



[America's Pacific Century](#)

The future of politics will be decided in Asia, not Afghanistan or Iraq, and the United States will be right at the center of the action.

BY HILLARY CLINTON | [NOVEMBER 2011](#)

As the war in Iraq winds down and America begins to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan, the United States stands at a pivot point. Over the last 10 years, we have allocated immense resources to those two theaters. In the next 10 years, we need to be smart and systematic about where we invest time and energy, so that we put ourselves in the best position to sustain our leadership, secure our interests, and advance our values. One of the most important tasks of American statecraft over the next decade will therefore be to lock in a substantially increased investment -- diplomatic, economic, strategic, and otherwise -- in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Asia-Pacific has become a key driver of global politics. Stretching from the Indian subcontinent to the western shores of the Americas, the region spans two oceans -- the Pacific and the Indian -- that are increasingly linked by shipping and strategy. It boasts almost half the world's population. It includes many of the key engines of the global economy, as well as the largest emitters of greenhouse gases. It is home to several of our key allies and important emerging powers like China, India, and Indonesia.

At a time when the region is building a more mature security and economic architecture to promote stability and prosperity, U.S. commitment there is essential. It will help build that architecture and pay dividends for continued American leadership well into this century, just as our post-World War II commitment to building a comprehensive and lasting transatlantic network of institutions and relationships has paid off many times over -- and continues to do so. The time has come for the United States to make similar investments as a Pacific power, a strategic course set by President Barack Obama from the outset of his administration and one that is already yielding benefits.

With Iraq and Afghanistan still in transition and serious economic challenges in our own country, there are those on the American political scene who are calling for us not to reposition, but to come home. They seek a downsizing of our foreign engagement in favor of our pressing

domestic priorities. These impulses are understandable, but they are misguided. Those who say that we can no longer afford to engage with the world have it exactly backward -- we cannot afford not to. From opening new markets for American businesses to curbing nuclear proliferation to keeping the sea lanes free for commerce and navigation, our work abroad holds the key to our prosperity and security at home. For more than six decades, the United States has resisted the gravitational pull of these "come home" debates and the implicit zero-sum logic of these arguments. We must do so again.

Beyond our borders, people are also wondering about America's intentions -- our willingness to remain engaged and to lead. In Asia, they ask whether we are really there to stay, whether we are likely to be distracted again by events elsewhere, whether we can make -- and keep -- credible economic and strategic commitments, and whether we can back those commitments with action. The answer is: We can, and we will.

Harnessing Asia's growth and dynamism is central to American economic and strategic interests and a key priority for President Obama. Open markets in Asia provide the United States with unprecedented opportunities for investment, trade, and access to cutting-edge technology. Our economic recovery at home will depend on exports and the ability of American firms to tap into the vast and growing consumer base of Asia. Strategically, maintaining peace and security across the Asia-Pacific is increasingly crucial to global progress, whether through defending freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, countering the proliferation efforts of North Korea, or ensuring transparency in the military activities of the region's key players.

Just as Asia is critical to America's future, an engaged America is vital to Asia's future. The region is eager for our leadership and our business -- perhaps more so than at any time in modern history. We are the only power with a network of strong alliances in the region, no territorial ambitions, and a long record of providing for the common good. Along with our allies, we have underwritten regional security for decades -- patrolling Asia's sea lanes and preserving stability -- and that in turn has helped create the conditions for growth. We have helped integrate billions of people across the region into the global economy by spurring economic productivity, social empowerment, and greater people-to-people links. We are a major trade and investment partner, a source of innovation that benefits workers and businesses on both sides of the Pacific, a host to 350,000 Asian students every year, a champion of open markets, and an advocate for universal human rights.

President Obama has led a multifaceted and persistent effort to embrace fully our irreplaceable role in the Pacific, spanning the entire U.S. government. It has often been a quiet effort. A lot of our work has not been on the front pages, both because of its nature -- long-term investment is less exciting than immediate crises -- and because of competing headlines in other parts of the world.

As secretary of state, I broke with tradition and embarked on my first official overseas trip to Asia. In my seven trips since, I have had the privilege to see firsthand the rapid transformations taking place in the region, underscoring how much the future of the United States is intimately intertwined with the future of the Asia-Pacific. A strategic turn to the region fits logically into our overall global effort to secure and sustain America's global leadership. The success of this

turn requires maintaining and advancing a bipartisan consensus on the importance of the Asia-Pacific to our national interests; we seek to build upon a strong tradition of engagement by presidents and secretaries of state of both parties across many decades. It also requires smart execution of a coherent regional strategy that accounts for the global implications of our choices.

WHAT DOES THAT regional strategy look like? For starters, it calls for a sustained commitment to what I have called "forward-deployed" diplomacy. That means continuing to dispatch the full range of our diplomatic assets -- including our highest-ranking officials, our development experts, our interagency teams, and our permanent assets -- to every country and corner of the Asia-Pacific region. Our strategy will have to keep accounting for and adapting to the rapid and dramatic shifts playing out across Asia. With this in mind, our work will proceed along six key lines of action: strengthening bilateral security alliances; deepening our working relationships with emerging powers, including with China; engaging with regional multilateral institutions; expanding trade and investment; forging a broad-based military presence; and advancing democracy and human rights.

By virtue of our unique geography, the United States is both an Atlantic and a Pacific power. We are proud of our European partnerships and all that they deliver. Our challenge now is to build a web of partnerships and institutions across the Pacific that is as durable and as consistent with American interests and values as the web we have built across the Atlantic. That is the touchstone of our efforts in all these areas.

Our treaty alliances with Japan, South Korea, Australia, the Philippines, and Thailand are the fulcrum for our strategic turn to the Asia-Pacific. They have underwritten regional peace and security for more than half a century, shaping the environment for the region's remarkable economic ascent. They leverage our regional presence and enhance our regional leadership at a time of evolving security challenges.

As successful as these alliances have been, we can't afford simply to sustain them -- we need to update them for a changing world. In this effort, the Obama administration is guided by three core principles. First, we have to maintain political consensus on the core objectives of our alliances. Second, we have to ensure that our alliances are nimble and adaptive so that they can successfully address new challenges and seize new opportunities. Third, we have to guarantee that the defense capabilities and communications infrastructure of our alliances are operationally and materially capable of deterring provocation from the full spectrum of state and nonstate actors.

The alliance with Japan, the cornerstone of peace and stability in the region, demonstrates how the Obama administration is giving these principles life. We share a common vision of a stable regional order with clear rules of the road -- from freedom of navigation to open markets and fair competition. We have agreed to a new arrangement, including a contribution from the Japanese government of more than \$5 billion, to ensure the continued enduring presence of American forces in Japan, while expanding joint intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance activities to deter and react quickly to regional security challenges, as well as information sharing to address cyberthreats. We have concluded an Open Skies agreement that will enhance access for

businesses and people-to-people ties, launched a strategic dialogue on the Asia-Pacific, and been working hand in hand as the two largest donor countries in Afghanistan.

Similarly, our alliance with South Korea has become stronger and more operationally integrated, and we continue to develop our combined capabilities to deter and respond to North Korean provocations. We have agreed on a plan to ensure successful transition of operational control during wartime and anticipate successful passage of the [Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement](#). And our alliance has gone global, through our work together in the G-20 and the Nuclear Security Summit and through our common efforts in Haiti and Afghanistan.

We are also expanding our alliance with Australia from a Pacific partnership to an Indo-Pacific one, and indeed a global partnership. From cybersecurity to Afghanistan to the Arab Awakening to strengthening regional architecture in the Asia-Pacific, Australia's counsel and commitment have been indispensable. And in Southeast Asia, we are renewing and strengthening our alliances with the Philippines and Thailand, increasing, for example, the number of ship visits to the Philippines and working to ensure the successful training of Filipino counterterrorism forces through our Joint Special Operations Task Force in Mindanao. In Thailand -- our oldest treaty partner in Asia -- we are working to establish a hub of regional humanitarian and disaster relief efforts in the region.

AS WE UPDATE our alliances for new demands, we are also building new partnerships to help solve shared problems. Our outreach to China, India, Indonesia, Singapore, New Zealand, Malaysia, Mongolia, Vietnam, Brunei, and the Pacific Island countries is all part of a broader effort to ensure a more comprehensive approach to American strategy and engagement in the region. We are asking these emerging partners to join us in shaping and participating in a rules-based regional and global order.

One of the most prominent of these emerging partners is, of course, China. Like so many other countries before it, China has prospered as part of the open and rules-based system that the United States helped to build and works to sustain. And today, China represents one of the most challenging and consequential bilateral relationships the United States has ever had to manage. This calls for careful, steady, dynamic stewardship, an approach to China on our part that is grounded in reality, focused on results, and true to our principles and interests.

We all know that fears and misperceptions linger on both sides of the Pacific. Some in our country see China's progress as a threat to the United States; some in China worry that America seeks to constrain China's growth. We reject both those views. The fact is that a thriving America is good for China and a thriving China is good for America. We both have much more to gain from cooperation than from conflict. But you cannot build a relationship on aspirations alone. It is up to both of us to more consistently translate positive words into effective cooperation -- and, crucially, to meet our respective global responsibilities and obligations. These are the things that will determine whether our relationship delivers on its potential in the years to come. We also have to be honest about our differences. We will address them firmly and decisively as we pursue the urgent work we have to do together. And we have to avoid unrealistic expectations.

Over the last two-and-a-half years, one of my top priorities has been to identify and expand areas of common interest, to work with China to build mutual trust, and to encourage China's active efforts in global problem-solving. This is why Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner and I launched the [Strategic and Economic Dialogue](#), the most intensive and expansive talks ever between our governments, bringing together dozens of agencies from both sides to discuss our most pressing bilateral issues, from security to energy to human rights.

We are also working to increase transparency and reduce the risk of miscalculation or miscues between our militaries. The United States and the international community have watched China's efforts to modernize and expand its military, and we have sought clarity as to its intentions. Both sides would benefit from sustained and substantive military-to-military engagement that increases transparency. So we look to Beijing to overcome its reluctance at times and join us in forging a durable military-to-military dialogue. And we need to work together to strengthen the Strategic Security Dialogue, which brings together military and civilian leaders to discuss sensitive issues like maritime security and cybersecurity.

As we build trust together, we are committed to working with China to address critical regional and global security issues. This is why I have met so frequently -- often in informal settings -- with my Chinese counterparts, State Councilor Dai Bingguo and Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, for candid discussions about important challenges like North Korea, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, and developments in the South China Sea.

On the economic front, the United States and China need to work together to ensure strong, sustained, and balanced future global growth. In the aftermath of the global financial crisis, the United States and China worked effectively through the G-20 to help pull the global economy back from the brink. We have to build on that cooperation. U.S. firms want fair opportunities to export to China's growing markets, which can be important sources of jobs here in the United States, as well as assurances that the \$50 billion of American capital invested in China will create a strong foundation for new market and investment opportunities that will support global competitiveness. At the same time, Chinese firms want to be able to buy more high-tech products from the United States, make more investments here, and be accorded the same terms of access that market economies enjoy. We can work together on these objectives, but China still needs to take important steps toward reform. In particular, we are working with China to end unfair discrimination against U.S. and other foreign companies or against their innovative technologies, remove preferences for domestic firms, and end measures that disadvantage or appropriate foreign intellectual property. And we look to China to take steps to allow its currency to appreciate more rapidly, both against the dollar and against the currencies of its other major trading partners. Such reforms, we believe, would not only benefit both our countries (indeed, they would support the goals of China's own five-year plan, which calls for more domestic-led growth), but also contribute to global economic balance, predictability, and broader prosperity.

Of course, we have made very clear, publicly and privately, our serious concerns about human rights. And when we see reports of public-interest lawyers, writers, artists, and others who are detained or disappeared, the United States speaks up, both publicly and privately, with our concerns about human rights. We make the case to our Chinese colleagues that a deep respect for international law and a more open political system would provide China with a foundation for far

greater stability and growth -- and increase the confidence of China's partners. Without them, China is placing unnecessary limitations on its own development.

At the end of the day, there is no handbook for the evolving U.S.-China relationship. But the stakes are much too high for us to fail. As we proceed, we will continue to embed our relationship with China in a broader regional framework of security alliances, economic networks, and social connections.

Among key emerging powers with which we will work closely are India and Indonesia, two of the most dynamic and significant democratic powers of Asia, and both countries with which the Obama administration has pursued broader, deeper, and more purposeful relationships. The stretch of sea from the Indian Ocean through the Strait of Malacca to the Pacific contains the world's most vibrant trade and energy routes. Together, India and Indonesia already account for almost a quarter of the world's population. They are key drivers of the global economy, important partners for the United States, and increasingly central contributors to peace and security in the region. And their importance is likely to grow in the years ahead.

President Obama told the Indian parliament last year that the relationship between India and America will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century, rooted in common values and interests. There are still obstacles to overcome and questions to answer on both sides, but the United States is making a strategic bet on India's future -- that India's greater role on the world stage will enhance peace and security, that opening India's markets to the world will pave the way to greater regional and global prosperity, that Indian advances in science and technology will improve lives and advance human knowledge everywhere, and that India's vibrant, pluralistic democracy will produce measurable results and improvements for its citizens and inspire others to follow a similar path of openness and tolerance. So the Obama administration has expanded our bilateral partnership; actively supported India's Look East efforts, including through a new trilateral dialogue with India and Japan; and outlined a new vision for a more economically integrated and politically stable South and Central Asia, with India as a linchpin.

We are also forging a new partnership with Indonesia, the world's third-largest democracy, the world's most populous Muslim nation, and a member of the G-20. We have resumed joint training of Indonesian special forces units and signed a number of agreements on health, educational exchanges, science and technology, and defense. And this year, at the invitation of the Indonesian government, President Obama will inaugurate American participation in the East Asia Summit. But there is still some distance to travel -- we have to work together to overcome bureaucratic impediments, lingering historical suspicions, and some gaps in understanding each other's perspectives and interests.

EVEN AS WE strengthen these bilateral relationships, we have emphasized the importance of multilateral cooperation, for we believe that addressing complex transnational challenges of the sort now faced by Asia requires a set of institutions capable of mustering collective action. And a more robust and coherent regional architecture in Asia would reinforce the system of rules and responsibilities, from protecting intellectual property to ensuring freedom of navigation, that form the basis of an effective international order. In multilateral settings, responsible behavior is

rewarded with legitimacy and respect, and we can work together to hold accountable those who undermine peace, stability, and prosperity.

So the United States has moved to fully engage the region's multilateral institutions, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, mindful that our work with regional institutions supplements and does not supplant our bilateral ties. There is a demand from the region that America play an active role in the agenda-setting of these institutions -- and it is in our interests as well that they be effective and responsive.

That is why President Obama will participate in the East Asia Summit for the first time in November. To pave the way, the United States has opened a new [U.S. Mission to ASEAN](#) in Jakarta and signed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation with ASEAN. Our focus on developing a more results-oriented agenda has been instrumental in efforts to address disputes in the South China Sea. In 2010, at the ASEAN Regional Forum in Hanoi, the United States helped shape a regionwide effort to protect unfettered access to and passage through the South China Sea, and to uphold the key international rules for defining territorial claims in the South China Sea's waters. Given that half the world's merchant tonnage flows through this body of water, this was a consequential undertaking. And over the past year, we have made strides in protecting our vital interests in stability and freedom of navigation and have paved the way for sustained multilateral diplomacy among the many parties with claims in the South China Sea, seeking to ensure disputes are settled peacefully and in accordance with established principles of international law.

We have also worked to strengthen APEC as a serious leaders-level institution focused on advancing economic integration and trade linkages across the Pacific. After last year's bold call by the group for a free trade area of the Asia-Pacific, President Obama will host the [2011 APEC Leaders' Meeting](#) in Hawaii this November. We are committed to cementing APEC as the Asia-Pacific's premier regional economic institution, setting the economic agenda in a way that brings together advanced and emerging economies to promote open trade and investment, as well as to build capacity and enhance regulatory regimes. APEC and its work help expand U.S. exports and create and support high-quality jobs in the United States, while fostering growth throughout the region. APEC also provides a key vehicle to drive a broad agenda to unlock the economic growth potential that women represent. In this regard, the United States is committed to working with our partners on ambitious steps to accelerate the arrival of the Participation Age, where every individual, regardless of gender or other characteristics, is a contributing and valued member of the global marketplace.

In addition to our commitment to these broader multilateral institutions, we have worked hard to create and launch a number of "minilateral" meetings, small groupings of interested states to tackle specific challenges, such as the [Lower Mekong Initiative](#) we launched to support education, health, and environmental programs in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam, and the [Pacific Islands Forum](#), where we are working to support its members as they confront challenges from climate change to overfishing to freedom of navigation. We are also starting to pursue new trilateral opportunities with countries as diverse as Mongolia, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, and South Korea. And we are setting our sights as well on enhancing coordination and engagement among the three giants of the Asia-Pacific: China, India, and the United States.

In all these different ways, we are seeking to shape and participate in a responsive, flexible, and effective regional architecture -- and ensure it connects to a broader global architecture that not only protects international stability and commerce but also advances our values.

OUR EMPHASIS ON the economic work of APEC is in keeping with our broader commitment to elevate economic statecraft as a pillar of American foreign policy. Increasingly, economic progress depends on strong diplomatic ties, and diplomatic progress depends on strong economic ties. And naturally, a focus on promoting American prosperity means a greater focus on trade and economic openness in the Asia-Pacific. The region already generates more than half of global output and nearly half of global trade. As we strive to meet President Obama's goal of doubling exports by 2015, we are looking for opportunities to do even more business in Asia. Last year, American exports to the Pacific Rim totaled \$320 billion, supporting 850,000 American jobs. So there is much that favors us as we think through this repositioning.

When I talk to my Asian counterparts, one theme consistently stands out: They still want America to be an engaged and creative partner in the region's flourishing trade and financial interactions. And as I talk with business leaders across our own nation, I hear how important it is for the United States to expand our exports and our investment opportunities in Asia's dynamic markets.

Last March in APEC meetings in Washington, and again in Hong Kong in July, I laid out four attributes that I believe characterize healthy economic competition: open, free, transparent, and fair. Through our engagement in the Asia-Pacific, we are helping to give shape to these principles and showing the world their value.

We are pursuing new cutting-edge trade deals that raise the standards for fair competition even as they open new markets. For instance, the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement will eliminate tariffs on 95 percent of U.S. consumer and industrial exports within five years and support an estimated 70,000 American jobs. Its tariff reductions alone could increase exports of American goods by more than \$10 billion and help South Korea's economy grow by 6 percent. It will level the playing field for U.S. auto companies and workers. So, whether you are an American manufacturer of machinery or a South Korean chemicals exporter, this deal lowers the barriers that keep you from reaching new customers.

We are also making progress on the [Trans-Pacific Partnership](#) (TPP), which will bring together economies from across the Pacific -- developed and developing alike -- into a single trading community. Our goal is to create not just more growth, but better growth. We believe trade agreements need to include strong protections for workers, the environment, intellectual property, and innovation. They should also promote the free flow of information technology and the spread of green technology, as well as the coherence of our regulatory system and the efficiency of supply chains. Ultimately, our progress will be measured by the quality of people's lives -- whether men and women can work in dignity, earn a decent wage, raise healthy families, educate their children, and take hold of the opportunities to improve their own and the next generation's fortunes. Our hope is that a TPP agreement with high standards can serve as a benchmark for future agreements -- and grow to serve as a platform for broader regional interaction and eventually a free trade area of the Asia-Pacific.

Achieving balance in our trade relationships requires a two-way commitment. That's the nature of balance -- it can't be unilaterally imposed. So we are working through APEC, the G-20, and our bilateral relationships to advocate for more open markets, fewer restrictions on exports, more transparency, and an overall commitment to fairness. American businesses and workers need to have confidence that they are operating on a level playing field, with predictable rules on everything from intellectual property to indigenous innovation.

ASIA'S REMARKABLE ECONOMIC growth over the past decade and its potential for continued growth in the future depend on the security and stability that has long been guaranteed by the U.S. military, including more than 50,000 American servicemen and servicewomen serving in Japan and South Korea. The challenges of today's rapidly changing region -- from territorial and maritime disputes to new threats to freedom of navigation to the heightened impact of natural disasters -- require that the United States pursue a more geographically distributed, operationally resilient, and politically sustainable force posture.

We are modernizing our basing arrangements with traditional allies in Northeast Asia -- and our commitment on this is rock solid -- while enhancing our presence in Southeast Asia and into the Indian Ocean. For example, the United States will be deploying littoral combat ships to Singapore, and we are examining other ways to increase opportunities for our two militaries to train and operate together. And the United States and Australia agreed this year to explore a greater American military presence in Australia to enhance opportunities for more joint training and exercises. We are also looking at how we can increase our operational access in Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean region and deepen our contacts with allies and partners.

How we translate the growing connection between the Indian and Pacific oceans into an operational concept is a question that we need to answer if we are to adapt to new challenges in the region. Against this backdrop, a more broadly distributed military presence across the region will provide vital advantages. The United States will be better positioned to support humanitarian missions; equally important, working with more allies and partners will provide a more robust bulwark against threats or efforts to undermine regional peace and stability.

But even more than our military might or the size of our economy, our most potent asset as a nation is the power of our values -- in particular, our steadfast support for democracy and human rights. This speaks to our deepest national character and is at the heart of our foreign policy, including our strategic turn to the Asia-Pacific region.

As we deepen our engagement with partners with whom we disagree on these issues, we will continue to urge them to embrace reforms that would improve governance, protect human rights, and advance political freedoms. We have made it clear, for example, to Vietnam that our ambition to develop a strategic partnership requires that it take steps to further protect human rights and advance political freedoms. Or consider Burma, where we are determined to seek accountability for human rights violations. We are closely following developments in Nay Pyi Taw and the increasing interactions between Aung San Suu Kyi and the government leadership. We have underscored to the government that it must release political prisoners, advance political freedoms and human rights, and break from the policies of the past. As for North Korea, the

regime in Pyongyang has shown persistent disregard for the rights of its people, and we continue to speak out forcefully against the threats it poses to the region and beyond.

We cannot and do not aspire to impose our system on other countries, but we do believe that certain values are universal -- that people in every nation in the world, including in Asia, cherish them -- and that they are intrinsic to stable, peaceful, and prosperous countries. Ultimately, it is up to the people of Asia to pursue their own rights and aspirations, just as we have seen people do all over the world.

IN THE LAST decade, our foreign policy has transitioned from dealing with the post-Cold War peace dividend to demanding commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan. As those wars wind down, we will need to accelerate efforts to pivot to new global realities.

We know that these new realities require us to innovate, to compete, and to lead in new ways. Rather than pull back from the world, we need to press forward and renew our leadership. In a time of scarce resources, there's no question that we need to invest them wisely where they will yield the biggest returns, which is why the Asia-Pacific represents such a real 21st-century opportunity for us.

Other regions remain vitally important, of course. Europe, home to most of our traditional allies, is still a partner of first resort, working alongside the United States on nearly every urgent global challenge, and we are investing in updating the structures of our alliance. The people of the Middle East and North Africa are charting a new path that is already having profound global consequences, and the United States is committed to active and sustained partnerships as the region transforms. Africa holds enormous untapped potential for economic and political development in the years ahead. And our neighbors in the Western Hemisphere are not just our biggest export partners; they are also playing a growing role in global political and economic affairs. Each of these regions demands American engagement and leadership.

And we are prepared to lead. Now, I'm well aware that there are those who question our staying power around the world. We've heard this talk before. At the end of the Vietnam War, there was a thriving industry of global commentators promoting the idea that America was in retreat, and it is a theme that repeats itself every few decades. But whenever the United States has experienced setbacks, we've overcome them through reinvention and innovation. Our capacity to come back stronger is unmatched in modern history. It flows from our model of free democracy and free enterprise, a model that remains the most powerful source of prosperity and progress known to humankind. I hear everywhere I go that the world still looks to the United States for leadership. Our military is by far the strongest, and our economy is by far the largest in the world. Our workers are the most productive. Our universities are renowned the world over. So there should be no doubt that America has the capacity to secure and sustain our global leadership in this century as we did in the last.

As we move forward to set the stage for engagement in the Asia-Pacific over the next 60 years, we are mindful of the bipartisan legacy that has shaped our engagement for the past 60. And we are focused on the steps we have to take at home -- increasing our savings, reforming our

financial systems, relying less on borrowing, overcoming partisan division -- to secure and sustain our leadership abroad.

This kind of pivot is not easy, but we have paved the way for it over the past two-and-a-half years, and we are committed to seeing it through as among the most important diplomatic efforts of our time.

SUBJECTS: [U.S. FOREIGN POLICY](#), [STATE DEPARTMENT](#), [SOUTH ASIA](#), [EAST ASIA](#), [SOUTHEAST ASIA](#)

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