



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

America is strongest when our optimism, integrity, ideals, and innovation are a model for the world. History has taught us that we lead most effectively by our example at home, and by our commitment to advancing collective security, shared prosperity, and human dignity through diplomacy and development around the world.

The pace and scale of transformations today provide unprecedented opportunities for America and the world, as well as shared challenges to peace, prosperity, and dignity. The diffusion of power between and beyond nations marks a fundamental shift in our geopolitical environment, with far-reaching implications for how we partner and promote U.S. interests. Seismic shifts in the sophistication and volume of information, coupled with wider access to smart phones and other tools of technology, rival the economic and social transformations of the Industrial Revolution. The scale and scope of transnational challenges demand innovation in how we engage other governments – and those outside of government – and how we strengthen and modernize a robust, credible, and responsive multilateral system. These advances present great opportunities for individual empowerment, innovation, and interconnectedness, but also new disruptions and threats.



Secretary Kerry delivers remarks at the public launch of the QDDR on April 22, 2014. The Secretary is joined by (left to right) Special Representative Thomas Perriello, former USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah, and Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Heather Higginbottom.

The global energy revolution is bringing electricity to millions, while at the same time climate change exacerbates our greatest vulnerabilities. A global middle class is growing exponentially as education, stability, and prosperity increase. Yet inequality, corruption, autocracy, and environmental degradation threaten to destabilize, dehumanize, and deflate that growth. We have seen great advances in public health and life expectancy, due in part to our signature development initiatives, but gaps remain, particularly in fragile states and in places where poor governance undermines these gains and increases the risk of pandemics and violent conflict.

American diplomacy and development are crucial to ensuring that this century will be defined by the opportunities rather than the threats that these forces present. At this moment U.S. diplomats and development professionals are leading the way in confronting challenges to regional orders in the Asia-Pacific, Europe, and the Middle East. We continue implementing our strategic rebalance to Asia and the Pacific, and are deepening our partnerships with countries in the region.

We are mobilizing dynamic partnerships to confront new interconnected challenges, from climate change and extreme poverty to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the failure of state institutions. We are building the broad coalitions necessary to defeat ISIL in the Middle East and counter Russian aggression against Ukraine. We are leading interagency and international teams that combat threats posed by global pandemics, violent conflict, and new weapons technologies. We are helping define a new set of UN development goals while working to ensure that the impact of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa does not set those countries back.

We are galvanizing global action to strengthen UN and regional peacekeeping, and to sharpen the tools that we use to prevent and mitigate conflict. We are working with our partners in Central America to strengthen civilian security partnerships and address the root causes of outward migration through a new strategy for regional engagement that will improve security, governance, and prosperity in an integrated manner. We are deepening diplomatic relations with Asia, Latin America, and Europe as we set the world's highest standards for labor rights and environmental protection through the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Transatlantic Trade

and Investment Partnership (T-TIP), which will put the United States at the center of a free trade zone covering two-thirds of the global economy. In all our efforts we are aided immeasurably by the alliances we have built worldwide and by our partners in NATO and other treaty organizations.

Every day we represent the American people abroad: building relationships with individuals, businesses, and organizations; promoting resilient, democratic societies; influencing outcomes; and making the world safer, more prosperous, and free.

THE QUADRENNIAL DIPLOMACY AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

Undertaken by the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the 2015 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) process reflects our commitment to review our work and profession, innovate constantly, and adapt to new challenges in a rapidly changing world. It is the product of more than a year of extensive internal and external consultations with all stakeholders, including members of Congress and their staffs, our allies around the world, advocates in the NGO community, and opinion leaders at think tanks and universities.

Secretary Kerry directed that this review focus on priority reforms that are crucial to enhancing the effectiveness, agility, and innovative spirit of U.S. diplomacy and development – and American leadership – in a time of dynamic challenges and great opportunities. Pursuing these priorities and reforms will ensure that American diplomatic and development efforts are better able to advance U.S. interests and priorities as articulated in the 2015 National Security Strategy. Toward that end, it builds on the foundation of the first QDDR, completed in 2010, which provided a comprehensive review of our diplomatic and development capabilities, advanced the role of rigorous strategic planning in all elements of civilian power, and emphasized a whole-of-government approach to foreign policy.

The 2010 QDDR elevated development as an equal pillar of American foreign policy and affirmed the role of USAID as the government's lead development agency. As part of a broad agenda, it also emphasized the role of economic development, made civilian security a focus for the State Department, and reiterated the central importance to all our efforts of engaging and advancing women and girls. We are making significant additional improvements consistent with the emphasis in the 2010 QDDR on energy diplomacy, cyber policy, counterterrorism, and economic statecraft. With a limited set of priority reforms, the 2015 QDDR builds on the progress achieved through the inaugural review and its ongoing implementation [See Appendix: 2010 QDDR Overview and Update].

The 2015 QDDR reviews the steps we have taken and previews where we need to go to place America in the strongest possible position to face the challenges and seize the opportunities of tomorrow. That is why the QDDR focuses on four cross-cutting areas throughout the report:

Increasing our partnerships and engaging beyond the nation-state. America's global alliances and partnerships have never been stronger, and increasing our cooperation with like-minded nations remains a pillar of our diplomacy and development. Yet America's contributions and influence are not limited to formal cooperation with governments and international and regional organizations. In an era of diffuse and networked power, and with federal funding constrained, our diplomats and development professionals must focus on strengthening partnerships with civil society, citizen movements, faith leaders, entrepreneurs, innovators, and others who share our interests and values. For example, partnerships with mayors will be increasingly important, as nearly 60 percent of the world's population will live in urban environments by 2030. While traditional diplomacy will be needed to produce a historic global framework on climate change, our diplomats and development professionals must also engage mayors, governors, chief executive officers, faith leaders, scientists, and engineers to find climate solutions. We will work with civil society groups to promote democracy and good governance and address gender-based violence; partner with local communities vulnerable to violent extremism;

and collaborate with all sectors and levels of government to find innovative solutions to our most pressing challenges. We will expand our leadership at the United Nations and in other international organizations, which are increasingly central to our responses to transnational challenges.

Focusing on improving governance. Governance affects the security and interests of the United States and our allies around the world. We know from experience that a lack of pluralism, transparency, and democracy exacerbates instability and violent extremism, suffocates inclusive economic growth, and is inconsistent with the advancement of human rights. Corrupt and poorly governed states often lack the capacity to take on shared international challenges such as addressing pandemics, effectively mitigating the causes or impacts of climate change, and helping with regional peacekeeping efforts. Societies that allow citizens a say and a stake in their success are more stable, prosperous, and secure. Consequently, we will be partners with those nations and individuals committed to the difficult work of building strong, democratic governance, sharing in the responsibilities of collective security, and adhering to international norms and standards.

Managing and mitigating physical risk. The Department and USAID will ensure that we continue to balance our values and interests with the inherent risks of 21st-century diplomacy and development. We will encourage a broad dialogue on physical risk with the Executive and Legislative branches and beyond, recognizing that we cannot stop all threats. In consultation with Congress, our interagency partners, and other stakeholders, we will seek ways to streamline operations and increase flexibility in dangerous environments, and we will implement the Department's risk-management policy. Additionally, we will continue to develop skilled, professional leaders and managers with the judgment to make tough calls and to trust their people to do the same.

Enhancing the use of data, diagnostics, and technology. In a world of information saturation, effective diplomacy and development require smart investments in the technology, knowledge management, and diagnostics that allow us to leverage data. The steps outlined in this report focus on everything from better application of data for crisis prevention and inclusive growth to greater accountability for strategic planning and programs. To strengthen information capabilities and integration, the Department will establish a multi-disciplinary hub for analytics, data science, strategy, and knowledge management.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Building on the 2015 National Security Strategy, this QDDR continues the work of the 2014 Joint Strategic Plan for the State Department and USAID, which focuses on achieving measurable progress by 2017 in economic diplomacy, global security, climate change and energy, democracy and human rights promotion, and modernizing diplomacy and development. Specifically, the QDDR focuses on four global policy priorities for the State Department and USAID:

Preventing and Mitigating Conflict and Violent Extremism. We outline steps to enhance our capacity to prevent and mitigate conflict, and to place greater emphasis on prevention within our broader effort to counter violent extremism. We will:

- **Expand prevention efforts to counter violent extremism.** The State Department and USAID will work with other agencies and multilateral partners to strengthen U.S. counterterrorism and CVE efforts by focusing more on prevention and tackling the drivers of violent extremism. Our approach places a premium on partnering with host governments, supporting vulnerable communities, and challenging extremist messaging.
- **Strengthen our ability to prevent and respond to internal conflict, atrocities, and fragility.** We will work with other departments and agencies to finalize and implement a strategic framework for fragile states. We will invest more in conflict prevention, develop a planning process that will be triggered when crises emerge, and provide personnel and support to specified countries of concern.

Promoting Open, Resilient, and Democratic Societies. Good governance underpins the long-term success of our foreign policy objectives. In many places around the world, however, the space for democratic

expression and fundamental freedoms is closing due to the rise in autocracy, and state capture by criminal organizations. We will:

- **Bolster support for democracy, human rights and governance.** We will continue to invest in democracy, human rights and governance initiatives, and capacity-building as a strategic priority. We will build on successful global initiatives, such as the Open Government Partnership and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.
- **Expand anti-corruption initiatives.** In collaboration with the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security, we will expand our partnerships with other nations to improve their capacity to target corruption and bribery, increase enforcement, and manage the inevitable reaction from those who profit from corruption.
- **Strengthen support of civil society and protect an open Internet.** We will strengthen our efforts to empower civil society, push back against expanding restraints on freedom of association and assembly, and protect an open Internet in restrictive environments.
- **Deepen partnerships and defend human rights.** We will continue our commitment to the protection of human rights. We will heighten our defense of marginalized individuals and groups, and expand outreach to groups and communities that share our goals on governance issues and other foreign policy challenges. Our efforts in this area will include working with other agencies to promote effective security sector governance.

Advancing Inclusive Economic Growth. Secretary Kerry has stated that foreign policy is economic policy. We are committed to advancing that vision and to reinforcing existing efforts to meet global development goals. We will:

- **Prioritize inclusive economic growth.** The Department will advance the Shared Prosperity Agenda, and USAID will continue working with our allies to end extreme poverty through a new model of development. Our strategies emphasize sustained inclusive economic growth, which promotes political and economic stability and expands the middle class worldwide. Inclusive growth does not simply add to a nation's GDP; it decreases youth unemployment and wealth inequality, promotes gender equality, increases access to electricity, provides pathways out of poverty, and increases government accountability. With the international rules-based system now competing against alternative, less-open models, we will work to ensure that tomorrow's global economy is defined by a race to the top, not a race to the bottom.
- **Enhance economic leadership and expertise.** We will strengthen economic leadership in regional bureaus, better align our overseas economic assignments with the skills of our people, and increase opportunities for internal and external assignments that will deepen our staff's economic expertise.
- **Improve our use of data and diagnostics.** Data and economic diagnostic tools will play a greater role in policy and decision-making, planning, monitoring and evaluation, and program development.

Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change. The 2015 National Security Strategy identifies the effects of climate change as a threat to our national security, and addressing this threat is a top priority for the Department and USAID. We will:

- **Strengthen climate diplomacy and development.** We will deploy greater expertise in addressing climate change and promoting clean-energy-technology solutions at priority posts, strengthen climate expertise in the Department's regional bureaus, and direct all Department and USAID bureaus and offices to designate personnel to serve as climate leaders.
- **Strengthen staff understanding of and engagement in climate issues.** We will educate all of our staff on climate-related issues, incorporating climate-related knowledge into the core competencies for Department and USAID officers.

- **Integrate climate change into all of our diplomacy and development efforts.** We will accelerate the integration of climate change mitigation and resilience throughout our policy, programming, and operations, including the development of systems to assess and adjust for climate change impacts in compliance with Executive Order 13677 on Climate-Resilient International Development.
- **Designate critical countries for in-depth climate engagement.** We will intensify our engagement with countries that are the most vulnerable to climate-related challenges, with those that have key roles to play in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and with those that can influence neighboring countries to meet international climate goals.
- **Expand climate and clean energy diplomacy beyond capitals.** We will complement crucial climate negotiations between nation-states with direct engagement with mayors, governors, faith leaders, women’s groups, and business leaders. We will seek their support in making commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The initiatives and reforms in these four areas will not only improve critical Department and USAID capabilities, but will reinforce progress on a broader range of priorities that advance the 2015 National Security Strategy. For example, progress toward sustained and inclusive economic growth will reinforce political stability and strengthen our efforts to deepen integration in the Western Hemisphere. Our efforts to address corruption and climate change will help bolster fragile states, assisting our efforts to counter violent extremism and enhance the stability of critical regions like the Middle East and North Africa. In pursuing these reforms, the Department and USAID will uphold America’s interest in peace, prosperity, and dignity—at home and abroad.

BUILDING DYNAMIC ORGANIZATIONS

In a world of complex threats, dynamic opportunities, and diffuse power, effective diplomacy and development require institutions that adapt, embrace technology, and allow for experimentation to ensure continuous learning. Based on an extensive review of operations at the Department and USAID, this QDDR outlines a series of improvements that will strengthen our ability to advance America’s interests. These improvements include:

Harnessing Knowledge, Data, and Technology

Making progress on U.S. policy priorities will require a data-driven, evidence-based approach. The amount, availability, and variability of data is expanding exponentially, and it has the potential to inform us about a range of issues, including conflict dynamics, state fragility, corruption, popular opinion, and climate change. The Department and USAID need to take better advantage of this growth in information. To use data more effectively, we will:

- **Implement a knowledge management strategy at the Department.** This comprehensive strategy for sharing and integrating information, and continuously updating our technology, will encourage the use of data science in making decisions and evaluating their impact.
- **Establish a Development Information Solution at USAID.** This comprehensive solution will harness data for decision-making, improve efficiencies across the entire program cycle, and connect management information from strategy to results.
- **Establish a hub for analytics, data science, strategy, and knowledge management at the Department.** We will bring together the best available resources in a scalable, entrepreneurial start-up environment to solve complex problems. This hub will connect existing policy and regional expertise with advanced technical capabilities, such as diagnostics, data analysis, and design. It will integrate data from all sources (not just from within the Department, but from other government agencies and non-governmental sources) and increase the flow of information between our offices, bureaus, and overseas posts.

- **Expand Open Data opportunities.** The Department and USAID will continue to implement President Obama's Open Data policy, increasing the data resources that are available to the public and to our diplomatic and development professionals.

Promoting Innovation. Innovation and programmatic risk-taking require constant experimentation, learning, and iteration. We must foster a culture of success that leverages and scales up our best practices, while treating setbacks as opportunities to develop better solutions. We will:

- **Support creative problem-solving.** We will foster a culture of engagement and experimentation, rather than risk avoidance. We will use data more strategically to shape policy development and evaluations, and experiment with systems thinking and human-centered design.
- **Institutionalize policy to encourage innovation while managing risk.** We will provide our employees with the guidance and tools to allow for innovation, while identifying, analyzing, mitigating, and monitoring the risk inherent to our policies and programs. One of the objectives of the Department's risk-management policy is to foster an environment that encourages programmatic innovation.
- **Capture and communicate lessons learned.** We will increase our capacity to monitor and evaluate our work and to produce timely lessons-learned analysis.

Managing and Mitigating Physical Risk. Risk is an inherent part of our work. We will take a realistic and balanced approach to physical risk as we continue to serve in dangerous and challenging overseas environments. We will:

- **Undertake a broad dialogue on physical risk.** Led by the Secretary and other top officials, we will launch a discussion with Congress and the American people about the realities of risk in our work and the need for greater risk-tolerance.
- **Optimize policy and program execution in complex, dangerous environments.** A special State Department and USAID team will review past and current operations in dangerous environments to inform policies and programs, and determine obstacles and lessons learned. In consultation with Congress, U.S. government agencies, and other stakeholders, the team will explore ways to streamline operations and increase flexibility in dangerous environments.
- **Implement a standard approach for managing and mitigating risk.** We will provide leaders and employees with a consistent approach to making decisions in the face of challenging, fluid, and unclear circumstances, while recognizing that there are no one-size-fits-all solutions. This must be an iterative process between posts and Washington.

Advancing Strategic Planning and Performance Management. Sound planning and data-use will improve our decisions, thereby maximizing the impact of our resources. We will:

- **Strengthen information-sharing and collaboration.** We will increase information-sharing and coordination, and work together to achieve the objectives in our strategies. Department bureaus and offices will increase integration of strategic planning, budget planning and execution, program and project management, grants management, and performance monitoring and evaluation.
- **Institute senior-level bureau and mission reviews.** These regular reviews will assess progress toward strategic objectives and ensure alignment of policy, planning, resources, and program decision-making.
- **Deepen expertise in planning and performance management.** Department bureaus will use planning and performance management experts to ensure continuity for their efforts in those areas, including monitoring and evaluation. We will develop a training program to build expertise in strategic planning, budgeting, project management, and monitoring and evaluation at all career levels, for both Foreign Service and Civil Service personnel.

- **Advance adaptive planning and assistance.** We will ensure that our strategic planning is flexible and tailored to complex and difficult environments.

Engaging Americans as Partners in Foreign Affairs. More than ever, American leadership abroad demands the active engagement of nearly every sector of our society, economy, and culture. The 2010 QDDR called for a “whole-of-government” approach to foreign policy. This QDDR expands that concept to a “whole-of-America” approach, empowering the American people as “citizen diplomats” to engage with a world that is increasingly interconnected. Our principle is simple: in today’s globalized world, it isn’t only about what the State Department and USAID can do for the American people. It is also about what the American people can do for U.S. foreign policy. We will:

- **Increase engagement with diaspora communities, faith-based groups, and others.** We will expand our partnerships with American citizens, institutions, and businesses to advance a more secure, prosperous, and just world. We will expand engagement with diaspora communities, faith-based groups, and other civic organizations.
- **Reach students and civic leaders through the “Engage America” program.** Every Foreign Service employee in the Department and USAID will be expected to engage with the American people on the value of diplomacy and development. We will reinvigorate our Hometown Diplomat program, emphasizing virtual connections and a broad reach. We will continue efforts to develop online content that teachers can use to explain global issues, foreign cultures, and the role of diplomacy and development.

INVESTING IN AN AGILE, SKILLED WORKFORCE

In managing crises, promoting long-term stability, and meeting other challenges, our most valuable resource is the dedicated workforce of the State Department and USAID. To ensure that we maintain the world’s premier diplomatic and development corps, and that our people are prepared not only for the world we currently face but also for emerging trends, we have identified opportunities to improve the agility of our workforce, their opportunities for continuous career learning, and their resiliency and capacity to serve.

Increasing Agility. The missions of the State Department and USAID require us to match the people with the right skills to the right task, at the right time and place. We will:

- **Increase our ability to quickly fill positions.** We will improve our procedures for identifying staffing gaps, locating expertise or additional staff, and quickly bringing in staff to fill positions left temporarily vacant, while ensuring that our existing staff is appropriately placed to advance our priorities. We will also maximize our use of current hiring mechanisms and identify new opportunities to accelerate the hiring process.
- **Make the most of our talent and expertise.** We will capitalize on the skills of all of our people. For example, we will reward senior Civil Service employees, create new avenues for their career development, and fully tap the potential of locally employed staff at our missions.

Investing in a Skilled, Diverse Workforce Ready to Lead. To ensure that the next generation of American diplomats and development experts is as strong as the last, we will continue to recruit, develop, and retain a workforce of highly talented individuals with a commitment to public service. We will:

- **Expand the core curriculum and invest in training.** The Department will develop a core curriculum to give Foreign Service employees deeper knowledge of the fundamentals of diplomacy. Both the Department and USAID will increase investments in training and will modernize and integrate that training into daily work.
- **Train and support effective, accountable leaders.** We will strengthen leadership and accountability at all levels. For example, we will include enhanced training and coaching for managers, starting early in their careers, and develop more effective feedback and assessment tools.

- **Increase and encourage long-term training and excursion tours.** We will provide additional opportunities for employees to take outside-the-agency assignments and to receive long-term training that develops expertise and fresh perspectives.
- **Increase the diversity of our workforce.** We will build on efforts to recruit and retain a workforce that represents the diversity of our nation.
- **Increase tours in State Department functional bureaus.** The Department will strengthen the integration of its regional and functional bureaus through steps such as encouraging Foreign Service Officers to seek tours in functional bureaus.

Taking Care of Our People: We take work-life balance seriously and will continue to support our employees as they balance their commitment to service with personal wellness and family life. Work-life balance is critical to retaining the best talent. It also is integral to the mission of the Department and USAID, given the round-the-clock nature of foreign affairs, the security concerns and restrictions at posts, and the significant personal sacrifices that our staff and their families are often asked to make. We will:

- **Support those who face the greatest risks.** We will make sure that employees and families who serve at dangerous posts—as well as those who face stresses and challenges at any post—receive the best possible support. They deserve this before, during, and after the assignment.
- **Ensure wellness and work-life balance for our people.** We are determined to make work-life wellness our cultural norm. We will expect managers to enable their employees to strike a healthy balance between work and their personal lives.
- **Pilot extended leave options for employees to meet educational and family needs.** We will pilot a career sabbatical option for Foreign Service and Civil Service employees.
- **Expand opportunities for eligible family members.** We will provide eligible family members, many of whom are pursuing their own careers, with greater assistance in locating relevant employment.

This QDDR outlines a set of strategic priorities and internal reforms as logical steps in a continuous process of learning and improvement. Next comes the difficult work of implementing this plan, with a particular focus on accelerating efforts already underway to advance our diplomatic and development priorities. All elements of the Department and USAID, as well as our partners at home and abroad, will be part of driving progress in these

areas. Where reforms can be made with existing resources, we will proceed. Where additional resources are required, we will work with Congress on a roadmap to reallocate and match resources with priorities.

We stand strong today as a nation because previous generations dared to think about the world not just as it was, but as it might be—and then chose to prepare for that world. With this QDDR, we aim to meet that same standard of leadership. 



Participants in the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders listen as U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry speaks at the Presidential Summit of the Washington Fellowship in Washington, D.C., on July 28, 2014.

