

— **AN AMERICAN CENTURY** —
A Strategy to Secure America's Enduring Interests and Ideals

A ROMNEY FOR PRESIDENT WHITE PAPER
with a Foreword by Eliot Cohen

October 7, 2011



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America does not have the option of abandoning a leadership role in support of its national interests. Those interests are vital to the security of the United States. Failure to anticipate and manage the conflicts that threaten those interests . . . will not make the conflicts go away or make America's interests any less important. It will simply lead to an increasingly unstable and unfriendly global climate and, eventually, to conflicts America cannot ignore, which we must prosecute with limited choices under unfavorable circumstances — and with stakes that are higher than anyone would like.

— Final Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review Independent Panel*
Stephen J. Hadley, Former Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
William J. Perry, Former Secretary of Defense
Co-Chairs

FOREWORD, by Eliot Cohen[†]

Now, as in the 1970s, as in the 1930s, and as at other times in our past, Americans are being told that the ability of the United States to influence international politics has passed. On both ends of the political spectrum we hear that the United States should clip its own wings, because it is too broke, too unpopular, or simply too incompetent to act like a superpower. American hard power, the argument goes, is waning, our soft power ineffective, our moral authority compromised, our will enfeebled. Some people even think this is a desirable state of affairs. This is an era, supposedly, for leading from behind, or indeed, not at all — propositions which amount to pretty much the same thing.

* Final Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review Independent Panel, United States Institute of Peace, 2010, p. 28: <http://www.usip.org/files/qdr/qdrreport.pdf>.

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This is a fallacious, and indeed a dangerous doctrine. The United States cannot withdraw from world affairs without grave danger to itself and to others. Almost every global conflict from the end of the eighteenth century has, in one way or another, embroiled this country. Even if some Americans today wish to disengage from the world's affairs, they will find — as they did on September 11th, 2001, and as other Americans did on December 7th, 1941 — that the world will not disengage from them.

America has global interests. Without a free and orderly international trading and financial system our own economic system cannot flourish. The values that make us Americans are universal: our Founders declared that “all men,” not some, “are created equal,” and Lincoln insisted that the Civil War was a test of whether “any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure.” Whether we wish it or not, our values, our policies, and our example matter to all who cherish freedom, and our conduct inspires or dismays them accordingly. A world without American leadership will be an unstable world, in which unscrupulous or tyrannical regimes feel free to get their way by force, and in which international cooperation frays and ultimately dissolves.

The American choice is not, therefore, whether it should lead: it is how to lead wisely. Skillful leadership requires an ability to recognize that sometimes our interests and our values will be in tension, and to figure out how to live with that ambiguity, without forsaking either. It means maintaining strength and using it prudently, while refraining from useless bluster or diplomacy conducted from a position of weakness. It means sustaining old friendships and alliances while seeking out and strengthening new relationships. It requires prudence in calculating risks, while realizing that sometimes nothing matters as much as communicating resolve. And it demands self-awareness, because, to a degree that often surprises Americans, others abroad take the doubts we express about ourselves here with the utmost seriousness.

America has a strong hand to play. Our political system is legitimate, resilient, and adaptive; our military, if we fund it adequately, will remain incomparably the most powerful in the world; our reservoirs of economic strength and technological ability are enormous; our culture is one of enterprise and risk-taking; our demographic position is the best in the developed world; our political and social system absorbs immigrants and makes members of all ethnic groups equal citizens. We agree about much, diverging, perhaps, about how best to live up to our values, but disagreeing far less about whether those values are just and true. However serious our current economic troubles, no other country has this combination of strengths.

We have experienced many shocks in the last several decades: some benign, like the generally peaceful collapse of the Soviet empire and the Soviet Union itself, and the end of the Cold war; others adverse, including war and economic recession. One test of presidential leadership in the years ahead will be not only a clear articulation of principles, grounded on both ideals and interests, but the ability to react to shocks, to improvise and adapt. The likelihood of dangerous shocks will rise, however, if the United States looks weak and uncertain. The easiest way, for example, to become embroiled in a clash with China over Taiwan, or because of China's ambitions in the South or East China Seas, will be to leave Beijing in doubt about the depth of our commitment to longstanding allies in the region. Conversely, a United States that is self-confident and strong will find more developments breaking its way.

Job one for the next administration will, no doubt, be restoring our economy as a great engine for the production of jobs and prosperity. But the world will not give the United States several years of furlough from international politics to put its own house in order. Gimmicks (e.g., reset buttons), declarations of utopian aspirations (e.g., the abolition of nuclear weapons), confessions of lack of staying power (e.g., proclaiming a date certain for leaving Afghanistan), undermining one's allies (e.g., waffling on trade agreements with friends like Colombia, or visiting

Israel's neighbors but ostentatiously shunning Jerusalem), and currying favor with our enemies (e.g., the abortive outreach to Syria's Assad) have, collectively, undermined America's position in the world as much as any economic bad news. Luckily, forceful, sober, and principled presidential leadership can do just as much to restore it. I joined Governor Romney's team because I believe that with his combination of principled understanding and practical ability, prudence and strength, he can provide just that kind of leadership at a time when we desperately need it.

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INTRODUCTION: AMERICAN POWER AND THE WORLD

We live in a dangerous world. On September 11, 2001, the United States was struck in the most devastating terrorist attack in history. We subsequently entered two major wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. At this moment, tens of thousands of our bravest young men and women are serving overseas, many of them in harm's way. How should we act to keep our country secure? An effective defense of American interests requires a sober recognition of the almost kaleidoscopic range of threats that continue to loom before our nation and the diverse policy responses they require.

In the American system, the burden of responsibility for national defense falls on our president. The American president is invested with the responsibility of serving as Commander-in-Chief of our armed forces and charged with conducting the foreign relations of the United States. No function is more critical to the survival of our experiment in self-government and no function is more reliant on the judgment, vision, wisdom, and leadership of the person occupying our nation's highest office. In choosing their president, the American people must understand how the world looks to the person who is seeking their support. And they must also understand what course of action he will pursue in their name. This white paper attempts to set out Mitt Romney's view of some of the most significant foreign-policy and national-security challenges facing the United States.

Whoever takes the oath of office in January of 2013 will need to grapple with a bewildering array of threats and opportunities. At one end of the spectrum are the traditional problems of statecraft. Powerful countries such as China and Russia are growing in strength and seeking their place in the sun. Their economic success and rising power could contribute significantly to the health of an international system built on economic and political freedom. But it also could help unravel such a system. The authoritarian character of China and Russia already propels those countries to engage in behavior that undermines international security. Checking their harmful ambitions while promoting their transformation into decent and democratic political actors is a primary challenge facing any American leader.

At the other end of the spectrum are the relatively new dangers posed by transnational actors, terrorist groupings preeminent among them. Although the United States has made great strides over the past ten years in dismantling al Qaeda, radical Islam still poses a multifaceted challenge and direct threats to our homeland remain an omnipresent danger. Our friends and allies around the world also continue to be at risk. Jihadists are seeking to exploit fragile states across the world as safe havens from which to plan and launch attacks or to tip those nations into theocratic revolutions. In a world in which weapons of mass destruction can fall into the wrong hands, the United States faces a set of national security dilemmas that are as urgent as they are complex.

A broad arc of the world extending from Pakistan to Libya is today caught up in profound turmoil. Connecting East to West, this region is the hinge on which Eurasia turns; its geostrategic importance cannot be overstated. It holds immense deposits of carbon resources. It contains some of the world's most important seafaring chokepoints, including the Suez Canal and the Straits of Hormuz. It is the seat of the world's major faiths, with religious passions roiling vast masses of people. It holds populations striving to break free from the stasis of authoritarian rule. It holds other populations suffering under the boot of dictatorships and/or locked in sectarian strife. It contains

states too weak to police or protect themselves. It is the world's primary flash point for nuclear proliferation. It poses a constant risk of catastrophic war that could take millions of lives and plunge the world economy into chaos.

We must also contend with failed or failing states, like Somalia, Yemen, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and to an alarming degree, our southern neighbor Mexico. These are states with weak governance that are wracked by poverty, disease, internal strife, refugees, drugs, and organized crime. They are or can become safe-havens for terrorists, pirates, and other kinds of criminal networks. Their problems regularly spill across borders turning internal problems into regional and even global ones.

A special problem is posed by the rogue nations of the world: Iran, North Korea, Venezuela, and Cuba. Their interests and values are diametrically opposed to our own and they threaten international peace and security in numerous ways, including, as in the case of North Korea and Iran, by seeking nuclear weapons, or by harboring criminal networks, exporting weapons, and sponsoring terrorists. They deny their people the human dignity and well-being offered by economic opportunity and political freedom. They can be the source of intense regional conflict that can easily spread into a far larger arena and endanger the peace of the world.

How should we deal with these many varied dangers? In the highly dynamic realm of national security and foreign policy there are seldom easy answers. Discrete circumstances in disparate regions of the world demand different kinds of approaches. There is no silver bullet for the problem of securing the United States and protecting our interests around the world.

But there are competing visions, competing philosophies, that lead to very different prescriptions for our national-security dilemmas. Amid the multiplying dangers and the complex challenges, Mitt Romney would work to protect and advance America's interests by employing all the instruments of national power at the president's disposal. He will defend our country, defend

our allies, and restore American leadership around the world. It is only American power — conceived in the broadest terms — that can provide the foundation of an international system that ensures the security and prosperity of the United States and our friends and allies. Every American has a profound interest in global peace and prosperity. Our prosperity is tied to free markets and free trade. Our security is dependent on the security of Asia and Europe. We created this world order, and our well-being as a nation depends on preserving it against the many challenges it faces.

To that end, American strength will be brought to bear according to a set of guiding principles:

First, a Romney foreign policy will proceed with clarity and resolve. The United States will clearly enunciate its interests and values. Our friends and allies will not have doubts about where we stand and what we will do to safeguard our interests and theirs; neither will our rivals, competitors, and adversaries. As the world's greatest power, the United States will strive to set the international policy agenda, create a predictable economic and security environment that enables other countries to develop policies that are in conformity with our own, and minimize those occasions on which the United States is confronted by instability and surprise.

Second, a Romney administration will seek to maintain and advance an international system that is congenial to the institutions of open markets, representative government, and respect for human rights. The United States will work vigorously to encourage all nations to develop modern and enduring governmental systems that foster the rule of law, protect human dignity, and defend the unalienable rights of man, including freedom of conscience and freedom of expression. The path from authoritarianism to freedom and representative government is not always a straight line or an easy evolution, but history teaches that nations that share our values will be more reliable U.S. partners and will tend to stand together in pursuit of common security and shared prosperity.

Third, the United States will apply the full spectrum of hard and soft power to influence events *before* they erupt into conflict. In defending America's national interest in a world of danger, the United States should always retain a powerful military capacity to defend itself and its allies. Resort to force is always the least desirable option, the costliest in resources and human life. A Romney administration will therefore employ all the tools of statecraft to shape the outcome of threatening situations before they demand military action. Though the use of armed force will never be off the table when the safety of America is at stake, a President Romney will take a comprehensive approach to America's security challenges. The tools of "hard" and "soft" power must work together to be effective. They are complements not substitutes for one another.

Fourth, the United States will exercise leadership in multilateral organizations and alliances. American leadership lends credibility and breeds faith in the ultimate success of any action, facilitating the participation not only of allies but also of others who are sitting on the sidelines. American leadership will also focus multilateral institutions like the United Nations on achieving the substantive goals of democracy and human rights enshrined in their charters. Bodies like the United Nations tend to confuse process with substance, prizing the act of negotiating over the outcomes that negotiations can reach. Even worse, these organizations have become forums for the tantrums of tyrants and for airing of the world's most ancient of prejudices: anti-Semitism. In the tradition of such U.N. ambassadors as Daniel P. Moynihan, Jeane Kirkpatrick and John Bolton, the United States must fight to return these bodies to their proper role of promoting democracy, human rights, and a peaceful and prosperous world. But while America should always try to work with others nations, America will always reserve the right to act alone to protect our vital interests.

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PART I: THE SINEWS OF AMERICAN POWER

Principles are vitally important for bringing clarity to national-security decision-making. But what breathes life into these principles and brings security to our country are the three foundations of America's strength: the inherent appeal of our values; our economic might, and our military prowess. Unfortunately, all three legs of this tripod have been undermined by three years of Barack Obama's misconceived policies. A Romney administration will seek to repair the damage and build a more durable structure in its place.

American Values

From John Winthrop to Ronald Reagan, the image of America as a shining city on a hill has resonated worldwide. Our Declaration of Independence is the most profound articulation of the fundamental premises of our system of rule. "Governments," it reads, "are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." The revolutionary ideas of our Founding Fathers built a constitutional regime that disestablished ancient privilege, guaranteed liberties, and promoted the general welfare. For nearly two-and-a-half centuries the ideas that "all men are created equal" and that they are "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights" including "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness," have stoked the aspirations of millions of freedom-seekers around the globe.

Today, however, this sunny vision of America as a lantern of liberty and a force for good has been competing with a darker and more pessimistic view. A perspective has been gaining currency, including within high councils of the Obama administration, that regards that United States as a power in decline. And not only is the United States regarded as in decline, but that decline is seen as both inexorable and a condition that can and should be managed for the global good rather than reversed.

Adherents of this view argue that America no longer possesses the resources or the moral authority to play a leadership role in the world. They contend that the United States should not try to lead because we will only succeed in exhausting ourselves and spreading thin our limited resources. They counsel America to step aside, allow other powers to rise, and pursue policies that will “manage” the relative change in our national fortunes. They recoil from the idea of American Exceptionalism, the idea that an America founded on the universal principles of human liberty and human dignity has a unique history and a special role to play in world affairs. They do not see an international system undergirded by American values of economic and political freedom as necessarily superior to a world system organized by multilateral organizations like the United Nations. Indeed, they see the United Nations as an instrument that can rein in and temper what they regard as the ill-considered overreaching of the United States.

This view of America in decline, and America as a potentially malign force, has percolated far and wide. It is intimately related to the torrent of criticism, unprecedented for an American president, that Barack Obama has directed at his own country. In his first year in office alone, President Obama issued apologies for America in speeches delivered in France, England, Turkey, and Egypt not to mention on multiple similar occasions here at home. Among the “sins” for which he has repented in our collective name are American arrogance, dismissiveness, and derision; for dictating solutions, for acting unilaterally, for acting without regard for others; for treating other countries as mere proxies, for unjustly interfering in the internal affairs of other nations, for committing torture, for fueling anti-Islamic sentiments, for dragging our feet in combating global warming, and for selectively promoting democracy. The sum total of President Obama’s rhetorical efforts has been a form of unilateral disarmament in the diplomatic and moral sphere. A President who is so troubled by America’s past cannot lead us into the future.

Mitt Romney rejects the philosophy of decline in all of its variants. He believes that a strong America is the best guarantor of peace and the best patron of liberty the world has ever known. That is the central lesson Romney finds in the history of America's role on the world stage. Throughout our past, the United States has acted across the globe to advance the values of liberty and self-government. We have never sought to impose ourselves on others, to seek colonies, or to engage in conquest. We have sought only our own safety and, where possible, to open the opportunity for others to live in freedom as we do. Any fair historical balance sheet would reveal that no nation has shed more blood for more noble causes than the United States. The "last best hope of earth" was what Abraham Lincoln called our country. Mitt Romney believes in fulfilling the promise of Lincoln's words. Mitt Romney believes in restoring the sinews of American power.

Our Economy

A strong economy is vital to our ability to deter military threats and forge an international system based on economic and political freedom. U.S. economic performance over the second half of the 20th century sustained our nation as a global superpower throughout the Cold War. When foreign-policy crises cropped up as they inevitably did, we had in place all the prerequisites — the manpower and technology, the scientific and industrial base, the ability to mobilize — to meet the challenges and prevail. Our economic prowess played a vitally important role in meeting our most important trial of the era: our competition with the Soviet Union. As we modernized our forces in the 1980s, introducing microchips into our arsenal, including especially precision-guided weapons, the Soviet Union was unable to keep pace. Its effort do so only succeeded in accelerating the bankruptcy of its Stalinist system of central planning and contributed to its final collapse.

Today, however, we find the American economy in serious trouble. Although the crisis did not begin under President Obama, his policies have not only failed to restart the economy but have

actively hindered recovery. He has failed to address and, in some instances, exacerbated many of the structural problems that have hobbled our nation's economic performance. The net result, as the Obama administration approaches its fourth year, is an economy trapped in stasis. Unemployment is over 9 percent, far above the post-war monthly average of 5.6 percent, and it has been over 8 percent for 31 consecutive months, the longest such spell in modern history. With GDP growth for the second quarter of 2011 at 1.3 percent, the U.S. economy is in dire straits and the threat of a second recession appears to be drawing near.

What is too often overlooked is that both the slow growth and the administration's reaction have direct and dangerous implications for our national security. The administration's primary response to the economic crisis has been massive government spending on a "stimulus" program designed to "prime the pump" of the economy. While the stimulus has largely failed in its objective, it succeeded in running up the annual deficit to \$1.3 trillion dollars, and brought us to a national debt of \$14.8 trillion. The national-security consequence of this spending spree has been to place severe constraints on the availability of resources for national security purposes.

Mitt Romney has already presented his detailed plan for turning around the American economy by establishing the right conditions for economic growth and job creation. In the book he released last month, *Believe in America*, Romney laid out a vision for rebuilding the foundations of the American economy on the principles of free enterprise, hard work, and innovation. His plan emphasizes critical structural adjustments rather than short-term fixes. It seeks to reduce taxes, spending, regulation, and government programs. It seeks to increase trade, energy production, human capital, and labor flexibility. It relinquishes power to the states instead of claiming to have the solution to every problem.

Romney's plan is at once a deeply conservative return to policies that have served our nation well and a highly ambitious departure from the policies of our current leadership. Economists who

have “scored” Romney’s plan estimate that it will produce economic growth of more than 4 percent per year, leading to the creation of more than 11 million jobs and bringing the unemployment rate below 6 percent during his first term in office. This robust growth, coupled with spending cuts and fiscal discipline, will also bring the federal budget deficit under control.

Returning our economy to the path of growth not only will benefit us at home, but also will produce significant benefits internationally. Our own prosperity will create greater prosperity abroad, it will make us a more attractive economic partner for trade and investment, and it will once again serve as powerful proof that America’s ideas and values are worthy of emulation. Just as importantly, an economically resurgent America on a sound fiscal footing will be in far better position to credibly deter our rivals, reassure our allies, and strengthening our overall influence around the world.

Our Military

American military power is vital to the preservation of our own security and peace around the world. Twice in the 20th century, the United States was compelled to come to the rescue of Europe when it was engulfed in war. And it was American military power that enabled the United States after World War II to stand in opposition to brutal and aggressive Communist dictatorship. It was American fortitude and power that turned around the Soviet missiles on their way to Cuba. It was American resolve and power that helped to liberate the captive nations of Eastern Europe and precipitate the collapse of the USSR. It is America today that patrols the global commons and keeps them safe for trade and commerce. It is America today that is working to extinguish terrorism around the world. A weak America, an America in decline, an America that retreats from its responsibilities, would usher in an era of uncertainty and danger, first for the United States but also for all those everywhere who believe in the cause of freedom.

President Obama came into office with a military in serious need of modernization. However, instead of rebuilding our strength, President Obama has put us on course toward a “hollow” force. He has already cut the projected defense budget by \$350 billion over the next twelve years and he has sought even further massive cuts over the same period. What is more, he agreed to a budget process that holds up the possibility of far sharper decreases in military spending, on the order of \$600 billion over the same period. This budget cutting enterprise is proceeding while American troops are in combat in Afghanistan, facing dangers in Iraq, and fighting the remnants of al Qaeda worldwide.

The Obama administration's cuts have left us with a military inventory largely composed of weapons designed forty to fifty years ago. The average age of our tanker aircraft is 47 years, of strategic bombers 34 years. While the weapons in our arsenal remain formidable, they are well along on the path to obsolescence. Along with the aging process, there has been a precipitous decline in sheer numbers. The U.S. Navy has only 284 ships today, the lowest level since 1916. Given current trends, the number will decline, and the additional contemplated cuts will cause it to decline even further. Our naval planners indicate we need 328 ships to fulfill the Navy's role of global presence and power projection in defense of American security. Our Air Force, which had 82 fighter squadrons at the end of the Cold War, has been reduced to 39 today. President Obama has cut funding for national missile defense.

The Obama administration is seeking to reap a “peace dividend” when we are not at peace and when the dangers to our security are mounting. This flies directly in the face of conclusions from the bipartisan Perry-Hadley Commission set up by Congress last year. Even before Congress has adopted its latest round of cuts and even before President Obama had proposed yet deeper cuts, the Commission warned that:

[t]he aging of the inventories and equipment used by the services, the decline in the size of the Navy, escalating personnel entitlements, overhead and

procurement costs, and the growing stress on the force means that a train wreck is coming in the areas of personnel, acquisition, and force structure.[‡]

There is a price to strength, but a greater price to weakness, because weakness tempts aggression.

An additional factor must be considered. The men and women of America's military are among the finest who have ever served any nation at any time. They are all volunteers; they have all chosen to dedicate their careers in the service of their country. Many have spent more time in Iraq and Afghanistan over the last ten years than they have spent at home. Thousands of them went overseas and will never come home. They have willingly chosen this path of sacrifice. It is unconscionable that these men and women must fly in airplanes that are old and unreliable, must sail in ships that have cracked hulls, or must ride in vehicles that are urgently in need of replacement — all because their government has had neither the vision to plan for their needs nor the simple common sense to manage its own budget.

As Commander-in-Chief, Mitt Romney will keep faith with the men and women who defend us just as he will ensure that our military capabilities are matched to the interests we need to protect. He will put our Navy on the path to increase its shipbuilding rate from nine per year to approximately fifteen per year. He will also modernize and replace the aging inventories of the Air Force, Army, and Marines, and selectively strengthen our force structure. And he will fully commit to a robust, multi-layered national ballistic-missile defense system to deter and defend against nuclear attacks on our homeland and our allies.

This will not be a cost-free process. We cannot rebuild our military strength without paying for it. Romney will begin by reversing Obama-era defense cuts and return to the budget baseline established by Secretary Robert Gates in 2010, with the goal of setting core defense spending —

[‡] Final Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review Independent Panel, United States Institute of Peace, 2010, p. v: <http://www.usip.org/files/qdr/qdrreport.pdf>.

meaning funds devoted to the fundamental military components of personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement, and research and development — at a *floor* of 4 percent of GDP.

Romney will also find efficiencies throughout the Department of Defense budget that can be reinvested into the force. The Department's bureaucracy is bloated to the point of dysfunction and is ripe for being pared. In the years since 2000, the Pentagon's civilian staff grew by 20 percent while our active duty fighting force grew by only 3.4 percent. That imbalance needs to be rectified. During World War II the United States built 1,000 ships per year with 1,000 people employed in the Bureau of Ships, as the naval purchasing department of the Department of War was then called. By the 1980s, we were building seventeen ships per year, with 4,000 people in purchasing. Today, when we are building only nine ships a year, the Pentagon manages the shipbuilding process with some 25,000 people. That kind of excess must be brought to an end along with the byzantine rules and wasteful practices that riddle the military procurement process.

With proper management, we can do far better in controlling costs and getting more for our taxpayer dollars. The measures Mitt Romney will take include establishing clear lines of authority and accountability for each weapons system so they remain on time and on budget. He will institute shorter design and delivery cycles for weapons systems to eliminate the current practice of relying on yet-to-be-developed technologies, which creates delays and cost overruns. This will foster more realistic planning, get equipment into the field at a faster pace, and save the cost of having to keep older weapons systems in circulation. He will institute greater competition at all levels of the procurement process. And he will work with Congress to pass budgets on time — something the Obama administration has habitually failed to do — to allow the Department of Defense and defense contractors to properly plan multi-year projects without delay and disruption. These and other reforms will ensure a functioning procurement system that redirects savings into the defense of our nation.

The burden of defense spending is substantial but in any honest accounting, the benefits need to be tallied along with the costs. Those benefits include, first and foremost, prevention of war. By patrolling the commons, our forces have also contributed to the maintenance of a worldwide system of free trade that has brought us enormous financial dividends, far more than we have spent on maintaining a military. And our strength has protected the development of democracy around the world, enhancing stability and providing new allies and partners in the cause of peace and freedom. The cost of preparedness may sometimes be high, but the cost of unpreparedness is almost always higher — not just in tax dollars but in human life and in the survival of liberty and representative government.

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PART II: AMERICA IN A TROUBLED WORLD

American security and American prosperity are first order tasks of any American president. Both of them are complex, and both of them entail engagement with issues that extend far beyond America's borders. Long gone are the days when America was kept safe from the world by the expanse of two oceans. The world has drawn close to us, sometimes dangerously so. An American president looking out from the Oval Office is confronted with a stunning array of challenges, all demanding analysis and all demanding action.

China

In 2010, after 30 years of dramatic growth, China surpassed Japan to become the world's second largest economy after ours. China's size in land and in population, its rapid economic growth, and its sharply increasing military expenditures are dramatically changing the strategic map of the world. While the potential for conflict with an authoritarian China could rise as its power grows, the United States must pursue policies designed to encourage Beijing to embark on a course

that makes conflict less likely. China must be discouraged from attempting to intimidate or dominate neighboring states. If the present Chinese regime is permitted to establish itself as the preponderant power in the Western Pacific it could close off large parts of the region to cooperative relations with the United States and the West and dim hope that economic opportunity and democratic freedom will continue to flourish across East Asia. Mitt Romney will implement a strategy that makes the path of regional hegemony for China far more costly than the alternative path of becoming a responsible partner in the international system.

Maintain Robust Military Capabilities in the Pacific: In the face of China's accelerated military build-up, the United States and our allies must maintain appropriate military capabilities to discourage any aggressive or coercive behavior by China against its neighbors. Maintaining a strong military presence in the Pacific is not an invitation to conflict. Quite the contrary; it is a guarantor of a region where trade routes are open and East Asia's community of nations remains secure and prosperous.

Toward that end, the United States should maintain and expand its naval presence in the Western Pacific. We should be assisting partners that require help to enhance their defensive capabilities. The Department of Defense should reconsider recent decisions not to sell top-of-the-line equipment to our closest Asian allies. We should be coordinating with Taiwan to determine its military needs and supplying them with adequate aircraft and other military platforms. We should be assisting Pacific nations to enhance maritime domain awareness, i.e., the ability to employ radar and other detection networks to monitor aggressive behavior in disputed waters. This would minimize the chance of surprise confrontations and prevent military miscalculations that can escalate into larger conflicts.

Deepen Cooperation Among Regional Partners: We need to continue to strengthen alliances and relations with strategic partners like India and build stronger ties to influential countries

like Indonesia. Our aim should be to work with all these countries bilaterally but also to encourage them to work with one another as they have begun to do. Our objective is not to build an anti-China coalition. Rather it is to strengthen cooperation among countries with which we share a concern about China's growing power and increasing assertiveness and with whom we also share an interest in maintaining freedom of navigation and ensuring that disputes over resources are resolved by peaceful means. It is yet another way of closing off China's option of expanding its influence through coercion.

As detailed in his book, *Believe in America*, Mitt Romney will also pursue deeper economic cooperation among like-minded nations around the world that are genuinely committed to the principles of open markets through the formation of a "Reagan Economic Zone." The benefits of this zone — which will codify principles of free trade — will be a powerful magnet that draws in an expanding circle of nations seeking greater access to other markets. Although China is unlikely to accede to the Reagan Economic Zone given its current approach to trade, offering Beijing the possibility of participation will give China significant incentives to end its abusive commercial practices. But with or without China as a member, the Reagan Economic Zone will establish a system of trade that could knit together the entire region, discouraging imbalanced bilateral trade relations between China and its neighbors, limiting China's ability to coerce other countries, and ultimately encouraging China to participate in free trade on fair terms.

Defend Human Rights: Any serious U.S. policy toward China must confront the fact that China's regime continues to deny its people basic political freedoms and human rights. A nation that represses its own people cannot be a trusted partner in an international system based on economic and political freedom. While it is obvious that any lasting democratic reform in China cannot be imposed from the outside, it is equally obvious that the Chinese people currently do not yet enjoy the requisite civil and political rights to turn internal dissent into effective reform. The United States

has an important role to play in encouraging the evolution of China toward a more politically open and democratic order.

If the United States fails to support dissidents out of fear of offending the Chinese government, we will merely embolden China's leaders. We certainly should not have relegated the future of freedom to second or third place, as Secretary of State Clinton did in 2009 when she publicly declared that the Obama administration would not let U.S. concerns about China's human rights record interfere with cooperation "on the global economic crisis [and] the global climate change crisis." A Romney administration will vigorously support and engage civil society groups within China that are promoting democratic reform, anti-corruption efforts, religious freedom, and women's and minority rights. It will look to provide these groups and the Chinese people with greater access to information and communication through a stronger Internet freedom initiative. Mitt Romney will seek to engage China, but will always stand up for those fighting for the freedoms we enjoy.

The Middle East and the Arab Spring

The Greater Middle East is experiencing the most dramatic change since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The protests that have broken out across the Arab world bespeak a generational yearning for a better life and for human dignity, and present an opportunity for profoundly positive change. History may show that the individual who moved the Arab world from autocracy to the path of freedom was not a head of state, but a humble Tunisian street vendor.

But the ongoing revolution is double-edged. The region is riven by tensions, and Iran and Islamist extremists are seeking to influence events and expand their control. The future of democratic institutions in the region — and the security of the United States and its allies — hangs in the balance. Mitt Romney believes that the United States cannot be neutral about the outcome.

To protect our enduring national interests and to promote our ideals, a Romney administration will pursue a strategy of supporting groups and governments across the Middle East to advance the values of representative government, economic opportunity, and human rights, and opposing any extension of Iranian or jihadist influence. The Romney administration will strive to ensure that the Arab Spring is not followed by an Arab Winter.

THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE ARAB SPRING: ISRAEL

Israel is the United States' closest ally in the Middle East and a beacon of democracy and freedom in the region. The tumult in the Middle East has heightened Israel's security problems. Indeed, this is an especially dangerous moment for the Jewish state. It has deteriorating relationships with Turkey and Egypt. It faces longstanding dangers from Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, a violent and highly unstable Syria, and a nuclear-aspiring Iran whose leadership is openly calling for Israel's annihilation.

To ensure Israel's security, Mitt Romney will work closely with Israel to maintain its strategic military edge. The United States will work intensively with Turkey and Egypt to shore up the now fraying relationships with Israel that have underpinned peace in the Middle East for decades. The United States must forcefully resist the emergence of anti-Israel policies in Turkey and Egypt, and work to make clear that their interests are not served by isolating Israel.

With regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Romney's policy will differ sharply from President Obama's. President Obama and his administration have badly misunderstood the dynamics of the region. Instead of fostering stability and security, they have diminished U.S. authority and painted both Israel and ourselves into a corner. President Obama for too long has been in the grip of several illusions. One is that the Israeli-Palestinian dispute is the central problem in the region. This has been disproved repeatedly by events, most recently and most dramatically by the eruption of the Arab Spring. But it nonetheless led the administration to believe that distancing

the United States from Israel was a smart move that would earn us credits in the Arab world and somehow bring peace closer. The record proves otherwise. The key to negotiating a lasting peace is an Israel that knows it will be secure.

The administration's errors extend in other directions as well. President Obama has repeatedly and unilaterally created new preconditions for restarting peace talks. The result has been to encourage Palestinians simply to hold out and wait for Washington to deliver more Israeli concessions on a silver platter. Why, after all, should the Palestinians even negotiate with Israel if the White House is pressuring Israel without extracting any price from the Palestinians in return?

As president, Romney will reject any measure that would frustrate direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. He will make clear to the Palestinians that the unilateral attempt to decide issues that are designated for final negotiations by the Oslo Accords is unacceptable. The United States will reduce assistance to the Palestinians if they continue to pursue United Nations recognition or form a unity government that includes Hamas, a terrorist group dedicated to Israel's destruction. The United States needs a president who will not be a fair-weather friend of Israel. The United States must work as a country to resist the worldwide campaign to delegitimize Israel. We must fight against that campaign in every forum and label it the anti-Semitic poison that it is. Israel's existence as a Jewish state is not up for debate.

THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE ARAB SPRING – IMMEDIATE POST-REVOLUTIONARY STATES: EGYPT, TUNISIA, AND LIBYA

Nations in the Middle East in transition to new governmental structures face serious pitfalls on the road to more representative forms of government. Already, destabilizing jihadist forces and Iranian-backed elements, often better funded and organized than their democratic counterparts, are seeking to exploit the upheaval to make political inroads. A Romney administration will support those individuals and groups that are seeking to instill lasting democratic values and build sturdy

democratic institutions that will sustain open societies in countries that have been closed for too long. Romney will make available technical assistance to governments and transitional bodies to promote democracy, good governance, and sound financial management. He will convene a summit that brings together world leaders, donor organizations, and young leaders of groups that espouse the principles of representative government, religious pluralism, economic opportunity, women's and minority rights, and freedom of expression and conscience in the Arab world. And in his first 100 days, Romney will engage Congress and relevant executive branch agencies and begin organizing all diplomatic and assistance efforts in the greater Middle East under one regional director. Unlike recent "special envoys" or regional "czars," this official will possess unified budgetary and directive authority, and therefore real ability to create results. One official with responsibility and accountability will be able to set regional priorities, craft a unified regional strategic plan, and properly direct our soft power toward ensuring the Arab Spring realizes its promise.

THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE ARAB SPRING: SYRIA

The United States must recognize Syrian strongman Bashar al-Assad for what he is: an unscrupulous dictator, a killer, and a proxy for Iran. For far too long, the Obama administration held out hope that it could negotiate with Assad to stop his violent crackdown on pro-democracy protestors. It even labeled him a "reformer" while he was turning heavy weapons on his own people. Mitt Romney holds no illusions about Assad's character or about Iran's interest in maintaining a client regime in Damascus.

Mitt Romney believes the United States should pursue a strategy of isolating and pressuring the Assad regime to increase the likelihood of a peaceful transition to a legitimate government. We should redouble our push for the U.N. Security Council to live up to its responsibilities and impose sanctions that cut off funding sources that serve to maintain the regime's grip on power. We should work with Saudi Arabia and Turkey to call on Syria's military to protect civilians rather than attack

them. This effort would aim to drive a wedge between Assad and his military, minimize violence, and increase the possibility that the ruling minority Alawites will be able to reconcile with the majority Sunni population in a post-Assad Syria. And we should make clear that the United States and our allies will support the Syrian opposition when the time comes for them to forge a post-Assad government.

THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE ARAB SPRING: IRAQ

U.S. military and diplomatic personnel have made stunning gains in Iraq, pulling the war effort there back from the precipice of defeat. The 2007 “surge” of troops successfully provided security to the population and granted space and time for the Iraqis, our diplomatic corps, and our coalition partners to establish institutions of governance. Today, after struggle and sacrifice, the goal of a democratic Iraq allied with the United States is within our reach. The Obama administration, however, is threatening to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. We are nearing the December 31, 2011 deadline for reaching a new Status of Force Agreement that will allow U.S. troops to remain in Iraq to continue their training mission. Reports indicate that President Obama is seeking to keep 3,000 troops in the country after 2011, a number far below the reported 14,000 to 18,000 our commanders in the field have recommended as the minimum necessary to carry out our mission. In light of these developments, it is impossible to forecast what conditions in Iraq will confront the next American president in January 2013. Mitt Romney will enter office seeking to use the broad array of our foreign-policy tools — diplomatic, economic, and military — to establish a lasting relationship with Iraq and guarantee that Baghdad remains a solid partner in a volatile and strategically vital region.

Iran

Mitt Romney believes that it is unacceptable for Iran to possess a nuclear weapon. Should Iran achieve its nuclear objective, the entire geostrategic landscape of the Middle East would tilt in favor of the ayatollahs. A nuclear Iran will pose an existential threat to Israel, whose security is a vital U.S. national interest. As Iran's ballistic missile capacity improves, it will endanger Europe and eventually the continental United States. It will provoke an arms race in which the Arab nations themselves forge ahead with nuclear programs of their own. The result will be a nightmarish cascade of nuclear tensions in the world's most volatile region. Iran's sponsorship of international terrorism would take on a new and terrifying dimension.

As president, Mitt Romney's strategy will be to end Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapon, eliminate the threat of Iranian nuclear terrorism against the United States and our allies, and prevent nuclear proliferation across the Middle East. U.S. policy toward Iran must begin with an understanding on Iran's part that a military option to deal with their nuclear program remains on the table. This message should not only be delivered through words, but through actions. The United States should restore the regular presence of aircraft carrier task forces in both the Eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf region simultaneously. The United States should repair relations with Israel, increase military coordination and assistance, and enhance intelligence sharing to ensure that our allied capabilities are robust and ready to deal with Iran. The United States should also increase military coordination with our Arab allies in the region and conduct more naval exercises as a demonstration of strength and resolve. Only if Iran understands that the United States is utterly determined when we say that their nuclear-weapons program is unacceptable is there a possibility that they will give up their nuclear aspirations peacefully.

Implement a Fifth Round of Tougher Sanctions: Sanctions are not ends in themselves. They are intended to persuade Iran to change course and abandon its nuclear program. President

Obama deserves credit for pushing for a fourth round of international sanctions on Iran early in his term, just as before him President Bush deserved credit for the three previous rounds. But time has shown that existing sanctions have not led the ayatollahs to abandon their nuclear aspirations. We therefore need to ratchet up our pressure on Iran with a fifth round of sanctions targeted at the financial resources that underpin the Iranian regime and its Revolutionary Guard Corps, focusing on restrictions on the Central Bank of Iran, as well as other financial institutions. We should place sanctions on all business activities of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, which include much of Iran's petroleum industry. To stanch the flow of the petroleum commerce that supports the Iranian regime, we should pursue sanctions on firms that transport such products to and from Iran.

Ideally, these sanctions would be implemented through the U.N. Security Council, but persuading Russia and China to go along might prove impossible. In the absence of a U.N. imprimatur, the United States should be ready to take action in conjunction with as many willing governments as possible. And if necessary, we should be prepared to act on our own. To that end, Mitt Romney will step up enforcement of existing U.S. laws that bar commerce with Iran, such as the exportation of refined petroleum products to Iran.

Romney will also push for greater diplomatic isolation of Iran. The United States should make it plain that it is a disgrace to provide Iran's Holocaust-denying president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the trappings and respect offered to responsible heads of state. He should not be invited to foreign capitals or feted by foreign leaders. Quite the opposite. Given his calls for Israel to be wiped off the map, Ahmadinejad should be indicted for incitement to genocide under Article III of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Support the Iranian Opposition: In 2009, President Obama refrained from supporting the nascent Green Movement as it was facing a violent crackdown by the Iranian regime. As protestors demonstrating against a stolen election were shot down in the streets, President Obama stated he

did not want to “meddle” in Iranian affairs, fearing that his unconditional outreach to the Iranian regime would be endangered if he did so. This was a disgraceful abdication of American moral authority.

Mitt Romney would make plain that the United States supports the emergence of a democratic alternative to the current repressive and reckless regime in Tehran. He would work to improve the flow of information to the Iranian population about its own government's repressive activities. He would recognize the strong national interest we have in the success of the Arab Spring in Syria and the removal of the Bashar al-Assad regime, Iran's closest ally. And Romney will not stand silent while the Iranian regime ruthlessly terrorizes its own people.

Commit to the On-Time Completion of a Fully Capable Missile Defense System: The United States and our European and Middle Eastern allies have a vital interest in establishing a fully operational and effective missile defense system in Eastern Europe to create a protective umbrella against Iranian nuclear weapons. Under pressure from Russia, President Obama early in his term scrapped President Bush's plan to deploy ground-based interceptors in Poland and a radar system in the Czech Republic. He instead favored a plan that featured a longer development timeline based upon technologies that have not yet been developed. He has since partially reversed course to reassure our allies who were alarmed by his abrupt about-face and subsequently clarified that his new program will also feature interceptors in Poland along with interceptors in Romania and a radar system in Turkey, all to be built in stages through 2020. As president, Mitt Romney is willing to commit to deploying missile defenses in Europe along that timeline, but he will do so with the following two qualifications.

First, Romney would reserve the option of reverting to President Bush's original plan of deploying proven interceptor technology in Poland if it becomes clear that Iran is making faster progress on developing long range missiles than the Obama plan assumes or if the new technologies

on which the plan relies fail to materialize in a timely fashion. If Iran is going to deploy intercontinental missiles sooner than 2020, the United States should retain the option of defending against them.

Second, Romney would make clear that while he is willing to cooperate with Russia on missile defense in ways that will enhance the overall effectiveness of the missile-defense system, he will not compromise the capability of the system or yield operational control of it. Russia must abandon any backdoor scheme to constrain our missile defenses. The United States should never give Russia a veto over our security and that of our allies.

North Korea

North Korea's nuclear weapons program is a serious menace to world peace. A nuclear weapons capability in the hands of an unpredictable dictator like Kim Jong-Il or his eventual successor poses a direct threat to U.S. forces on the Korean Peninsula and elsewhere in East Asia, threatens our close allies South Korea and Japan, destabilizes the entire Pacific region, and could lead to the illicit transfer of a nuclear device to another rogue nation or a terrorist group. As president, Mitt Romney will commit to eliminating North Korea's nuclear weapons and its nuclear-weapons infrastructure.

A key mistake in U.S. policy toward North Korea has been to grant it a series of carrots in return for only illusory cooperation. Each step the world has taken toward North Korea has been met with further provocations and expansion of its nuclear program. Over the years, North Korea has found that its pursuit of a nuclear weapon reaps it material and diplomatic rewards, taking away any incentive for it to end its program.

Mitt Romney will reverse that dynamic. The United States will make it unequivocally clear to Pyongyang that continued advancement of its nuclear program and any aggression will be punished

instead of rewarded. Romney will work with allies to institute harsher sanctions on North Korea, such as cracking down on financial institutions that service the North Korean regime and sanctioning companies that conduct commercial shipping in and out of North Korea. He will also step up enforcement of the Proliferation Security Initiative to constrain North Korean illicit exports by increasing the frequency of inspections of North Korean ships and discouraging foreign ports from permitting entry to North Korean ships. Such measures would significantly block the trade revenue that props up the North Korean regime and shut off routes by which the regime supplies its nuclear program.

China holds significant political and economic leverage over North Korea. It is not using that leverage, however, to achieve the goal of ending North Korea's nuclear program. China fears a destabilized North Korea and the implications of its possible collapse for the region along its border. Romney will work to persuade China to commit to North Korea's disarmament. He will reassure China it will not be alone in dealing with the humanitarian and security issues that will arise should North Korea disintegrate. This will involve detailed planning for such an eventuality to ensure that we are ready to deal with the numerous issues that will arise if and when the North Korean regime collapses under the weight of its own economic and political contradictions.

Romney will also pursue robust military and counter-proliferation cooperation with our allies and others in the Pacific region. As the United States invigorates our relationships with South Korea, Japan, and others, and increases our collective military presence and cooperation, it should demonstrate to the Chinese that they should join the coordinated effort or be left behind as a regional counter-proliferation partner.

Afghanistan and Pakistan

Enjoying the sanctuary of the Taliban government in Afghanistan, al Qaeda set in motion the conspiracy that killed so many Americans on September 11, 2001. We learned many bitter lessons that day, including that we are not safe from enemies who plot freely against us from the other side of the world. That is why so many of our best and bravest young men and women are risking their lives in Afghanistan. Our mission in Afghanistan is to eliminate al Qaeda from the region and degrade the Taliban and other insurgent groups to the point where they are not existential threats to the Afghan government and do not destabilize Pakistan, with its stock of nuclear weapons. Our objective is to ensure that Afghanistan will never again become a launching pad for terror and to send a message to any other nation that would harbor terrorists with designs on the American homeland.

Much of the mission has been accomplished through the courage and dedication of our troops. The killing of Osama bin Laden was a landmark in the struggle for which President Obama deserves credit. Much more, however, remains to be done. Unfortunately, President Obama has repeatedly frustrated and imperiled the American mission through a series of unwise decisions. After a protracted deliberation process, President Obama in December 2009 announced he would support a “surge” that would entail introducing an additional 30,000 troops into Afghanistan. But in the very same speech announcing the surge, he put forward a timetable for withdrawal. The mixed message left our Afghan allies in doubt about our resolve and encouraged the Taliban to believe that they could wait us out. This past June, President Obama disregarded the counsel of his top military commanders, including General David Petraeus, and announced a full withdrawal of those 30,000 surge troops by September 2012. That date falls short of the commanders’ reported recommendation that the troops remain through the end of 2012 and the Afghan “fighting season” to solidify our gains. That date also happens to be just weeks before a U.S. presidential election.

There is no military rationale for it. It raises questions about whether the timing is politically inspired. Whatever the motivation behind the decision, it means that our military will be compelled to begin moving troops and equipment out of Afghanistan in the middle of the fighting season, taking away forces and resources it needs to combat the enemy.

Mitt Romney will never make national-security decisions based upon electoral politics. Upon taking office, he will review our transition to the Afghan military by holding discussions with our commanders in the field. He will order a full interagency assessment of our military and assistance presence in Afghanistan to determine the level required to secure our gains and to train Afghan forces to the point where they can protect the sovereignty of Afghanistan from the tyranny of the Taliban. Withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan under a Romney administration will be based on conditions on the ground as assessed by our military commanders.

Ensure Buy-In from Afghan and Pakistani Governments: To defeat the insurgency in Afghanistan, the United States will need the cooperation of both the Afghan and Pakistani governments. It is in the interests of all three nations to see that Afghanistan and the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region are rid of the Taliban and other insurgent groups. Mitt Romney will work with both the Afghan government and Pakistan to ensure that those nations are fully contributing to success in Afghanistan. But we will only persuade Afghanistan and Pakistan to be resolute if they are convinced that the United States will itself be resolute. Only an America that appears fully committed to success will eliminate the incentives for them to hedge their bets by aligning with opposing forces.

The United States must be clear in what we require of both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Afghan President Hamid Karzai should understand that our commitment must be met with reciprocal efforts to crack down on corruption in his government, respect free and fair elections as required by the Afghan constitution, and coordinate with the United States on fighting the narcotics

trade that fuels the insurgency. Pakistan should understand that any connection between insurgent forces and Pakistan's security and intelligence forces must be severed. The United States enjoys significant leverage over both of these nations. We should not be shy about using it.

Latin America

Decades of remarkable progress in Latin America toward security, democracy, and increased economic ties with America are currently under threat. Venezuela and Cuba are leading a virulently anti-American "Bolivarian" movement across Latin America that seeks to undermine institutions of democratic governance and economic opportunity. The Bolivarian movement threatens U.S. allies such as Colombia, has interfered with regional cooperation on key issues such as illicit drugs and counterterrorism, has provided safe haven for drug traffickers, has encouraged regional terrorist organizations, and has even invited Iran and foreign terrorist organizations like Hezbollah into the region. The region is also witnessing an epidemic of violent criminal gangs and drug cartels, which have wrought death and mayhem across much of Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean.

President Obama has done little to reverse these disturbing trends and has to some degree exacerbated them. He has neglected our democratic allies in the region while reaching out to those nations that are working against our interests and values. He has squandered valuable time in which to advance free-market principles throughout the region by waiting for three years to present free trade agreements with our allies Colombia and Panama to Congress for ratification. He has relaxed sanctions on Cuba while demanding no reforms in return that would offer the Cuban people their long-denied freedom. He has allowed the march of authoritarianism to go unchecked. In some cases, he has actually encouraged it, as when he publicly backed former Honduran president Manuel Zelaya — a Hugo Chavez ally — despite Zelaya's unconstitutional attempt to extend his term as president in defiance of the Honduran supreme court and legislature.

Mitt Romney will chart a different course. Under a Romney administration, the United States will pursue an active role in Latin America by supporting democratic allies and market-based economic relationships, containing destabilizing internal forces such as criminal gangs and terrorists, and opposing destabilizing outside influences such as Iran.

In his first 100 days in office, Romney will launch a vigorous public diplomacy and trade promotion effort in the region — the Campaign for Economic Opportunity in Latin America (CEOLA) — to extol the virtues of democracy and free trade and build on the benefits conferred by the free trade agreements reached with Panama and Colombia, as well as those already in force with Chile, Mexico, Peru, and the members of the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Through old and new media and through numerous public events conducted in conjunction with our regional partners, CEOLA will draw a stark contrast between free enterprise and the ills of the authoritarian socialist model offered by Cuba and Venezuela. The campaign will also seek to involve both the U.S. and Latin American private sectors in efforts to expand trade throughout the region with initiatives that not only help American companies do business in Latin America, but also help Latin American companies invest and create jobs in the American market. The goal of CEOLA will be to set the stage for eventual membership in the Reagan Economic Zone for nations throughout Latin America and the creation of strong and mutually beneficial economic ties between the region and the United States.

Romney will build on separate existing anti-drug and counterterrorism initiatives to form a unified Hemispheric Joint Task Force on Crime and Terrorism. The aim of this group will be to coordinate intelligence and enforcement among all regional allies. Coordinated strategies are required to combat regional terrorist groups and criminal networks that operate across borders. And a regional effort is required as well to sever all financial, logistical, and material connections between regional groups and foreign terrorist entities like Hezbollah that are operating in the region.

Mexico and the United States must take immediate action on the problem of violent drug cartels operating across our shared border, which has already inflicted great costs to both our countries in human life, drug addiction, and social decay. The United States and Mexico currently cooperate through the Merida Initiative, a program run by the U.S. Department of State to improve Mexico's law enforcement capabilities. However, in light of the severity of the cartel problem and the sheer firepower and sophistication of the criminal networks we are facing, the United States and Mexico should explore the need for enhanced military-to-military training cooperation and intelligence sharing similar to practices that were successful in combating cartels and narco-terrorist networks in Colombia. Romney will use the full powers of the presidency to complete a border fence to protect our southern frontier from infiltration by illegal immigrants, trans-national criminal networks, and terrorists.

Russia

In a 1939 radio broadcast Winston Churchill famously called Russia “a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma.” The line is quoted often. But most leave out the rest of Churchill's statement, where he offered a key to understanding Russia, and “that key is Russian national interest.” What is Russia's national interest today? At the risk of oversimplification, we can say that Vladimir Putin, who will be seeking a third term as Russian president in 2012, aims above all else to preserve his power, stoking Russian nationalist passions to maintain popular support, and using wealth garnered from energy and arms sales to stave off economic calamity. With the Kremlin's leverage over the energy supplies of Central and Western Europe, its stockpile of nuclear weapons, its recent history of aggressive military action, and the power it wields in multilateral institutions like the United Nations, Russia is a destabilizing force on the world stage. It needs to be tempered.

President Obama famously sought to “reset” U.S. relations with Russia. The ambiguity of that term cannot mask that the Obama administration has failed to move Russia toward a more beneficial working relationship with the United States and our allies. President Obama began his reset policy by withdrawing, without reciprocal concessions, from President Bush’s plan to place a missile-defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic, a move Russia strongly desired. He continued the same “we give, Russia gets” policy by signing the New START treaty in 2010. While the agreement compels the U.S. to reduce our nuclear launcher and warhead limits, the levels it sets for Russia are *above* what the Russians possessed at the time the agreement was reached. In other words, New START gave Russia room to expand its arsenal while requiring the United States to reduce our own. In any event, even if we put aside the demerits of the treaty, it was a squandered opportunity to extract concessions from the Russians that would have advanced our interests. Thus, President Obama failed to press for meaningful reductions not only in Russia’s strategic nuclear arsenal, but also in its extensive tactical nuclear force. And he failed to elicit Russian help in dealing with North Korean and Iranian nuclear ambitions.

Upon taking office, Mitt Romney will reset the reset. He will implement a strategy that will seek to discourage aggressive or expansionist behavior on the part of Russia and encourage democratic political and economic reform. He will review the implementation of the New START treaty and other decisions by the Obama administration regarding America's nuclear posture and arms-control policies to determine whether they serve the best interests and national security of the United States. He will pursue policies that work to decrease the reliance of European nations on Russian sources of energy. He will explore increasing technical assistance to the Eastern European nations currently developing the Turkey-to-Austria Nabucco natural gas pipeline, which will supply Europe with a cheaper source of energy and options apart from Russian oil and gas. A Romney administration will also work with the private sector to spur access to untapped shale energy

resources in Western Europe. And the United States should build stronger relationships with the states of Central Asia by enhancing diplomatic ties, increasing military training and assistance, and negotiating trade pacts and educational exchanges.

Support Civil Society: A Russian government that respects the civil and political rights of its people and that is truly representative of their wishes will be a more productive participant in an international system based on economic and political freedom. Deepening authoritarianism and centralized control of the economy serves only to impede Russia's economic development and turn the country into a more menacing presence on the world stage. A Romney administration will be forthright in confronting the Russian government over its authoritarian practices. Mitt Romney will support measures to increase the flow of information into Russia that highlights the virtues of free elections, free speech, economic opportunity, and a government free of corruption. A useful additional step would be to bring more leaders of Russian civil society organizations to the United States on exchanges programs, which would raise their profile and empower them with ideas that can be shared with their fellow Russians upon their return.

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PART III: INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL REFORM

To face the complex challenges of the four corners of the world requires an effective and focused diplomatic and national security agency structure. There is no single right way to organize the affairs of a global superpower. In a rapidly changing environment, the laws governing U.S. national security also need to keep pace. Just as we engaged in major organizational and legal reforms after the attacks of September 11, the experience of the past ten years has revealed the need for additional change in both our bureaucratic arrangements and the legal structure of our national-security activities.

Restructure Our Diplomatic Apparatus

America's diplomatic and foreign assistance agencies are the instruments by which the United States projects its soft power to advance our interests and values. Today we are underutilizing our soft power. In significant part, this is due to the antiquated organizational structure of our Department of State, which divides diplomatic authority country-by-country and then across various crisscrossing functional and regional bureaus. Our foreign-assistance capabilities are then further spread out across various agencies, from United States Agency for International Development to the Departments of Commerce and the Treasury. This balkanized scheme scrambles lines of authority, blurs priorities, and creates accountability gaps through which failures go unpunished and successes go unrecognized. The disadvantages of the current structure dissipate America's soft power. President Obama has attempted to overcome these difficulties by appointing presidential "czars" or "special envoys" to address various regional problems, but these ad hoc arrangements lack the legislatively endowed directive and budgetary power to be effective.

Mitt Romney recognizes that what we need instead is a governmental structure that allows for regional strategic planning focused on our formidable soft power resources. He will move to reform all of our diplomatic and assistance agencies to foster joint regional strategic planning, clear lines of authority, and personal accountability for results. Romney will work with Congress and relevant Executive branch agencies to begin a process of reorganization toward unified budgetary and directive authority under one official responsible for all diplomatic and assistance programs within a particular region. These will be designed to mirror the regional military combatant commands. This would improve coordination between our military and diplomatic agencies so that their missions reinforce each other, instead of working at cross purposes as is currently the case.

Empower Our Counterterrorism and Homeland Security Agencies

In the same way we must ensure that our soft power agencies are properly structured to allow them to carry out their duties in an effective and strategic manner, we must also make sure that those agencies charged with combating terrorism have the clearest mandate to keep America safe. As president, Mitt Romney will empower all relevant military, intelligence, and homeland security agencies with the appropriate legal authority and policy guidance to dismantle terrorist groups and prevent terrorist attacks on our homeland and on targets abroad. The saying that we always fight the last war is familiar, but familiarity should not lead us to miss that maxim's sober warning. Our homeland-security professionals must be able to focus on the threats to come, not simply the threats that came before.

Focus on Cybersecurity: In the first 100 days of his administration, Romney will order full interagency reviews to develop and deliver to his desk a unified strategy to bolster America's cybersecurity. Attacks on our digital infrastructure can take many forms. We have been and will continue to be subject to militarized cyber-attacks, cyber-terrorism, cyber-espionage, and private-sector theft of intellectual property. A cyber-attack that debilitates or compromises any of our vital computer systems — from the electric grid, to nuclear plant cooling systems, to our intelligence databases — could be devastating, and the perpetrators could be extremely difficult to trace, apprehend, and punish. President Obama has taken some positive steps to confront this problem, but he has not yet updated our national cyber-security strategy, promulgated in 2003, an eternity ago in the rapid evolving digital world. And his efforts so far have not adequately engaged our defense and intelligence resources. The multi-faceted threat we face in cyberspace requires a much more coordinated effort by the Department of Defense, the intelligence agencies, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Departments of Commerce and the Treasury to secure America. This

effort must prevent duplication, maximize information sharing, and bind together the disparate competencies of these agencies.

Focus on Domestic Radicalization: Rising alongside cyber-attacks as an emerging threat to the homeland is the radicalization of U.S. citizens and residents leading to “homegrown” Islamist terrorism. The number of terror plots hatched by domestic Islamist terrorists has spiked in recent years as our terrorist adversaries abroad have been less successful in trying to infiltrate us from outside and focused more on radicalizing and recruiting American citizens and residents to become operatives. The Fort Hood shootings, carried out by a member of our armed forces, and the attempted Times Square bombing, planned by a naturalized U.S. citizen, are only the most well-known of these plots.

Mitt Romney will make countering this mounting danger a top priority. He will charge our federal agencies not only with designing better frameworks to share intelligence “horizontally” among themselves, but also with redoubling their efforts to work with state and local authorities to share intelligence “vertically.” Our counterterrorism professionals will need to continue to develop “fusion centers” and other innovative systems to collect and systematically analyze information about domestic activities. They will need the capacity, consistent with U.S. law, to collect and unflinchingly analyze communications between terrorist networks abroad and people within our borders. They must bolster partnerships with Muslim-American communities, build trust in the spirit of “community policing,” work with community leaders to identify threats and suspicious activity, develop our database of knowledge about the hallmarks of radicalization and recruitment, and train local and state authorities to understand those hallmarks and act on them at the earliest appropriate moment. Enhancing our ability to fight this side of the terror threat will inevitably raise questions about the protection of privacy and civil liberties. Romney will require that any

counterterrorism strategy must contain measures to balance the increased capabilities of our analytic technologies against legitimate concerns about the preservation of our constitutional rights.

Clarify Counterterrorism Legislative Mandates

To ensure that our military and counterterrorism professionals have the authority they need to keep America safe from asymmetric threats, Mitt Romney will take steps to clarify the legislative authorities underlying our fight against terror.

Update the AUMF: The chief source of statutory authority for the war on terrorism — the Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) passed by Congress shortly after the attack of September 11, 2001 — is only a few sentences long, its language is quite general, and it has not been updated since its enactment. While the statute clearly authorizes force against al Qaeda and the Taliban, it does not directly address what other groups might also be covered. Recent administrations have interpreted the AUMF expansively to include those who substantially support forces associated with al Qaeda and the Taliban, but as more time passes, the connections between those two groups and the terror threats we face will become more and more attenuated. These new terror groups — like al-Shabaab in Somalia — may share al Qaeda's ideological objectives but lack close operational ties with the larger network. This leaves our counterterror forces to operate in a legal limbo, possibly hamstringing them when they should enjoy the full freedom of action and deserve the full protection of law. Romney will work with Congress to clarify this portion of the AUMF, amending it to authorize the use of force against any foreign terrorist entity that is waging war against the United States.

Unify Oversight of DHS: Mitt Romney will also work with Congress to unify the over 108 authorizing committees and subcommittees in Congress that oversee the Department of Homeland Security. Whereas other agencies answer to only one authorizing committee in each house of

Congress, since its formation the Department of Homeland Security has had to answer to a panoply of committees. This is a legacy of the Department's swift formation from a number of disparate offices spread over numerous agencies. It creates many problems. The obligation to report to and testify before such a large number of committees dominates the working hours of Department officials. Their time would be far better spent focused on operational tasks that make America safer. The committees also create a rash of inconsistent mandates and priorities for the Department, confusing its mission. Simply put, there are far too many cooks in the congressional kitchen. Mitt Romney would strengthen the Department and allow its professionals to carry out their work more effectively by seeking to form only one authorizing committee in each house responsible for the Department's operations. Though it is difficult to convince members of Congress to relinquish oversight power when national security is at stake, Romney will work closely with Congress to ensure that this important reform is realized.

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CONCLUSION

In 1952, as President Truman, a Democrat, wrestled with the continuing challenge of creating order in the tumultuous aftermath of World War II, Senator Arthur Vandenberg, a Republican, put forth the dictum that "politics stops at the water's edge." This was not a mere slogan. What Vandenberg intended, in his own words, was "to unite our official voice at the water's edge so that America speaks with maximum authority against those who would divide and conquer us." The kind of bipartisanship that Vandenberg was after was not always achieved, even in moments of great crisis in the early Cold War. But there was sufficient consensus to enable America to stand largely united as we moved forward with such monumental projects as the Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe and the Truman Doctrine to check Soviet expansion.

Unfortunately, bipartisanship broke down amid the prolonged and bitter conflict over the Vietnam War. As our country grew divided, so did our foreign-policy elites. In the realm of foreign policy, we fractured into a nation of liberals and conservatives, doves and hawks. Today, more than 35 years after the Vietnam War came to its tragic close, divided we remain. For a brief moment the attacks of September 11 seemed to bring the country together. But the unity turned out to be evanescent. As we responded to the terrorist attacks with controversial counterterrorism measures and entered major wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, our internal divisions resurfaced with a vengeance, and the country became polarized almost as intensely as it had been during the Vietnam War.

Healing our longstanding divisions should be a primary objective of any American president. Politics should indeed stop at the water's edge, as Vandenberg implored. But we need to see our current circumstances plainly. It is not the quest for political advantage that underlies our sharp divisions about national security. Rather, those divisions arise from fundamental disagreements about the nature of the international system and equally fundamental disagreements about the best American policies to contend with the perils of a deeply troubled world.

This white paper sets out Mitt Romney's view of America's position in the world, the dangers and opportunities that lie before us, and the policy choices that will make us safe. It is a view starkly different from that held by President Obama, and it leads to a set of prescriptions starkly different from those which he has set in motion over the past three years. The American people deserve the opportunity to make an informed choice about the kind of world in which they want to live. If we fall short of Vandenberg's ideal, if we continue to have profound disagreements about how best to protect our country, at least we continue to settle our disagreements by discussions, debates, campaigns, and elections. That is what our democracy is all about.

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APPENDIX: SETTING A NEW TONE

Eight Actions for the First Hundred Days

1. Restore America's Naval Credibility

Announce an initiative to increase the naval shipbuilding rate from nine per year to approximately fifteen per year and sustain the carrier fleet at eleven. This will restore America's presence and credibility on the high seas with a view toward deterring aggressive behavior and maintaining the peace.

2. Strengthen and Repair Relationships with Steadfast Allies

Take swift measures to restore and enhance relationships with our most steadfast allies. Actions include reaffirming as a vital national interest Israel's existence as Jewish state, declaring the U.S.-U.K. special relationship to be a foundation for peace and liberty, and beginning talks to strengthen cooperation with Mexico on the shared problems of drugs and security.

3. Enhance Our Deterrent Against Iran

Reaffirm that Iran's possession of a nuclear weapon is unacceptable. Order the regular presence of carrier task forces in both the Eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf region. Begin discussions with Israel to increase levels of military and intelligence coordination and assistance.

4. Commit to a Robust National Missile Defense System

Begin process of reversing Obama-era budget cuts to national missile defense and raise to a top priority the full deployment of a multilayered national ballistic-missile defense system.

5. Establish Single Point of Responsibility for All Soft Power Resources in the Middle East

Work with Congress and relevant Executive branch agencies to organize all diplomatic and assistance efforts in the greater Middle East under one regional director with unified budgetary and directive authority. One official with responsibility and accountability will set regional priorities and direct our soft power toward ensuring the Arab Spring realizes its promise.

6. Launch Campaign for Economic Opportunity in Latin America

Capitalize on the benefits arising from the ratification of the Colombian and Panamanian free trade agreements to launch a robust public-diplomacy and trade promotion campaign in Latin America that contrasts the benefits of democracy, free trade, and economic opportunity with the ills caused by the authoritarian model of Venezuela and Cuba.

7. Conduct a Full Review of Our Transition in Afghanistan

Conduct a full interagency review of our military and assistance presence in Afghanistan to determine the presence necessary to secure our gains and successfully complete our mission. The review will involve discussions with generals on the ground and the delivery of the best recommendations of our military commanders.

8. Order Interagency Initiative on Cybersecurity

Order a full interagency initiative to formulate a unified national strategy to deter and defend against the growing threats of militarized cyber-attacks, cyber-terrorism, cyber-espionage, and private-sector intellectual property theft. U.S. defense and intelligence resources must be fully engaged in this critical aspect of national defense.