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Letter from the Editorial Board

As the spread of global challenges across borders mandates greater coordination among different actors to produce robust solutions, the role of international institutions in effecting collective action has become increasingly important. However, in recent years, these same institutions are coming under increased scrutiny, whether for failing to stem worsening crises or for having lost their legitimacy in the face of a swiftly shifting global landscape. These developments have raised an important question: how must the current international order adapt to deal with today's problems?

In this issue of *New Perspective in Foreign Policy*, young professionals grapple with this question by analyzing the challenges of achieving effective international cooperation across a range of different issues. Their pieces offer insights into both the structural shifts that may be necessary to maintain established international institutions, and areas where common priorities could help spawn new cooperation.

Travis Gidado examines how the European Union today faces a rising tide of “Euroskepticism” in member states. Based on analysis of “Euroskeptic” movements in the United Kingdom and Hungary, Gidado argues that the European Union should pay closer attention to growing dissatisfaction, pointing out that it could snowball into a potential existential threat for the international body.

Next, Kaleem Hawa and Allison Roberts analyze the increasingly evident shortcomings of the global health infrastructure, scrutinizing the global response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Highlighting key deficiencies in the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and even the structure of U.S. health aid, Hawa and Roberts explain the importance of implementing a more robust, targeted global health infrastructure to prevent similar outbreaks in the future.

Sabrina Deveraux explains how rising geopolitical tensions in the South China Sea are negatively affecting the physical environment in the region. Deveraux argues that while ignoring the environmental consequences risks worsening medium-term tensions, seeking

cooperation in areas of mutual interest—such as management of fishery stocks—could provide a focal point for gradual trust-building and cooperation.

Finally, Niklas Anzinger addresses an example of international commercial cooperation with potential geopolitical implications: the much-discussed bilateral gas deal between China and Russia. Anzinger explains why the deal may not prove quite as profitable as proponents in Moscow might like, in part due to Russia's limited leverage in China and the financial challenges of the deal.

The editorial board is also pleased to introduce a new interview series in this issue of *New Perspectives in Foreign Policy*, featuring as its inaugural interviewee Dr. Kathleen Hicks, CSIS senior vice president, Henry A. Kissinger chair, and director of the International Security Program. Dr. Hicks offers her insights on a range of key issues in U.S. defense policy, including conflict in Syria and the role of civilian leadership in the Department of Defense, as well as her thoughts on leadership and professional development.

Despite the often bleak outlook evident among observers of international politics, when creative analysis is applied in the service of the constant search for incremental policy improvements, even the worst situations present opportunities for progress. In this issue of *New Perspectives on Foreign Policy*, we are pleased to offer a combination of the above: international cooperation reexamined and reimagined.

SINCERELY,

New Perspectives Editorial Board

Contrarians at the Gate: The Growing Threat of Euroskepticism in the European Union

Travis Gidado

AFTER A MONTH of impassioned speeches and debates, the United Kingdom (UK) successfully avoided a Scottish exit from its centuries-old union this past fall. However, while many observers welcomed Scotland’s “no” vote on independence, fearing the possible ramifications of Scottish self-determination—especially as it relates to other potential breakaway republics such as Catalonia in Spain—the Scottish referendum ultimately distracted attention from a more substantive risk to political order in Europe: that of Euroskeptic parties who may soon drag their countries away from further integration with the European Union (EU).

Compared with leaders of Scotland’s independence movement who exhibited strong support for EU membership during the referendum campaign,^{1,2} Britain’s antipathy toward Europe continues to cast a pall over EU politics. An upstart UK Independence Party (UKIP)

illustrated the strength of British Euroskeptic attitudes when it enjoyed unprecedented success in the May 2014 European elections. Led by Nigel Farage, UKIP won 27.5 percent of the vote, became the first party to beat Labour and Conservatives in a national election since 1906, and secured European parliamentary representatives from “Scotland, Wales and every region of England.”³ Polling also reflects popular discontent with the European experiment: as of June 2014, nearly half of eligible voters in the UK would elect to leave the EU if the terms of membership remain unchanged, while only 37 percent of voters would stay under a similar agreement.⁴ British ambivalence toward the EU has been well documented, as two-thirds of respondents opposed the EU constitution just a decade ago,⁵ but the 2014 elections allowed British voters to catalyze anti-EU fervor into action.

In Southern Europe, debates concerning EU membership have raged since the financial crisis exposed the economic gap between southern nations and their stronger neighbors to the north.

Although British debates over EU membership have received considerable international attention—and that attention will justifiably increase if the Tories win the 2015 national elections now that the adverse political climate surrounding

Cameron's leadership has forced him to guarantee a referendum on remaining in the EU by 2017⁶—the fallout from rising Euroskepticism outside the UK has made it unlikely that Britain will be the focal point for these battles in the near term. In 2014, Euroskeptic parties from France, Italy, and Greece also made gains in the European Parliament by establishing an active, mainstream-friendly voice in national politics.⁷ But these regions have different stakes in the EU, and the following cases illustrate the diversity of Euroskeptic attitudes that could evolve into political rebellion against the European experiment.

In Southern Europe, debates concerning EU membership have raged since the financial crisis exposed the economic gap between southern nations and their stronger neighbors to the north. Savvy political actors in the region have coopted subsequent economic dissatisfaction to build momentum in their battle against ongoing Europeanization, fostering successful Euroskeptic organizations such as Italy's populist Five-Star Movement or the far-left Syriza in Greece.⁸ Local Euroskeptics have also benefited from the ability to channel latent anti-immigrant frustration into their political schemes. While increasing immigration remains an unpopular subject in most European countries and has become a tenet of Euroskeptic party platforms from Finland to Bulgaria, a May 2014 survey suggests that immigration provokes the most disdainful reaction from Southern Europeans: over 80 percent of Italians

and Greeks polled were advocates of reducing current immigrant flows. Alternatively, in countries such as Britain and France where contemporary distaste for immigration is a *fait accompli*, the anti-immigrant camp enjoyed only a simple majority over pro-immigrant and neutral respondents.⁹ If these groups continue to galvanize popular opinion into broad-based support within their countries, they may eventually lobby for independence from Brussels's significant influence over their political and economic well-being.¹⁰

The situation in Hungary offers an even more ominous example of Euroskeptical trends that should startle Europhiles. In 2013, Hungary's Republikon Institute explored the increasingly nationalistic nature of Hungarian Euroskepticism under Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's leadership. Euroskeptical views were quite low compared to the European average in 2010 when Orbán's Fidesz party most recently came to power, but Hungarians now express much greater opposition to the European Union: as of 2013, 36 percent of Hungarians view EU membership positively compared to 57 percent of Europeans overall, and only 32 percent of Hungarians think that Hungary benefited from EU membership versus 53 percent of respondents from other parts of Europe when asked the same question about their respective countries.¹¹ Under Orbán's leadership, nationalistic and anti-EU passions have successfully flourished amidst Hungarian civil society.

If Hungary's rising Euroskepticism is emblematic of trends impacting many other European countries, Orbán's political activities demonstrate his willingness to parlay these attitudes into policymaking decisions that distance Hungary from Brussels. He has advocated for non-Eurozone member-nations to pursue economic policies that they believe are in their best interests, even if those policies run contrary to established European economic dogma.¹² In the lead-up to the Crimean conflict, Orbán also signed a multibillion dollar nuclear deal with Russia, leaving Hungary as one of Russia's few supporters after it was hit with economic sanctions for its role in sparking the Ukraine conflict.^{13,14} If these

actions weren't enough to raise eyebrows across Europe, Orban's flirtations with authoritarianism may eventually establish him as Euroskepticism's central figure.¹⁵ Arguing that most successful emerging countries are far from the liberal democratic ideal, he proclaimed, "I don't think that our European Union membership precludes us from building an illiberal new state based on national foundations."¹⁶ Although Orban's particular brand of antagonism towards the EU remains an exception for now, it could be a harbinger of more vehement anti-European attitudes in other countries dissatisfied with the status quo.¹⁷

Brussels may soon have a difficult task on its hands if other nations allow Euroskeptic attitudes to grow in a similar fashion.

Brussels may soon have a difficult task on its hands if other nations allow Euroskeptic attitudes to grow in a similar fashion. With Euroskeptic parties' growing strength and rising popular sentiment that categorizes EU leadership as "out of touch, intrusive and inefficient,"¹⁸ it would not be

surprising to see more active hostility emerge from beyond the UK. In any event, the most salient systemic threats to the European order won't stem from irredentist zeal in Scotland or Catalonia, but from nations whose homegrown Euroskeptic movements could undermine the potential for greater Europeanization.

Will Euroskeptic movements grow potent enough to force legitimate changes within European governments in response to the EU's steadily increasing authority, or will the specter of anti-EU hostility fade over time? It's hard to say, but the former should give Europhiles pause as intense and potentially devastating disputes loom over the horizon.¹⁹ ■

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The Global Health Security Infrastructure: West Africa's Ebola Epidemic and U.S. National Security

Kaleem Hawa and Alison Roberts

THE MAGNITUDE OF THE LATEST EBOLA outbreak has been dramatic: while Ebola claimed the lives of a combined 1,600 people from 1976 to 2013, the outbreak that began in December 2013 resulted in 21,296 cases by mid-January 2015, of which 8,429 had died.¹ Many had feared it would be even worse: when cases in Liberia were doubling every 15–20 days, the CDC predicted cases could reach 550,000 by January 20, 2015, which could have meant as many as 1.4 million cases total when accounting for underreporting.² Though it is now clear these models presented an overestimate and case numbers are declining, the risk of resurgence remains a concern.³ Even before the first Ebola cases were diagnosed, the weak health systems of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone were hopelessly unprepared for an outbreak of this large a magnitude. Ebola's swift spread and the international community's lethargic early response help underscore the importance of building a more robust global health

security architecture to prevent epidemics like these in the future.

Had Ebola broken out in the United States in December 2013, it would not have had the same devastating impact it has had in West Africa. Insufficient health care capacity in Ebola-afflicted countries prevented them from containing the disease. There is less than 1 nurse or midwife per 10,000 people in Guinea, only 2 per 10,000 in Sierra Leone, and 3 per 10,000 in Liberia⁴—far fewer than the 41 per 10,000 in South Africa⁵ or the 98 per 10,000 in the United States.⁶ To make matters worse, lack of protective equipment to deal with the current epidemic led to scores of health workers contracting Ebola and made many reluctant to work with Ebola victims.⁷ Since the disease had never been encountered in these West African states, no large groups of health workers in any of three countries had been previously trained in Ebola containment.⁸

International political commitment was initially poor as well. Despite the World Health Organization (WHO) having approximately 150 experts working in the area, no regional coordination infrastructure was even developed until an emergency meeting in early July.⁹ In addition, organizations such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) were slow to aid affected countries; the CDC only had 12 experts across Liberia and Sierra Leone before the infection of three U.S. citizens prompted the deployment of 50 additional officials to the region.¹⁰ Due to large budget cuts and de-prioritization of pandemic response, the WHO was not ready to fill the gaps that weak health systems had left.¹¹

The impact of the West African Ebola epidemic on U.S. security became clear on September 30, 2014, when the first imported case reached the United States.¹² The first imported case led to the infection of two health workers in Dallas, which along with a new case in New York quickly caused public and political turmoil. Even before these cases were imported, the Obama administration announced on September 16, 2014, the United States would be establishing a military command center in Liberia with as many as 3,000 U.S. military personnel to supply medical and logistical support to local health care systems in West Africa overwhelmed by the Ebola outbreak.¹³

This emergency humanitarian response is critical to bring the epidemic under control and prevent further U.S. importations.

U.S. national security policymakers have begun responding to the stark

reality of globalization. The Obama administration's FY15 Foreign Appropriations Budget proposal allocated \$45 million in new funding to the Global Health Security Agenda (GHS).¹⁴ The GHS is committed to strengthening global disease surveillance through a network of Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) in nations that have been noncompliant with International Health Regulations in the past. By creating the GHS, the Obama administration is recognizing

**U.S. national security
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of globalization.**

that disease-specific projects will not prevent yet-unknown health threats from spreading in the manner that HIV/AIDS, SARS, or Ebola did. If implemented fully, the GHSA could be critical to improving the strength and sustainability of health systems and preventing another global health crisis.

The United States can be a global leader on both health and security. Along with fully implementing the GHSA, the U.S. government should work with country governments on policies aimed at preventing emigration of medical professionals. Policies already in place, such as USAID's work improving access to commodities, should be continued and scaled up where necessary. EOCs should be targeted in areas of greatest risk (regions with high population density like southern Africa) and greatest need (regions with poor health systems like West Africa).

In the end, the implementation of a robust global health security infrastructure can come about only from individual countries understanding the risks they face from burgeoning globalization and committing the resources to address systemic gaps. Had robust health infrastructure been in place in West Africa before the current Ebola outbreak, thousands of lives might have been saved. Global health infrastructure is vital to global security because, as it was succinctly put by former secretary of health and human services Kathleen Sebelius, “[microbes and diseases] do not recognize or stop at national borders. A threat anywhere is indeed a threat everywhere.”¹⁵ ■

Kaleem Hawa and Alison Roberts are former research interns with the Global Health Policy Center at CSIS.

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More Than a Geopolitical Problem: The Environmental Impact of Tensions in the South China Sea

Sabrina Devereaux

IN RECENT YEARS, the South China Sea has become a major geopolitical flashpoint as maritime and territorial disputes between China and its neighbors have grown and intensified. Increased tactical jousting among claimants is not only raising regional tensions, but also inflicting a little-noticed but growing environmental toll on the region. Importantly, this includes accelerating the already rapid decline of key fishing stocks that supply much of Southeast Asia's protein. These environmental issues, often subordinated to more pressing short-term security concerns, deserve greater international focus than they have received so far. As countries compete more and more intensely to secure their "fair share" of dwindling resources, it is likely that environmental issues will prove an increasingly severe impediment to regional cooperation the longer they remain unaddressed.

Tensions in the South China Sea stem from overlapping historical claims to several island chains within the region put forth by China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Brunei.¹ These claims vary in extent, specificity, and legal basis, but in recent years the countries involved have become increasingly aggressive in their defense. While the islands themselves are small and contain few resources, they have enormous strategic value under international maritime law, which grants the country in control of an island exclusive economic rights over resources within the surrounding waters.² Conflict over these rights has not only contributed to a deterioration of the diplomatic environment in the South China Sea, but to the physical environment as well.

The plight of the South China Sea's abundant fishery resources, which supply between 25 to 65 percent of Southeast Asia's animal protein

Conflict over these rights has not only contributed to a deterioration of the diplomatic environment in the South China Sea, but to the physical environment as well.

consumption,³ provides a compelling example of this issue. Several claimant countries have put in place policies designed to intensify fishery exploitation in disputed areas. Perhaps the best known example of this is the Chinese government's

use of diesel subsidies to enable (and encourage) its fishermen to ply more distant waters than would otherwise be commercially feasible.⁴ However, Beijing is not alone in its efforts. Both the Vietnamese and Chinese governments have also funded the installation of thousands of satellite navigation systems on their fishing boats. This strengthens contact between fishermen and their governments, improving the ability of the former to navigate while simultaneously allowing the latter to better track foreign vessels and, in some cases, deny them access to disputed waters.

Actions like those described above help governments strengthen their claims to contested maritime resources in what has been termed “intensified resource nationalism.”⁵ But the potentially positive tactical implications of these efforts are overshadowed by their damaging effects on the sustainability of vital fishing stocks. Fishing in the region has surpassed natural reproduction rates,⁶ turning what was once a self-perpetuating supply of protein into a nonrenewable resource. Indeed, one Chinese survey on demersal trawling (among the most common fishing techniques employed by commercial fishing vessels) reported that catch rates in the South China Sea had declined by over 70 percent since the 1960s.⁷ This has led regional states to compete with ever-growing intensity to satisfy expanding short-term demand in the face of shrinking long-term supplies.

The conflict also has passive effects on the ability of countries to manage resource exploitation, even when they might agree on principles for their sustainable management. For example, the

detaining of fishermen fishing by illegal practices in disputed areas has become increasingly politicized over the years, as governments have fought to establish jurisdiction. This is illustrated by the capture of six Vietnamese fishermen by the Chinese government last July, which prompted expansive media attention and statements by both foreign ministries in response.^{8,9} As a result, even when the effects of banned practices on delicate reef ecosystems are readily apparent, states must weigh the broader diplomatic consequences of arresting foreign fishermen before acting to protect the marine environment.

These coordination issues even extend beyond enforcement to the technical level where standards for good practice are set. Because each nation fishes with the conviction that it is exercising its own exclusive resource rights, catch sizes are calculated unilaterally rather than based on coordination with foreign fisheries, contributing to endemic overexploitation.¹⁰

To sustain the region's multibillion dollar fishing economy, each of these problems needs to be addressed, but overriding concerns over sovereignty so far have taken precedence.

To sustain the region's multibillion dollar fishing economy,¹¹ each of these problems needs to be addressed, but overriding concerns over sovereignty so far have taken precedence. Given current tensions, perhaps the only achievable near-term option South China Sea states can take to lessen the environmental impact of their territorial disputes is to increase communication on matters of the environment. This requires that environmental protection be elevated as a topic of discussion during multilateral summits, and accorded more focus within analysis of the South China Sea issue. To be effective, these discussions must clearly acknowledge countries' shared interest in preserving the region's fisheries and the negative impact that failing to address environmental issues will have on the solvability of the overall dispute. In a best-case scenario, eventual cooperation in

environmental management could also serve as a confidence-building measure enabling cooperation in other areas (even if current tensions preclude this as a near-term option). ■

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Russia May Not Benefit from Gas Sales to China

Niklas Anzinger

DURING HIS MAY 2014 VISIT TO SHANGHAI, Russian President Vladimir Putin praised the signing of a \$400 billion natural gas supply contract between Russia and China, calling it “the biggest contract in terms of sale by volume to any one country in the sector’s entire history.”¹ According to the contract, Russia’s Gazprom will deliver 38 billion cubic meters per year (bcm/y) of natural gas via pipeline to China’s National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) for 30 years. Energy is a key dimension of Russian foreign policy with Europe—Europe depends on Russia for nearly 30 percent of its gas.² In the wake of the Ukraine crisis, Europeans are increasingly concerned about Russia’s energy leverage, particularly if Russia’s dependence on European demand wanes with the creation of new customers such as China. However, from a Russian perspective, the economic and security benefits from the deal with China will be limited for two reasons: First, the scale of Chinese import demand and its supply diver-

sification strategy will not endow Russia with a large overall share of the Asian energy market (and thus potential influence); and second, the project could become a financial burden for Russia because the economic risks involved could result in a low return on investment.

Russia is seeking to diversify its export markets and China is seeking to diversify its supply. Currently, Russia is highly dependent on European demand. Revenues from oil and gas exports accounted for 70 percent of Russian total exports and 52 percent of its federal budget in 2012, while 93 percent of its gas exports were transported by pipeline to Europe.³ However, European energy demand is projected to remain sluggish, a situation compounded by Europe’s recent efforts to diversify away from Russian energy imports in response to political tensions. Meanwhile, China’s energy demand is expected to steadily increase and its market could absorb nearly 15 percent of

China seeks to satisfy its rapidly growing energy demand to fuel its economic growth. Not only is diversification of supply crucial, but environmental concerns loom large too.

total Russian gas exports by 2020 under the deal.⁴

China seeks to satisfy its rapidly growing energy demand to fuel its economic growth. Not only is diversification of supply crucial, but environmental concerns loom large too. China's large share of coal

in its energy mix—69 percent in 2011—has led to rapidly deteriorating air quality. Consequently, the Chinese government put a ceiling on its coal production and announced that it aims to increase its use of cleaner natural gas from only 4 percent in 2011 to 9 percent in 2020, effectively a more than threefold increase in consumption from 130 bcm/y in 2011 to 400–420 bcm/y in 2020.⁵ In sum, economic, energy security, and environmental concerns make Russian gas an attractive option for China.

For Russia, on the other hand, energy security and economic benefits are less obvious. First, Russian supply leverage in China will be limited because its potential share as a supplier for the Asian market is low. China is pursuing a variety of supply sources to ensure it is able to meet demand. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration's (EIA) forecast, by 2040, Russia will account for only around 7 percent of Chinese gas demand, compared to 13 percent from Turkmenistan, nearly 22 percent from liquefied natural gas (LNG) and other contracts, and the remainder supplied by domestic production.⁶ Moreover, China is increasing its LNG import capacity by building more facilities at its main economic centers on the eastern coastline, having 10 already operational, five under construction, and five more planned or proposed.⁷ As a result, Russia may diversify its exports through the contract with China, but its foothold there will be more tenuous than its foothold in Europe.

Second, as Russia seeks to tap into the Asian market, potential cost overruns could make the project a financial burden. Russia has to



build pipes, processing plants, field development, and other infrastructure in the sparsely populated East Siberian region. Planning such large projects involves risks such as applying new technology and changing market conditions as well as planning complexity.⁸

According to an industry analyst, costs in oil and gas projects are 33 percent more on average than estimated and 78 percent are complete failures.⁹ Gazprom has a track-record of cost overruns in energy projects. For example, development of the Shtokman gas field in the Barents Sea was canceled in 2012 because lower European demand and inexpensive U.S. shale gas made the project commercially unviable.¹⁰

For China, Russian supplies are a welcome opportunity, but only one of many in its overall energy security considerations.

Another problem in large-scale project investment, especially in Russia, is corruption. Recently, the Sochi Olympics in 2014 ran into a 500 percent cost overrun—\$38 billion more than initially planned.¹¹ The new “Power of Siberia” pipeline and infrastructure development plans for the gas deal with China would be even more massive. Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller has calculated the total cost to be \$70 billion over 30 years, including prepayment and co-financing from China.¹² Additional risks for investment in East Siberia include the harsh climate and remote geography, scarcity of labor, and increasingly effective Western financial sanctions. Russian constructors and industrialists obtained favored contracts in similar projects in the past, while cost overruns were simply nationalized—to the burden of the Russian state finances.¹⁴ Consequently, the risk for the project to fall on the Russian net balance is high.

It is, however, unclear who benefits or loses more from the deal in monetary terms since the price for the gas and the investment

financing are secret. While it may diversify Russia's exports, the total amount would not increase considerably Russia's influence in Asian gas markets. For China, Russian supplies are a welcome opportunity, but only one of many in its overall energy security considerations. As the project is risky, Russia may ultimately not obtain the benefits from the deal it seeks. ■

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Interview with Dr. Kathleen Hicks

October 10, 2014

The editorial board of *New Perspectives in Foreign Policy (NFPF)* sat down with Dr. Kathleen Hicks, senior vice president, Henry A. Kissinger Chair, and director of the International Security Program at CSIS, to discuss her views on current events and her advice for aspiring policy-makers. NFPF asked Dr. Hicks to speak about underappreciated aspects of the current U.S. military operations in Iraq and Syria, her experience in leadership at the Department of Defense (DoD), and her career more broadly.

Dr. Kathleen Hicks previously served as principal deputy under secretary of defense for policy and deputy under secretary of defense for strategy, plans, and forces. As principal deputy under secretary for policy, Dr. Hicks was responsible for advising the under secretary of defense for policy and the secretary of defense on the issues pertaining to the development and execution of U.S. national defense policy and strategy. As deputy under secretary for strategy, plans, and forces, she led the development of the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance and the 2010 Qua-

drenial Defense Review and oversaw the strategic guidance development, review, and plans for the day-to-day military activities of combatant commanders. Prior to her service at the Department of Defense, Dr. Hicks was a senior fellow at CSIS, where she codirected the CSIS Task Force on Nontraditional Security Assistance; led strategy, planning, and process assessments for the Project on National Security Reform; and assessed the national security community's role in improving global health. Dr. Hicks holds a Ph.D. in political science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, an M.A. from the University of Maryland's School of Public Affairs, and an A.B. magna cum laude from Mount Holyoke College.

U.S. Operations in Syria and Iraq

NFPF: What is the greatest risk the United States faces as it expands its involvement [in Syria] and as it pursues airstrikes?

Hicks: I'm not sure I could name one greatest risk. I'll cheat and name a few. First of all, before you can an-



swer that question, you have to acknowledge that there is risk in doing nothing. Putting that to the side, there are then the risks of involvement. There are risks of not succeeding and actually emboldening individuals, whether in Syria and Iraq already or elsewhere throughout the world, to view this as a *casus belli* to come up against the coalition. So the worst outcome is actually galvanizing people against you in a way that they weren't before. I personally don't think right now that that is the most significant risk, but if that risk were realized it would be very bad, and of course we've lived through 13 years of wondering whether our actions have been a galvanizing force for militant Islamists, and so that's a continuing concern in this theater as well.

There is also definitely a risk that the diplomatic and development pieces don't catch up to the military piece. For instance, specifically in Iraq, there's a risk that the Iraqi political system can't stand up and create the kind of pluralistic outcomes that we believe are needed for Iraqi society to function. Alongside that is concern about the ability of the Iraqi military to stand up and be capable and accountable to that pluralistic government for the security of Iraq. In Syria, the biggest risks are if you create further humanitarian devastation in a country that's already been devastated by civil war and if you empower [Syrian President Bashar al-] Assad in a way that leads to further humanitarian crises or an inability of Syrian society to move beyond the current regime.

NFPF: One of the things that's come up a lot recently is the indefinite timeline of current U.S. operations in Syria and Iraq. Many people acknowledge that the operation is going to take years. As you look forward, how do you imagine operations evolving under a future administration?

Hicks: I think one of the best things that was done in the rollout of the current strategy was to emphasize that this will not be quick. That's realistic, and it sets the stage for this very issue you're raising. In two years, the United States is going to have a presidential election, and there is still going to be some form—we don't know exactly what it will look like—but some form of significant U.S. engagement on this issue: political, diplomatic, probably economic, and probably military. So you have to set the expectation now that this is an issue that the American public is going to have to grapple with in the long term, and the next president will have to grapple with too.

So far there has been a pretty broad American consensus around the need to undertake military action and to lead, if I can put that very broadly, the co-



alition efforts, against ISIS. But so much in politics is context-dependent. If things go well, I think that will continue to be a broad, bipartisan view that is likely to be carried forward by candidates who are serious contenders for president. Obviously, if something goes horribly wrong in operations, that will change very much the political context that the next president will inherit. I think the key thing has been, whether people have really internalized this or not, to set the expectation that the challenges in Iraq and Syria are not something that some airstrikes are going to solve for us overnight.

Experience at the Department of Defense

NFPF: Let's turn to your personal experience in the military arena. When you first began pursuing a career in the Department of Defense, did you consciously think about the challenges that being a civilian might pose to effective communication with people who come from a military background?

Hicks: One of the things that I would often tell people when they would come to talk to me about jobs in DoD and being a civilian there—it sounds kind of silly, but I would say to them: just as a reminder, if you're going to work here you have to have a basic appreciation for the military, an appreciation of the role of the military. In other words, don't come work in the Department of Defense if you don't actually like the idea that we have a military that helps to protect our interests. There are a surprising number of people who will come to talk to you about jobs who really are separating in their minds the policy role in the abstract, and the role as a policymaker inside the Department of Defense specifically. So yes, you first and foremost have to have a basic respect for, appreciation for the U.S. military as an instrument of national power.

Second, you do really have to start to learn the cultures, plural, of the military services—the subcomponents of the services, how people progress in their career paths in the military, and how that might shape their mindset. A lot of that, again, is through exposure and experience. At CSIS we have military fellows, and one of the things that I talk to them about at the beginning of every year is, this is a wonderful opportunity for many of our junior staff who've never had experience with the military to learn who you are and what you do. And the extent to which you as a military fellow are willing to take that as a leadership opportunity to engage them—we're hugely grateful for that.



And [Dr. John Hamre, president and CEO of CSIS] says much the same thing, though of course more elegantly.

If you're going to succeed, you have to do that inside the jobs you're doing, whether you're at a think tank like we are, working on military issues, or you're actually in the Department. Even harder is if you're in other departments, for instance the State Department or the National Security Council staff, where you may not have the same day-to-day interaction with the military. You have to go out of your way to understand those service cultures, and the same is true, obviously, for State, USAID, and certainly for the president's staff at the National Security Council.

NFPF: How has the role of women in defense leadership positions changed since you've been in OSD, and what do you think we should be doing moving forward?

Hicks: It's changed a lot. When I entered the Department in 1993, it would have been extremely unusual to have another woman in any meeting I was ever in. When I went back to the Department in 2009, we had a meeting that my boss at the time, Michèle Flournoy, was holding in her office, and we all paused for a moment and looked around the table and every person in the room was a woman; it was so strange. It's funny because that's the context you're coming from, where you don't even blink if you're the only woman in the room, and suddenly you're in a room full of women and you think "wait a second, this is weird! How did this happen?" So, I think for women who have entered more recently, that is now less shocking.

That said, I think we definitely have a long way to go, and my view is the number one thing that will change the national security community, particularly in the defense sector, in terms of gender balance, is when the military improves its numbers of women in the general office and flag officer ranks. I think it's only when you start to see female service chiefs, a female chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, et cetera—only then will you really be changing the culture in which civilian women are sitting. Those of us women on the civilian side, we really do rely on the progress that is made on the military side, to prove that there is a place for women at the table, that it is not just sort of an interesting happenstance, but that there are women progressing in the

operational realm who may come out and become part of that civilian corps, or who at least help to validate the general rule that women are an important part of that hard power sector of the national security community.

Career and Leadership

NFPF: Looking at your career path, how much of it was preplanned and really thought out in advance, and how much of it was simply taking advantage of opportunities as they came your way?

Hicks: It was definitely a mix of the two. At a pretty young age, I had a good sense of what I wanted to do with my twenties. Because I'm a geek, my goal was to work in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. I wanted to serve in government, I wanted to work on defense policy issues, and I was very fortunate that that worked out for me. And, as happens to many people, particularly in government, but I'm sure in all workplaces, you get together over coffee with your friends in your twenties and you say, "Look at these people who've been here ten years, I'm not going to be those people!" And then you wake up one day and you are like, "Oh my god! How did I end up here?"

The other piece I knew very early, which I don't expect everyone to know, was that I wanted to get a PhD. So I did have that as part of my plan, and I did that more than anything just for myself. I liked the academic world. I wanted to have that experience. I didn't do it for reasons of believing that it would help me in my career progression in terms of people finding me a more attractive employee. I did it for my own intellectual growth.

So those were two pieces I sort of knew, and I think it was more like in my late twenties, early thirties, as I was having a lot of success in the government sector, that I started to think, "OK, where do I go from here?" From there on, it was not quite so well laid out, it was more a mix of opportunities and sense of duty, if you will, at different points in my career in terms of how I progressed through that. I would say that's still true today. I think if I know one thing, it's that I have a passion for these issues and I want to stay involved in the sector, but I've been around Washington long enough not to be setting my mind toward particular positions or particular outcomes. I'm pretty open ended.

NFPF: How did you, as an individual, approach learning about what is obviously a massively complex defense system, and, as a leader, what were your



strategies for building consensus and understanding others' views within such a huge policymaking apparatus?

Hicks: It really is an art form, and it's very much a mixture of personality and experience. There's no one who's worked in the national security system who hasn't had the taste of failure at some point, for a variety of reasons: cultural differences between agencies, sincere principled disagreements about where to go on a policy issue, inability to translate vision from the executive branch to Congress or vice versa, inability to translate it from Washington to the field, or from the field to Washington. There is no easy, scientific method that can help you solve these problems.

What I find for myself has been most helpful, first of all, is just having a really good emotional intelligence, and understanding how agencies, individuals within those agencies or other bureaucracies come to problems. If you will, it's a form of negotiation, of understanding others, of understanding what motivates them and why. And again, sometimes disagreements happen for a good, principled reason. The different organizations have different ends or purposes and as a result, they're going to come at problems differently. That piece alone—being able to have a rational conversation with people who are coming from a different viewpoint, and trying to find ways that you can either give in when you need to, stand the line when you need to, and then most of the time compromise on both sides to get to a solution that's pretty good though not ideal—that's one set of skills.

Another set of skills is a resiliency skill: to not be defeated by the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy of government—I think this is true in any country and certainly in the United States—is tremendous. You have to be resilient if you're going to work in it: Understand who the real players are, what their goals are, how you can manipulate the system with your emotional intelligence and your willingness to survive the bureaucracy, and how you can build that into a campaign to get done what you need to get done. You cannot be a person who believes that the bureaucracy is just in your way, and you can't deal with it, and you'd rather go run a startup in Silicon Valley. That's a perfectly legitimate pathway, but if you're going to stay in the government, you have to at some point come to terms with the reality that the bureaucracy is there.

It's a lot of soft skills people don't usually talk about, but it's a skillset that's



important in pretty much any context. A lot of it is about leadership, even at the junior level—leading from the bottom, if you will, helping your boss get to where he or she needs to go. Certainly from a senior position it's about leading your team with all those same skillsets—getting them to understand that other people have a different point of view, not because they're awful people but because they're coming from a different perspective, looking for opportunities to find compromise where it seems to make sense, and standing your ground when you feel like you have to do that. At the end of the day, when the decision is made differently, you have to, as we say in the Department of Defense, salute smartly and execute to the best of your ability.

NFPF: You mentioned the importance of people leading from the top and people leading from below. How do you think about shaping the next generation of leaders, and what sort of tools do you think are important to empower people?

Hicks: For me personally, a couple things come to mind. The first is, communication is very important to me, as a leader. One of my rules of thumb is that you can never spend too much time and energy in communicating to your workforce. It is an overwhelmingly difficult thing to do in practice because you actually have other responsibilities you have to execute day in and day out, but people almost never mind you communicating. And it's amazing that no matter how much you think you communicate something, it doesn't translate all the way down—particularly in a large hierarchical organization—to the degree or even in the way you wanted it to. So, communication to me as a leader is very important, and I do that in a number of ways. Just to give you an example in terms of empowerment, a lot of it is about getting together smaller focus groups, going down several layers to the offices, and visiting people in their workspaces. Going desk by desk and talking to people.

The second thing is making clear to employees, but also acting on it, that good ideas come from everywhere. One of the most important things for leaders to always have in mind is that they are not going to be the expert, or even the best positioned person, to know about the right solutions to every problem. In fact, that's not their job. Their job is to build teams that have the expertise and the ability to translate that in solutions.



Those are some of the basic empowerment tools. Just another little example from one organization that I led—there was this concern that good ideas weren't getting through the system, and it was an idea-generating place in terms of its mandate. I said that anyone in any office can send me an "information memo" on any topic, at any time. They don't have to worry about the intervening layers of management not thinking it's a good idea or not wanting it to go forward. I definitely have had an open-door policy in terms of people providing ideas for the very reason of empowering them more.

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From 2006 to early 2009, Dr. Hicks served as a senior fellow at CSIS, leading a variety of research projects in the national security field, including as part of the Center's Beyond Goldwater-Nichols series. She was a career civil servant in the Office of the Secretary of Defense from 1993 to 2006, serving in a variety of capacities and rising from Presidential Management Intern to the Senior Executive Service. Dr. Hicks has received numerous recognitions for her service in the Department of Defense (DOD), including distinguished awards from Secretaries of Defense Chuck Hagel, Leon Panetta, and Robert Gates and from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey and the 2011 DOD Senior Professional Women's Association Excellence in Leadership Award. She holds a Ph.D. in political science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, an M.A. from the University of Maryland's School of Public Affairs, and an A.B. magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Mount Holyoke College. She previously served as an ex officio member of the Board of Directors for the U.S. Institute of Peace and currently serves on the Board of Advisors for the Truman National Security Project. Dr. Hicks is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and an adjunct with the RAND Corporation.



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