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"U.S. Smart Power in the Americas: 2009 and Beyond"

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The Commission on Smart Power concluded that the next president of the United States, regardless of political party, should make up for what it called "*the absence of American leadership . . . by complementing U.S. military and economic might with greater investments in soft power.*"

This is an excellent report, but I would offer two reformulations. First, more international leadership requires international *participation*. From 1995 to 1998, I was the representative of the United States in the effort to end fighting between Ecuador and Peru. Five thousand Special Forces soldiers from the two countries were confronting each other in very difficult Andean terrain. We needed to separate them and then try to find a lasting solution to a dispute that went back to colonial times. Four countries -- Brazil, Argentina, Chile and the U.S. – acted together as

treaty guarantors. All contributed soldiers to the separation of forces and subsequent military observation. My guarantor counterparts and I would share intelligence, listen to each other's views and meet until we hammered out a course all our governments could support. The issues were difficult. But the give and take was mutual. Often our meetings led to a course different from anything any one of us had started with. It took three years, but we succeeded when few believed we could.

The lesson I draw for us this morning is that international leadership requires the willingness to participate, first in developing consensus, and then in following through.

My second reformulation is that, rather than *complementing* existing power, the bigger problem is to *integrate* the various elements of power. You can't just say "We'll deal with this just militarily, or just economically, or just diplomatically." You can't just say "We'll deal with this multilaterally, that bilaterally, and this unilaterally." Most important problems require the simultaneous application in some form of all elements of power, hard and soft, multilateral and bilateral.

Let me now turn to the five areas of the Commission's report.

First, Alliances, partnerships, and institutions: The Commission argues that "*Three approaches could help . . . renewing our commitment to the United Nations, reinvigorating our alliances, and working to erase the perception that the United States has double standards when it comes to abiding by international law.*"

International organizations are not a panacea. They need the active support of their members. And even then most operational matters must of necessity be dealt with bilaterally or in groups of nations smaller than the whole. But they always have a multilateral dimension.

To ensure that it can be better integrated into the U.S. policy process and in a better position to explain what falls into its province to the other Member States, the U.S. Mission to the OAS should be at least doubled in size. If consultations with other Members yield an effective program, we should double our annual quota. While costs have soared and presidential Summits have asked more and more of the OAS, quotas

have remained stagnant and staff and programs have been steadily cut.

No matter how much we renew our commitment to the OAS, however, this is still a world of nations. The United States needs strong and peaceful bilateral ties to its neighbors, to what in Spanish would be called its *países limítrofes*: Canada, Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean. Sub regional groupings, like CARICOM, offer important collective opportunities for many needed activities.

Like our immediate neighbors, South America's countries must be approached globally as well as regionally and bilaterally. On some issues -- energy, the environment, nuclear nonproliferation – no global approach is possible without at least some of its countries.

The reliability of the United States as an ally is being tested right now with regard to Colombia. That the FTA is bogged down in the U.S. Congress despite the success of Plan Colombia is a caution against being too optimistic about U.S.-Latin American relations.

Finally, Cuba is certainly no ally, but it is an alliance problem. Cuba is a founding member of the OAS, but the exclusion of its government has for more than forty years also excluded Cuba from the growing regional consensus that found its expression in the Inter-American Democratic Charter. In practice, all OAS member states, including Cuba itself, will have to agree on how and when Cuba might resume its seat, so this is not something for the United States to decide unilaterally. The United States could, however, join with other countries to ask the OAS Secretary General to explore what might be done.

Sandra Day O'Connor says in the Commission Report that "*The decision not to sign on to legal frameworks the rest of the world supports is central to the decline in American influence in the world.*"

The U.S. should put an end to the use of Guantanamo for detentions, end Article 98 sanctions against countries that join the International Criminal Court, and ratify the American Convention on Human Rights and the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other

Related Materials, generally known by its Spanish acronym CIFTA. We have signed both; we should ratify both with whatever reservations might prove necessary.

Putting laws on the books, of course, is not enough. Our current presidential campaign has made the point quite nicely in the debates over health insurance. In an article entitled "Consider it Done?" the journal Health Affairs reviews the efficacy of mandates in expanding health insurance coverage, and finds that compliance varies greatly, depending on the quality of the laws and on their enforcement. The OAS in recent years has worked hard to reduce such slips twixt the cup and the lip. Meetings of States Parties follow up treaties to improve compliance. The harmonization of national laws to bring them in line with treaty mandates has scored notable successes on anti-corruption, extradition, and control of illegal drugs. The U.S. Government deserves much credit for its financial and technical support to many of these activities. The Administration has even invited the Ministers of Justice of the hemisphere to meet here in Washington this spring. But the United States could and should do much more to support regional capacity-building. To mention just one very simple example: the U.S. should be sure to nominate good

candidates for the month-long Course in International Law run in Rio de Janeiro since1973 by the Inter-American Juridical Committee. Participation in this course turns good mid-career lawyers into leaders with a network of regional contacts.

Second, Global Development. The Commission argues that "*Elevating the role of development in U.S. foreign policy can help the United States align its own interests with the aspirations of people around the world.*"

The role of the U.S. Government in the development of other countries is controversial. Nothing arouses greater resistance in the U.S. public than the idea of hand outs to foreigners when we have unresolved problems at home.

There are however, two areas in which fresh and not inherently costly U.S. policies could contribute importantly to regional development: citizen security and education.

For years thousands, even millions have entered the United States illegally to better themselves in ways impossible in

their countries of origin. We need immigrants. But we do not need shadow communities that live in the dark, at the margin of the law. We need to regain control in a way that is worthy of our civilization, we need to shape an open system, with dignity and responsibility for all. We need enforceable controls, defined guest-worker rights, clear requirements for citizenship, and respect for our national security needs.

Relations with our *países limítrofes* cry out for such a comprehensive approach, but today I want to focus only on criminal deportations. For a decade now, the United States has "formally removed" more than 70,000 aliens a year that have run afoul of U.S. law. Mexico and countries in Central America and the Caribbean receive repatriation flights daily. The results have been strategically ineffective, locally destabilizing and regionally dispiriting. A year ago, a U.N.-World Bank study of criminal deportations to Jamaica from the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada gingerly concluded that "assisting in reintegration efforts for deported offenders could be a cost-effective way for deportee-sending countries to promote development and weaken international crime networks." We obviously need to defend ourselves. But also need to help our neighbors defend themselves

against this criminality and instability. The next Summit of the Americas, to take place in Trinidad & Tobago in April 2009, should ask the OAS to develop new initiatives on citizen security.

Third, Public diplomacy: The Commission argues that "*Bringing foreign populations to our side depends on building long-term, people-to-people relationships, particularly among youth.* "

Our Declaration of Independence proclaims that "*a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them.*" There is no better bully pulpit than one where everyone is in the audience. The UN, the OAS and other multilateral organizations are ideal venues to set forth our views and explain our actions.

Scholarships have for years accounted for an important but unheralded portion of the OAS budget. The Secretariat does a remarkable job in fomenting training and information exchanges. But much more could be done to strengthen or establish support for experts in drug control, terrorism, transnational crime, human rights, civil emergencies, and the

mitigation of natural disasters. A new Inter-American Academy of Public Administration could function along the lines of the Inter-American Defense College, with students nominated by the member states. CARICOM, SICA, the Andean Pact, and MERCOSUR could I am sure put to excellent use regionally-supported training activities in whose design they participate. All countries should reserve places in their diplomatic and military academies and other advanced schools of public service for counterparts from neighboring countries.

Fourth, Economic integration: The Commission suggests that "*Continued engagement with the global economy is necessary for growth and prosperity, but the benefits of free trade must be expanded to include those left behind at home and abroad.*"

The dominant reality is that the Western Hemisphere is inexorably integrating. Our neighbors buy ten times more than does China of our merchandise exports. This interdependence could become a competitive asset for all concerned. The countries of the hemisphere could be a secure strategic anchor and a mutually supportive foundation

for each other in this uncertain world. But that is a utopian thought as long as protectionism takes precedence over mutual adjustment.

In this regard, the Commission's concern for "*those left behind at home and abroad*" is positive in recognizing the fears and dislocations caused by globalization in the U.S. as well as in our even more vulnerable neighbors. Perhaps the next Summit might commission a report on the measures needed to ease transitions, preserve national ways and prevent homogenization. Then perhaps protectionism can addressed politically as well as economically.

Fifth, Technology and innovation: The Commission concludes that "*Energy security and climate change require American leadership to help establish global consensus and develop innovative solutions.*"

Brazil's scientific capacity and progress on fossil as well as non fossil fuels make it a global player on both energy and the environment. Were it possible to add in Canada, Mexico and -- when the poisons subside – Venezuela, the regional opportunities would certainly be enormous. The region

should certainly be well-represented in the Commission's recommended Joint Technology Development Center.

Finally, the way we do things. The Commission concluded with a call for "*a strategic reassessment of how the U.S. government is organized, coordinated, and budgeted . . . including the appointment of senior personnel who could reach across agencies to better align strategy and resources.*"

Better internal integration is clearly needed. But we also need senior personnel who could reach across countries to better align strategy and resources! What happens if we in the U.S. solve all of our own internal interagency and civil-military problems only to then find we and other countries still lack the trust and know-how to work together?

The deterioration of the international system should be a major concern for everyone. We need an urgent start on rebuilding multilateral capacity. The Multilateral Evaluation System developed by the OAS to coordinate and assess national drug programs shows it can work. But though U.S. support has been essential (along with that of Mexico and other countries), I gather cuts are being planned to

accommodate other foreign assistance needs. This is a bad mistake. Legal frameworks and international institutions are essential for bilateral and other activities to be at their best. International professional training and coordination should not be considered foreign aid – they are necessary to build the capacity required to make cooperation sustainable regionally and internationally. Every U.S. department and agency should have a core of public servants who spend part of their careers working in the UN, the OAS, or other international organizations. Such a tour might even be a requirement for promotion to the Senior Executive Service. Institutional ties maintained by a network of professionals who know how to work together can provide both early warning and containment of issues that might otherwise escalate into problems—in effect, a valuable insurance policy for progress and peace.

What I am advocating is of necessity a long-term approach. It takes time to educate and train people, time to build trust. It is not enough to know where you want to go. You also need to know how to get there. You need skill. And you need friends. Nothing will last unless the interests of all concerned are advanced. In international politics there is no

MapQuest where you can dial up directions. There is just a lot of hard work with others. Maybe we should call this approach a "Diplomatic surge" or a "Smart Power Surge."