isolated itself from other European countries. The geopolitical consequences of Putin's actions are complex as they involve the economic stability of Europe and multiple competing interests that are likely to affect energy policy and international affairs around the world.

About 40% of Ukraine's energy consumption is fueled by natural gas; 63% of that natural gas was supplied by Russia in 2012. Ukraine is also a heavy transit country of Russian natural gas for many European Union (EU) countries – 20% of the natural gas consumed by the EU flows through the country.

A recent event hosted by the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) provided various perspectives on impacts that Russian energy policy will have on surrounding European countries. The panel provided listeners with a range of information regarding Russian energy giant Gazprom, the troubles Europe will face based on regional variations in energy resource options, and what role the U.S. might play in easing European dependence on Russian oil.

Anders Aslund of the Peterson Institute for International Economics considers Gazprom one of the worst commercial gas companies. He cited Russia's neglect of the U.S. shale revolution, increases in global liquefied natural gas production, the United Nations' (UN) competition policy, and the leveling out of European energy consumption against Russia's energy interests worldwide. As tightly controlled as Gazprom is, the amount of money produced and pipelines indiscriminately built are undermining Russia's long-term energy and economic interests. Aslund called Gazprom the largest "organized crime syndicate in the world."

Some of the panelists believe that Putin has yet to fully consider his next steps. They believe that decisions made regarding Gazprom pipelines and pricing are arbitrary, and Putin is attempting to serve the interests of cabinet members and paying lip service to Russian citizens without considering the role of international energy markets.

Europe as a whole faces significant challenges and a variety of choices into the future. Gary Schmitt of AEI shed light on other European countries and their energy options. Poland was unable to get their shale-gas markets off the ground, Germany has banned fracking, France has shale potential but focuses heavily on their nuclear power capabilities, and Ukraine lacks the financial resources and stability to pursue shale gas, although Shell has expressed interest in helping them in this venture.

The larger issue that European countries face is variable perceptions of fossil fuel usage. While the security of the region may depend on Ukraine having a quick and affordable supply of energy to keep them stable, Western European countries and the U.S. may be slow in providing help based on their long-term energy and climate change concerns.

The U.S., while not energy independent, has a market ripe with alternative fuel investors, and there has been steady movement towards renewables in recent years due to a growing consensus on climate change. This is also true of Western European countries, such as France and the U.K. Unfortunately, Ukraine does not currently have the luxury of time or excess funds to pursue renewables on their own; Russian gas thus remains an essential, and its removal poses significant national security risks.

Ben Zycher, an energy and environmental policy scholar at AEI, highlighted the options that the U.S. has in helping to ease European dependence on Russian oil. There is an honest argument behind the idea that exporting oil, coal, and natural gas from the U.S. would be beneficial for the region, and Zycher believes that emissions from doing so would have only negligible effects on total greenhouse gas emissions and global climate change. The greatest roadblock some experts see to U.S. involvement in Europe's energy market stems from the Obama administration's aversion to fossil fuel usage. They see hope only in the gradual "liberalization" of Obama's energy policies.

Russian aggression towards Ukraine and their use of natural gas as a policy tool is dangerous for Ukraine, the surrounding region, and the world. International response to Putin's actions and Ukraine's gas troubles will continue to shape the global geopolitics of energy.

Two Critical Issues Facing the U.S.-India Relationship in 2014

Naman Jain, Media and Government Relations Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
July 14, 2014

India has been abuzz with the [recent election victory](#) of Narendra Modi. The former Chief Minister of the Indian state of Gujarat and member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is renowned for the [economic success](#) that he led his state to in his 12 year-tenure as Chief Minister.

As Chief Minister of Gujarat, Mr. Modi had [released a book](#) titled "Convenient Action – Gujarat's Response to Challenges of Climate Change." In fact, this book [lists](#) the Narendra Modi-led Climate Change Department of Gujarat, which was established in 2009, and is noteworthy for being the sole Asian Climate Change Department belonging to the state of an Asian country.

Now that Mr. Modi is the Prime Minister of India, will there be greater focus by India on climate change and on trade ties with the U.S.? And is there a scope of advancements in Indo-U.S. relations by a focus on these issues?

Climate Change

Solar Energy

Addressing climate change requires that countries explore alternate sources of energy, such as solar power. Narendra Modi's [agenda](#) involves generation of electricity by the provision of solar energy for the benefit of 400 million Indians. The [Modi administration seeks](#) to assist all homes with solar power so that they can operate "at least one light bulb by 2019." Solar energy can help some Indian villages that are not connected to the grid by providing distributed energy.

Nuclear Energy

Nuclear energy in India could develop further under the Modi administration. The Ministry of External Affairs in India recently stated that India [would allow the IAEA](#) greater "oversight" of its "civilian nuclear program." In fact, there is clear indication of Narendra Modi's interest in working on Indian nuclear energy since he [agreed](#) to advance civilian-based "nuclear power projects" and enforce global "civil nuclear agreements." However, India

is facing obstacles from contractors who are hesitant to construct nuclear reactors, primarily because of the 2010 Indian law on “nuclear liability”, according to which contractors would have to dish out a heavy sum in case of any accident. Other countries that are heavily reliant on nuclear power do not have such a law.

Coal

India is heavily dependent on coal, and is only behind China and the United States in “global coal consumption.” However, an effort to explore cleaner forms of energy will likely develop India’s relationship with the Obama administration. President Obama has been an advocate for decreasing carbon emissions and has clearly articulated his belief that climate change is a threat. Exploration of renewable sources of energy by India such as solar power does not mean that it would give up on coal of immediately. Gradually decreasing dependency on coal over a steady timeframe as well as continuing exploration and utilization of solar and nuclear power will enable relations between India and the United States to improve.

Trade

What about the trade relationship between the two countries? India and the United States have lukewarm trade ties. In 2013, India constituted the “18th largest goods export market” for the United States and was the “10th largest supplier of goods imports.” Yet, disputes have overshadowed these statistics. Both Indian foreign direct investment (FDI) in the United States and American FDI in India rose from 2011 to 2012, by a margin of 6.7% in the former and 15.3% in the latter.

In fact, solar energy has been at the center of one of the disputes connecting the two countries. In February 2014, the United States threatened to “take India to the World Trade Organization” because of the “domestic content requirements in India’s massive solar program,” which U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman believes inclines against American producers and can consequently hurt solar power proliferation. The two countries have had a troubled relationship because of the U.S. Trade Representative’s (USTR) warning of “trade sanctions” in reference to guarding of IPRs, or intellectual property rights.

However, the future may not look as bleak for India-U.S. trade relations under the administration of Narendra Modi. Prior to his victory in the national

elections, Mr. Modi asserted that “It is in India’s interest to promote trade, commerce and technology. We will do whatever is necessary to that effect.” In fact, Congressman Ed Royce and Congressman George Holding want Mr. Modi to “address a joint meeting of Congress”, and they have justified this by providing examples of the relevance of India-U.S. relations, the number of Indians who voted in the 2014 elections, the economic success of Gujarat including the decline in poverty and improvement in infrastructure, and Mr. Modi’s plan to “focus on private enterprise, reduce bureaucracy, and strengthen trade ties with major partners.” In early July 2014, Senator John McCain visited Mr. Modi in New Delhi, days after he suggested to the Senate that the United States “should seek to help India’s economic and military development.”

Next Steps

The rise of Narendra Modi to the Indian leadership has the potential to change relations between India and the United States. While trade issues have plagued the relationship including the issue of solar requirements, it is likely that the positive strides being made by both the sides will gain greater momentum. Mr. Modi’s interest in advancing solar energy is likely to synchronize with the United States’ focus on tackling climate change. A focus on climate change and Indo-U.S. trade, along with ensuring a secure Asian region, the shared notions of democracy, and a new Indian government under Mr. Modi, are likely to open a new path for the India-U.S. relationship.

Top Ten Reasons for ITER

Kathy Duong
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
April 24, 2014

As climate change becomes a serious national security threat, we must look to the future for a clean, safe and sustainable source of energy for our future.

The ITER experiment will be the largest experimental tokamak nuclear fusion reactor, located at Cadarache, France.

Through ITER, we can find solutions to control fusion energy, so that it can be commercialized to provide the world with a sustainable energy source.

This project was born in 1985 in hopes of peace through energy cooperation between the superpowers of the Soviet Union and the U.S. Today, its members include China, the European Union, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America.

With recent controversy over the mismanagement of the ITER structure, the U.S. has reevaluated its position in funding the ITER project. If the U.S. withdraws from the project, we will fall behind in energy research and will not be able to reap the numerous benefits that ITER offers.

Below are the top ten reasons why ITER is beneficial for the United States

1. ITER is a great return on investment: The U.S. only contributes about 9% but reaps 100% of what ITER produces.

2. ITER provides business opportunities: About 80% of the funds for the ITER project is spent within the U.S.[1]

3. U.S. business would be exporting large amounts of goods: U.S. businesses are not only getting contracted by U.S. ITER but by other ITER members. One example is the Oxford Superconducting Technology. Located in New Jersey, it was awarded over \$55 million by the EU for toroidal field strand production.[2]

4. The ITER project engages U.S. industries, universities and national laboratories: ITER stems from a wide range of natural science and engineering fields which provides many different opportunities for a variety of fields to be in conjunction with each other.

5. It creates jobs: The ITER Organization predicts between 2014 and 2017 there will be around 3,000-4,000 workers added to the existing 1,000 employees.[3]

6. ITER provides future large investments in the U.S.: The project anticipates an estimate of \$1 Billion in future contracts for the United States.[4]

7. Keeps America competitive: Participating in the ITER project prevents the U.S. from falling behind on new frontiers of science.

8. ITER is a method of practicing diplomacy through energy: During the Cold War, Mikhail Gorbachev saw fusion energy as a solution to get the Soviet Union and the U.S. to cooperate. If the U.S. withdraws from the project, it will lose international credibility.

9. Most of the U.S. is involved: ITER contracts extend over 38 states, which have been awarded for \$10,000 or more.[5]

10. ITER provides a solution to the energy crisis: Fusion provides clean limitless energy. The fusion process produces no greenhouse gas emissions or radioactive waste. Fusion uses resources readily available. Deuterium is an abundant resource that can be found in water and tritium is produced during the fusion process.[6]

DOE Makes Plans for U.S. Fusion Energy

Kendall Strong, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 4, 2014

The Department of Energy (DOE), Office of Science, is processing the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Omnibus Appropriations Act request from for strategic United States (U.S.) involvement in advancing fusion energy. The Act requires the Fusion Energy Sciences (FES) Advisory Committee (FESAC) to submit a plan for fusion energy research based on four possible scenarios. The first three scenarios assume a baseline appropriation of \$305 million. The first entails a growth rate of 2% based on the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) inflators for FY 2015 – FY 2024. The second scenario is also based on OMB's inflators plus a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA). The third scenario is flat funding. The fourth scenario is based on the President's \$266 million request, in addition to COLA and OMB inflators.

The 10-year plan, to be submitted by January 2015, assumes U.S. participation in the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER). ITER is an international nuclear fusion research and engineering project with seven members including the European Union (EU), U.S., China, Russia, Japan, India and Korea.

FES provides advice on complex scientific and technology issues to the Director of the Office of Science. FESAC has been advised to use the January 2013 Nuclear Science Advisory Committee's report on nuclear physics priorities and programs as a model.

FESAC has been asked to create a plan that will ensure long-term U.S. leadership in fusion energy, particularly in plasma science, remaining within their appropriations from Congress and based on the four scenarios listed above. This includes prioritizing facility creations or closures, research initiatives, partnerships with federal and international universities and organizations, and student engagement.

It is important that FES retain their competitive edge within the DOE Office of Science to ensure the growth of fusion energy; it will be essential that the U.S. uses international resources, such as ITER, in this effort. Fusion energy is an advancing energy field which international competitors are hoping to create and commercialize; the U.S. should not be left behind in this venture.

Fusion energy, which uses fuel extracted from seawater and lithium, combines small atoms together in order to release helium gas. Unlike fission energy there is no chain reaction and therefore no possibility of a meltdown. Fusion essentially mimics the process of stars in a self-sustaining reaction that has posed challenges for scientists around the world. The current roadblock to successfully generating energy from fusion is that it still takes more energy to begin the reaction than it produces.

ASP is in support of an aggressive fusion development program. We suggest a Congressional authorization of \$30 billion over the next ten years in order to ensure that our domestic and international fusion energy development programs continue. Fusion research has a large showing across the U.S. We believe that the federal government should challenge American engineers and scientists to build a domestic fusion facility within the next decade.

Multiple nuclear programs currently exist within the DOE Office of Science including DIII -D, C-Mod, and National Spherical Torus Experiment (NSTX) research and operations; Small Business Technology Transfer (SRRT/SBIR); international research; education and outreach; design studies; materials research; plasma science research and a fusion simulation program.

The DOE Office of Science has outlined general guidelines for U.S. nuclear fusion research falling into four broad categories: Burning Plasma Science for Foundations, Long Pulse, and High Power; and Discovery Plasma Science. Foundations goals include furthering the basic understanding of plasma science prediction and control, particularly through partnerships with universities and student engagement. Growth for the program proposes advanced and spherical Tokamak theory and simulation. Tokamaks use magnetic fields to confine plasma and create equilibrium.

Long pulse goals are to go beyond national and university partnerships and to conduct research on indefinitely maintaining a burning plasma state. This is expected to require further U.S. involvement and investment in ITER, continuing Tokamak research and development, and Stellarator involvement. Stellarators, like Tokamaks, are a fusion device that is used to confine hot plasma within magnetic fields. High power goals primarily include greater U.S. involvement in ITER.

Discovery fusion science goals already include research on high-energy density experiments and plasma control; it is proposed that research on these should continue to grow. Also proposed is further development for SBIR/STTR.

ASP is in support of the development measures proposed by the DOE Office of Science as they hope to advance fusion energy goals; we also believe that the President should appoint a Fusion Power Commissioner to streamline the research, development and commercialization of fusion energy.

Dr. Mark Koepke has been pegged to chair the FESAC subpanel. He is a professor of Physics at West Virginia University in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. He has a particular focus on Plasma Physics.

10 Key Facts About Nuclear Fusion

Colin Taylor, Research Intern

[Flashpoint Blog](#)

July 9, 2014

1. Its real and it works

Fusion is the same process that powers the sun and is already being conducted in laboratories all over the world. Scientists have made exponential progress in fusion energy over the past few decades but progress was slowed by budget cuts in the 1990 s.

Further Reading: [ASP's Fusion Page](#)

2. It has the potential to provide a nearly inexhaustible supply of energy

Fusion produces energy by fusing together two hydrogen isotopes, deuterium and tritium, that are virtually inexhaustible. Deuterium comes from ocean water and tritium, though limited today, will be produced from lithium as a byproduct of the reaction. Fusion therefore holds the promise of complete energy security.

Further Reading: [“Back to the future: are we about to crack energy fusion”](#) in the Guardian

3. Fusion emits no pollutants or greenhouse gases

The only byproducts of the fusion process are helium and a fast neutron, which carries the heat to make steam, meaning there is none of the long-lived radioactive waste produced by conventional nuclear fission reactors.

Further Reading: ASP's [“Fusion Power – A 10 Year Plan to Energy Security”](#)

4. There is no threat of nuclear meltdown like there is with the nuclear fission reactors of today

Fusion does not rely upon a chain reaction so there is no chance of a runaway reaction that could lead to a meltdown. In the event of an equipment failure, the small amount of fuel available stops reacting instantly and the plant cools automatically.

Further Reading: [“Provide Energy From Fusion”](#) from the National Academy of Engineering

5. Fusion will spark monumental scientific achievements

The positive spillover effects of the U.S. fusion program are already being felt. Fusion scientists are making advancements in superconductors, super-power lasers,

new high-efficiency semiconductor light sources, large and small-scale robotics, and supercomputing and modeling.

Further Reading: ASP's [“Fusion Fact Sheet”](#), [“Technology from Fusion Research, Benefits Today”](#)

6. Fusion industry stretches across the U.S.

The fusion industry already supports thousands of jobs and businesses across the country. 47 out of 50 states support the fusion industry.

Further Reading: [ASP's “Fusion's Reach Across America”](#)

7. The U.S. is falling behind

Despite pioneering fusion energy research, a lack of commitment risks ceding leadership to other countries. Although the National Ignition Facility currently leads the world in inertial fusion research, the magnetic fusion facilities in other countries have surpassed the technological capabilities of the best American labs.

Further Reading: [“America's Fusion Race With China Is Heating Up, So Why Is Washington Going Cold?”](#) in Defense One

8. Fusion will give the U.S. freedom from fossil fuels

Without the need for fossil fuels, the U.S. can conduct foreign policy according to its values and interests, not according to commodity prices.

Further Reading: [“Nuclear fusion is the ‘perfect energy source’”](#) on CNN.com

9. Pioneering fusion energy will produce vast economic benefits

The establishment of a high-tech industry will bring vast new streams of revenue to America's leading industrial companies, creating thousands of new jobs. Creating a new industry will give America a “first mover advantage” that will increase our global competitiveness with economic implications for generations.

Further Reading: [“Startup nuclear energy companies augur safer, cheaper atomic power”](#) in Fortune

10. Cutting down the time needed to develop fusion energy will require a national commitment coupled with an accelerated push to commercialization

Absent steps to accelerate fusion development, current projections estimate that commercial-scale fusion power plants could be built in the 2040 s. Yet a timeframe that always remains decades away lacks ambition and forecloses on domestic leadership. The American fusion community believes that given adequate resources, developing commercial fusion power can be achieved on an accelerated timeframe.

Further Reading: [“A Challenge to America: Develop Fusion Power Within a Decade”](#) by ASP Chairman Gary Hart and board member Norman R. Augustine in Forbes



Nuclear Security

New START is a Good Thing, Then and Now

Nathan Daniels, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
March 6, 2014

Earlier this week, Russia’s Strategic Rocket Forces carried out a test-fire of an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM). However, U.S. officials have made **remarks** that the launch was pre-planned, viewed as “non-threatening”, and was not connected with what is going on in Crimea, Ukraine.

According to National Security Council spokeswoman Caitlin Hayden, notification was provided under **New START Protocol**, specifically part four; section IV, which states that notification is to be provided at least 24 hours in advance of any ICBM or SLBM test-launch. It is not clear, however, when the U.S. received the notification, but a U.S. official **said** that it initially predated the crisis in **Crimea**.

“As required under the New START Treaty, Russia provided advance notification of this launch to the United States,” she said. “Such advance notifications are intended to provide transparency, confidence, and predictability and to help both sides avoid misunderstandings. Russia and the United States routinely flight test their ICBMs and SLBMs.” – Hayden

The New Start Treaty requires the United States and Russia to limit the number of strategic arms within seven years from the date the Treaty entered into force, which was February 5th, 2010. The Treaty does not, however, contain any constraints on the testing, development, or deployment of current or planned missile defense programs.

However, keeping in mind the geopolitical circumstances surrounding the situation in Ukraine, imagine if this had occurred without New START and the notification requirements of the Treaty.

It is evident that the signing of New START has not only been a milestone event towards the bilateral reduction of nuclear weapons, but it also helps ensure security and clarity in these types of situations; for example, a surprise launch that could initially have mixed, uneasy interpretations.

We at the American Security Project believe that New START has strengthened **strategic stability** between the United States and Russia by allowing each country to maintain a predictable **nuclear arsenal**. This enhances U.S. insight into Russia's strategic forces and increases the amount of information accessible to the United States.

Rose Gottemoeller, who was **confirmed** today as Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, previously spoke at an ASP **event** regarding New START and how it strengthens our national security and stability. Because of the unprecedented compliance and verification measures pertaining to weapons dispositions, deployments, and repairs since the implementation of the Treaty, Ms. Gottemoeller felt that, "we are essentially monitoring a living document providing a look into each others' nuclear forces."

Without New START, we would not have already known about Russia's **plans** to test-fire two more ICBMs later on this month, nor would we have been aware prior to other test launches back in October or December of last year. New START will not only continue to provide nuclear transparency between the two countries that collectively hold 90% of the world's nuclear weapons, but help create a collaborative approach to ensure misinterpretations are not made, regardless of what kind geopolitical tensions may exist at any given time.

John Kerry Op-Ed: Iran Nuclear Deal Still Possible, But Time is Running Out

Theresa Shaffer, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
July 1, 2014

Secretary of State John Kerry, former ASP board member, published an op-ed in the Washington Post this past Monday, June 30, advising Iran's leaders to make the choice to "end Iran's economic and diplomatic isolation and improve the lives of their people." He said this in regards to reaching a comprehensive agreement on Iran's nuclear program, since the deadline of July 20 is quickly approaching.

Secretary Kerry drew attention to the fact that Iranian negotiators have been serious throughout the talks, however it is now important for Iran to "back up its words with concrete and verifiable actions...to ensure Iran cannot obtain a nuclear weapon and that its program is limited to peaceful purposes. In return, Iran would be granted phased relief from nuclear-related sanctions."

He underlined all of the positive outcomes that could result if Iranian leaders come to an agreement:

"If Iran is able to make these choices, there will be positive outcomes for the Iranian people and for their economy. Iran will be able to use its significant scientific know-how for international civil nuclear cooperation. Businesses could return to Iran, bringing much needed investment, jobs and many additional goods and services. Iran could have greater access to the international financial system. The result would be an Iranian economy that begins to grow at a significant and sustainable pace, boosting the standard of living among the Iranian population."

Secretary Kerry concluded by indicating that **negotiators** are presently in Vienna to continue talks for a comprehensive agreement, and although there might be pressure to extend the deadline for negotiations, this would require all sides to agree, which could prove especially difficult.

You can access a link to the entire op-ed here: [Iranian nuclear deal still is possible, but time is running out.](#)

USIP: Iran Sanctions and What the U.S. Cedes in a Nuclear Deal

Theresa Shaffer, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
July 8, 2014

The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) held a panel on July 8 to discuss the challenges of sanctions in the Iran nuclear talks. The panel began by stating that since the 1979 Iranian revolution, there have been 16 executive orders from the White House, 10 statutes from Congress, and 4 UN Security Council Resolutions, giving rise to a global sanctions regime against Iran.

Three main recent impacts of sanctions on Iran:

- Oil revenues in Iran are down 60%, plummeting from \$100 billion in 2011 to \$35 billion in 2013.
- Iran's currency, the rial, has lost 60% of its value since 2011.
- U.S. and E.U. sanctions have cost Iran over \$100 billion in lost sales since 2011.

Additionally, Kenneth Katzman, senior Middle East analyst at the Congressional Research Service, added that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reported Iran's economy has shrunk by 6% in 2013 and will continue to do poorly in 2014.

Mr. Katzman believes that Iran will demand the lifting of sanctions imposed after [UN Security Council Resolution 1929](#) (June of 2010), since sanctions ramped up dramatically after this time to force Iran to the negotiating table. This would include the suspension of secondary sanctions that apply to US foreign companies and foreign entities doing business with Iran. He also drew attention to the difficulty of defining what a nuclear sanction is, since Iran will likely claim that any sanction intended to bring them to the negotiating table is a nuclear sanction, even if the sanction was imposed for supporting terrorism in the region or human rights violations.

Mr. Katzman believes that the President will waive sanctions in order to provide sanctions relief, however he warned that two years down the road, especially when the [Iran Sanctions Act](#) expires on December 31, 2016, Iran will want the waiving of sanctions to stop and will want permanent sanctions relief. He pointed out that Congress will be more willing to provide sanctions relief if the issue of an Iranian nuclear weapon is completely off the table. If this is not the case, then there will be more skepticism in Congress, which could complicate a deal.

Elizabeth Rosenberg, senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security, added to Mr. Katzman's statement by emphasizing that the P5+1 should beware of overpromising sanctions relief since this could weaken their credibility. She then clarified that even if Iran were provided significant sanctions relief, there would still not be an immediate surge in foreign investment in the country.

She provided five reasons for foreign investor caution in Iran:

1. Uncertainty of whether a nuclear deal will hold.
2. Sanctions will still be enforced for supporting terrorism, human rights violations, etc.
3. Violating sanctions is expensive ([HSBC](#) paid a \$1.9 billion fine in 2012 for breaching US sanctions against Iran)
4. Iran has a challenging business environment, rampant with corruption
5. Congress has the ability to undermine a nuclear deal by either rejecting it or imposing new sanctions (such as terrorist-related sanctions) as the nuclear deal begins.

Suzanne Maloney, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, expressed that what Iranians would like out of a nuclear deal is to be able to do business with the world in a normal fashion in order to boost their economy. Iran's trade is restricted to barter trade and constricted to countries with which it has significant oil revenue deposits because of the difficulty in repatriating oil revenues. She asserted that Iran needs to be able to transact its business with the rest of the world through the international financial system with the use of [SWIFT](#) electronic payments, and it needs to be able to access its resources in international banks around the world.

ASP supports the use of sanctions in order to get Iran to the negotiating table. ASP also believes that the best solution to the Iranian nuclear crisis is a diplomatic resolution. For more information on Iranian sanctions, please see ASP's Fact Sheet, "[Significant Iranian Sanctions Since 1995.](#)"



Economic Security

Does the US-Japan Impasse Spell Doom for TPP?

Brendan Connell
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
April 10, 2014

With news breaking on Wednesday of top US trade negotiators failing to reach a complete agreement with Japan over any of the most contentious trade issues, many are left feeling a sense of cynicism regarding the precious Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). In particular, some are quick to argue that if the US cannot reach a bilateral deal with Japan on its own, how will the US ever link arms with the other ten TPP countries? The current US-Japan impasse is unfortunate since a trade deal would act as a valuable centerpiece for US-Japan relations before Obama's planned visit to Tokyo on April 24th. But just because US-Japan trade negotiations are in their rough patch doesn't mean that TPP will be ultimately run off its tracks.

For one, Wednesday's lack of progress is not surprising. It appears many are simply waking to a realization that's been true for a long time: A US-Japan FTA would be a *very* big and difficult accomplishment. Japan's status of being the world's third largest economy and its prominence in the automobile industry makes it arguably the most contentious TPP member from the United States' point of view. On the flip side, Japan—if it wants to abide fully to a TPP-like agreement—will have to part ways with its politically-important rice and beef import tariffs. While these sticking points will have to eventually be confronted in TPP, the love affair with

import tariffs will not be so easily tamed overnight. The current US-Japan impasse is therefore not an indication of a hopeless TPP, but merely a harsh reality for how difficult and drawn-out trade negotiations usually are—even bilateral ones.

The formidable obstacles remaining between the US and Japan also mean it would be wise for both sides to not raise the starting bar too high. Trade negotiations are often an incremental process—a little often leads to a little more. The General Agreements of Tariffs and Trade (GATT) morphed into a full-fledged World Trade Organization. The US-Canada FTA of the 80s also built itself into a more comprehensive NAFTA. This is why judging US-Japan talks with the ultimatum of completely eliminating tariffs is counterproductive and only risks precluding more reasonable measures from happening. Ultimatums and red-lines make for great entertainment, but right now they have no place in US trade negotiations.

Instead, a take-what-you-can-get strategy of patience and persistence will be the best option towards US-Japanese trade relations and a future TPP. Japan's latest free trade pact with [Australia](#) illustrates this perfectly—though far from an “ideal” FTA, Japanese import tariffs on Australian beef will be nearly halved and Australian import tariffs on Japanese cars will be completely phased out. Concessions like this are better than no concessions at all.

Knowing this, USTR Michael Froman has refrained from using any explicit goal-setting, telling [Reuters](#) that “the U.S.-Japan summit is one important juncture, but it's not a pre-set goal,” and that “it's the content of negotiations that's important.” Likewise, President Obama and Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe have been reluctant to build up the stakes of trade talks too high—rather than issuing a joint statement or declaration at the upcoming Tokyo summit, the two leaders will instead settle on a much less grandiose sounding “[fact sheet](#)” to outline areas of US-Japanese cooperation.

In the end, it's likely that US-Japan trade negotiations will land on something akin to Japan's most recent trade pact with Australia—an agreement that is far from possessing TPP-esque comprehensiveness. And even a less ambitious FTA will still take time. Yet this should not be viewed as a bad thing. Both the US and Japanese governments should accept that trade agreements are far from being an easy endeavor and recognize that slow

baby steps are better than no steps at all. There are many scenarios that can be put forth by opponents for why TPP will fail, but this recent hiccup in US-Japan trade talks is not one of them.

U.S.-Russian Tensions Reveal Weakness in Satellite Security

Dan Day, Research Intern

[Flashpoint Blog](#)

June 10, 2014

On June 5, Gwynne Shotwell, president and COO of Space Exploration Technologies (SpaceX) [spoke at the Atlantic Council](#) on the current problems facing the U.S. aerospace industry and how [SpaceX](#) is working to restore American primacy in space launch technology. Since its founding in 2002 by [Elon Musk](#), SpaceX has worked closely with NASA to develop cutting-edge technology in the commercial space launch industry, most notably through its [Falcon 9](#) and [Dragon](#) launch vehicles.

[As past ASP reports have illustrated](#), American assets in space, primarily GPS satellites, are essential for our military to function. From intelligence gathering to secure communication to targeting weapons, the U.S. military relies on fully-functional space assets on a daily basis, making them a prime target for future Russian and Chinese aggression. An attack on U.S. space assets would be devastating if the technology is not readily available to quickly replace damaged satellites. This fact is doubly troubling considering the U.S. currently relies primarily on Russian-made RD-180 engines to propel satellites into space.

Tensions with Russia over Ukraine as well as a [Russian ban on the sale of RD-180 engines to the Pentagon](#) have forced the U.S. to consider domestic alternatives or risk becoming incredibly vulnerable in the event of a significant problem, such as an attack or malfunction, with key space assets. Once the primary nation within the global aerospace industry, Shotwell outlined the decline of U.S. influence and subsequent reliance on other countries for aerospace technology since the 1980s. The trend has reversed to an extent since SpaceX's founding in 2002, and Shotwell hopes that the U.S. can restore its position in the industry through an increased number of competitors that will both drive down cost and encourage innovation within the industry.

The boom in demand for GPS-driven devices has created a larger commercial market for aerospace technology, which companies like SpaceX have stepped up to fill. In an attempt to be considered for military contracts in the future, SpaceX hopes to have its rockets certified for use by the Defense Department by the end of the year. Currently, [SpaceX is in the midst of a lawsuit with the U.S. Air Force](#) in an attempt to terminate a contract granted to United Launch Alliance (ULA) which could prove problematic for SpaceX in the event that its rockets are certified.

The running joke among Air Force officials is that many of the current satellites in orbit are “[old enough to vote](#)”, indicating they are well past their design life and in desperate need to be replaced. The current reliance on Russian engines to power a key part of national security is simply unsustainable given geopolitical realities. Instead of playing favorites, the military needs to embrace the entrepreneurial spirit this nation was founded upon and allow companies like SpaceX to compete with one another. If the tech industry has shown us anything, it is that competition among rivals can result in some pretty amazing innovations.

While we can use our iPhone without giving a second thought to the technology behind it, the U.S. military doesn't have this luxury. Our assets in space grow in both importance and vulnerability with every passing day, and the ability to quickly replace them is a primary national security concern. Instead of shutting out companies like SpaceX who have the potential to offer a reliable, relatively cheap, and domestically-produced alternative to foreign technology, the military should be welcoming them with open arms.

The iPhone Illusion and the U.S.-China Trade Deficit

Dan Day, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 12, 2014

In April of this year, the [U.S. trade deficit with China](#) hit a two-year high of \$47.2 billion, its largest bilateral deficit with any nation. The Chinese trade deficit is often used as a political rallying cry by politicians looking to bring back jobs and end reliance on cheap Chinese labor, but in a global economy as complex as ours, how much do bilateral trade statistics even mean?

For an American, the answer can probably be found in your pocket. Look at the back of any iPhone and you will see this catchy little phrase: “Designed by Apple in California, Assembled in China.” [To say this is an oversimplification would be an understatement.](#) Between being designed in California and assembled in China, your iPhone travels to Japan, South Korea, Germany, and back to the U.S., with each destination adding significant value to the final product along the way. All the parts from this process are eventually sent to China, where workers assemble the parts and export the finished product.

The problem with bilateral trade statistics, especially with countries like China, is that when an iPhone is exported from China to the U.S., the entire value for the product is attributed to China despite the assembly process only contributing about 3.6% of the value. Our approximately \$2 billion iPhone-specific trade deficit with China distorts reality and creates misguided policies on how to address economic relations with China.

In order to capture the realities of a truly global supply chain, value-added trade statistics are much more suited for a 21st century international economy. When adjusting for the actual value China adds to the production of an iPhone, the deficit shrinks to \$73 million. Does the U.S. still run trade deficits with China that are probably unsustainable in the long run? Absolutely. But don't read too much into the doom-and-gloom predictions made by politicians looking to shut us off from the benefits of international trade.

Instead of trying to end reliance on China by turning inward, we should look for other markets that will help trim down the deficit. The [Trans-Pacific Partnership](#) will allow the U.S. to diversify its source of exports as well as show commitment to our allies situated in the [increasingly turbulent Pacific Ocean](#). The [Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership](#) will further solidify our relationship with Europe through a long overdue free trade deal between the U.S. and the EU. It is the national interest of the U.S. to ensure these trade deals are completed in a timely fashion.

Additionally, the U.S. needs to continue to put pressure on Beijing to quit [playing fast and loose with the internationally accepted rules on currency valuation](#). With [e-commerce giant Alibaba](#) set to make a China-sized splash in the U.S. stock market later this summer, we need to ensure there is a level playing field in the industry. More effort should be put into bringing World Trade Organization suits against China as an increasing number of Chinese companies look to go global.

As China's miraculous growth over the last few decades has lifted millions out of poverty, it is [slowly but steadily losing its comparative advantage in manufactured goods](#), a process that would accelerate if its currency is allowed to float. The U.S. has a long way to go if it wants to slow its appetite for Chinese goods, but the solution lies in diversifying its international trade practices, not in trying to stop them.

Seip and Cheney: Look to Private Sector For Satellite Security

Dan Day, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 12, 2014

[Retired Air Force Lt. General Norm Seip](#) as well as [retired Marine Corps Brig. Gen and American Security Project CEO Stephen Cheney](#) wrote an op-ed for [The Hill](#), pushing the government to utilize the private sector, particularly innovative companies like SpaceX, in its attempt to find alternatives to its dependence on Russian-made engines to power space launch technology.

The current national security space-launch arrangement for our satellites and other space assets is precarious at best, and may be doomed for complete collapse in as little as a year and a half if something isn't done to address the booster engine shortage.

Seip and Cheney chided a government panel recommendation which suggested that officials should use billions in taxpayer money to fund research and development for a new engine rather than turning to the private sector.

It's as if no one in the Department of Defense (DOD) has heard of the already successful American private space industry.

An excellent example is SpaceX's Falcon 9 launch vehicle, and the soon to be introduced Falcon Heavy. These are capable of taking all DOD satellites into space at the present time. National security launch missions can be performed today without sacrificing any capabilities, spending additional billions of taxpayer dollars on unproven new technology development or deferring missions long into the future. The DOD already knows what SpaceX can do — it has a successful track record with NASA and commercial launches, and that track record should have seen them certified for national security work by now.

[Past ASP reports](#) have documented the current U.S. vulnerability in space assets which has been magnified as a result of tensions in Crimea and the [sudden downturn in U.S.-Russian relations](#).

The Ex-Im Charter Debate and U.S. National Security

Dan Day, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 23, 2014

On September 30, 2014, the charter for the [Export-Import Bank of the United States](#) (Ex-Im) is set to expire and right now [politics](#) are playing with a vital tool of American economic and national security - the future of Ex-Im hangs in the balance.

Established in 1934 with the mission of facilitating sales of U.S. exporters to international buyers, Ex-Im provides crucial support to export-reliant U.S. businesses in the form of loans, loan guarantees, and insurance. Its key role is to remove the credit-riskiness inherent in any international sale by assuming the risk of default by a foreign buyer, encouraging companies to do more business and keeping them competitive in the international marketplace. While large manufacturers like Boeing, Caterpillar, and General Electric are often viewed as the biggest beneficiaries of Ex-Im support, it also provides an essential role for small businesses who otherwise could not afford the riskiness of doing global business.

Those who oppose renewing Ex-Im's charter argue it is an example of crony capitalism that allows the government to pick winners and losers, in the process filling a role that should be left to the private sector. Joking references to its role as the "[Bank of Boeing](#)" underscore the perception that it serves the interests of the big and powerful at the expense of taxpayers and small business.

A closer look reveals many of these worries are misguided and allowing Ex-Im to shut down will cost the U.S. thousands of jobs as well as economic security and competitiveness. Ex-Im's ability to borrow at U.S. Treasury interest rates allows it to operate at a profit from the fees and interest payments it collects from foreign buyers, and its near-spotless default rate of 1.5% has meant no cost to taxpayers. A look at its financial figures also reveals that its perception as a form of corporate welfare for behemoths like Boeing and GE are largely overblown. [According to David Ickert, Vice President of Finance for Air Tractor:](#)

"The Export-Import Bank is essential to exports of U.S. products. For instance, in FY2011, Ex-Im was involved with 3,751 transactions that supported nearly \$42 billion in exports from more than 3,600 U.S. companies. Of those transactions, 3,247 – 87% – were with small-business exporters. All of those transactions added up to \$6 billion in Ex-Im financing in FY2011. The Ex-Im Bank Pays for itself (through the fees it charges to foreign buyers) and – above and beyond that – returns money to the U.S. treasury. From 2006 to 2010, Ex-Im Bank returned \$3.4 billion to the Treasury...Exports have definitely meant jobs in this rural part of Texas, and Ex-Im Bank has helped us provide the export financing to increase our exports and break into new markets."

Tony Bennett, President of the Texas Association of Manufacturers has also chimed in on the debate:

"Even in the case of large companies that might benefit from Ex-Im, those large companies support thousands of vendors and suppliers across the state of Texas and across the U.S. economy that feed into the host plant. It's a trickle-down economy, and when you start threatening exports even for the large companies, you're going to hurt the economy all the way down the staircase."

At a time when the U.S. is on the verge of completing two of the biggest free-trade deals in history, it seems obvious that Ex-Im has the potential to play a vital role for businesses looking to go global. Ex-Im's demise means exporting companies will often be forced to require up-front or extremely short term repayment, and in the extremely competitive global market, buyers will simply go elsewhere. With just about every other developed nation providing some form of public financing to encourage exports, it makes little sense to put the U.S. at such a distinct disadvantage.

Studies have shown a [strong link between free trade and peace among nations](#), and the current [TPP](#) and [TTIP](#) negotiations should be viewed in this light. TTIP will allow Europe to break its energy dependence on Russia, while TPP will signal the U.S. commitment to its allies who are increasingly worried about [asuddenly aggressive China](#). The military utilizes technology produced around the world, [and as our current reliance on Russian-made engines to power our space launches illustrates](#), it is a matter of national security that we have a multitude of reliable trading partners in the event of unexpected geopolitical crises. We live in a world where power is no longer simply a reflection of military

might, and our robust economy and competitiveness in the world are assets we cannot afford to take lightly.

American Security Project, along with over 800 other chambers, companies, and association of varying sizes, sectors, and regions, has signed onto a letter drafted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with the National Association of Manufacturers urging Congress to renew Ex-Im's charter (featured below). For the sake of our future economic security, let's hope Congress gets the message.

[FINAL NAM Chamber Joint Ex Im Letter with signatories](#)

Ex-Im Closure Threatens Global Competitiveness of Exports

Dan Day, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
July 1, 2014

Threats to allow the charter of the Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im) to expire on September 30 have the potential to bring an essential cog in the American economy down with it- the global competitiveness of our exports.

Ex-Im provides loan guarantees to foreign purchasers of American goods and services as well as credit insurance to domestic companies looking to hedge against the risk of default. Stephen Myrow, a former chief of staff at Ex-Im has likened export credits to "nuclear missiles" in the arms race for global markets.

"You have them because other countries have them, and the thought of unilateral disarmament is not realistic."

Without the insurance and loan guarantees provided by Ex-Im, U.S. companies that do business overseas will be forced to demand larger up-front cash payments, shorter repayment plans, and charge higher interest rates to international customers. With nearly all other developed countries utilizing some form of export credits, it would be hard to blame customers for taking their business elsewhere.

Consider Boeing, whose primary competitors Airbus and Siemens AG are among the largest recipients of export financing by Germany's version of Ex-Im, IPEX Bank. Japan, South Korea, China, France, and Britain have all taken steps in recent years to expand the availability of export financing in order to boost global competitiveness.

While it is true that big-time players like Boeing, GE, and Caterpillar receive large amounts of Ex-Im financing, nearly 90% (3,413) of the bank's transaction were with small business last year. If Ex-Im's charter is allowed to expire and the private sector assumes the role of export creditor, it will be these small businesses who are unable to secure deals with the likes of Bank of America who stand to lose the most. In its current form, the private sector is simply not structured to adequately play the role of Ex-Im.

Plain and simple, killing Ex-Im will hurt American competitiveness within the global economy, and small businesses who rely on export financing for the bulk of their transactions will be hit the hardest. There are plenty of examples of large and unnecessary government subsidies that drain taxpayer dollars, but attempting to cut off an institution that currently operates at a profit to taxpayers while simultaneously keeping our exports competitive is simply bad policy.

Economic power and competitiveness are more connected to national security than ever before. Because of institutions such as Ex-Im, the U.S. has by far the strongest and most resilient economy in the world, an asset that we can use to negotiate trade agreements such as the ongoing TTIP and TPP deals. Going forward, it is essential that we remain competitive in the global market with rivals like China and Russia. Allowing Ex-Im's charter to expire is a big step in the wrong direction.

3 Key Topics in Upcoming U.S.-China Economic Talks

Dan Day, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
July 8, 2014

For the 6th year, the [U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue \(S&ED\)](#) will take place July 9-10th between key commerce and foreign policy officials from Beijing and Washington in an attempt to open up investment and trade opportunities between the world's two largest economies. The U.S. and China are each other's second largest trading partners and have one of the most robust bilateral economic relationships in the world. From 2012 to 2013, [overall trade in goods increased and Chinese foreign direct investment into the U.S. nearly doubled](#). Still, a few primary economic issues remain unresolved between the two powers and the S&ED talks represent an opportunity to discuss these issues in detail.

Intellectual Property Rights

[According to Kurt Campbell, a high-ranking diplomat for the region:](#)

“The biggest threat to the United States-China relationship is the undermining of confidence of American business to invest in China due to corruption, intellectual property piracy and cyber attacks.”

A 2013 report issued by a private commission revealed that China is responsible for around [50-80% of the roughly \\$300 billion suffered by the American economy from intellectual property theft](#). Last month, [five Chinese officials were indicted on charges of hacking U.S. corporate networks](#) in an attempt to steal trade secrets, [prompting China to label the charges as hypocritical and a “double standard”](#) in light of the NSA spying scandal. With the debate over IP rights fresh in the minds of both parties, this will no doubt be a contentious yet crucially important topic on the S&ED agenda.

Bilateral Investment

[Neal Asbury, the CEO of the Legacy Companies, a commercial and retail food service equipment maker is unhappy with the current U.S.-China business relationship:](#) “Our problem with China from a manufacturer's

perspective is that they have access to our market, but we don't have access to theirs. If we had access to their market like they have ours, this trade deficit would quickly go away. A bilateral investment treaty is good for China, but really good for us.”

While China's investment into the U.S. is increasing exponentially, U.S. investment in China has plateaued and even begun to diminish as long-standing laws meant to protect certain industries, especially in technology and financial services, have been an obstacle for U.S. companies looking to increase their investment in China and Chinese companies. Currently, the U.S. has bilateral investment treaties with 42 other nations, and getting the Chinese to open their massive economy to foreign investors is a key goal for the U.S. in these talks.

Currency Manipulation

Despite [not officially naming China a currency manipulator since 1994](#), the U.S. has long pressed China to allow its currency to float freely rather than intervening the foreign exchange market to keep the yuan artificially low. By doing this, China puts U.S. businesses, particularly in manufacturing, at a distinct global disadvantage. China is too important a player in the international economy to continue to play fast and loose with the widely accepted rules regarding currency valuation, and this is an issue which the U.S. can afford to take a somewhat firm stance. Despite the [World Trade Organization's murky stance on the international legality of China's currency devaluation](#), there is no doubt that it is a form of export subsidy, albeit an indirect one.

The U.S. has an opportunity over the next 48 hours to increase its economic security and expand business opportunities in one of the most profitable markets in the world. At a time when U.S. investors are salivating over the impending IPO by Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba which is scheduled for next month, the timing could not be better for U.S. officials to begin chipping away at some of the biggest barriers to better economic relations with China.

Petraeus: TPP a Matter of National Security

Dan Day, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
July 10, 2014

Retired U.S. Army general David Petraeus [recently outlined the potential national security benefits that can accrue from the success of the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership \(TPP\)](#), a free trade deal currently being negotiated between 12 Pacific-rim nations, most notably the U.S. and Japan.

“The consequences for Washington getting the TPP right are huge, opening some of the world’s fastest-growing markets to more U.S. exports, improving American competitiveness, growing the global middle class, and fostering the prosperous, open and rules-based Asia that is in everyone’s interest.

But the fate of the trade pact is also tied closely to America’s national security.

Indeed, a paralyzed or collapsed TPP process would be seen by our allies, partners and adversaries across Asia as a body blow not only to the credibility of America’s economic leadership, but to our geopolitical position more broadly, deepening doubts about Washington’s staying power and strength. And this, in turn, would carry spillover effects in the security realm, exacerbating military tensions and territorial rivalries and ultimately raising the threat of conflict.”

The economic benefits that will come from the completion of a free trade deal in the Pacific region are significant: increased trade in goods and services, more access to investment opportunities in emerging markets, robust intellectual property rights to encourage entrepreneurship, [the list goes on.](#)

Largely hidden in the debate over TPP passage is exactly the message Petraeus is trying to get across- the signal it will send regarding the level of U.S. commitment to an [increasingly unstable East Asian region.](#)

Consider Vietnam for instance. Currently embroiled in a [heated maritime dispute over the deployment of Chinese oil rigs in disputed waters](#) and lacking any significant ties with Washington, it is likely that those in Hanoi feel both insecure and isolated in the face of Chinese aggression. By signing onto TPP, Vietnam

will link its economy to the U.S. and create the sense that the U.S. is committed to creating and maintaining stability in the region.

As a result of both material power and geographic luck, the U.S. is in a position to control both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans over the coming decades, something that no other power has the ability or desire to do. Continued U.S. supremacy over the seas in the coming decades is arguably its most pressing geopolitical goal in its ability to maintain the current international order, and TPP would be a giant step in the right direction.

With the upcoming midterm elections in mind, hyper-partisanship and gridlock are likely to be the short term norm. For the sake of both our future economic and national security, let’s hope our Congress can see the strategic importance in this deal.



Asymmetric Operations

Three Reasons Why Libya Matters: Oil, Haftar, and Terrorism

John Bugnacki, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
May 29, 2014

Oil and Corruption:

Across Libya, militias like the Petroleum Defense Guard are currently occupying the country's key ports and oil fields. [The Petroleum Defense Guard](#) alone is estimated to control 17,000 fighters, or almost half the number of soldiers that Libya's national army possesses. The militias, with large numbers of heavily-armed troops, are preventing the government from retaking the port installations and oil fields. They refuse to allow the exportation of oil until the central government in Tripoli agrees to engage in power and revenue-sharing agreements with local groups. Oil production is currently stalled at a meager [160,000 barrels](#), much lower than its former height under Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi. In March, one militia even attempted to sell oil illegally to [North Korean smugglers](#) to finance itself as negotiations continue.

These groups worry that the new government in Tripoli will continue the corrupt practices of the previous Gaddafi regime, using financial and administrative instruments to embezzle the vast majority of oil revenues and shift them out of the country. [In a recent study](#), Global Financial Integrity, a financial transparency think-tank, estimates that over 200 billion dollars left Libya from 1980-2007. Among all African countries, Libya was second only to Nigeria in the amount of capital outflows.

The new Libyan government must not be allowed to perpetuate the inequities of the past, but the longer that both sides fail to reconcile, the greater the risk of the country sliding into chaos becomes. Libya needs oil revenues to rebuild its infrastructure, provide social services, and strengthen its institutions. Until oil exportation resumes, either through government force or the agreements that the militias demand, Libya will remain a haven for militaristic radicals and opportunists of all stripes.

General Haftar and The 2014 Uprising

During the 1960s and 70s, [General Khalifa Haftar](#) fought alongside Muammar Gaddafi and, in the early 1980s, served as a key figure in the country's war against its southern neighbor Chad. [After a falling out with Gaddafi](#), Haftar left the country and spent the following decades in the United States. Later, during the 2011 NATO Action against Gaddafi's Libya, Haftar returned, but failed to assume a prominent role in the post-revolutionary government. In recent months, Haftar has tapped into the indignation of Libya's population at the inability of the central government to reconcile with the militias and its perceived tilt toward Islamism, titling his resistance movement "Operation Dignity."

In February, Libyan officials charged Haftar with trying to launch a coup against the government, but he fled to his native Eastern Libya before he could be arrested. Since that time, Haftar has been building support among many of the same groups who have been occupying Libya's oil fields and ports. [This coalition](#) consists of "army officers, tribal militiamen, and federalists seeking regional autonomy."

[More recently](#), on May 16, in what some have termed the 2014 Libyan Uprising, Haftar's forces attacked bases occupied by Libya's Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist organizations in Benghazi by using land and air forces, leaving 70 people dead. [Two days later](#), militias allied with Haftar's coalition raided the parliament building of the General National Congress in Tripoli. While Haftar's true motivations and intentions are still unclear, the U.S. must take note of his actions and consider how to resolve the conflict between Haftar's faction and the government.

The Threat to the U.S. and the Region:

As the Financial Times observes, the chaos and destabilization currently present in Libya, “could provide a haven for al-Qaeda militants already active elsewhere in Africa.”

The 2012 attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi is only one example of the terror, frustration, and lawlessness that Libyan citizens have to confront daily. Libya’s current instability provides a climate in which groups such as Ansar al-Sharia, the Islamist group believed to be responsible for the attack and the death of Ambassador Stevens, can operate with impunity and endanger both the stability of the region and the lives of American citizens.

What Is To Be Done:

The Libyan government has recently announced that elections, postponed since February, will finally be held in June, but the political unrest that has occurred during the past few months continues to escalate. Foreign governments are taking notice of this conflict. U.K. prime-minister David Cameron, who played a vital role in the 2011 NATO Action, has appointed a special envoy to Libya in order to tackle the current crisis. On May 18, in an anticipatory move, Tunisia sent 5,000 troops to its common border with Libya.

The United States has deployed 1,000 marines and the USS Bataan, which will arrive in a few days. The U.S. State Department has announced that any American citizens currently in Libya should leave the country immediately and Secretary of State John Kerry has asked David Satterfield, a senior diplomat, to travel to Libya as the U.S.’s envoy.

Going forward, the U.S. must work with its allies both outside and within Libya to end the factional infighting and culture of corruption that menace the country.

Shaping the Perception of the Syrian Conflict

Nathan Alvarado-Castle, Adjunct Junior Fellow

Flashpoint Blog

June 17, 2014

The information war in Syria has become a common dynamic with the large-scale violence that has increasingly engulfed the region over the past three years – causing what Tony Blair has opined as “the whole of the Middle East under threat.”

As of Monday, ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) has purported to capture Tal Afar, a small city in northwest Iraq with a population of 200,000, including the commander of Iraqi Army forces in the city, General Abu al-Waleed.

Iraqi residents have reported ISIS militants were using bullhorns to call people to come to the square to witness the execution of Gen. Abu al-Waleed, but there was no confirmation yet that it had taken place. To the contrary, Iraqiya, the Iraqi state television channel, claimed the commander was in “good health” and would in a “few hours” announce “victory over ISIS in all of the territory of Tal Afar”.

But, neither story can be confirmed at this time. What can be said, however, is the importance of controlling the narrative or rather the image(s) coming out of the conflict in Syria (and now in Iraq).

When ISIS took Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq, along with vital tactical and lethal arms including US-supplied Humvees last week, ISIS staged a photo-op of ISIS commander Umar al-Shishani with a triumphant smile. This photo quickly became the summation of ISIS’ progression and rapid rise as one of Syria’s formidable non-state actors on the ground.

There is no doubt what undergirds the impact of the photo is the strategic leverage ISIS has gained by capturing Mosul. But to exclude in analysis the importance that the function of shaping the narrative has on the dynamics on the ground in Syria is to miss a vital dimension between state and non-state actors. Despite the asymmetry in force and resources that states have, legitimacy is perception-based and therefore equally obtainable by non-state players. In a chaotic environment, allegiance and loyalty are often attributed to those who can provide a basic level of predictability to the population – even if this predictability is a strict and ruthless interpretation of Sharia Law.

Unchecked expansion by ISIS in the region will only strengthen ISIS' existing position as a power player in the Syrian conflict. Furthermore, it will give credence to the perception by citizens that the core prerogative of a government – security – is a fleeing mirage and best left to those with the capacity to wage violence.

Sisi's Egypt

Joshua Miller, Adjunct Junior Fellow
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
May 28, 2014

As Egypt's former defense chief Abdel Fattah al-Sisi approaches his expected presidential victory, he faces a myriad of issues that threaten his office. While many claim the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) poses the largest threat to Egypt, the country's economy also illustrates worrisome concerns. For the past three years, the Egyptian economy has been struggling since the country emerged from the post-Mubarak revolution. Public debt has been aggregating, businesses and households face harsh conditions due to daily power blackouts, and the country's energy shortfall will be exacerbated with the coming summer months. Unemployment and economic stagnation has continued to plague the country since Mubarak was deposed.

With the current unemployment rate standing at 14%, with a number nearly double that among the young section of society, the country is facing a restless youth who is disenfranchised with the current course of the economy. Frequent labor strikes further cripple already paralyzed sectors such as public transportation and healthcare. With a mild growth rate around 2.1% for the last fiscal year, the country shows bleak prospects of growth. One

of the country's longest financial bases, tourism, has seen a precipitous drop in comparison to its pre-2011 heights. Wary international investors, halved foreign currency reserves, and a strained national budget continue to plague the country's prospect for future growth.

The country's energy crisis continues to remain a central issue that affects all strata of Egyptian society. International oil and gas companies conducting business with Egypt are publicly lamenting over the due revenues they are owed by the Egyptian government and promised allotments of natural resources. Frequent electricity blackouts incited public anger, contributing to the large demonstrations that led to Morsi's removal. The political blowback from a recurrence of such blackouts could be devastating for Sisi. The lackluster implementation of energy conservation on a national level has exacerbated the country's woes.

Sisi has been cognizant of the country's plight, as he has devoted significant airtime on the country's TV networks addressing these issues. Despite this, he has expressed reservations in making considerable cuts to food and fuel subsidies that cost the country 28.5 billion USD annually or one-fifth of the national budget. Disregarding international financial institutions' calls for such an austerity plan, Sisi asserted that the standard of living must rise before he would decisively cut subsidies. Instead, Sisi has relied on enormous financial assistance packages from Persian Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia, which have donated 20 billion USD since last July to prop up Egypt's floundering economy.

Assuming that he is elected, Sisi will have to reassure the domestic and international community that his ascension to power was not a coup, but a reaction to popular demand. By hosting a free and fair election and garnering sufficient voter turnout, Sisi will be able to buttress his credibility and legitimacy for the future. Simultaneously, Sisi must combat the vexing challenges of the security environment that has become increasingly volatile since Morsi's ousting last August, evident by the uptick in terrorist attacks on police and military personnel throughout the country and in the Sinai Peninsula. The security situation is reflective of the political realm, which remains one of the most intractable areas in the country, with supporters of the establishment remaining in a hotly contested conflict with the extremist elements of MB. The polarized nature of the conflict has alienated the moderate elements from both parties, increasingly pushing the prospect of reconciliation towards a zero-sum outcome. However, President Sisi's broad support will afford him

a few years of good will, which he could utilize to show conciliatory political gestures towards the opposition that accepts the constitution and non-violent political action, as he establishes a stable security situation on the ground. The full implementation of recent efforts embodied in the country's new constitution, such as equal protection under the law, individual freedoms, social welfare and economic rights, and government transparency are imperative to laying the groundwork for the country's future.

As Sisi assumes office, it would be wise for Egypt to emulate its Arab Spring neighbor, Tunisia, who has been the region's true success story. Islamists, liberals, and moderates were able to come to a consensus despite their reservations and agree to a constitution that protects the rights of all citizens. The onus now lies with the extremist elements of the MB to cease their violent activity and fall into the mainstream political fold of the country that has taken the first steps of adopting the constitution with inclusive rights for all. Only then will Egypt be able to address its economic grievances head-on.

Statement on the Egyptian Election

BGen Stephen A. Cheney USMC (Ret.)

[Flashpoint Blog](#)

June 4, 2014

On behalf of the American Security Project, I would like to congratulate the Egyptian people ondemocratically electing Abdel Fattah al-Sisi to the office of the President. Since 2011, the people of Egypt have shown the world their perseverance in combatting oppression, publicly expressing their dedication to forging a democratic way of life and taking great strides to guarantee freedom for all. This is a historic event for Egypt, one where the fruits of a democratically formed constitution ensured a successful transition of government.

This past year a transparent and diverse council led the formation of a new constitution that protects basic rights and freedoms for Egyptians. Overwhelmingly supported by the population, this new constitution laid the groundwork for a new, freer Egypt. Over the past two days the world has witnessed millions of Egyptians heading to the polls to elect a new leader, physically embodying the spirit of democracy that is so apparent in the new constitution.

We at the American Security Project congratulate the people of Egypt on their successful election and applaud their dedication to a democratic way of life. We are looking forward to the parliamentary elections later this year.

Egyptian Youth: 5 Key Trends According to the Arab Youth Survey 2014

Jeffrey Lloyd, Research Intern

[Flashpoint Blog](#)

June 11, 2014

The 2014 Arab Youth Survey has been released and reveals 5 core insights into the concerns and beliefs of the average Egyptian youth. The American Security Project held an event yesterday to discuss the overarching themes and results of this regional study, but the findings in Egypt specifically are very interesting and worthy of noting. This study helps to shed light into the hopes and dreams of the youth in the Arab world during this era of transition. I have highlighted the 5 most important take-aways regarding the Egyptian youth and will draw analysis from each.

1. Changing Values and Beliefs:

Modern values versus traditional ones are growing increasingly prevalent among Arab youth as globalization shapes their attitudes and behavior. **43% of Egyptian youth say traditional values are outdated and belong in the past.** Only 17% of the overall youth population in the Arab world responded with the same answer in 2011, illustrating a dramatic increase in the importance of modern values among Arab youth just over the past 3 years. The rise in social media consumption, the use of smartphones, and increased exposure to new ideas through media and travel are believed to have caused this significant shift in youth perception. Such modern technology has not only helped spur a paradigm shift in values, it has also been used as a tool to organize protests, criticize leadership, and in general act as an outlet to express opinions and beliefs in a format unlike anything else. Since 2011 popular protests have unseated two rulers. It will be interesting to see how this new technological commodity continues to change values and beliefs in the Egyptian youth and the greater Middle East.

2. Concern Over Unemployment and the Rising Cost of Living:

Out of the 16 countries studied, Egyptian youth are ranked as the most concerned over unemployment. **62% of Egyptians are VERY CONCERNED about unemployment** as the government struggles to provide jobs for their growing population. In addition, **61% cite the rising cost of living as their greatest concern**, even above the national economy, opportunities for women, and the threat of terrorism. Clearly unemployment and the rising cost of living are on the minds of Egyptian youth, many of which have recently graduated from college or need to support their family. The new government's ability to appease such anxiety in this large sector of society will determine their ability to remain in power.

3. Ideas on Entrepreneurship:

When asked **“Do you feel people of this generation are more likely to start a business than in previous generations?”** **71% of Egyptians said YES.** According to the Arab Youth Study, entrepreneurial spirit is very high across the Arab world. This is a result of increased access to higher education and more accessible funding, but also is a response to the lack of jobs in general which forces people to take matters into their own hands. Unemployment in the Middle East and North Africa is twice the global average, with the youth bearing the brunt of joblessness. This entrepreneurial spirit is a necessity for the Arab youth, and will impact both the Egyptian and the region's ability to thrive in the future.

4. What is the Biggest Obstacle Facing the Middle East and North Africa?

According to the Arab Youth Study, **more than half (55%) of the youth polled say the biggest obstacle facing the Middle East and North Africa is civil unrest.** They believe this obstacle will define the region's ability to be successful in the future. The other top 4 obstacles cited were lack of democracy (38%), terrorism (30%), lack of strong leadership (30%), and the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamists movements (28%). This is an interesting finding, given that civil unrest completely altered the political terrain in Egypt. The youth are probably the largest proponents of civil unrest, but it appears they are also aware of its limitations as a means of progress.

5. Energy Subsidies Entitlement:

A remarkable trend illustrated in this study shows that an overwhelming majority of young Arabs feel entitled to subsidized energy costs. **70% of Egyptian youth think energy, electricity and transport fuel such as gasoline and diesel should be subsidized by the government.** This sense of entitlement threatens the economy and encourages prolific use of limited energy reserves. This heavy subsidization gives little incentive to the average citizen to reduce their energy consumption, which has resulted in the Arab world being amongst the least energy-efficient regions in the world. In addition, concern over climate change and the environment are ranked at the very bottom out of 27 categories listed. This is a dangerous combination when you consider the arid and vulnerable climate of the Middle East and North Africa.

Conclusion:

This study was conducted across 16 countries in the Middle East and North African region, with a sample size of 3,500 and an even ration between men and women. The purpose of the Arab Youth Survey is to provide public and private sector organizations with data and analysis to inform their decision making and policy formation. **These findings help give us a glimpse into the minds of one of the most important generations in the Middle East and North Africa.** The youth were at the heart of the Arab awakening, in many countries they are the largest segment of society, and will be the leaders of the future. It is of utmost importance to understand such trends in the youth because their opinions will impact the political, social, and economic makeup of the region for decades to come.

Russian Propaganda Permeates International Borders

Thomas Campbell, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 5, 2014

While the U.S. government maintains that Russia's annexation of Crimea and the current situation in Ukraine clearly "violate the Ukrainian constitution and international law," an extensive [propaganda campaign](#) facilitated by the Kremlin appears to be influencing a large portion of global public opinion.

In 2005, the Russian government established the news outlet formerly known as Russia Today. RT, and therefore its subsidiary Ruptly, are funded and controlled by the state, yet present themselves as objective and impartial news sources. Thus far, RT has achieved unprecedented outreach both domestically and internationally. According to founding editor-in-chief Margarita Simonyan, Putin is eager to "break the monopoly of the Anglo-Saxon mass media."

The Leveda Center, an independent research organization in Moscow, conducted a poll in April that showed that [94% of Russians rely on state TV](#) to follow the developing situation in Ukraine and Crimea. Not only is a vast audience being reached, but domestic public opinion is also being influenced. Prior to the annexation of Crimea, the Russian population was becoming increasingly unsupportive of Putin as a leader, with a [poll in November 2013](#) showing that "53 percent said they would vote for a different candidate during the next election." Since the developments in Crimea, Putin's popularity has soared – 86% of the Russian population would now re-elect him. The Russian support for Putin's actions in Ukraine and Crimea may be attributed to RT's portrayal of Russian advancements as liberation from a radically right-wing government in Kiev rather than invasion. However, RT has displayed varying degrees of credibility, with numerous instances of [misrepresented or fabricated information](#) being broadcasted.

Internationally, Kantar Media reports that RT reaches 120 million households in the U.K. and 85 million in the US, making it "the most watched English language news channel in the U.K." and "the most watched foreign news network" in the US, [according to the Fiscal Times](#). Europe is no stranger to state-run news agencies, such as Deutsche Welle in Germany or France24 in France; a factor that may have granted legitimacy to

RT on an international level. Of RT's \$300 million budget (expanded from just \$30 million in 2005), approximately \$136 million is invested abroad in an attempt to influence western public opinion. As such, RT currently broadcasts in Russian, English, Spanish, Arabic, and German. In addition, television is not the only media outlet by which RT is rapidly ascending. In fact, the RT YouTube channel became the first TV news YouTube channel in history to surpass one billion views. While more research is required to determine the effectiveness of this propaganda campaign, its exposure has been undeniable.

Western press is currently struggling to contest the recent surge Russian propaganda in Eastern Europe. Radio Free Europe was a public diplomacy success story of the Cold War, but its influence has since been in steep decline. On May 2, [USAID pledged \\$1.25 million](#) to support press freedom in Ukraine in addition to the \$10 million already committed by the US government in preparation for the May elections. Right now, RT appears to be successfully filling the global void of an eastern perspective on current events. However, should further analysis show that the increasing popularity of RT is correlating to a change in public opinion, the western press should be wary of its voice being overwhelmed.

Iraqi Censorship: Social Media Blocked Unless You Whisper

Thomas Campbell, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 19, 2014

In an attempt to prevent communication and thus hinder the mobilization of the Islamist State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the Iraqi government restricted access to numerous social media sites as early as June 13th, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Viber. Some journalists have also [reported](#) that the Internet has been "getting progressively slower." Such attempts at internet censorship, as well as methods used to circumvent these restrictions, are outlined in a briefing report published by Madeline Bersch and [American Security Project](#) Fellow Matthew Wallin entitled [Internet Censorship and Circumvention](#).

In recent history, attempts at [internet censorship](#) in this region have been met with strong criticism from Western media and activists, yet these authoritarian regulations in Iraq are being largely overlooked. Because

of the violence that these censorship efforts are allegedly trying to prevent, is such an extreme response justified? Although ISIS has been known to use such social media platforms for recruitment and propaganda efforts, social media and the instantaneous information that it can provide is greatly beneficial for the Iraqi citizens in affected areas as well as the hundreds of thousands who have fled to seek refuge.

In addition, these Internet regulations are proving ineffective at containing ISIS and are thus restricting the general population unnecessarily. Because ISIS developed in the remote deserts of the region and is fairly well organized, it has the capabilities to use alternative technologies such as VPN, satellite communications, proxy servers, or even direct fiber-optic lines to exterior providers in order to gain internet access and thus bypass censorship. In fact, [Internet traffic trends](#) indicate “significant declines in access in social media services in Baghdad and the immediate vicinity,” but “Internet access in other parts of the country were disrupted to a lesser extent, if at all.” Psiphon, a system designed for circumventing internet censorship, averages approximately 8,000 Iraqi users a day, but reported over 550,000 on the Sunday following the censors, [according to BBC](#).

One social media outlet has survived the censorship; a sharing application called Whisper. Iraqi youth have been using this app primarily as a means to anonymously vent their frustrations, much like adolescents in other places around the world. However, Whisper has the potential to emerge as more than just a confessional and could be utilized by the Iraqi population to quickly spread important news or warnings. For example, the U.S. Embassy in Iraq relocated a number of its staff as a precautionary measure this past Saturday (6/14). At 8AM that day, the following Whisper was created and shared publicly: “U.S. Embassy in Baghdad is evacuating!!! Yeppp!!!!” Although this turned out to be an exaggeration, this story was not covered until hours later by the media. In addition, CNNMoney reported that, according to Whisper’s editor-in-chief Neetzan Zimmerman, “usage in Iraq more than doubled between June 12 and June 15.” Whisper’s user interface is also somewhat unique in allowing searches not only by category/theme but also by location. Therefore, if its user base continues to increase, it may become a potentially viable avenue for mass communication amidst censorship.

Public Diplomacy Among US Bishops and Iranian Religious Leaders

Theresa Shaffer, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 20, 2014

On June 14, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops went to Iran to meet with the Iran Supreme Council of the Seminary Teachers of Qom (Shia Islam) to sign a [joint declaration](#) opposing actions that, “endanger the life, health, dignity and welfare of others, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.” The discussions lasted from June 11-17 and served as a public diplomacy effort to foster better relations between Americans and Iranians.

In the joint declaration, religious leaders declared that, “Shia Islam opposes and forbids the production, stockpiling, use and threat to use weapons of mass destruction. Catholicism is also working for a world without weapons of mass destruction and calls on all nations to rid themselves of these indiscriminate weapons.”

The joint declaration concluded with a plea for respect of all religions, and ambitions for “inter-religious dialogue that transcends governments and national boundaries.”

This public diplomacy effort comes at a very crucial time, as discussions are currently underway to negotiate a deal with Iran in order to reach a comprehensive agreement regarding their nuclear program before the Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) is set to expire on July 20th of this year.

ASP believes that public diplomacy efforts such as this are crucial in helping to create dialogue, foster trust, and build long-term relationships between the U.S. and Iran. By cultivating relationships with citizens, misperceptions can be battled through exchange and dialogue, and U.S.-Iran relations can begin to normalize once again, facilitating negotiations and benefiting both countries’ interests. For further reading, please see ASP’s [“U.S. Public Diplomacy Towards Iran.”](#)

#SaveFulbright: Senate Subcommittee Rejects Fulbright Budget Cuts

Thomas Campbell, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 23, 2014

In a preliminary success for the [#SaveFulbright](#) campaign, the Senate State-Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee [rejected the proposed Fulbright budget cuts](#) on June 19th. In early March, the President's [budget request](#) for the coming fiscal year called for an unprecedented \$30.5 million reduction in funding for the Fulbright exchange program despite a \$17.9 million overall increase in funding requests for Educational and Cultural Exchange Programs. However, in addition to the refusal of the proposed 13% cut of the original FY14 budget of \$234.7 million, the Senate subcommittee actually recommended a slight increase of \$2.2 million.

Naturally, the initial budget request prompted [substantial backlash](#) from the Fulbright community and alumni, inciting the trending [#SaveFulbright](#) and an online [petition](#) which has received almost 30,000 signatures. The revised bill echoes the public's concerns, [justifying the amendments](#) by noting that "in recent years the Department of State has justified reductions to one-way exchanges with a specific regional focus on the grounds that the Fulbright Program offers bi-directional exchanges with greater flexibility and strong country and university support. Yet in the fiscal year 2015 budget request the Department proposes to reduce the Fulbright Program to fund region-specific exchanges. This reversal indicates a lack of long-term planning."

Referred to as the "flagship international educational exchange program of American cultural diplomacy," Fulbright has persevered through almost 70 years since its inception in 1946 and now spans across at least 155 other countries, funding nearly 8,000 international exchanges each year. In addition, Fulbright has produced some of the most tangible benefits that we have seen from a cultural diplomacy campaign – over 325,000 total alumni, of which there are 53 Nobel Prize winners, 28 MacArthur Foundation fellows, 80 Pulitzer Prize winners, and 29 former heads of state. Why then would the government even consider siphoning funds from such a storied program during a time in which we are becoming increasingly committed to public diplomacy?

Funding, Engagement Key for QDDR Success, Officials Say: Nat'l Defense Magazine

Maggie Feldman-Piltch, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 30, 2014

A June 25th blog post by [National Defense Magazine](#) discussed comments made by panelists Deputy Secretary Higginbottom, Alex Thier of USAID, and Special Representative to the QDDR Tom Perriello, at [ASP's QDDR on the Hill](#) event that a healthy budget and engagement from the public and Congress are key to State and USAID's role in preventing international conflict.

"Still, budget restrictions and Americans' disregard of global affairs have obstructed the State Department and USAID from becoming an influential player overseas, and from spreading public diplomacy and safety, Their said. The success of the QDDR in promoting public diplomacy ultimately depends on the agencies' ability to gain support from the public."

The full post can be read [here](#).

Islamic State Hashtag Diplomacy

Thomas Campbell, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
July 14, 2014

In tandem with its acquisition of physical territory in the Middle East, the Islamic State terrorist organization has been choreographing a parallel insurgence on social media. As J.M. Berger [wrote in The Atlantic](#), "The advance of an army used to be marked by war drums. Now it's marked by volleys of tweets."

The Islamic State has taken a multifaceted approach to social media, saturating sharing sites like Twitter and Facebook from multiple angles including the official IS account, regional IS accounts, and the accounts of individual mujahedeen fighters and radical supporters. The official and regional accounts have been used primarily to promote the organization through multimedia propaganda. On the other hand, the individual fighter accounts are treated much like regular twitter accounts, documenting the ordinary, relatable aspects of their daily life. However, recruitment messages and violent propaganda are systematically incorporated

as well, creating a duality between fear and credibility intended to frighten enemies while appealing to potential followers. Finally, in the organization's most recent tech-savvy maneuver, the Islamic State released the Android app "The Dawn of Glad Tidings" in April, through which users can subscribe to IS news updates while simultaneously authorizing the organization to automatically tweet from their personal accounts. While the Islamic State is certainly not the first terrorist organization to utilize social media, they are proving to be much more effective at it than most.

In fact, social media and internet tools favor non-state actors, and subsequently extremist organizations, while restricting the power of more dominant state actors. This is because governments are self-restricted in creating the types of sensationalist or attention-grabbing material that tends to go viral online. This new realm of asymmetrical information warfare grants influence to organizations like the Islamic State who would struggle with conventional methods of communication such as newspapers or television. Yet on social media, a government's slowly-generated, moderated messages can often be drowned out by the extremist, eye-catching propaganda of organizations like the Islamic State.

Although it is clear that the Islamic State's approach to social media is overinflating the organization's actual outreach and following, it appears that their intent may be to use this inflated stature to their advantage. Over-projecting their current following creates an artificial bandwagon that could entice potential supporters who are currently on the fence. Also, by appearing larger and thus more intimidating while backing up their tweets with real-world action, their messages are treated more seriously. For example, the Dawn app reached almost 40,000 tweets the day the Islamic State marched on Mosul. By the time IS forces arrived, many Iraqi soldiers had already fled the city in fear, allowing the Islamic State to take over an entire city with relatively little armed conflict. Then, by live-tweeting their successful insurgency, IS grants themselves credibility for future threats.

Through these clever social media techniques, the IS leadership has been able to manufacture a campaign that resembles a grass-roots movement. Although the Iraqi government recently censored social media within its borders, the Islamic State is having no trouble circumventing these restrictions. Twitter has also removed several accounts connected with the IS organization for violating the site's protocol, but these

attempts to stamp out the Islamic State's social media presence have been futile. For each account removed, three more can appear in its place, generating a never-ending game of virtual whack-a-mole.

Obama Supports Poroshenko, Meets with Global Leaders at G7 Summit

Victoria Burnside Clapp, Research Intern
Flashpoint Blog
June 5, 2014

Speaking at a press conference Wednesday in Warsaw, Poland, President Obama stated that the US needs to stand "solidly behind" Ukraine as it moves into this new stage of its leadership. These remarks came during a two-day ceremony to celebrate 25 years of Polish independence, following Obama's first formal meeting with Ukraine's president-elect, Petro Poroshenko.

Obama declared himself deeply impressed by Poroshenko, and commented that he admired the latter's pragmatism as a businessman, believing him capable of handling Ukraine's complex and delicate economic situation.

Nevertheless, Ukraine's economy is not, and cannot be the sole focus of the US's support. Burgeoning Russian involvement in Ukraine is also a top area of discussion for the US, Obama acknowledged. In this vein, the president unveiled the European Reassurance Initiative, a \$1 billion fund intended to bolster the security of NATO allies through increased training exercises, pre-positioning of military equipment abroad, and building the capacity of countries such as Ukraine and Moldova to partner with NATO and the US.

The president also cautioned that further Russian aggression against Ukraine or other NATO allies "will be met with further costs for Russia, including if necessary, additional sanctions." Poroshenko then thanked the US for its support of Ukraine (e.g. its public objection to the annexation of Crimea).

Obama's visit to Poland kicked off a week of international involvement for the president, who flew from Warsaw to Brussels yesterday to participate as a world leader in the G7 Summit. Due to the efforts of the president and his allies in the G7, Russia's participation in the summit was suspended as a response to the country's

involvement in Ukrainian affairs. That suspension subsequently resulted in the relocation of this year's planned G8 summit—now, in Russia's absence, a G7 summit—from Sochi to Brussels.

Ukraine and Russia's involvement in the region will certainly play a large role in the summit's discussions. A substantial portion of the talks thus far have dealt with Russia—the summit's newly absent member. Despite the fact that, according to German chancellor Angela Merkel, the G7 participants are 'fully behind' the new Ukraine leadership, there nevertheless seems to be a lack of consensus on the question of future sanctions for Russia.

Today, the G7 continues its discussions of Russia's actions vis-a-vis Ukraine, in addition to other pressing matters, including the need to prioritize security of energy supplies and examine world trade and economy.

China Doubles Down in Central Asia with New Natural Gas Pipeline

Alexander Gupta, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 19, 2014

The third line of the China-Central Asia Natural Gas Pipeline is officially operational. The pipeline, known as Line C, begins at the Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan border and ends at the Horgos Port in the Northwest Chinese province of Xinjiang.

The 1,830 Km pipeline, which was built by the China National Petroleum Corp. (CNPC), runs through central Uzbekistan and southern Kazakhstan before reaching China. Line C complements two other pipelines, Line A and Line B. A fourth pipeline, Line D, is scheduled to begin construction in December.

Currently, Line C transports 7 billion cubic meters (cm) of natural gas across Central Asia into China. The CNPC predicts that Line C will eventually transport over 25 billion cm of natural gas by the end of next year. Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are projected to supply over 10 billion cm of natural gas while Kazakhstan will contribute roughly 5 billion cm.

The construction of Line C and D illustrate the deepening economic ties between China and Central Asia. China is continuously depending on Central Asia for its energy needs. Central Asia will be supplying over 40 percent of natural gas imports to China when Line D is fully functioning by 2020.

China is fostering close economic ties with Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan, but is also enriching the poorer nations of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Line D, which will originate in Turkmenistan and end in China, will run through Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan allowing these countries to collect substantial transit fees from China.

China is increasing its foothold and presence in Central Asia with the creation of Line D. Line D will be the longest and most expensive of the China-Central Asia pipelines covering over 7,000 Km. China could potentially be designing Line D to run through Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan in order to diversify the routing of its various pipelines.

Currently, Line A, B, and C run parallel with each other through Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. China recently signed a \$400 Billion deal with Russian natural gas producer Gazprom to supply gas to China from Russia. The move is seen as a way for Russia to diversify away from the European energy market. It could also be a way for China to open new pipeline routes away from Central Asia.

Overall, China continues to increase its presence in Central Asia through the construction of lucrative and expansive pipelines which stretch across Central Asia. China is now in the process of diversifying the routes and origins of their natural gas pipelines in order to decrease geopolitical risk and increase their influence across Central Asia.

U.S. Bids Farewell to Important Central Asia Air Base

Alexander Gupta, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 23, 2014

This month marks the official closing of the Transit Center at Manas in north Kyrgyzstan. The Transit Center at Manas was an American air base setup after the September 11th attacks to support the war in Afghanistan.

The Kyrgyzstani government ordered the U.S. to leave the base rather than continuing to collect \$60 million a year in rent from the U.S. government. The Transit Center at Manas became an extremely important logistical and operational base for the U.S. after Uzbekistan ordered the U.S. to withdraw from the Karshi-Khanabad Air Base in 2005.

The Transit Center handled over 5.3 million U.S. serviceman since it was established in late 2001, this accounts for 98% of all personnel engaged in the conflict in Afghanistan. Currently, there are only 300 U.S. servicemen remaining at the base. They are all scheduled to leave Kyrgyzstan by July 11th 2014.

Kyrgyzstan, and Central Asia in general, has become strategically closer to Russia in recent years. Russia, in 2005, began pressuring the Kyrgyzstani government to evict the U.S. from Manas because of skepticism regarding American intentions in Afghanistan.

In 2003, Russia established an air force base at Kant Air Base in north Kyrgyzstan as part of the Collective Security Organization Treaty. More recently, Russia announced it would double its military presence at Kant Air Base and extend its lease at the base for another 15 years beginning in 2017.

Russia also maintains its largest air base outside of Russia in west Tajikistan. Russia and Tajikistan have negotiated to enlarge the base and increase the size of Russia's military personnel. It is clear Russia is strengthening its bulwark in Central Asia in order to help stabilize the region and its border as coalition forces drawdown in Afghanistan.

The closure of U.S. military operations in Kyrgyzstan reflects what many have seen as a diminished role of the U.S. in Central Asia. The U.S. is set to significantly reduce troop levels in Afghanistan over the next two years. By 2016 there will only be a remaining force to guard the embassy in Kabul and provide military guidance to the Afghans.

The U.S. is currently vacating its military operations in Afghanistan and Central Asia in order to concentrate on other regions of the world. Russia is stepping up its strategic influence in Central Asia. It remains to be seen how the U.S. can enhance its strategic objectives and values in Central Asia post 2016, but it is vital for this important region that it does so.

Karachi Airport Attack Shines Light on Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

Alexander Gupta, Research Intern
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
June 30, 2014

On the evening of Sunday, June 8th 2014, 10 terrorists allegedly from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) infiltrated Pakistan's largest and busiest airport. The terrorists attacked the Jinnah International Airport in the sprawling, seaport city of Karachi. The setting of the attack was the airport's old terminal which is used for cargo and military aircraft. The ten men, most of Uzbek origin, fired automatic weapons, detonated grenades, and used explosive suicide vests when they were finally about to be apprehended by Pakistani authorities. By Monday morning, 39 people were confirmed dead, including the 10 terrorists.

The IMU and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claimed responsibility for the attack several days later. If the IMU is responsible for the attack it potentially demonstrates the reemergence of the IMU and the threat of Central Asian Islamic fundamentalist groups banding together with Al-Qaeda and the Taliban to destabilize the region.

In 1998 the IMU was established with the ultimate goal of eliminating Uzbekistan's longtime President Islam Karimov and implementing Sharia Law in the Fergana Valley along the Uzbekistan-Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border region. After a sustained series of defeats the IMU was driven out of their stronghold in the Fergana Valley and fled to north Afghanistan in 1999 where they allied with the Taliban.

As a result of the September 11th attacks, Operation Enduring Freedom commenced on October 7th 2001. The U.S. worked with the Northern Alliance in order to retake Kabul from the Taliban. As the U.S. fought their way toward Kabul, the IMU was uprooted from north Afghanistan and fled to a new safe haven in South Waziristan, Pakistan. By the time the IMU reached northwest Pakistan they were severely weakened from fighting coalition forces in Afghanistan.

The IMU is reportedly joining forces with TTP as a way to balance out their relative strengths and weaknesses. The alliance of these two organizations raises concerns because these radical terrorist groups, which had been adversaries years ago, are now working together with shared objectives. The IMU is also working together with Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, from the autonomous Federally Administered Tribal Areas in northwest Pakistan.

Coalition forces are currently in the process of withdrawing from Afghanistan. There is a risk of the Taliban, along with Al-Qaeda, regaining significant territory in Afghanistan once coalition forces finally depart. The potential threat could be compounded by other terrorist organizations joining forces. The IMU, with enough support, could then be able to more efficiently resume their original goals of attacking the Uzbekistan government and instilling Sharia Law in the Fergana Valley.

Regional-Determinism in Asia: How Everyone's Security Could be in Jeopardy

Nathan Alvarado-Castle, Adjunct Junior Fellow
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
July 11, 2014

Earlier this week, high-level American and Chinese officials [met](#) in Beijing to discuss pertinent bilateral issues including climate security, the global economy, and cybersecurity. More importantly, the two nations also discussed the growing tensions between China and Japan and other neighboring Asian countries [overdisputed](#) territorial claims in the South and East China Seas.

Though these territories have been subject to debate between Japan and China in previous years, the current situation could incite an ["explosive"](#) incident. This would radically alter not only the political and economic landscape in Asia (such as rollback the economic gains that have been made since the financial crisis of 2008), but force the US 'pivot' to Asia to accelerate, further tying down the US and straining resources.

The likelihood of direct conflict – unless properly mitigated – could increase if the current state of affairs is not resolved through diplomatic means.

Further raising tensions in the region, Japan just [reversed](#) 70 years of pacifism engrained in their post-WWII constitution. On July 1st, Japan's Cabinet "reinterpreted" the war-renouncing Article 9 of the constitution allowing Japan to exercise a right to collective-self defense through the use of Self-Defense-Forces in overseas battles. According to the [WSJ](#), this reversal enables Japan to join multinational 'peacekeeping' operations, come to the aid of allies like the United States when or if they are attacked, and cooperate more fully with U.S. or South Korea if Japan itself is attacked.

Leading up to this change, last year Japan sought out the biggest defense budget rise in [22](#) years amid tensions with China over the uninhabited Diaoyu Islands in the East China Sea. More recently, the months of April and June saw Japanese [jets scramble](#) a record 340 times in response to approaching Chinese aircraft. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has also repeatedly pressed for a collective security alliance with Australia, the Philippines, Vietnam, India and other regional allies in the Pacific.

In Abe's most recent visit to Australia, the first of two in a span of four months, Japan's PM [said](#), "Japan is now working to change its legal basis for security . . . so we can act jointly with other countries in as many ways as possible." Going on, Abe said, "Let us join together all the more in order to make vast seas from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian, and those skies, open and free." Abe's rhetoric is a direct address to China's unilateral declaration in November of the [Air Defense Identification Zone](#) over the East China Sea and the [maritime spat with Vietnam](#) over a recently built Chinese oil rig off Vietnam's coast.

Prior to Abe's speech, China's own President Xi Jinping articulated a new security framework for Asian affairs.

In May, Chinese President Xi Jinping set forth a new security concept with a regional emphasis at the fourth Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), an organization consisting of 26 nations including strategic partners Russia and Iran. Since China has assumed chairmanship of CICA in 2014, they have attempted to raise the significance of the organization as one of many initiatives to place itself at the center of Asian affairs.

At the summit in Shanghai, Xi announced that there is a "common destiny" for the "Asian family" and that this destiny would be found in a regional-framework that sought security for "both individual countries and the region as a whole through dialogue and cooperation". This speech, which noted the "need to keep pace with the changing circumstances and evolving times" – a slight objection to the *status quo* of the international order – directly addressed what was 'new' to the new security concept for Asian countries: *Asian affairs were to be solved by Asian countries or more specifically, China.*

In the final statements of the speech, Xi acclaimed, "It is for the people of Asia to run the affairs of Asia, solve the problems of Asia and uphold the security of Asia." This can be seen as a rhetorical challenge to U.S. hegemony in the region.

The US '[pivot](#)' to Asia announced in 2011 by the Obama Administration has undoubtedly caused hard-liners within the Chinese establishment to view such an action as a strategy of regional containment or encirclement – and for good reason. With the US increasing their

military presence in the Pacific, Asian-Pacific allies have begun a crypto-arms race to counter potential Chinese expansion, leading US Pacific Command Commander Adm. Samuel Locklear to claim the Asia-Pacific, "[the most militarized region in the world](#)".

It does not take an astute analyst of world history to know there is potential for direct conflict in the region. As a result, the US military risks involvement if China and Japan were to come to blows. Of course, this does not *have* to be the case. Actions can be taken today to reverse this trend of escalation and the meetings earlier this week sought to do exactly that. Nonetheless, the US should make its diplomatic and military policy in the region abundantly clear, as any ambiguity in regards to Japan's security and China's growing influence over neighboring countries will no longer suffice in a world where challenging the international order is becoming more common.

Air Force panel needs to push past status quo with space launch

August Cole, Adjunct Fellow
[Flashpoint Blog](#)
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A key Air Force panel appears ready to recommend the U.S. take a significant step in shoring up its space-launch capabilities by developing a domestic alternative to the Russian rocket engines that currently lift some of America's most sensitive military and intelligence satellites into orbit.

The key question, however, is how long will it take and how much will it cost? How those two simple questions are answered will heavily shape the future of America's military space program.

The panel's report will be an important recognition that the status quo approach to national security space launch missions needs to change in order to reflect renewed tensions with Russia over Ukraine as well as the increasingly dynamic U.S. commercial space launch market.

According to a Bloomberg report, the Air Force panel reviewing U.S. reliance on Russian RD-180 rocket engines used to power Atlas V rockets found an American engine alternative could take up to 6 years at a cost as much as \$1.5 billion. [See the Bloomberg report.](#) That is too long, and out of step with the sort of timeline government

needs to aim for in order to capture the best that both commercial sector and traditional contractors have to offer. The U.S. has such options at hand and more are coming online in the next few years at the same time that satellite technology itself is undergoing a transformation that will be helped along by more frequent and cheaper launches. This is an era in national security policy where disruptions to long-held convictions and practices are the norm. For the Pentagon, such monumental shifts need to be internally generated or such shocks will be caused by adversaries and rivals.

The situation is emblematic of larger challenges the Defense Department faces in encouraging competition and innovation by leveraging commercial suppliers and business models. By working faster to open up its military space launch opportunities to more firms, the Air Force can encourage entrepreneurship within the military and commercial segments of the space launch market to give the Defense Department innovative and cost-effective space access. This comes back to the need for a national security strategy for space that prioritizes resilience, including the ability to rapidly and affordably replace damaged or destroyed military and relevant civilian space assets.

This has become a matter of will as much as time. Right now, the U.S. is short of both.

Further Reading

Climate Security

[Ten Key Facts – Climate Change](#)

[Tennessee and Climate Change](#)

[Water Management in the American Southwest](#)

[Texas and Climate Change](#)

Energy Security

[America's Energy Choices for 2014](#)

[Fusion Power – A 10 Year Plan for American Energy Security](#)

Asymmetric Operations

[Current Space Launch Vehicles Used by the United States](#)

[National Security & America's Space Challenge](#)

[Part 1: The Next Space Race: Competition](#)

[Part 2 – Overcoming Asymmetric Risks in Space](#)

[The 21st Century Nuclear Arsenal](#)

[Internet Censorship and Circumvention](#)

About the Editors

Adin Dobkin

Adin is ASP's Government and Media Affairs Officer. In his role, he briefs key members of government bodies, coordinates ASP's efforts with nationally-recognized media outlets, and develops political strategy behind ASP's research efforts. His work helps to ensure that ASP's message reaches the most number of ears and has a lasting impact on U.S. public policy.

Prior to his work in government and media affairs, Adin served as an Adjunct Junior Fellow studying military operations and American competitiveness. He has been a member of several important political and communications organizations in both the public and private sector. These organizations include local, state, and federal legislators, political consulting groups, mayoral campaigns, and congressional offices.

Adin is also the founder of The Kant Institute, a policy organization founded on principles of social engagement and the creation of an open forum for the big thinkers of the next generation. The Institute focuses on issues of education reform, including curriculum studies, infrastructure development, and EdTech.

Naman Jain

Naman Jain is the Media and Government Relations intern at the American Security Project. Originally from India, he attended the College of Wooster in Ohio where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations in May 2014. He is interested in a variety of topics, including South Asia, foreign policy, and international security.

The American Security Project (ASP) is a nonpartisan organization created to educate the American public and the world about the changing nature of national security in the 21st Century.

Gone are the days when a nation's security could be measured by bombers and battleships. Security in this new era requires harnessing all of America's strengths: the force of our diplomacy; the might of our military; the vigor and competitiveness of our economy; and the power of our ideals.

We believe that America must lead in the pursuit of our common goals and shared security. We must confront international challenges with our partners and with all the tools at our disposal and address emerging problems before they become security crises. And to do this we must forge a bipartisan consensus here at home.

ASP brings together prominent American business leaders, former members of Congress, retired military flag officers, and prominent former government officials. ASP conducts research on a broad range of issues and engages and empowers the American public by taking its findings directly to them via events, traditional & new media, meetings, and publications.

We live in a time when the threats to our security are as complex and diverse as terrorism, nuclear proliferation, climate change, energy challenges, and our economic wellbeing. Partisan bickering and age old solutions simply won't solve our problems. America – and the world - needs an honest dialogue about security that is as robust as it is realistic.

ASP exists to promote that dialogue, to forge that consensus, and to spur constructive action so that America meets the challenges to its security while seizing the opportunities that abound.



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