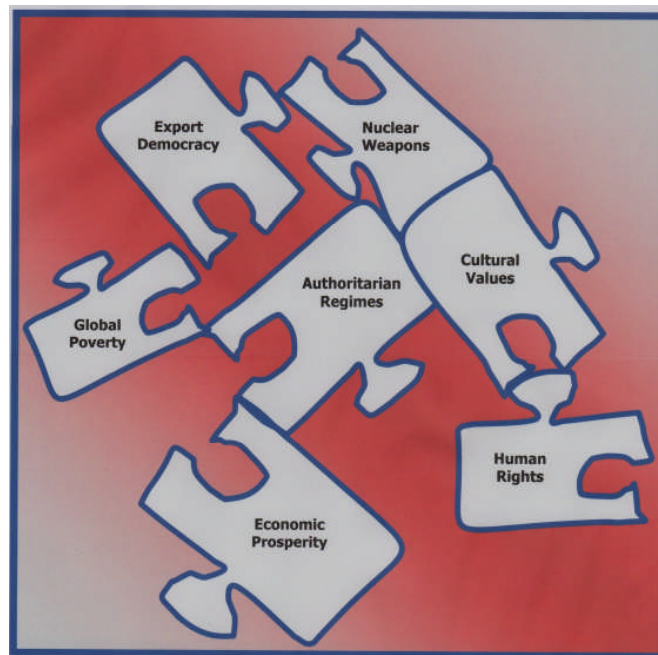


Foreign Policy



The rule of law, diversity, equality, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness - defined by the Charters of Freedom -- are American values that embody who we are as a people and a nation. These values are exported to the rest of the world through foreign policy doctrine. Exporting these values in pursuit of national security interests is complex and challenging. When other nation-states do not agree to, or share the same interests as the United States, complexities are magnified.

Philosophical views on foreign policy can be as complicated as working on a 7,000-piece puzzle. The U.S. National Intelligence Council offers a rational narrative for its challenging complexities: “ideology is a frustratingly fuzzy concept...difficult to define...and equally difficult to measure.” Practitioners and advocacy groups triangulate international relations by analyzing the possible effects on people, countries and the international system.

The United States is party to more than 10,000 treaties and agreements with foreign nations. As of 2014, there were 195 independent countries around the world, each with its own sovereign rights to governance according to the Office of the Geographer and Global Issues within the Department of State. Fostering positive relationships among central governments promote good behavior and accomplish national security objectives. Perceptions, motivations and actions help define how America interacts with other nations. At times, the United States will pursue unilateral actions; sometimes it dances with the Devil; and other times it chooses to do nothing. The course of action depends on the objective, the rule of law, congressional and citizenry influence. Advancing U.S. interests internationally stands a higher probability of success when American citizens (who ultimately pick up the tab) understand the key role of their country in what can become a long and complicated process. Regardless of who they vote for, their political beliefs, or affiliation, American citizens are stakeholders.