

International Order and Global Swing States

The rise of four powerful democracies—Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Turkey—presents one of the most significant opportunities for U.S. foreign policy in the early 21st century. The democracies that have newly emerged on the global stage collectively possess the capability and the legitimacy to bolster the interlocking web of norms, institutions, rules, and relationships that has for six decades preserved peace among the great powers, fostered economic prosperity, and facilitated the spread of freedom. This global order now confronts numerous challenges, some emanating from China's rise and others from a diverse set of international developments. If these challenges eventually fragment the international order, the United States, its allies, and all other countries that depend upon an open and stable world will suffer the consequences.

Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Turkey offer great potential as partners to extend the global order. Though separated by location and historical experience, these countries share not only a common commitment to democratic institutions but also possess large and growing economies while inhabiting strategic locations in their respective regions. And critically, the precise global role of each is in flux.

These four rising democracies might be termed “global swing states.”¹ In the American political context, swing states are those whose mixed political orientation gives them a greater impact than their population or economic output might warrant. This applies to Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Turkey. The choices they make—whether they take on new responsibilities, free-ride, or obstruct—will, in aggregate, decisively influence the trajectory of today's world.

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Principles and Pillars

Following World War II, the United States and its allies fashioned a new global system, based on international rules and rooted in new institutions that aimed to regulate the conduct of states. The United Nations was the order's crown jewel—a “parliament of man” that aspired to prevent future wars among its members.² The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were established to promote economic development and financial stability, while the General

Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the predecessor to the World Trade Organization (WTO), was founded to promote trade liberalization.

This global order, though it was routinely referred to as such, never encompassed the entirety of the world. The Soviet bloc stood outside many of the new institutions or participated in them only indifferently; other bodies, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, were founded to maintain order precisely by opposing Soviet designs. The order evolved over time in response to technological changes, a growing demand for natural resources, and trade imbalances that emerged as Western Europe and Japan recovered from wartime devastation.³

Over the course of decades, this system came to advance a set of principles in five key areas of state behavior. A *trade order*, based on commercial reciprocity and nondiscrimination, expanded to include a growing number of states. A *financial order* aimed for monetary stability despite a shift to floating currencies. A *maritime order*, premised on territorial sovereignty and freedom of navigation, became increasingly formalized. A *nonproliferation order* was constructed to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and to reduce their testing. And a *human rights order* emerged, rooted in respect for fundamental liberties and the democratic process. Today, each of these principles is reflected in a major pillar of the global order that in turn encompasses a series of norms, institutions, rules, and relationships.

The global trade order is highly formalized, based on the GATT and now embodied in the WTO and its web of rules and dispute resolution mechanisms. The Doha Round of global trade talks represents the current effort to extend this order in the direction of freer international commerce.

The financial order is rooted in the U.S. dollar as the predominant international reserve currency, flexible exchange rates, and general currency convertibility. The IMF fills a role as a lender of last resort. The World Bank channels capital as well as strategic and technical advice to middle-income and

poor nations. Since 2008, the Group of 20 (G20) has emerged as a key institution that endeavors to guide the global financial order.

The maritime order has emerged from centuries of practice. Many of the rules underpinning the maritime order have been formalized in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). While some countries, including the United States, have not ratified the convention, Washington and most major capitals recognize its key provisions as customary international law. U.S. naval power continues to backstop international law governing the use of the maritime domain.

The nonproliferation order is rooted in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), which draws a strict distinction between five recognized nuclear weapon states and all others. It also includes the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and multilateral export control regimes that attempt to limit the spread of particular weapons and delivery systems. Less institutionalized elements of the nonproliferation order range from efforts like the U.S.-led Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) to ad hoc multilateral coordination designed to stem proliferation financing and gather intelligence.

The human rights order encompasses a range of widely recognized international norms relating to the basic rights and liberties of all individuals. These rights are enumerated in documents such as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, along with the constitutions and laws of many democracies. A new and contested element of this order is the “Responsibility to Protect” (R2P), a doctrine that elevates the protection of individuals against atrocities above the traditional sovereign norm against outside interference.⁴

The global order contains additional pillars, but none are as central as these five. For instance, an environmental order remains nascent in the absence of an international agreement that requires both developed nations and emerging market economies to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases. Other elements of the global order include international law enforcement mechanisms and regimes governing the use of air and space.

The global order advances a set of principles in five key areas of state behavior.

Future Fragmentation

The order that exists today has profoundly benefited many nations. While by no means banishing war, it has facilitated the longest period of great power peace in modern times. Because of the economic stability and openness the order has

engendered, the world has experienced a dramatic rise in trade and investment. And democracy, which in the early 20th century was largely limited to a few European nations and their settler offshoots, now encompasses half of humanity.⁵

During the 1990s, the consolidation of free market democracies across Europe and elsewhere—together with the economic integration of developing nations that had long stood apart from the global economy—led some analysts to predict the enduring triumph of the international order.⁶ The creation of the WTO and the indefinite extension of the NPT offered similar cause for optimism. Since 2000, however, new challenges have put pressure on each pillar of the global order.

Some of these challenges relate to China's rise. In trade, China's globally competitive state-owned enterprises have revealed gaps in the WTO's regulatory structure, which divides trade into actions by governments and actions by private companies. In finance, China has bypassed the World Bank by lending bilaterally to developing countries and has started to transform the renminbi into a global currency, a move that may partly shift the international monetary system away from the U.S. dollar. Meanwhile, Beijing's claims to virtually the entire South China Sea and attempts to limit freedom of navigation pose a challenge to the maritime order.

China, however, is not solely responsible for the mounting pressures on the international order. Because of objections from countries such as Brazil and India, movement on the Doha Round of talks has ceased. The market turmoil of recent years has raised questions about the legitimacy of the financial order. Turkey's outsized claims in the eastern Mediterranean, Russia's extensive claims in the Arctic Ocean, and piracy all challenge the maritime order. Nuclear pursuits by North Korea and Iran pose a profound challenge to the nonproliferation order. The human rights order, too, confronts new pressures. The wave of democratization that began in the 1970s has crested; the number of electoral democracies in the world dropped in 2010 to 115, the lowest level since 1995, and has rebounded only slightly.⁷ Mixed regimes have emerged that feature the trappings of electoral rule but fail to grant citizens basic rights such as freedom of speech, blurring the distinction between democracy and other forms of government.

The debt crisis that has forced a new era of austerity on America and many of its European allies poses an additional challenge to the order. Current—if not necessarily long-term—fiscal pressures will likely reduce U.S. military and foreign affairs spending in the coming years. Europe confronts an even bleaker fiscal landscape, and many European countries have already started to slash defense outlays and cut foreign aid.⁸ Because Western military and financial capabilities have long underwritten the global order, the advent of fiscal austerity puts further strain on the international system.

At present, the order's multiple challenges are unlikely to produce a monolithic alternative—something akin to the Communist bloc after World War II. There are no countries today with both the power and ambition to construct a rival system. Although sometimes touted as the foundation of a new international order, the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and now South Africa) grouping lacks the necessary unity of interests and ideological cohesion to fulfill this role. The more likely scenario is fragmentation of the global order.⁹ Principles which the order has advanced would become less universally binding; different parts of the world would interpret and apply the order's principles based on local consensus or the desires of the regionally dominant power. And institutions and arrangements that have successfully regulated key areas of state behavior would become less effective as they are replicated. Such fragmentation would be inimical to all countries that depend upon an open and stable world for their peace and prosperity.

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Looking for New Capacity

The current moment presents the United States with an opportunity to adapt and renew the global order by enlarging its base of supporters. The most promising new partners will possess large and rapidly growing economies. A sizeable and expanding resource base is a prerequisite for a meaningful contribution to international order. It is no coincidence that the order's founders and earliest supporters were the world's wealthiest nations; no other countries in the post-war era could have fulfilled this role. Additionally, states of interest will have strategic locations—because they occupy a central position in a region or stand at the hinge of multiple regions, geography magnifies their influence. The most promising partners will also embrace democratic government at home, which endows them with the potential to fully support an order defined by liberal values and norms. Based on these criteria, four countries stand out as pivotal partners: Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Turkey.

Brazil's future appears increasingly bright. Its gross domestic product (GDP), which expanded at 3.5 percent per year from 2000–2011, now totals more than \$2 trillion. Geographically, Brazil dominates South America; it shares a border with every country on the continent except Chile and Ecuador. Since the transition from military to civilian rule in 1985, democracy in Brazil has taken ever deeper root.¹⁰

India's power has begun to catch up with its sheer size. Its GDP is roughly \$4 trillion and between 2000 and 2011 grew at 7.4 percent annually. India occupies the majority of the South Asian landmass and has a land or maritime boundary with every state in the region plus China, Burma, Indonesia, and Thailand. Since independence, democracy in India has endured with only a single brief interruption.

Indonesia has definitively emerged on the international stage. The political transition that followed the collapse of the Suharto dictatorship in 1998 resulted in democratic rule. Indonesia's economy, valued at about \$1 trillion, increased by 5.3 percent each year from 2000–2011. An archipelagic nation of more than 17,000 islands, Indonesia straddles two oceans and has maritime boundaries with most Southeast Asian nations as well as Australia and India.

Turkey is now one of the world's most dynamic powers. Its GDP expanded at an average rate of 4.3 percent from 2000–2011 and today stands at approximately \$1 trillion. Lying at the juncture of Europe and Asia, Turkey borders many of the Middle East's most volatile countries as well as the Balkans and the Caucasus; it also shares maritime boundaries with Russia and Ukraine. Although Turkish politics remain rough and tumble, military coups no longer punctuate periods of civilian rule.

Other important countries exist in the pursuit of global order—Mexico, South Korea, and South Africa come immediately to mind. However, all differ from the pivotal partners above in at least one respect. Multiple factors constrain Mexico's influence. Geography limits its international role—it is located on the periphery of Latin America—and Mexico has recently spent a good deal of political and financial resources looking inward to combat narcotics-based instability. South Korea belongs to the group of American allies—which includes Europe, Japan, and Australia—that have for at least several decades embraced the global order, partnered closely with the United States in its support, and sought little revision to it. Because the partnership between Washington and Seoul is deep and far-reaching, there is less room for new initiatives. South Africa has a much smaller economy—about \$500 billion—than the four rising democracies. Situated on the southern tip of the African continent, it exerts considerable influence over its immediate neighbors but is just one of several regional heavyweights.

Global Swing States

As the United States seeks to defend and strengthen the global order, Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Turkey represent particularly promising partners. The four bring capability and legitimacy to any international effort. All are increasingly

influential at the regional and global level, and although they desire changes to the international order, they do not seek to scrap it.

Brazil has taken on a higher global profile by holding a nonpermanent seat on the UN Security Council (UNSC), exhibiting leadership within the G20, increasing its activity within the WTO, and participating in the annual BRICS meeting and the IBSA

Forum (India, Brazil, and South Africa). On trade, Brasilia contributed to the breakdown of the Doha Round of talks. It has also taken protectionist steps, such as a “Buy Brasil” government procurement policy and “temporary” tariff hikes on imports, but it has done so within the scope of its WTO obligations. The Brazilian government has pledged to contribute up to \$10 billion to bolster the IMF’s lending capacity as the European debt crisis lingers, and has also become one of the largest providers of foreign assistance to poor countries through its state development bank. At the same time, Brazil is a vocal proponent of capital controls and objects to the U.S. dollar’s status as the world’s predominant reserve currency.¹¹

A signatory to UNCLOS, Brazil maintains that a provision of the treaty grants coastal states the right to regulate foreign militaries operating in their Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). However, it has not acted to restrain freedom of navigation, and has generally worked through UNCLOS to pursue its seabed energy interests. In addition, it has taken modest steps toward supporting maritime security in the South Atlantic.

Citing both the NPT’s lack of legitimacy and the robustness of its bilateral inspections regime with Argentina, Brazil continues to reject the IAEA’s Additional Protocol, which provides for virtually unfettered international inspections. In its highest-profile foray into global diplomacy, Brazil joined with Turkey in 2010 in an unsuccessful bid to negotiate a deal that would send Iran’s uranium abroad for enrichment. Under the presidency of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Brazil opposed robust UNSC measures against human rights violators and offered political support to unsavory regimes. Lula’s successor, Dilma Rousseff, has pioneered a different approach on human rights issues. In 2011, for instance, Brazil voted at the UN Human Rights Council for the first time to support a special rapporteur for Iran. However, the use of military force to halt atrocities remains a red line for Brazil, as it prefers multilateral mediation and diplomatic consultation. Brazil has proposed the “Responsibility While Protecting” concept, which would “codify standards and procedures to govern humanitarian intervention.”¹² Overall, Brazil seeks to modify the trade, finance,

All four swing states desire changes to the international order, but they do not seek to scrap it.

maritime, and human rights orders by working through existing institutions and arrangements.

To an even greater extent than Brazil, economic growth has fueled India's ascendancy. India is a member of the BRICS, boasts the largest emerging economy in the G20 after China, and recently held a non-permanent seat on the UNSC. New Delhi has at times worked to slow trade liberalization at the global level; in the Doha Round, India's objections to treating emerging market economies differently from underperforming developing countries has stymied a multilateral trade deal. However, India has taken on greater responsibility for maintaining the worldwide financial architecture, contributing \$10 billion to buttress the IMF's lending facility despite domestic blowback. Long a recipient of foreign aid, India has in recent years become a donor. New Delhi appears content to see the U.S. dollar's preeminence endure because any effort to displace it would only help India's geopolitical rival, China, promote the renminbi.

Although India advances an interpretation of UNCLOS that would require foreign navies to obtain coastal state consent before operating in the EEZs, in practice, it has at most lodged infrequent diplomatic protests. Moreover, India has started to champion freedom of navigation by, for instance, pressing Beijing to abide by international law in the South China Sea. New Delhi is also increasingly committed to deploying its new naval assets to the defense of the maritime commons. It has dispatched ships to engage in counter-piracy operations off East Africa and has helped other nations in the Indian Ocean region to build their maritime capacity.¹³

While remaining outside the NPT, India has moved closer to harmonizing its policies and practices with the guidelines of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and seeks membership in all four multilateral export control regimes. India's human rights approach is evolving. New Delhi abstained from voting in the UNSC on the resolution authorizing military action against the Gaddafi regime and on occasion touts a history of nonintervention. Yet, India also trumpets its status as the world's largest democracy, and has made concrete efforts to bolster the democratic institutions of several countries on its periphery. Globally, New Delhi is one of the ten founding members of the Community of Democracies, an intergovernmental coalition of democratic nations that works to promote the rule of law and good governance. It is also a co-founder of and leading contributor to the UN Democracy Fund, which provides financial resources to civil society organizations operating in countries experiencing political transitions. With the exception of trade, Indian policy has increasingly supported the main pillars of global order.

Like India, Indonesia's economic rise has coincided with an enlargement of the country's international role. In addition to exercising a prominent voice within Southeast Asia, Indonesia is a member of several notable forums

including the G20, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) and the 57-member Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). On trade, Jakarta has generally opted to follow rather than lead throughout the course of Doha Round negotiations. Although Indonesia's market opening and liberalization after 2000 set a positive example for Southeast Asia, its recent embrace of protectionist measures runs contrary to the open trading order and threatens to diminish its role as an economic model for the region.¹⁴ Indonesia has supported key financial institutions such as the IMF, while simultaneously promoting diversification away from international dependence on the U.S. dollar as a global reserve currency. It also advocated transforming the Chiang Mai Initiative into a multilateral reserve pool, which moves the arrangement one step closer toward becoming a regional alternative to the IMF.¹⁵

Indonesia, a party to UNCLOS, has begun to take diplomatic and military actions to uphold the maritime order despite serious constraints on its naval capability. Once hesitant to intervene in South China Sea territorial disputes, Jakarta has in recent years challenged Beijing's extensive claims, and in 2012 worked to rally members of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to take a united stand on the issue.¹⁶ Cooperating with neighboring states, Indonesia has played an instrumental role in largely eradicating piracy in the Strait of Malacca.¹⁷ Indonesia is also a model nuclear citizen. It is a longstanding member of the NPT and has signed the IAEA's Additional Protocol and ratified the CTBT (Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty). As Indonesia continues to develop its plans for a domestic nuclear power industry, it has scrupulously followed international safety and security practices, earning the IAEA's commendation.¹⁸ Although Indonesia remains somewhat wary of humanitarian intervention, its support for the human rights order has come to include the sharing of experience, the construction of regional norms, and the naming and shaming of human rights abusers. On the whole, Indonesia has taken positions that generally reinforce the international order.

Turkey, much like the other global swing states, has leveraged rapid economic growth to carve out a new international role. It belongs to a diverse set of international institutions including NATO, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Council of Europe, and the OIC; it is also an applicant for membership in the European Union and recently occupied a non-permanent seat on the UNSC. Turkey has remained relatively inactive within the WTO, but through the success of its free market reforms has set a powerful example for the Middle East. Ankara has become a supporter of the global financial order in recent years. It pledged \$5 billion to the IMF in June 2012 and has set up a new agency to finance development assistance.¹⁹ Embracing the G20, Turkey has tried to use the institution as a platform for championing the interests of the world's least developed countries.

Turkey has continued to reject the legal foundation of the maritime order. It has remained outside UNCLOS and unlike another non-signatory (the United States) does not treat most clauses of UNCLOS as customary international law. Beyond rejecting UNCLOS, Turkey has advanced its own theory for delineating EEZs in the eastern Mediterranean that extends its EEZ to Egypt's northernmost waters.²⁰ With the discovery of gas fields in the eastern Mediterranean, Ankara has ratcheted up tensions by warning states to refrain from bidding on oil and gas concessions around Cyprus. Yet at the same time, Turkey has made significant counter-piracy contributions. It was a founding member of the Contact Group on Somali Piracy and was quick to dispatch ships to fight this reemerging threat to vital shipping lanes.²¹

Turkey has upheld the nonproliferation order's legal components but at times has complicated international efforts to pressure Iran, for instance, through its efforts to broker a deal to enrich Iran's uranium abroad. On human rights, Turkey's approach has exhibited considerable variation. Ankara soft-pedaled Iran's crushing of the Green Movement, opposed but later supported the NATO intervention in Libya, and pivoted from backing the Assad regime in Syria to calling for its ouster to taking direct military action against the regime's forces. On balance, and leaving aside the maritime domain, Turkish policies have strengthened or at least not undercut the major pillars of the international order.

Organizing a U.S. Approach

Characterizing Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Turkey as global swing states speaks to their position in the international system; it does not suggest an emerging bloc. On the contrary, it is unlikely that these rising democracies will act in

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concert. In most cases, U.S. efforts will focus on each nation separately rather than on the four of them collectively. Nevertheless, considering these countries through a common framework will clarify Washington's foreign policy priorities and enable new and more strategic approaches that go beyond simply managing four bilateral relationships.

Each global swing state seeks greater recognition in multilateral fora, but rebalancing international institutions remains a Sisyphean task on which U.S. action can make only limited headway. In addition, no solution is likely to satisfy all four powers, attract support from a divided foreign policy establishment in Washington, and win the backing of European leaders for whom rebalancing international institutions is a zero-sum exercise. While American leaders should continue to affirm the need for UN reform and support further efforts to align

the IMF's quota and voting shares with today's realities, they should devote far greater attention to capitalizing on areas where Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Turkey have already taken on new global responsibilities.

With these guidelines in mind, opportunities for enhanced U.S. cooperation with the global swing states abound. However, five initiatives in particular stand out because of their potential impact on the international order and the possibility of realizing them within the short- to medium-term.

First, Washington should partner with the global swing states to define and address unfair commercial practices by state-owned enterprises. Just as in the United States, firms in Brazil, India, and Indonesia face growing pressure from Chinese companies that receive government backing, while in Turkey leading businesses see similar pressure looming on the horizon.²² The United States should emphasize the treatment of state-owned enterprises in its economic dialogues with all four powers. It should also urge the Business and Industry Advisory Committee (BIAC) of the OECD to establish a policy group dedicated to exploring this issue. (Of the global swing states, Turkey is the only member of the OECD, but business associations from Brazil, India, and Indonesia all have observer status at the BIAC and could contribute to a new policy group.) If the United States can forge a consensus with these four powers, it might be possible to address the rise of state-owned enterprises through a multilateral trading system rather than through a patchwork of ad hoc trade remedies.

Second, the United States should partner with India, Brazil, and Turkey to establish a model for development in Africa. These three nations' development activities in Africa could become a robust alternative to China's bilateral lending, which prioritizes physical infrastructure over political institutions. Over the past decade, India has ramped up its presence in Africa by boosting trade and investment ties. Brazil and Turkey have done the same and also opened a number of new embassies. Today, all three appear interested in trilateral development partnerships with the United States. Because the private sector spearheads Indian engagement with Africa, the State Department should catalyze cooperation among U.S. and Indian firms operating there. In West Africa, where Brazil's economic equities are most concentrated, Washington should work with Brasilia to strengthen rule of law and help local governments craft robust investment frameworks. Turkey has most focused on East Africa; Washington and Ankara should identify new joint initiatives in the region.²³

Five initiatives stand out for their potential short- to medium-term impact on global order.

Third, the United States should launch an initiative with India and Indonesia to develop an affordable, long-range unmanned system for maritime domain awareness. With both nations looking to build up their domestic defense industries and concerned about maritime-based threats, this initiative may hold significant appeal. If successful, a long-range unmanned system would expand these nations' capability to defend the maritime commons and could be mass-produced for other Indian Ocean navies and coast guards, allowing regional states to more actively combat transnational threats such as piracy, human smuggling, and drug trafficking.

Fourth, Washington should encourage Jakarta's aspirations to become a regional and global leader on nonproliferation issues. The United States should support Indonesia's apparent ambition to see every member of ASEAN sign and ratify the IAEA's Additional Protocol.²⁴ The IAEA has recognized Indonesia as a model for the peaceful use of nuclear technology, and Washington should fund Indonesian sharing of best practices with other Southeast Asian nations that have contracts out for new reactors, like Vietnam.²⁵ Lastly, the United States should seek to extend the Nuclear Security Summit to 2016 and advocate that it convene in Jakarta; this would both recognize and enhance Indonesia's nonproliferation leadership.

Fifth, America should cooperate with India and Indonesia to seize the opportunity afforded by the political opening in Burma. Both global swing states have a geopolitical interest in seeing a more democratic and independent government in Naypyidaw. The U.S. National Endowment for Democracy could partner with the Indian International Institute of Democracy and Election Management to strengthen Burma's capacity to hold free and fair elections. Washington could also work with New Delhi to promote reform of the security sector in Burma. Non-governmental human rights organizations in Indonesia are well organized and wish to assist Burma's political transition; what they lack is funding. Washington should work with the Indonesian government to locate resources for a Burma initiative from each country's private foundations and corporate sector.

Capacity Building

To varying degrees, the capacity of governmental institutions in the four global swing states has not kept pace with their rise. While remaining mindful of their domestic sensitivities, Washington can partner with each nation to help build capacity to actively support the international order.

Since 2000, U.S. security cooperation with most of the global swing states has intensified. This is particularly true of India and Indonesia, where lifting legal restrictions has enabled new defense sales, technology transfers, and military exercises. However, with the exception of NATO ally Turkey, the level of

International Military Education and Training (IMET) funding does not reflect the potential of these countries to contribute to the global order.²⁶ The U.S. Departments of Defense and State should jointly increase IMET budgets for Brazil, India, and Indonesia to the nearly \$4 million that Turkey currently receives.

American leaders should also support annual fellowships that embed foreign policy professionals from the global swing states in U.S. congressional offices. Legislatures in these rising democracies play an important—and often expanding—role in their global engagement. In many cases, however, the quality of parliamentary staff is mixed. Congressional offices already host a limited number of institutionally-sponsored scholars from abroad, so a clear model for this program already exists.²⁷

Additionally, Washington should create a human rights fellowship program for journalists from Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Turkey. Within each of the four global swing states, populations often remain largely uninformed of human rights challenges unfolding in distant corners of the world and of their government's approach to human rights issues abroad. The National Endowment for Democracy hosts a fellowship program that brings journalists (as well as other professionals) to the United States from aspiring and emerging democracies. However, because Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Turkey have completed their democratic transitions, their journalists are underrepresented. To deepen a culture of linking human rights at home with human rights abroad, the National Endowment for Democracy should establish a separate exchange program for journalists from these global swing states.

Foundations of Engagement

Although U.S. leaders have devoted more attention to each global swing state in recent years, the foundations of American engagement require further strengthening. Appropriating additional resources to U.S. agencies seeking to expand ties with global swing states is critical. At a time of fiscal austerity, U.S. foreign affairs spending tops the list for budget cutters in Congress. The White House and the State Department should make the case to Congress for providing resources for these four relationships.

Now is the time to establish a quarterly interagency meeting at the Deputy level and a monthly working-level Interagency Policy Committee to review progress made, share lessons learned, identify roadblocks, and map out the next steps for U.S. policy toward these four nations. With responsibility for Brazil, India, Indonesia and Turkey spread across regional bureaus and diverse government agencies, those charged with managing these critical relationships rarely communicate. On top of this, the interagency process tends to channel the attention of decisionmakers toward short-term crises rather than medium- to long-term opportunities.

The U.S. government must also develop the capacity to track its investments in language training and other educational opportunities related to the global swing states. Without this capacity, it will be impossible to effectively make intelligent human resource allocations. By all accounts, the U.S. government's current expertise on the four global swing states remains limited. Washington should launch a program to immerse U.S. officials in the politics and economics of each. One element of such a program might be modeled on the Mansfield Fellowship, which currently provides competitively selected U.S. federal employees with a year of Japanese language training followed by an assignment with the Japanese government. Although today, some of the four global swing states may not be receptive to hosting U.S. officials, this initiative is worth exploring.²⁸

Navigating an Uncertain Age

To secure its interests and ideals across the major axes of uncertainty that obscure the future, the United States must forge closer partnerships with the global swing states. One axis of uncertainty is how China's growing power will affect the international order. Whether an authoritarian China will accept the entirety of the current order, which enshrines rule of law and democratic values, remains unknown.²⁹ China's political system may predispose it to oppose the global order as its power expands. Alternatively, China may find that it has an interest in accepting many of the prevailing institutions and arrangements. Either way, it is critical that Washington work with the global swing states to reinforce the international order.³⁰ In the best case scenario, a strong global order will channel China's growing strength in a constructive direction to the benefit of all countries. In the worst case, a renewed international order will withstand Chinese pressure and continue to underpin a stable world.

**Washington
confronts a unique
opportunity.**

The other axis of uncertainty is the future path of American power. If the United States retains its overwhelming predominance, forming closer connections with the global swing states will reinforce the international order at a time of mounting challenges. If, as some observers argue, America's preeminent position is eroding, this strategy will reinforce the web of security alliances and partnerships, global institutions, and robust world trade and financial architecture through which the United States can pursue collaboration or organize opposition.

The current order advances the security, prosperity, and values of the United States and much of the world. If new challenges eventually fragment the order,

Washington and the four rising democracies will suffer the consequences more than most. With the global roles of Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Turkey in flux, Washington confronts a unique opportunity. Now is the time to seize it.

Notes

1. This article draws on Daniel M. Kliman and Richard Fontaine, *Global Swing States: Brazil, India, Indonesia, Turkey and the Future of International Order*, (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security and the German Marshall Fund of the United States, November 2012), <http://www.cnas.org/globalswingstates>. We are not the first to use the term “swing state” outside a domestic American context but the application of the term to these four countries and their relationship to the international order is new. For other uses, see Parag Khanna, “Waving Goodbye to Hegemony,” *The New York Times Magazine*, January 27, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/27/magazine/27world-t.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>; C. Raja Mohan, “India and the Balance of Power,” *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 4 (July/August 2006); and Ashley J. Tellis, “India as a New Global Power: An Action Agenda for the United States” (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), 30, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/Tellis.India.Global.Power.FINAL.pdf>.
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