September 11 shook a perhaps too complacent America to its foundation. It has forced us to assess our role in the world: how will we meet the great uncertainties and challenges of this new century. We know that we cannot shut out, dismiss or defer the problems of the world. The immediacy of an inter-connected world demands American attention, and there are consequences when we fail.

America embarks upon this new era with unprecedented power. Militarily, we have no rival. Politically, our influence is unsurpassed, and our economy has no equal. What Joe Nye, dean of Harvard University’s Kennedy School, calls our “soft power,” the appeal of American culture, values, and ideas, is also at its height.

But as Edmund Burke warned his fellow Britons two centuries ago, great power dominance carries with it great risks:

“We may say that we shall not abuse this astonishing and hitherto unheard of power. But every other nation will think we shall abuse it. It is impossible but that. Sooner or later, this state of things must produce a powerful combination against us which may end in ruin.”

This admonition of great power limitations must be balanced by great power responsibilities. How and where do we measure and calibrate our interests and apply our power to influence the world?

Global interests and challenges require global consensus and coalitions. That does not mean forfeiting American sovereignty. However, it will be the constraints on American power, rather than the extent of American power, that will provide the context for the difficult choices that will be necessary in a still dangerous and unpredictable world.

These choices will be challenged by limited resources and competing priorities, and tested by sound judgment and an appreciation of the reality and tasks ahead. As Henry Kissinger has written of the post-Cold War era, “History...will not excuse failure by the magnitude of the task.”

We will need a wider lens to comprehend the nature of the threats and opportunities of this century, and how we lead, respond, and use our power.
We cannot understand the American role in the world, and our responsibilities in it, without seeing the complexity of the world, including how others see us. Edmund Burke also understood the need for a wider lens when he wrote that, "Nothing is so fatal to a nation as an extreme self-partiality, and the total want of consideration of what others will naturally hope and fear." The perception of power, or how our use of power is perceived by others, becomes part of our power.

The terrorists who attacked the World Trade towers and the Pentagon represent an enemy unlike any we have ever known. Terrorism is a deadly combustible fusion of politics and ideology at the extremes of human behavior. The prospect of terrorists acquiring weapons of mass destruction, the "vertex of evil" described by Senator Lugar in a speech to the Council in February, presents us with a foreign policy nightmare scenario of the greatest urgency.

During the Cold War, stability between the United States and the Soviet Union rested upon a premise of nuclear deterrence through the threat of mutually assured destruction. If we are to keep peace in a still dangerous and vulnerable world for the next 50 years, it will require a coalition of common interests based upon new and more flexible strategies.

Three Priorities

This new era in foreign policy requires thinking, policies and leadership to match these new challenges. As President John F. Kennedy said in 1963, "The purpose of foreign policy is not to provide an outlet for our own sentiments of hope or indignation; it is to shape real events in a real world." Unilateralism is not an option. Neither is isolation, static policies or Cold War, or even immediate post-Cold War, policies. The world looks to the United States for leadership, and we look to our friends and allies for partnerships of common interest.

There are three foreign policy priorities where a wider lens will help us to conceptualize, and operationalize our foreign policy in this new era of immediate threat and challenge:

- the global campaign against terrorism;
- controlling the spread of weapons of mass destruction;
- offering political and economic programs to address poverty and desperation.

The War on Terrorism

President Bush has framed a standard for this new era in foreign affairs with his commitment to the destruction of global terrorist organizations. By defining the objectives for a more peaceful and just world, we frame the policies that will make hope and possibilities in the world a reality.

This will be difficult. We will need a wider lens to grasp the complex nature and
consequences of terrorism. Terrorism is not just a global phenomenon. It is just as often a local phenomenon, defined by time, place, culture, and political context: the FARC and narco-terror in Colombia, the brutality of Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines, radical Palestinian attacks on Israeli women and children, and the terror of Hindu mobs in India. These are all examples of the use of violence against civilians. They are all terrorism. Arabs and Palestinians view the civilian casualties resulting from Israeli military occupation as terrorism.

But the U.S. cannot confront indiscriminate world-wide political violence without an appreciation for the political, cultural, and historic context of that violence. Otherwise, our campaign will never end, and we cannot win. Over time, it also allows our own interests to be co-opted by others, drawing us into battles that, in the end, may not necessarily be ours.

We need to be clear about objectives. Our goal of destroying al-Qaeda and the Taliban and disrupting financial and operational terrorist networks world-wide, is a clearly defined objective. It has relied on military, law enforcement, humanitarian, intelligence, diplomatic and economic tools, in coordination with our allies, and coalitions of common interests.

The display of international support for our efforts has been unprecedented. The Bush Administration assembled a coalition of traditional allies, like NATO, and non-traditional allies, like Russia, to break the al-Qaeda network and route out the Taliban. Coalition partners shared our common interest of defeating international terrorism. NATO quickly invoked Article 5; an attack on the United States was an attack on the alliance. The UN “6 plus 2” forum provided an opportunity for American leadership and consultation around the shared interest of stability in Afghanistan.

The United Nations passed UNSC Res. 1373 on September 28, last year, which required all states to take measures to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorists. So far, 172 states have designated coordinating officials, and 130 states have submitted the required reports. The work of the UN Counter Terrorism Committee has set in motion a series of actions and cooperative arrangements by world governments and international organizations that could have spill-over effects beyond combating terrorism. These include areas such as counter-narcotics and non-proliferation, which are not only in the U.S. interest, but in the world’s interests as well.

By widening our lens, and setting our objectives, we can continue to make the war on terrorism a unifying, rather than dividing theme of American foreign policy. Thus enhancing and widening coalitions of common interest.
Weapons of Mass Destruction

Preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and preventing their use, is an urgent priority. Here, too, there is a global consensus attached to our objectives. No one wants a nuclear-armed Iraq or Iran. Everyone understands the threat North Korea’s nuclear potential poses to stability in East Asia. A nuclear exchange in South Asia would be a global catastrophe. The president rightly highlighted this issue in his State of the Union address. It deserves presidential priority. The continuation and expansion of Nunn-Lugar programs to reduce the Russian stockpile of nuclear weapons and weapons-grade material in the former Soviet Union are examples of programs that are critically important to our efforts.

Placing non-proliferation under the rubric of war on terrorism, however, may unnecessarily blur and complicate the different policies and coalitions necessary for meeting both challenges. Again, we need a wider lens. The issues of proliferation and terrorism are not necessarily connected nor are they mutually exclusive. They join at the vertex of evil that Senator Lugar identified.

Although we should strengthen and expand export controls and regimes to enforce non-proliferation, we must also realize that states proliferate for security, geo-political and other reasons. Diplomacy is therefore essential to any successful non-proliferation strategy. This is happening and must continue on the Korean peninsula. We should approach non-proliferation and security concerns in the Persian Gulf as a regional issue that must involve the United Nations.

Partnerships for Change

The United States still leads by the power of our values and our vision for democratic governance and free market economies. Many of the peoples of the Islamic world do not hate us for what we are, as some analysts claim, and as some polls may imply, but rather because many of the poor and disenfranchised in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world have not yet shared in the freedom and prosperity that animates our approach to governance. This understandable resentment has caused some to consider us hypocrites, and hate our hypocrisy. However, a cultural clash of civilizations is over-stated, unless our own policies take us there.

Perhaps we have neglected the complicated fibers woven into the fabric of the Middle East and other parts of the world. I do not believe that poverty per se is the “cause” of world terrorism. It is a factor. Desperation and hopelessness are among the root causes of terrorism. Our policy in the Middle East requires a more positive message of change that reaches out to the people of the Middle East and all peoples of the world.

America must be about enhancing its relationships in the world, not just its power.
The Middle East

Let me say a few words on the current situation in the Middle East, where a wider lens is essential to peace.

From an American perspective, the intensification of Israeli-Palestinian hostilities directly threatens our ability to develop and maintain the regional coalitions that are essential for U.S. national security interests, including our war on terrorism. It can get worse, and it will, without America’s involvement and strong leadership.

Wrapped in this historical tragedy and unprecedented violence is an opening for peace. The urgency and depth of intensity may have presented a pathway to moving beyond process to resolution. We do not have the luxury of time. There is no margin of error left in the Middle East. The hourglass is on its last grains of sand. We must now move the endgame to the front. This will require a breadth and depth of thinking that we haven’t previously brought forward. For example, who guarantees the peace and Israel’s security as it pulls back to pre-1967 borders? The U.S.? NATO? Some other multi-national force? There will be no hope for sustained peace without this very fundamental question being addressed. Soon. A political settlement is part of a cease-fire.

We must now address a regional peace, not just between Israel and the Palestinians, but between Israel and the Arabs. This is not new. A framework for a political settlement or endgame should be part of the mix, along with the Tenet Cease-fire plan, the confidence-building measures of the Mitchell plan, and the basic premise of the Saudi initiative (normal relations between Israel and its Arab neighbors). Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah’s proposal, endorsed by the Arab League, presents the world with a unique opportunity to quickly move the Middle East to the higher ground of negotiation and resolution. It must not be squandered. It allows us to build an Arab coalition for peace with Israel, a coalition that would complement our efforts to deal with the challenge of terrorism.

The costs of not seizing the initiative are high. Our Arab allies, especially Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, face rising popular pressure as a result of the escalation in violence. The pressure on these and other Arab governments does not come from those advocating peace, but from the fringe, those urging a harder line against both Israel and the United States. Instead of a coalition encouraged to take risks for peace, we may face an Arab world poised for rejection and escalating conflict.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot be separated from our other regional interests, such as the war on terrorism and Iraq. They are integrally connected. If Israel and the Arab world continue on a path of violence, slaughter and confrontation, terrorists and the states which sponsor them will be emboldened and strengthened, and our cause in the war on terrorism will be weakened. Military options alone will not bring peace to the Middle East and
cannot defeat terrorism. There must be hope, humanitarian assistance, economic development, democratic institutions, and regional cooperation based on regional common interests. We recognize that this is and will always be imperfect.

**Passing the First Tests**

Afghanistan and the Balkans are the first tests of this new century in world affairs. We have destroyed the Taliban, but must continue to track down straggling but deadly remnants of Al Qaeda. Victory will be short-lived unless a new government takes hold and democratic and economic institutions are developed and sustained, and people are free and remain free.

Our credibility and commitment to the war on terrorism, and the capacity of the U.S. to lead, will be much determined by our success or failure in Afghanistan. Afghanistan and the Balkans can be models for this new century in foreign affairs.

This is a human challenge. Those who have been collared under the yoke of brutal totalitarian rule fight and die for the right to build their own free, just, and stable nations. We are part of their struggle. This requires an adjustment in American policy and commitment. Commitment of our resources and prestige, as well as military, economic, humanitarian and diplomatic assets to give these nations time to fulfill the opportunity our interventions have helped create. That means America will remain in these countries of the Balkans and Afghanistan for periods of time to help give them the time, security, and stability that is essential to their futures.

By widening our lens to deeply understand both the challenges and opportunities of this new century, we will more clearly make the difficult choices that will determine the legacy of American leadership, and future of a world full of promise, in the 21st Century.

We cannot shrink from the reality before us and the heavy burden of responsibility placed on us.

The words of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger 28 years ago provide wise guidance. “The challenges before us are monumental. But it is not every generation that is given the opportunity to shape a new international order. If the opportunity is missed, we shall live in a world of chaos and danger. If it is realized we will have entered an era of peace and progress and justice.”