

Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

***“IMPLEMENTING SMART POWER:
SETTING AN AGENDA FOR NATIONAL
SECURITY REFORM”***

A Statement by

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Mr. Chairman,

We would like to thank you and your distinguished colleagues on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for the invitation to speak today on the subject of, “Implementing Smart Power: Setting an Agenda for National Security Reform.”

As you know, we are co-chairs of CSIS’s Commission on Smart Power, a bipartisan Commission that included one of your fellow Committee members, Senator Chuck Hagel, as well as Senator Jack Reed and two distinguished members of the House of Representatives. CSIS’s President and CEO John Hamre asked the two of us to form this Commission in late 2006, and the Commission released its findings on November 7, 2007. It is our privilege to sit before you today to provide our thoughts on implementing a Smart Power agenda in the months and years ahead.

Smart Power: The Big Idea

Mr. Chairman, as you know, your committee held a hearing on Smart Power in March of this year, receiving testimony from Admiral Leighton Smith and General Tony Zinni, who is also a member of our Commission. Admiral Smith and General Zinni spoke on behalf of 52 retired generals and admirals who are backing the idea of Smart Power, organized by the Center for U.S. Global Engagement. The pair did an excellent job of explaining Smart Power, so we do not want to spend too much time here on what you already know. But please allow us to briefly explain how we came to this idea.

The two of us—one Democrat and one Republican—have devoted our lives to promoting America’s preeminence as a force for good in the world. What we have seen recently, however, is that too many people around the globe are questioning America’s values, commitment, and competence.

Two decades ago, the conventional wisdom was that the United States was in decline, suffering from “imperial overstretch.” A decade later, with the end of the Cold War, the new conventional wisdom was that the world was a unipolar American hegemony. Today, we need a renewed understanding of the strength and limits of American power.

The rest of the world knows that the United States is the big kid on the block, and that this will likely remain the case for years to come. But our staying power has a great deal to do with whether we are perceived as a bully or a friend. Humility increases America’s greatness, it does not weaken it.

Smart Power has been portrayed by some in the media as simply presenting a “kinder, gentler” face of America to the world. The thought seems to be that all that is required is a new administration or shift of style rather than substance. Smart Power is much more than this. It is an approach that seeks to match our strategies and structures at home to the challenges that face us abroad.

Our military is the best fighting force bar none, but many of the challenges we face today do not have military solutions. We need stronger civilian instruments to fight al Qaeda’s ideas, slow climate change, foster good governance and prevent deadly viruses from reaching our shores. The uncomfortable truth is that an extra dollar spent on hard power today will not necessarily bring an extra dollar’s worth of security.

Smart Power is based on three main principles:

- First, America’s standing in the world matters to our security and prosperity.
- Second, today’s challenges can only be addressed with capable and willing allies and partners.
- Third, civilian tools can increase the legitimacy, effectiveness, and sustainability of U.S. Government policies.

This is why we have called for an integrated grand strategy that combines hard military power with soft “attractive power” to create Smart Power of the sort that won the Cold War. Power is the ability to influence the behavior of others to get a desired outcome. Machiavelli said it was safer to be feared than loved. Today, in the global information age, it is better to be both.

Smart Power is a framework for guiding the development of an integrated strategy, resource base and tool kit to achieve U.S. objectives, drawing on both hard and soft power. It underscores the necessity of a strong military, but also invests heavily in alliances, partnerships, and institutions at all levels to expand American influence and establish the legitimacy of American action.

The United States can become a smarter power by investing in the global good—providing services and polices that people and governments want but cannot attain in the absence of American leadership. This means support for international institutions, aligning our country with international development, promoting public health, increasing interactions of our civil society with others, maintaining an open international economy, and dealing seriously with climate change and energy insecurity.

Elements of a Smart Power approach exist today, but they lack a cohesive rationale and institutional grounding. U.S. foreign policy over-relies on hard power because it is the most

direct and visible source of U.S. strength. The U.S. military is the best-trained and resourced arm of the federal government. As a result, it has had to step in to fill voids, even with work better suited to civilian agencies. The military has also been a vital source of soft power. Witness the massive humanitarian operations it launched in response to the Asian tsunami and Pakistani earthquake.

The U.S. Government is still struggling to develop its soft power instruments outside of the military. Civilian institutions are not staffed or resourced properly, especially for extraordinary missions. Civilian tools are neglected in part because of the difficulty of demonstrating their short-term impact on critical challenges. Stovepiped institutional cultures inhibit joint action.

U.S. foreign policy decision-making is too fractured and compartmentalized. Many official instruments of soft power—public diplomacy, broadcasting, exchange programs, development assistance, disaster relief, diplomacy, even military-to-military contacts—are scattered throughout the government, with no overarching strategy or budget that tries to integrate them with military power into a unified national security strategy.

There is little capacity for making tradeoffs at a strategic level. The United States spends about 500 times more on the military than we do on broadcasting and exchanges. How would we know if this is the right proportion, and how would we go about making tradeoffs?

Furthermore, how should the government relate to the nonofficial generators of soft power that emanate from our civil society? This includes everything from Hollywood to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which is a private sector actor that now has the throw-weight of a government. These are some of the challenges our Commission identified and sought to address.

Distinguished Members of the Committee, we developed Smart Power in large part as a reaction to the global war on terror, a concept that we consider to be wrongheaded as an organizing premise of U.S. foreign policy. America is too great of a nation to allow our central narrative and purpose to be held captive to so narrow an idea as defeating al Qaeda. We were twice victimized by September 11—first by the attackers, and then by our own hands when we lost our national confidence and optimism and began to see the world only through the lens of terrorism.

The threat from terrorists with global reach and ambition is real and is likely to be with us for some time. When addressing the threat posed by al Qaeda and affiliated groups, we need to use hard power against the hard-core terrorists, but we cannot hope to win unless we build respect and credibility with the moderate center of Muslim societies. If the misuse of hard power creates more new terrorists than we can kill or deter, we will lose.

Similarly, when our words do not match our actions, we demean our character and moral standing and diminish our influence. We cannot lecture others about democracy while we back

dictators. We cannot denounce torture and waterboarding in other countries and condone it at home. We cannot allow Guantanamo Bay or Abu Ghraib to become symbols of American power.

The Cold War ended under a barrage of hammers on the Berlin Wall rather than a barrage of artillery across the Fulda Gap because we successfully balanced principle with pragmatism. The United States had a strategy aligned with the challenges at hand and an approach that relied on all means of national power.

This is an important lesson for the challenges we face today. Americans in their hearts may be reluctant internationalists, but they also realize that we cannot cut ourselves off from the rest of the world today. We are no longer protected by our two great oceans in the way we once were.

Foreigners will continue to look to America. The decline in American influence overseas is not likely to endure. Most want the United States to be the indispensable nation, but they look to us to put forward better ideas rather than just walk away from the table, content to play our own game.

The United States needs to rediscover how to be a smart power. Smart Power is not a panacea for solving the nation's problems, and it is not about getting the world to like us. It is essentially about renewing a type of leadership that matches vision with execution and accountability, and looks broadly at U.S. goals, strategies and influence in a changing world.

An Emerging Consensus

We believe there is a strong and growing measure of bipartisan agreement on the need for America to become a smarter power. A number of leading Americans and allies have spoken out in recent months that the United States ought to invest more heavily in modernizing our civilian tools of national power and increase the emphasis of these tools in our global strategy. The following five examples stand out:

- Secretary of Defense Robert Gates gave a major speech at Kansas State last November making the case for strengthening America's capacity to use soft power and better integrate it with hard power. Secretary Gates lamented how civilian tools that helped win the Cold War were gutted during the 1990's through Foreign Service hiring freezes, deep staff cuts at USAID, and the abolishment of the U.S. Information Agency.
- Former and current American political leaders on both sides of the aisle have endorsed the arguments behind Smart Power. This list includes notable Democrats such as Sam

Nunn, Madeleine Albright, John Edwards, and Harry Reid, and notable Republicans such as William Cohen, Frank Carlucci, Christine Todd Whitman and Newt Gingrich.

- Each of the three remaining presidential candidates have made public statements supporting strengthening some aspect of America's civilian international affairs agencies. Each has also advocated a new approach to U.S. foreign policy in which we lead by attraction rather than primarily by virtue of hard power.
- Military leaders have been some of the most active in calling for a Smart Power approach to U.S. foreign policy. In addition to General Zinni and Admiral Smith's testimony before this Committee on behalf of 52 retired generals and admirals, former CENTCOM Commander General John Abizaid and SOUTHCOM Commander James Stravridis have both endorsed elements of the Commission's findings. Combatant Commanders have their war plans, but they also recognize that much of how they engage today requires soft power as they try to shape their environments in favor of peace and stability.
- German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier told an American audience last week that Smart Power is George Marshall's vision in a nutshell, and precisely what we need today to repair the trans-Atlantic relationship and better serve the world's interests.

There are many others who have spoken out in favor of Smart Power who are not included in this brief listing. It is clear to us that there is something attractive about the pragmatic, common-sense approach of our Commission's findings that appeals to Republicans and Democrats alike.

We recognize that there are also others who may oppose our vision, whether because they stand committed to the grand strategy of the past seven years, doubt that civilian institutions and our allies abroad can keep us safe, or simply expect the next president to demand less of our foreign policy instruments. There are also some, including distinguished members of this Committee, who have voiced frustrations at the slow pace of translating the ideas behind Smart Power into concrete action.

We share the sense of urgency in moving from rhetoric to action, and realize that if America is to become a smarter power, this agenda will have to be taken on jointly by the next administration and Congress alike.

From Rhetoric to Action

It is our view that the emerging consensus on the idea of Smart Power must move in the coming months toward greater agreement on a specific Agenda for Change. Numerous commissions, task forces, and experts continue to provide their blueprints for how to build and modernize

America's civilian tools and make the United States a smarter power abroad. This activity is a welcome sign of a rising tide, but there is also a danger that divergent visions on how to implement Smart Power could unhinge momentum that has accumulated in support of the basic concept and rationale.

We will outline a few of the strategic priorities our Commission identified, including those recommendations that concerned specific instruments and institutions of the U.S. Government. Neither our Commission nor the two of us, however, hold the golden key. It may well be that recommendations emerging from likeminded initiatives such as those you will hear on the next panel may prove to have more lasting impact. The critical task is moving toward a set of feasible action items that can be taken up by the next administration, whether Republican or Democratic in the months ahead.

First, the next president should create a deputy national security adviser who is “double-hatted” as a deputy at the Office of Management and Budget.

- The various tools available to the U.S. government are spread among multiple agencies and bureaus. There is no level of government, short of the President, where these programs and resources come together.
- The national security adviser is swept up in the urgent challenges of unfolding crises and lacks the ability to focus on long-term strategy development or manage interagency trade-offs.
- This “smart power” deputy should be charged with developing and managing a strategic framework for planning policies and allocating resources, working closely with relevant Congressional committees.
- The smart power deputy should lead a process parallel to the Quadrennial Defense Review for the civilian tools of national power that conducts a systematic and comprehensive assessment of goals, strategies, and plans.

Second, the next administration should request and Congress should resource a personnel “float” for civilian agencies that allows for increased training and professional development.

- The Defense Department is able to sustain a far superior process for leadership education because it routinely budgets for 10 percent more military officers than there are jobs for them in operational assignments.
- This ‘float’ permits the military to send its officers to leadership development programs, to work as detailees in other agencies to broaden their professional experiences and judgment, and to meet unforeseen contingencies. Civilian agencies have not budgeted a comparable personnel float.
- The next president should increase the number of Foreign Service Personnel serving in the Department of State by more than 1,000 and consider further expansions in other relevant civilian agencies.

Third, the next administration should strengthen civilian agency coordination and expeditionary presence on a regional basis.

- Civilian government agencies do not have a regional command structure comparable to the Department of Defense. As a result, this prevents the development of regional strategies that integrate interagency operations on a regional basis.
- The next president should empower the senior State Department ambassadors known as “political advisors” or POLADs assigned to advise regional military commanders a dual authority to head a regional interagency consultation council comprising representatives from all other federal agencies that have field operations in those regions.
- Congress and OMB should work to provide the State Department resources to support these regional coordination councils.
- The next administration should request and Congress should fund increases in the number of civilian personnel able to participate in regional expeditionary missions, such as through the pending Civilian Stabilization Initiative.

Fourth, the next administration should strengthen America’s commitment to a new multilateralism.

- America needs the United Nations, but we need a better one than we have at present. The United Nations could play an active role in promoting American interests in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, counterterrorism, global health, and energy and climate.
- The U.S. alliance system negotiated during the last half century consists of nearly 100 formal treaty arrangements and security commitments. Rather than view these agreements as hindrances to American action, the next president ought to view this alliance network as a force multiplier.
- For decades, America has been the global champion of legal norms and standards. The United States directly benefits from a strengthened international legal order. At those times, though, when treaties are objectionable, the United States can justify stepping back but not walking away.
- The main institutional architecture absent today is an effective forum for coordinating global strategic thinking on a set of specific practical challenges. The G-8 could spin off a series of yearly meetings on energy and climate, nonproliferation, global health, education, and the world economy.

Fifth, the next administration should elevate and unify its approach to global development by creating a cabinet-level voice.

- The next president should task the smart power deputy to work with the cabinet secretaries to develop a coherent management structure and institutional plan within the first three months of office for creating a cabinet-level voice for development.
- The Commission on Smart Power heard a range of arguments for how to organize this aspect of our civilian capacity. Disagreement centers around the degree of integration that will best serve American interests and the priority placed on effective development.

Some have called for a Department of Global Development while others have promoted the creation of a “super-State” Department of Foreign Affairs. Ultimately, we concluded that a cabinet-level voice for global development was important for putting forward a more positive face of the United States to the world.

- This new cabinet official should take the lead on launching new, high-profile global public health initiatives, building on successful Bush Administration and private sector efforts. These could include developing a global health network and bringing safe drinking water and sanitation to every person in the world.

Sixth, the next administration and Congress should encourage greater autonomy, coherence and effectiveness for U.S. public diplomacy and strategic communication efforts.

- Reviving USIA may not be the most practical option at present. The next administration should strengthen our resource commitment to public diplomacy and consider what institutional remedies in addition to capable leadership could help make U.S. public diplomacy efforts most effective.
- One possibility the next administration should consider is the establishment of an autonomous organization charged with public diplomacy and reporting directly to the secretary of state. This quasi-independent entity would be responsible for the full range of government public diplomacy initiatives, including those formerly conducted by USIA.
- Congress should create and fund a new institution outside of government that could help tap into expertise in the private and nonprofit sectors to improve U.S. strategic communication from an outside-in approach. As the Defense Science Board has suggested, this center could conduct independent polling, research and analysis on U.S. Government priorities; promote a dialogue of ideas through mutual exchanges; and shape communications campaigns to help shape foreign attitudes. The center should have an independent board that could serve as a “heat shield” from near-term political pressures.
- Effective public diplomacy must include exchanges of ideas, peoples and information through person-to-person educational and cultural exchanges, often referred to as citizen diplomacy. The next administration should expand successful exchange and education programs, including doubling the size of the Fulbright program.

Seventh, the next administration should shape an economy flexible and competitive enough to deliver economic benefits while minimizing the human cost of adjusting to economic dislocation.

- International trade has been a critical ingredient to U.S. economic growth and prosperity. The next administration should seek to create a free trade core within the WTO, negotiating a plurilateral agreement among those WTO members willing to move directly to free trade on a global basis. While consensus within the full WTO remains the goal, and could potentially be reached in some areas within the coming months, in many cases

it is not realistic. The next administration should seek to lock in a minimum measure of global trade liberalization.

- There is no doubt the benefits of trade are not evenly distributed—within a nation or across nations. The next president should exercise U.S. influence in international financial institutions to direct the efforts of these organizations toward aiding poorer countries that face the inevitable adjustment issues that come with the opening of markets. We should also reexamine our own trade policies toward these nations. The next administration should fundamentally reform trade adjustment assistance to facilitate the reentry of American workers who lose their jobs.
- Global competition today is less for markets and more for capital, talent and ideas. Half of all patents issued in 2006 were of foreign origin. The United States must do more to prepare itself for increasing economic competition.

Eighth, the next administration and Congress must make addressing climate change and energy insecurity more than just a political catch phrase by creating incentives for U.S. innovation.

- A world operating on different sets of rules and costs associated with carbon dioxide emissions could have disruptive implications for trade, energy security, competitiveness, and economic growth. The next administration should create a level playing field to underpin the carbon-constrained economy. It should work with Congress to place an economic value of greenhouse gas emissions via a mechanism that sends clear, long-term price signals for industry.
- As world energy demand continues to rise, the next administration must reduce demand through improved efficiency, diversify energy suppliers and fuel choices, and manage geopolitics in resource-rich areas that currently account for the majority of our imports. The next administration should take the lead within international institutions to establish a common principles charter for energy security and sustainability. The charter should outline sound energy policies and practices, including protection of sea lanes and critical infrastructure; investment-friendly regulatory and legal frameworks that respect sovereign rights of resource holders; and promote regular dialogues between producers and consumers to improve information sharing.
- The next administration and Congress should establish and fund a joint technology development center. International collaboration helps reduce costs and accelerate the pace of innovation. The U.S. Department of Energy in partnership with major global energy companies should establish 10-year endowment for funding energy and technology related research. This could be administered by an international consortium of the National Science Foundation and equivalents and disburse grants through a peer review process to researchers to provide venture capital to develop and deploy next generation energy technologies, such as biofuels.

Ninth, American leaders ought to eliminate the symbols that have come to represent the image of an intolerant, abusive, unjust America, and use our diplomatic power for positive ends.

- Closing the Guantanamo Bay detention center is an obvious starting point and should lead to a broader rejection of torture and prisoner abuse. Guantanamo's very existence undermines America's ability to carry forth a message of principled optimism and hope. Although closing Guantanamo presents practical, legal and political obstacles, these constraints are surmountable if it is a priority for American leadership. Planning for its closure should begin before the next president takes office.
- The next administration should continue to expend political capital to end the corrosive effect of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The United States must resume its traditional role as an effective broker for peace in the Middle East. We cannot want peace more than the parties themselves, but we cannot be indifferent to the widespread suffering this conflict perpetuates and passionate feelings it arouses on all sides.
- Effective American mediation confers global legitimacy and is a vital source of smart power.

Tenth, the next Administration should not fall into a new Cold War struggle to compete with and contain Chinese soft power.

- China's soft power is likely to continue to grow, but this does not necessarily mean that Washington and Beijing are on a collision course, fighting for global influence.
- The next president should seek to identify areas of mutual interest between the United States and China on which the two powers can work together on a smart power agenda.
- Energy security and environmental stewardship top that list, along with other transnational issues such as public health and non-proliferation. Global leadership does not have to be a zero-sum game.

Mr. Chairman, we would both be happy to go into more detail on our Commission's recommendations or discuss our personal views on these matters during our oral testimony. Thank you again for the opportunity to sit before you today.