# 1AC – EU Authoritarianism

### FW:

#### the standard is maximizing expected wellbeing

***1- Only*pleasure and pain are intrinsically valuable. People consistently regard pleasure and pain as good reasons for action, all other values can be explained in relation.**

**Moen 16** [Ole Martin Moen, Research Fellow in Philosophy at University of Oslo “An Argument for Hedonism” Journal of Value Inquiry (Springer), 50 (2) 2016: 267–281] RA

Let us start by observing, empirically, that **a widely shared judgment about intrinsic value and disvalue is that pleasure is intrinsically valuable and pain is intrinsically disvaluable.** **On virtually any proposed list of intrinsic values and disvalues (we will look at some of them below), pleasure is included among the intrinsic values and pain among the intrinsic disvalues.** This inclusion makes intuitive sense, moreover, for **there is something undeniably good about the way pleasure feels and something undeniably bad about the way pain feels, and neither the goodness of pleasure nor the badness of pain seems to be exhausted by the further effects that these experiences might have.** “Pleasure” and “pain” are here understood inclusively, as encompassing anything hedonically positive and anything hedonically negative.2 **The special value statuses of pleasure and pain are manifested in how we treat these experiences in our everyday reasoning about values.** If you tell me that you are heading for the convenience store, **I might ask: “What for?” This is a reasonable question, for when you go to the convenience store you usually do so**, not merely for the sake of going to the convenience store, but **for the sake of achieving something further that you deem to be valuable.** You might answer, for example: “To buy soda.” This answer makes sense, for soda is a nice thing and you can get it at the convenience store. I might further inquire, however: “What is buying the soda good for?” This further question can also be a reasonable one, for it need not be obvious why you want the soda. You might answer: “Well, I want it for the pleasure of drinking it.” **If I then proceed by asking “But what is the pleasure of drinking the soda good for?” the discussion is likely to reach an awkward end. The reason is that the pleasure is not good for anything further; it is simply that for which going to the convenience store and buying the soda is good.**3 As Aristotle observes**: “We never ask [a man] what his end is in being pleased, because we assume that pleasure is choice worthy in itself.**”4 Presumably, a similar story can be told in the case of pains, for if someone says “This is painful!” we never respond by asking: “And why is that a problem?” We take for granted that if something is painful, we have a sufficient explanation of why it is bad. If we are onto something in our everyday reasoning about values, it seems that **pleasure and pain are both places where we reach the end of the line in matters of value.**

#### Prefer for bindingness – if I put my hand on a hot stove I have a biological imperative to pull it back – proves avoiding pain is intrinsic to actions – anything that isn’t binding lets people say why not.

#### 2 – Extinction o/ws under any framework, even under moral uncertainty – infinite future generations

**Pummer 15** — (Theron Pummer, Junior Research Fellow in Philosophy at St. Anne's College, University of Oxford, “Moral Agreement on Saving the World“, Practical Ethics University of Oxford, 5-18-2015, Available Online at http://blog.practicalethics.ox.ac.uk/2015/05/moral-agreement-on-saving-the-world/, accessed 7-2-2018, HKR-AM) \*\*we do not endorse ableist language=

There appears to be lot of disagreement in moral philosophy. Whether these many apparent disagreements are deep and irresolvable, I believe there is at least one thing it is reasonable to agree on right now, whatever general moral view we adopt: that it is very important to reduce the risk that all intelligent beings on this planet are eliminated by an enormous catastrophe, such as a nuclear war. How we might in fact try to reduce such existential risks is discussed elsewhere. My claim here is only that we – whether we’re consequentialists, deontologists, or virtue ethicists – should all agree that we should try to save the world. According to consequentialism, we should maximize the good, where this is taken to be the goodness, from an impartial perspective, of outcomes. Clearly one thing that makes an outcome good is that the people in it are doing well. There is little disagreement here. If the happiness or well-being of possible future people is just as important as that of people who already exist, and if they would have good lives, it is not hard to see how reducing existential risk is easily the most important thing in the whole world. This is for the familiar reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future – there are trillions upon trillions… upon trillions. There are so many possible future people that reducing existential risk is arguably the most important thing in the world, even if the well-being of these possible people were given only 0.001% as much weight as that of existing people. Even on a wholly person-affecting view – according to which there’s nothing (apart from effects on existing people) to be said in favor of creating happy people – the case for reducing existential risk is very strong. As noted in this seminal paper, this case is strengthened by the fact that there’s a good chance that many existing people will, with the aid of life-extension technology, live very long and very high quality lives. You might think what I have just argued applies to consequentialists only. There is a tendency to assume that, if an argument appeals to consequentialist considerations (the goodness of outcomes), it is irrelevant to non-consequentialists. But that is a huge mistake. Non-consequentialism is the view that there’s more that determines rightness than the goodness of consequences or outcomes; it is not the view that the latter don’t matter. Even John Rawls wrote, “All ethical doctrines worth our attention take consequences into account in judging rightness. One which did not would simply be irrational, crazy.” Minimally plausible versions of deontology and virtue ethics must be concerned in part with promoting the good, from an impartial point of view. They’d thus imply very strong reasons to reduce existential risk, at least when this doesn’t significantly involve doing harm to others or damaging one’s character. What’s even more surprising, perhaps, is that even if our own good (or that of those near and dear to us) has much greater weight than goodness from the impartial “point of view of the universe,” indeed even if the latter is entirely morally irrelevant, we may nonetheless have very strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Even egoism, the view that each agent should maximize her own good, might imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. It will depend, among other things, on what one’s own good consists in. If well-being consisted in pleasure only, it is somewhat harder to argue that egoism would imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk – perhaps we could argue that one would maximize her expected hedonic well-being by funding life extension technology or by having herself cryogenically frozen at the time of her bodily death as well as giving money to reduce existential risk (so that there is a world for her to live in!). I am not sure, however, how strong the reasons to do this would be. But views which imply that, if I don’t care about other people, I have no or very little reason to help them are not even minimally plausible views (in addition to hedonistic egoism, I here have in mind views that imply that one has no reason to perform an act unless one actually desires to do that act). To be minimally plausible, egoism will need to be paired with a more sophisticated account of well-being. To see this, it is enough to consider, as Plato did, the possibility of a ring of invisibility – suppose that, while wearing it, Ayn could derive some pleasure by helping the poor, but instead could derive just a bit more by severely harming them. Hedonistic egoism would absurdly imply she should do the latter. To avoid this implication, egoists would need to build something like the meaningfulness of a life into well-being, in some robust way, where this would to a significant extent be a function of other-regarding concerns (see chapter 12 of this classic intro to ethics). But once these elements are included, we can (roughly, as above) argue that this sort of egoism will imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Add to all of this Samuel Scheffler’s recent intriguing arguments (quick podcast version available here) that most of what makes our lives go well would be undermined if there were no future generations of intelligent persons. On his view, my life would contain vastly less well-being if (say) a year after my death the world came to an end. So obviously if Scheffler were right I’d have very strong reason to reduce existential risk. We should also take into account moral uncertainty. What is it reasonable for one to do, when one is uncertain not (only) about the empirical facts, but also about the moral facts? I’ve just argued that there’s agreement among minimally plausible ethical views that we have strong reason to reduce existential risk – not only consequentialists, but also deontologists, virtue ethicists, and sophisticated egoists should agree. But even those (hedonistic egoists) who disagree should have a significant level of confidence that they are mistaken, and that one of the above views is correct. Even if they were 90% sure that their view is the correct one (and 10% sure that one of these other ones is correct), they would have pretty strong reason, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, to reduce existential risk. Perhaps most disturbingly still, even if we are only 1% sure that the well-being of possible future people matters, it is at least arguable that, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, reducing existential risk is the most important thing in the world. Again, this is largely for the reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future – there are trillions upon trillions… upon trillions. (For more on this and other related issues, see this excellent dissertation). Of course, it is uncertain whether these untold trillions would, in general, have good lives. It’s possible they’ll be miserable. It is enough for my claim that there is moral agreement in the relevant sense if, at least given certain empirical claims about what future lives would most likely be like, all minimally plausible moral views would converge on the conclusion that we should try to save the world. While there are some non-crazy views that place significantly greater moral weight on avoiding suffering than on promoting happiness, for reasons others have offered (and for independent reasons I won’t get into here unless requested to), they nonetheless seem to be fairly implausible views. And even if things did not go well for our ancestors, I am optimistic that they will overall go fantastically well for our descendants, if we allow them to. I suspect that most of us alive today – at least those of us not suffering from extreme illness or poverty – have lives that are well worth living, and that things will continue to improve. Derek Parfit, whose work has emphasized future generations as well as agreement in ethics, described our situation clearly and accurately: “We live during the hinge of history. Given the scientific and technological discoveries of the last two centuries, the world has never changed as fast. We shall soon have even greater powers to transform, not only our surroundings, but ourselves and our successors. If we act wisely in the next few centuries, humanity will survive its most dangerous and decisive period. Our descendants could, if necessary, go elsewhere, spreading through this galaxy…. Our descendants might, I believe, make the further future very good. But that good future may also depend in part on us. If our selfish recklessness ends human history, we would be acting very wrongly.” (From chapter 36 of On What Matters)

#### 3 – Actor specificity:

#### [A] Governments must aggregate since every policy benefits some and harms others, which also means side constraints freeze action. [B] States lack wills or intentions since policies are collective actions.

#### 4 - only it can explain degrees of wrongness- it is worse to kill thousands than to lie to a friend- either ethical theories cannot explain comparative badness, or it collapses

### Plan:

#### The member nations of the European Union ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike.

### Adv:

#### Strike rights are backsliding in Eastern Europe – especially after COVID

Lynch 21 [Esther Lynch was elected as a deputy general secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation at its Vienna Congress in 2019, having previously been a confederal secretary. "Time to put an end to union-busting." https://socialeurope.eu/time-to-put-an-end-to-union-busting]

The right to join a trade union and to bargain collectively is recognised as a fundamental human right by numerous European and international charters and conventions. And yet union-busting is on the rise in Europe.

Over the last year, the European Trade Union Confederation has been receiving alarming reports of union rights violations—of obstacles, victimisation and discrimination in a number of countries—sometimes using the pandemic as a pretext. The ETUC is calling on the European institutions to take a stand and put an end to union-busting, by including measures in the proposed directive on adequate minimum wages to halt anti-union practices and to guarantee trade union access to workplaces and protection from victimisation.

The best way to secure fair wages is through collective bargaining by trade unions. The draft directive recognises this in article 4, calling for the ‘promotion of collective bargaining on wage setting’. This obliges member states to work with social partners (unions and employers) to encourage ‘constructive, meaningful and informed’ negotiations and strengthen sectoral or cross-industry bargaining. In countries where fewer than 70 per cent of workers are covered by collective agreements, governments will have to draw up action plans to promote bargaining.

All this is welcome but fails to require member states to tackle employers’ attacks on workers’ ability to organise and act together—if necessary through strike action—without risk of reprisals, victimisation, dismissal or discrimination.

Legally binding

The obligation on the European Union and its member states to act could not be clearer. The legally binding Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (article 12) establishes ‘the right of everyone to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his or her interests’. Several International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions reinforce the right to negotiate on behalf of workers, including the Collective Bargaining Convention (1981). Principle 8 of the European Pillar of Social Rights further encourages the social partners ‘to negotiate and conclude collective agreements in matters relevant to them, while respecting their autonomy and the right to collective action’.

The ILO Committee on Freedom of Association Digest of Case Law affirms:

The right to bargain with employers with respect to conditions of work constitutes an essential element in freedom of association, and trade unions should have the right, through collective bargaining or other lawful means, to seek to improve the living and working conditions of those whom the trade unions represent. The public authorities should refrain from any interference which would restrict this right or impede the lawful exercise thereof.

Yet ‘interference’ is happening throughout Europe. Union representatives are being victimised, detained or denied the right to communicate with the workers they represent.

The International Trade Union Confederation’s Global Rights Index 2020 revealed that 38 per cent of European countries excluded workers from the right to join or set up a union, 56 per cent failed to uphold the right to collective bargaining and no fewer than 72 per cent violated the right to strike. Many employers are refusing to enter talks or are choosing to bypass legitimate trade unions in favour of non-union and non-representative ‘sweetheart’ organisations.

Growing evidence

The ETUC has growing evidence of anti-union activities by well-known companies, such as McDonald’s and Intercontinental Hotels. In Ireland, the bookmaker Paddy Power and retailer Dunnes Stores have used police to expel trade union representatives from their premises. In Latvia, legislation allows employers to set up ‘yellow’ unions, to prevent legitimate trade unions from reaching collective agreements.

Just last month, a court in Italy found that a Deliveroo algorithm discriminated against riders who took strike action and ordered the company to pay damages to trade unions. Elsewhere, ending the automatic ‘check-off’ payment of union dues from wages has had a severe impact on union finances.

A recent Vice report detailed how the notoriously anti-union Big Tech company Amazon subjected employees to surveillance in a number of EU countries, including Spain, Austria and Czechia, using ‘professional’ union-busters and private detectives to spy on trade union activities. Indeed, union-busting is now big business—and forms part of the business model of major companies such as Ryanair.

Governments are complicit in these activities. Trade unionists are still arrested and prosecuted for carrying out their duties, for instance in Turkey and Belgium. A number of countries fail to protect union members from discrimination or victimisation, including Bulgaria, Romania and Poland, where some categories of workers also do not have the right to organise.

And now some member states have adopted so-called emergency procedures in response to Covid-19, seriously limiting trade union rights such as holding demonstrations. In Hungary, a new law, introduced without consultation, prohibits collective bargaining, outlaws strikes and terminates all existing agreements in the healthcare sector.

#### The right to strike is key to global democracy – organized and empowered labor secures reforms in every area

Puddington 10 [Arch Puddington is currently Senior Scholar Emeritus at Freedom House. He also previously served as the Senior Vice President for Research at Freedom House. "The Global State of Workers’ Rights: Free Labor in a Hostile World." https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/inline\_images/WorkerRightsFULLBooklet-FINAL.pdf]

Some 30 years ago, in August 1980, workers in communist Poland formed the independent Solidarity trade union movement, thereby challenging one of the totalitarian system‘s fundamental principles: control of labor organizations by the party-state. The strike that led to Solidarity‘s establishment was launched at the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk. It quickly spread throughout Poland, and its program escalated from workplace issues to a sweeping demand for freedom to create the institutions that undergird a democratic society. After a decade of tumult and repression, Solidarity emerged triumphant, compelling the country‘s communist authorities to allow competitive elections that resulted in a landmark victory for the democratic opposition. This in turn led to the domino-like collapse of communist rule throughout Central and Eastern Europe and, two years later, the breakup of the Soviet Union.

The question some are asking today is whether a phenomenon similar to Solidarity might be possible in what is now the world‘s most powerful authoritarian country, China. In recent years, evidence of worker unrest there has steadily mounted. Strikes and other forms of labor protest occur regularly; just in the last few months, workers have called high-profile strikes at installations operated by some of the world‘s largest multinational corporations. As was the case in Poland, the official labor umbrella group, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), has played an obstructive role by trying to force striking workers back into their enterprises and in some instances acting as strikebreakers. There are also signs that some within the ACFTU, unlike in the official Polish union, see a need for change that seems to be lost on the leadership.

The burgeoning workers‘ resistance in China has drawn supporters and participants from many segments of the economy, including cab drivers, teachers, and factory workers. Despite their lack of experience as union activists, they have embraced the tried-and-true tactics of labor protest— sit-down strikes and roadblocks, for example—and have eschewed violence. These youthful workers have also used mobile telephones and the internet to draw attention to their causes. The stories they tell about conditions at the workplace are eerily familiar to anyone who is acquainted with the history of the trade union struggle in Europe and North America: low pay within the context of rapidly expanding inequality, punishing hours, harsh supervisors, and a consuming work routine that discourages family life.

The most recent strike wave has taken many observers outside China by surprise. The growth of the Chinese industrial juggernaut gave rise to myths about Chinese workers, who were widely regarded as docile, willing to work remarkably long hours without complaint, uninterested in unions or collective action, inspired by patriotic love for the Communist Party leadership, and unwilling to challenge authority. Among those caught unaware were the owners and managers of multinational corporations whose investments in China have been predicated on the assumption of cheap, compliant Chinese labor. Indeed, the American Chamber of Commerce in China was sharply critical of changes to Chinese labor laws that were adopted in 2008, issuing a thinly veiled warning that enhanced protections for workers would lead multinationals to look elsewhere for new installations.

Unlike the state-owned enterprises in communist Poland, the strike targets in modern China are foreign-owned, private firms. Accordingly, the strikers do not confront the state directly, and the strikes are thus not regarded as overtly political. Still, the increasing willingness of Chinese workers to risk arrest and jail to defend workplace rights is a potent signal to the government of the power of independent worker action.

The Chinese case is a cogent reminder of the central role played by the struggle for worker rights in the past century‘s broader movement toward democratic freedom. From South Africa to South Korea, Chile to the Czech Republic, the democracy and workers‘ rights movements have been closely linked. This relationship was well understood by fascist, communist, and authoritarian dictators who feared the strength of democratic trade unionists.

A number of important qualities distinguish free trade unions from other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that promote democratic reform. First, unlike most NGOs, they have a mass membership. Second, if they are run democratically, they can act as a training ground for democracy activists, who learn how to campaign on issues, muster support, and get themselves elected to union offices. And third, trade unions are one of the few NGOs that operate simultaneously in the social, economic, and political spheres, making them a potential counterweight to the concentrated power of economic and political elites.

It is no surprise, then, that a principal goal of totalitarians and dictators of both the right and the left has been to secure absolute control over organized labor and transform unions into pliant instruments of the party-state. Communist movements of the past, which claimed to draw legitimacy from the working classes, were particularly eager to capture and destroy independent labor organizations.

Today, repressive regimes are still wary of the power of organized workers. In a number of societies, unions and workers remain in the forefront of movements that seek human rights, fair elections, a free press, and laws to stem rampant corruption. Unions have played a crucial role, for example, in the effort to bring reforms to Zimbabwe in the face of murderous reprisals by the regime of President Robert Mugabe. In South Africa, it was the labor movement that prevented the transshipment of Chinese weapons to Zimbabwe at a time when the government of President Thabo Mbeke went out of its way to befriend Mugabe. In Iran, bus drivers and other workers have been important forces in the struggle for democracy; threatening statements issued in recent months by the country‘s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, have paid special attention to the role of workers in the opposition. In Guinea, unions were a critical force in demonstrations that sought democratic change, and union members were prominent among those massacred by the country‘s military junta in September 2009. And in Venezuela, unions have strongly resisted attempts by President Hugo Chavez to bring the entire labor movement under his personal control.

The political leaderships of many authoritarian countries—such as Russia, China, Iran, and Egypt—are acutely aware of the Solidarity example and are determined to forestall a repetition on their territory. However, only the most oppressive regimes—North Korea and Cuba, for example—exert the degree of tight control that marked previous eras, and relatively few countries respond to trade union activism with the sort of thuggery employed by Mugabe. Just as they have developed sophisticated mechanisms to muzzle independent voices in the media, control the activities of civil society organizations, and marginalize opposition political parties, modern authoritarian regimes have devised more nuanced strategies to keep organized labor under control. Thus the Communist Party leadership in China has developed an approach that combines concessions to striking workers with efforts to restrict press attention to labor unrest, prevent labor complaints from reaching higher authorities in the state or party, and above all block the formation of a nationwide workers‘ movement that could become an autonomous source of power like Solidarity.

The problems of workers are not restricted to countries with authoritarian political environments. Societies that otherwise observe a wide array of democratic freedoms—those that tolerate robust debate in the media, are sensitive to the rights of minorities, and have adopted a series of policies to achieve gender equality—may still take steps to limit the power of trade unions as agents of collective bargaining and sources of independent political power. The most glaring example of this phenomenon is the United States. While the country has adopted laws that in principle guarantee the rights of workers to form unions, engage in collective bargaining, and conduct strikes and other forms of workplace protest, these rights have been circumscribed in practice over the past three decades through a combination of court decisions, political initiatives, and government policies.

The status of workers‘ rights must also be viewed within the context of a global decline in freedom of association. Authoritarian governments have singled out the institutions of civil society for special attention in recent years. Targets include democratic political parties, human rights organizations, women‘s advocates, groups that investigate corruption or monitor abuse by security services, organizations that seek legal reform, and groups that champion minority rights or religious freedom—organizations, in other words, that aim to provide ordinary people with a voice or influence on public policy.

#### It spills over – democratized labor creates a culture of participation that offsets authoritarian populism

Spiegelaere 18 [Stan De Spiegelaere is a researcher at the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI). "An Unlikely Cure For Populism: Workplace Democracy." https://socialeurope.eu/an-unlikely-cure-for-populism-workplace-democracy]

Trump in the White House, Orban in Hungary, the Law and Justice party in Poland, the AfD in Germany, Erdoğan in Turkey… It seems like the list of challenges to our democracies is becoming worryingly extensive. Time to act! And the area where one should act might surprise you: our companies.

Democracy lives on values of speaking up, participating in decision making and being involved. It’s when societies think their voices and votes don’t matter, that democracies are threatened in their core. Yet, the place where we spend a good deal of our active days, companies, is quite authoritarian. Speaking up is not always values, participating in decision making not welcome and don’t even think about suggesting to vote out your management.

Think about it. Our societies want us to spend about 40 hours a week in non-democratic environments, doing as we are told and at the same time be critical, voicing and engaged citizens in the remaining time. No surprise that many resolve this cognitive dissonance by retreating from political democracy altogether, with all due consequences.

Democracy starts at work

It’s not the first time our societies are confronted with this limbo between democracy and the capitalist organization of the firm. And many countries have found ways to at least lessen this painful spread by introducing some types of democracy in the companies: employees are given a vote. Not to choose the company management (yet), but to choose some representatives that can talk with the management on their behalf.

Unions, works councils and similar institutions take democracy down to the company floors. Imperfect, sure, but they give at least a slim democratic coating to our rather autocratic working lives. They enable workers to voice their demands, suggest changes and denounce issues without risking personal retaliation.

And by doing so, they create an environment in which individual employees feel more comfortable to speak up too about their own work. About how it can be improved, about when to do what. And these hands-on experiences of democracy breed a more general democratic culture. According to two recent studies, employees being involved in decision making about their work are more likely to be interested in politics, have a pro-democratic attitude, vote, sign a petition or be active in parties or action groups. And this is what democracy is all about. It’s more than just casting a vote every so often, it’s about being engaged and involved in decision making that affects you.

The picture is quite clear: if we want political democracy to succeed we need citizens to have practical experiences with participation and involvement. And where better to organize this then in companies by giving people a vote on their representatives and a say in how they do their day-to-day work. Empowered employees bring emancipated citizens. No coincidence the European Trade Union Confederation aims to put this back on the policy agenda.

Populism gives us a fish, workplace democracy teaches us how to fish

Lacking voice in the workplace, lacking hands on experiences with the (often difficult) democratic decision making, many turn to politicians promising to be their voice. “I am your voice” said Trump to working America in 2016. Similarly, the German AfD stressed to be the voice of the ‘little man’.

They all promise of restoring ‘real democracy’ by being their voice on the highest level. At the same time, all these populists take measures which break the voice of workers on the company level. Trump is making it harder for unions to organize or bargain collectively. In Hungary, the Orban government has limited the right to strike and made organizing more difficult.

#### Now is key – Trump stress-tested global democracy, shoring up cohesion now solves norms on emerging tech

Rasmussen 12/15 [Anders Fogh Rasmussen was NATO secretary general, 2009-14. He founded the Alliance of Democracies Foundation in 2017, "A New Way to Lead the Free World", 12/15/20, https://www.wsj.com/amp/articles/a-new-way-to-lead-the-free-world-11608053780]

President-elect Joe Biden has a queue of America’s weary allies outside his door. We are yearning for a determined leader and, from experience, I believe Joe Biden will seize this opportunity.

In 2018 I launched the first Copenhagen Democracy Summit, under the auspices of my Alliance of Democracies Foundation. The summit convenes national leaders, democracy activists, and representatives from tech and civil society to strengthen the forces of democracy. The former vice president opened the first summit and co-founded a new trans-Atlantic initiative, with former Republican Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff and me, to fight foreign election meddling.

Mr. Biden’s speech made a strong argument for renewing alliances and standing up for democracy. “Democracy’s all about one simple thing,” he said: “freedom, freedom, freedom.” During his campaign this year, he pledged to host a similar summit of democratic leaders as president.

America will lead the endeavor, but it won’t be alone. Democracies in the Indo-Pacific, from Taiwan to Australia, India and Japan, are also looking for like-minded friends to counter China’s aggressive posture.

In Europe, a post-Brexit U.K. will host the Group of Seven summit in 2021, bringing together the world’s top democratic and economic firepower. London intends to use this opportunity to make what one senior politician described to me as an “overture to the free world.” It has already floated a potential “Democratic 10,” or D-10, opening the top global table to other major democracies such as India, Australia and South Korea. And Britain will try to build new consensus on economic resilience in areas such as foreign subsidies, global trade reform and technological advancement.

It’s that last topic, tech, that poses an existential challenge for democracies. The world is in a figurative technological arms race. Whoever wins that race will lead in setting rules, standards and norms for emerging technological systems, from facial recognition to weapons of war. If China wins the race, freedom will wane

The free world should learn from its internal tussles over Huawei and TikTok and build a digital alliance to prepare for the next set of challenges. This includes setting common privacy standards for transferring the metadata needed to develop cutting-edge artificial intelligence, cooperating on how to regulate internet platforms, and combining firepower to develop telecom networks, quantum computing and artificial intelligence—all faster, better and freer than China.

Not every U.S. ally is fully convinced of the need for a global democratic caucus. France and Germany may be concerned that an alliance of democracies would supplant the global multilateral system represented by the United Nations. And a resurgence of the trans-Atlantic alliance could reduce the imperative for Europe to develop strategic independence from the U.S.

On both of these concerns, I disagree. Strengthening the global democratic alliance would enable member nations to rebuild multilateralism, not bypass it. We need to talk to China, about climate change and other struggles, but let’s do so from a position of relative strength. And Europe should simultaneously continue to be more self-sufficient and invest more in its own security, because a stronger Europe means a freer world.

Thirty years ago advanced democracies were told that they’d reached the “end of history,” and that the continued advance of freedom was inevitable. The opposite has been the case: Freedom has retreated as America retreated from its place as the global leader. We may not see a better opportunity again to recover from the West’s crippling disease of democratic self-doubt. It’s time to build an alliance of democracies.

#### European populism causes nuke war

von der Heyden 17 [Karl von der Heyden, Co-Chairman of the American Academy in Berlin, was awarded the Duke University Medal for Distinguished Meritorious Service, recipient of The International Center in New York's Award of Excellence, M.B.A. from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, “I Survived World War II. Nationalism Is a Path to War”, 2017, https://time.com/4815170/wwii-nationalism-donald-trump-america-first/]

This collective tendency to forget is not a new phenomenon. After the horrors of the Napoleonic Wars, Europe was given a new order of nation states under the Treaty of Vienna, signed in 1815. The new order lasted relatively well, surviving the revolutions of 1848 and the subsequent Crimean and Franco-Prussian wars. By the time World War I began in 1914, institutional and personal memories of the post-Napoleonic order had been weakened or forgotten.

Similarly, seventy years after World War II, millions of people in the U.S. and Europe have forgotten the lessons learned from that war and from the peace that followed. Nascent nationalist and popular movements converged in Britain to produce a vote to leave the [European Union](https://time.com/4696437/european-union-future-maastricht/). Similar coalitions heavily influence the American political scene today, as they do in Poland, Hungary and even the Netherlands. White House communications that appear to realign foreign policy put in place over the last half-century are beginning to concern America’s allies.

I understand why the “[America First](https://time.com/4569845/donald-trump-america-first/)” movement propagated by Donald Trump sounds patriotic to many voters, as do other movements that favor isolationism. It is natural to blame others for our failure to adjust to new technologies, to immigration and to competition from countries whose growth rates are higher than our own. But the truth is that the “America First” movement runs the risk that it could trigger a global decline in productivity. Free trade has benefitted the U.S, Europe and much of the rest of the world. Many new businesses, particularly in information technology, can now start with a global footprint on Day One instead of being confined to a local market. NATO has preserved the freedom of the Western World from Communism. It has recently become more relevant again in view of the Russia’s efforts to disrupt it.

Perhaps most worrisome is the apparent cooling of relations between European NATO allies and the United States, which has compelled German Chancellor [Angela Merkel](https://time.com/4797241/angela-merkel-us-german-tensions-g7-summit/) to say, “The times when we could fully rely on others are to some extent over… We Europeans must really take our fate into our own hands.”

Problems arise when we start classifying our own and other countries as “winners” or “losers.” Free trade, immigration and the treatment of refugees will never be perfect — far from it. But the alternatives of walling off people, as well as trade, are worse. Appealing to ultra-nationalist and xenophobic feelings is playing with fire. With easy access to weapons of mass destruction, the danger is greater than ever.

Growing up in Germany, I saw the dangers of fascism and nationalism. I saw leaders who only made matters worse by appealing to the majority of voters who feared minorities and foreigners.

Anyone who appreciates history would know better than to make even casual references to the possibility of [nuclear war](http://www.cnn.com/2017/04/18/politics/kfile-trump-north-korea-nuclear-war/index.html).

#### European authoritarianism breaks the EU

Cassidi Beck 20. Masters Thesis in Political Science at Stellenbosch University. “The Rise of Strongmen Leaders: A Threat to Global Security”.

A power like the European Union can export stability to its surrounding neighbours, but once it becomes a hostile state, now only does it now export this stability, but it also destabilises the entire region (Drozdiak, 2017:213; Emmott, 2017:125; Kearns, 2018:3-5; Wright, 2017:96). Evidence suggests that an unstable EU will likely lead to increased conflict, as unity between nations is no longer fostered – if the transatlantic relationship is badly damaged, a host of economic and security interests will be at risk (Gillingham, 2018). The rejection of organisations that seek to build and sustain the liberal, rules-based order is highly problematic; “were the EU to collapse, the pressure and restraint currently being applied, albeit weakly, to countries violating its values would disappear and the residual commitment to those values in some governments may well disappear” (Kearns, 2018:214).

For instance, Hungary’s illiberalism fostered under Orban’s leadership particularly undermines the EU and is in clear breach of the values on which it was founded (Frankopan, 2018:49; King, 2017:29). Hungary shows disdain of the Union’s democratic accession criteria, as it increasingly ignores the very laws it agreed to abide by once it was admitted as a member state. If a one-member state radically deviates from the EUs criteria and constitutional traditions, and undermines the rule of law, this poses a significant risk to the health of the EU. If Hungary can benefit from EU membership while following its own form of government, it allows other nations, whether members of not, to feel emboldened to do the same (Bugaric, 2014:25). The deviation of the Orban government has not only disrupted EU actions in many arenas, but it has also developed contaminating effects on other member states, representing a danger for democratic and liberal cohesion of the EU (Agh, 2016:286; Lendvai, 2017:54).

Through the rise of illiberalism, the continuing conflict with Brussels and probing the limits of the EU’s power, the ramifications of the Strongmen’s actions could help foster EU fragmentation (Krastev, 2018:56). While the EU loses its credibility, not only are restraints on illiberal authoritarianism being removed, but it is being legitimised, giving it a massive boost across Europe and the world (Kearns, 2018:214). Leaders like Orban, Putin and Erdogan, along with rising European Strongmen, weaken the broader European convergence project. By asserting more national sovereignty and clawing back power from Brussels, Europe is undoubtedly heading towards a more fragmented future, or a long, slow collapse (Kagan, 2019:119; Kearns, 2018; Krastev, 2018:56).

The concern over European collapse is the volatility and insecurity it will likely create, as it is difficult to imagine a resulting liberal, open, tolerant and cooperative Europe. It will likely lead to difficulty in building consensus on key policy issues, including central issues such as migration, terrorism, climate change, trade and the rule of law (Drozdiak, 2017:81). The Transatlantic relationship would likely be damaged, which can lead to a host of European economic and security threats as states increasingly fail to cooperate (Kearns, 2018). The chaos of collapse would undermine the validity and credibility of the values and institutions that have been the foundation of the EU. They would be subject to harsher scrutiny while the cessation of cooperation would serve as a rebuke to all those claiming that international cooperation is essential to future progress. “The collapse of the EU would therefore be a historic defeat not only for the idea of European integration and cooperation but for a Europe of pluralistic governing institutions, serving a society built on the primacy of individual freedom” (Kearns, 2018:208). Without a democratic body like the EU monitoring the actions of Strongmen, it will become easier for nations to revert to illiberal forms of democracy. The current pressure and restraint being applied to countries violating its liberal democratic values would disappear and the residual commitment to those values in some governments may well disappear as well. For example, Hungary’s mistreatment of refugees and the Roma people would likely continue without consequence while Erdogan would be able to continue his mistreatment of human rights.

#### EU breakup causes nuclear war.

**Fiedler 18** [Lauren Fielder, Professor Fielder is Assistant Dean of Graduate and International Programs and Director of the Institute for Transnational Law at the University of Texas at Austin, ’18, “Is Nationalism the Most Serious Challenge to Human Rights? Warnings from BREXIT and Lessons from History,” 53 Tex. Int'l L.J. 212]

The political might of the EU is essential for peace and stability in the world. Brexit "fractures the Western alliance and weakens NATO solidarity and resolve." 224 The politics of scale and multilateralism foster peace and human rights with regard to third countries. 225 This can be seen in the work that the EU currently doing, albeit imperfectly, in trying to de-escalate the tension between Iran and Saudi Arabia, a source of the conflict brewing in Yemen. 226 The clearest example of these politics of scale is the essential role of the EU in aiding the peaceful transition of former Eastern Bloc states into largely democratic and open societies upon the end of the Cold War. 227 The entry requirements into the EU reflected this European identity, including democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for minorities. 228 However, the transition to democracy is not finished: "It still could (with the enthusiastic support from Moscow) go into reverse." 229 Putin's Russia has a vital interest in the breakup of the EU, 230 and we see that the threat of nuclear war is not far behind us. 231 Further, current destabilization in parts of the Balkans is reminiscent of past patterns that preceded violence in the region. 232

The end of the European Union could return Europe to, as one writer describes, the "dark days of poisonous tribal hatreds" in which destructive forces could unleash the undoing of 70 years of statesmanship. 233 Indeed, the last seven decades, the [\*234] European Union has largely been a "place of peace, stability, prosperity, cooperation, democracy, and social harmony." 234 However, "[we would] be wrong to assume the permanence of European political and economic stability … . Across the grand sweep of European history, countries and empires disintegrating into smaller governing units or being violently subsumed into larger empires is the norm." 235

The EU is not just an international economic organization; it is an organization created from the destruction brought about by two World Wars and designed to promote peace and prevent conflict. 236 European integration is doubtless problematic but "the alternative is so much worse." 237 The history of Europe is fraught with violent conflict: "War, twice in the Twentieth Century and for ages previously, has plagued the European continent." 238 Conflict stretches back across the entire history of Europe. There has been an almost unbroken chain of war from the fifteenth century to World War II fought over family rivalries, religion, deep hatreds, and territorial expansion. In the fifteenth century, the War of the Roses was fought over a dispute over title to the English throne. 239 In the sixteenth century, there were religious wars in Austria, Germany, France, and Spain over Catholicism and Protestantism. 240 The seventeenth century included the Thirty Years' War - a war that started over religion, but expanded to include territorial acquisition - the English Civil War, France's Dutch wars that were fought over frontiers, and the War of the League of Augsburg, which was possibly the first war over the Alsace-Lorraine. 241 In the eighteenth century, European countries fought to block the coalition of France and Spain in the War of Spanish Succession; and, also fought in the War of Austrian Succession, the Seven Years' War, and the French Revolution. 242 In the nineteenth century, there were the Napoleonic Wars to build an Empire, the second and third French Revolutions, the Wars for Italian Unification, the Crimean War - which was the first modern war, with massive casualty rates, mechanized warfare, and modern weapons - and the wars for German unification. 243 Finally, in the twentieth century, there was the Russian Revolution, the First and Second Balkan Wars, World War I, and World War II. 244

#### And, Spread of authoritarianism risks digital militarization---extinction.

Orts ’18 [Eric; June 27; Guardsmark Professor in the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania; LinkedIn Pulse, “Foreign Affairs: Six Future Scenarios (and a Seventh),” https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/foreign-affairs-six-future-scenarios-seventh-eric-orts]

7. Fascist Nationalism. There is another possible future that the Foreign Affairs scenarios do not contemplate, and it’s a dark world in which Trump, Putin, Xi, Erdogan, and others construct regimes that are authoritarian and nationalist. Fascism is possible in the United States and elsewhere if big business can be seduced by promises of riches in return for the institutional keys to democracy. Perhaps Foreign Affairs editors are right to leave this dark world out, for it would be very dark: nationalist wars with risks of escalation into global nuclear conflict, further digital militarization (even Terminator-style scenarios of smart military robots), and unchecked climate disasters.

The global challenges are quite large – and the six pieces do an outstanding job of presenting them. One must remain optimistic and engaged, hopeful that we can overcome the serious dangers of tribalism, nationalism, and new fascism. These "isms” of our time stand in the way of solving some of our biggest global problems, such as the risks of thermonuclear war and global climate catastrophe.

#### Democracy solves every impact by being comparatively more stable than autocracies

Kroenig 20 Matt. 4/3. Professor of government and foreign service at Georgetown University – you know who he is. “Why the U.S. Will Outcompete China” <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/04/why-china-ill-equipped-great-power-rivalry/609364/>) 1/20/2021

National-security analysts see China as one of the greatest threats facing the United States and its allies. According to an emerging conventional wisdom, China has the leg up on the U.S. in part because its authoritarian government can strategically plan for the long term, unencumbered by competing branches of government, regular elections, and public opinion. Yet this faith in autocratic ascendance and democratic decline is contrary to historical fact. China may be able to put forth big, bold plans—the kinds of projects that analysts think of as long term—but the visionary projects of autocrats don’t usually pan out. Watch White Noise, the inside story of the alt-right The Atlantic’s first feature documentary ventures into the underbelly of the far-right movement to explore the seductive power of extremism. Stream Now Yes, democratic governments are obligated to answer to their citizens on regular intervals and are sensitive to public opinion—that’s actually democracies’ greatest source of strength. Democratic leaders have a harder time advancing big, bold agendas, but the upside of that difficulty is that the plans that do make it through the system have been carefully considered and enjoy domestic support. Historically speaking, once a democracy comes up with a successful strategy, it sticks with the plan, even through a succession of leadership. Washington has arguably followed the same basic, three-step geopolitical plan since 1945. First, the United States built the current, rules-based international system by providing security in important geopolitical regions, constructing international institutions, and promoting free markets and democratic politics within its sphere of influence. Second, it welcomed into the club any country that played by the rules, even former adversaries, like Germany and Japan. And, third, the U.S. worked with its allies to defend the system from those countries or groups that would challenge it, including competitors such as Russia and China, rogue states such as Iran and North Korea, and terrorist networks. America can pursue long-term strategy in part because it enjoys domestic political stability. While new politicians seek to improve on their predecessor’s policies, the United States is unlikely to see the drastic shifts in strategy that come from the fall of one political system and the rise of another. Democratic elections may be messy, but they’re not as messy as coups or civil wars. Daniel Blumenthal: The Unpredictable Rise of China Open societies have many other advantages as well. They facilitate innovation, trust in financial markets, and economic growth. Because democracies tend to be more reliable partners, they are typically skillful alliance builders, and they can accumulate resources without frightening their neighbors. They tend to make thoughtful, informed decisions on matters of war and peace, and to focus their security forces on external enemies, not their own populations. Autocratic systems simply cannot match this impressive array of economic, diplomatic, and military attributes. David Leonhardt recently wrote in The New York Times, “Chinese leaders stretching back to Deng Xiaoping have often thought in terms of decades.” Commonly cited examples of that long-term thinking include the Belt and Road Initiative, a program that invests in infrastructure overseas; Made in China 2025, an effort to subsidize China’s giant tech companies to become world leaders in 21st-century technologies, such as artificial intelligence; and Beijing’s promise to be a global superpower by 2049. Since putting in place sound economic reforms in the 1970s, China has seen its economy expand at eye-popping rates, to become the world’s second largest. Many economists predict that China could even surpass the United States within the decade, and some have suggested that China’s model of state-led capitalism will prove more successful, in terms of economic growth, than the U.S. template of free markets and open politics. I doubt these predictions. Because autocratic leaders are unconstrained and do not have to contend with a legislature or courts, they have an easier time taking their countries in new and radically different directions. Then, when the dictator changes his mind, he can do it again. Mao’s autocratic China ricocheted from one failed policy to another: the Great Leap Forward, then the Hundred Flowers Campaign, then the Cultural Revolution. Mao aligned with the Soviet Union in 1950 only to nearly fight a nuclear war with Moscow in the next decade. Beginning in the time of Deng Xiaoping, China pursued a fairly constant strategy of liberalizing its economy at home and “hiding its capabilities and biding its time” abroad. But President Xi Jinping abandoned these dictums when he took over. As the most powerful leader since Mao—he has changed China’s constitution to set himself up as dictator for life—he could once again jerk China in several new directions, according to his whims, and back again. According to the Asia Society, he has stalled or reversed course on eight of 10 categories of economic reform promised by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) itself. Moreover, Xi is baring China’s teeth militarily, taking contested territory from neighbors in the South China Sea and conducting military exercises with Russia in Europe. The problem for Beijing is that stalled reforms will stymie its economic potential and its confrontational policies are provoking an international coalition to contain them. The 2017 U.S. National Security Strategy declared great-power competition with China the foremost security threat to the U.S.; the European Union labeled China a “systemic rival”; and Japan, Australia, India, and the United States have formed a new “quad” of powers to balance China in the Pacific. Furthermore, the plans often cited as evidence of China’s farsighted vision, the Belt and Road Initiative and Made in China 2025, were announced by Xi only in 2013 and 2015, respectively. Both are way too recent to be celebrated as brilliant examples of successful, long-term strategic planning. A certain level of domestic political stability is a prerequisite for charting a steady strategic course in foreign and domestic affairs. But autocratic regimes are notoriously brittle. While institutionalized political successions in democracies typically lead to changes of policy, political successions in autocracies are likely to result in regime collapse and war. China’s “5,000 years of history” were pockmarked by rebellion, revolution, and new dynasties. Fearing internal threats to domestic political stability—consider the protests this year in Hong Kong and Xinjiang—the CCP spends more on domestic security than on its national defense. If you follow the money, the CCP is demonstrating that the government is more afraid of its own people than of the Pentagon. This domestic fragility will frustrate China’s efforts to design and execute farsighted plans. If threats to Chinese domestic stability were to materialize and the CCP were to collapse tomorrow, for example, Chinese grand strategy could undergo another seismic shift, including possibly opting out of competition with the United States altogether. Shadi Hamid: China Is Avoiding Blame by Trolling the World Autocracies have other vulnerabilities as well. State-led planning has never produced high rates of economic growth over the long term. Autocrats are poor alliance builders who fight with their supposed allies more than with their enemies. And the highest priority of autocratic security forces is repressing their own people, not defending the country. The world has undergone drastic changes in just the past few years, but these enduring patterns of international affairs have not. Some fear that Trump’s nationalist tendencies will erode the U.S. position, but the momentum of America’s successful grand strategy has kept the country on a fairly steady course. Despite Trump’s criticism of NATO, for example, two new countries have joined the alliance on his watch, including North Macedonia this week. The coronavirus has upended a sense of security in the U.S., leading many people into the familiar trap of lauding autocratic China’s firm response in contrast to the halting and patchwork measures in the United States. But there is good reason to believe that this assessment will be updated in America’s favor with the benefit of hindsight. Already we are seeing evidence that conditions are much worse in China than CCP officials are letting on and that China’s attempts at international “disaster diplomacy” are backfiring. It has been revealed that the CCP has continually misrepresented the numbers of COVID-19 infections and deaths in China, and European nations have rejected and returned faulty Chinese coronavirus testing kits.

#### Democratic regress causes global war.

Diamond ’19 [Larry; 2019; Professor of Sociology and Political Science and at Stanford University, Ph.D. in Sociology from Stanford University; Ill Winds, “Conclusion: A New Birth of Freedom,” Ch. 14]

In such a near future, my fellow experts would no longer talk of “democratic erosion.” We would be spiraling downward into a time of democratic despair, recalling Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s grim observation from the 1970s that liberal democracy “is where the world was, not where it is going.” 5

The world pulled out of that downward spiral—but it took new, more purposeful American leadership. The planet was not so lucky in the 1930s, when the global implosion of democracy led to a catastrophic world war, between a rising axis of emboldened dictatorships and a shaken and economically depressed collection of self-doubting democracies.

These are the stakes. Expanding democracy—with its liberal norms and constitutional commitments—is a crucial foundation for world peace and security. Knock that away, and our most basic hopes and assumptions will be imperiled.

The problem is not just that the ground is slipping. It is that we are perched on a global precipice. That ledge has been gradually giving way for a decade. If the erosion continues, we may well reach a tipping point where democracy goes bankrupt suddenly—plunging the world into depths of oppression and aggression that we have not seen since the end of World War II. As a political scientist, I know that our theories and tools are not nearly good enough to tell us just how close we are getting to that point—until it happens.

#### Disengagement unleashes power vacuums that go nuclear.

Hadley ’17 [Stephen; March 21; Chair of the Board of Directors at the United States Institute of Peace, former director of the National Security Council, J.D. from Yale University; United States Institute of Peace, “America’s Role in the World,” https://www.usip.org/publications/2017/03/americas-role-world]

Over the past seventy years, Democratic and Republican administrations alike have understood that American security and prosperity at home are linked to economic and political health abroad, and that America does better when other countries have the incentive and the capacity to work alongside us in tackling global challenges. This is why we constructed a system of international institutions and security alliances after World War II. They provided a framework for advancing economic openness and political freedom in the years that followed.

The international order America built and led has not been perfect, but it has coincided with a period of security and prosperity unmatched in human history. And while many nations benefited from the investments America made in global security and prosperity, none benefited more than the United States.

Yet today, the value of America’s global engagement is under question. A substantial number of Americans feel that their lives and livelihoods have been threatened rather than enhanced by it. They view international trade as having shuttered the factories at which they worked, immigrants as threatening their standard of living or safety, and globalization as undermining American culture.

This popular dissatisfaction needs to be understood and acknowledged. Washington needs to ensure that the benefits of America’s international engagement are shared by all of our citizens. But we also need to be clear about the consequences of disengagement. For while it is comforting to believe that we can wall ourselves off from the ailments of the world, history teaches us that whenever problems abroad are allowed to fester and grow, sooner or later, they come home to America.

Isolationism and retreat do not work; we know because we have tried them before. We also know, from recent experience, that if America recedes from the global stage, people in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East will increasingly look elsewhere for inspiration and guidance – whether to authoritarianism or extremist ideology.

In our opinion, such a shift would be harmful to the interests of those populations, but it would be harmful above all to the interests of the United States, because our security and our prosperity depend on having friends abroad that share our values – including our belief in the rule of law, freedom of movement, and access to markets.

Neither Russia nor China proclaim the same loyalty to those principles as we do. Were they to fill a vacuum left by the United States, it could very well mark a return to a balance of power system, where the world’s major powers competed militarily for territory and spheres of influence at great human and financial cost. This is a world to which none of us should want to return.

America’s continued global leadership cannot be taken for granted, but a retreat into isolationism is not preordained. We have an opportunity – and, in our view, an obligation – to defend those aspects of the international system that work in the twenty-first century, and to adapt those that do not.

In doing so, we should acknowledge that the existing order is in need of revision and refurbishment. The international system was designed for a different era, and it requires a renewal of purpose and a reform of its structures. Its mission should more clearly extend beyond preventing war in Europe to include stabilizing other strategic regions that affect our well-being. Its approach should reflect the fact that long-term stability depends on well-governed states whose leaders are seen as legitimate by their people. And its structure must be adapted to the realities of a world in which power is more diffuse, so other countries can take on a greater role commensurate with the contributions they make and the responsibilities they assume.

China, Russia, and other countries should understand that there is a larger place for them at the decision-making table, provided they are constructive and respect the interests of other nations. And they need to understand that there will be costs if they do not.

For this and other reasons, U.S. military power will remain vital in a renewed international order. We appreciate this committee’s efforts to ensure that our military remains the best-trained, best-equipped, and best-led force on earth. Given the variety of threats facing our country, it makes sense to continue upgrading and enhancing our country’s military capabilities and deterrent power. But we strongly believe that it would be a mistake to increase defense spending at the expense of other critical investments in national security – especially those in diplomacy, development, democracy, and peacebuilding.

We know from experience that force, and the credible possibility of its use, are essential to defend our vital interests and keep America safe. But as one of us has said in the past, force alone can be a blunt instrument, and there are many problems it cannot solve. The military leaders who so frequently testify before this committee would be the first to tell you that they cannot succeed in their missions without the vital capabilities that our civilian agencies bring to the table. Gutting these capabilities will put an unacceptable burden on our men and women in uniform, and would make America less safe. We need to fund these other civilian elements of American power as robustly as we do the military element. We recognize that government can always be made more efficient and effective, but the best way to accomplish that goal is to build a budget based on a sound strategy. This administration first needs to take the time to staff the Departments and agencies, and to develop a national security strategy. As members of the legislative branch, it is your responsibility to ensure that every dollar is spent wisely, but it also your responsibility to protect our national security institutions from arbitrary and senseless cuts.

The Middle East Strategy Task Force

No region has seen more death and suffering or presented more challenges to the international order than the Middle East, with outcomes that have frustrated both Democratic and Republican administrations. The Middle East is likely to be an important test case in the coming years – the region in which the international order gets rejuvenated for a new era or ceases to function entirely.

From 2015 to 2016, we served as Co-Chairs of the Atlantic Council’s Middle East Strategy Task Force, which sought to understand better the underlying challenges in the region and to articulate a long-term strategy for meeting them. Our goal was not to develop a new U.S. strategy, but to understand the role that the U.S. can play in supporting a larger international effort led by the region itself.

One of our initial insights was that we face not just a crisis in the Middle East, but from the Middle East having global impact. The roots of this crisis lie in a long history of poor governance in many states in the region. The Arab Spring was a consequence of the dissatisfaction of increasingly connected and empowered citizens with a number of political leaders who ruled ineptly and often corruptly. Where leaders sought to quash these popular protests by force, the result in most cases was civil war.

The four civil wars raging in the Middle East – in Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Yemen – have had destabilizing consequences for the region and beyond. They have produced the ungoverned spaces and grievances that have allowed terrorist groups to direct or inspire attacks in the West. They have also created the greatest worldwide refugee crisis since the Second World War, the devastating human cost of which has been coupled with profound effects on our own domestic politics and those of Europe.

The challenges we face in the Middle East bear some resemblance to those of post-war Europe. Countries torn apart by war will need to determine the new shape of their governments, and how those governments interact with their people. The entire state system will need to be shored up so that countries are less prone to subversion, supported by effective regional institutions to mediate conflicts and prevent them from spiraling into all-out war.

But there are also important differences between the modern Middle East and post-war Europe. There is no magnanimous victor in the mold of the Allies, with the will and capability to reshape the region from the outside. New global and political realities mean that no Marshall Plan is in the offing for the rebuilding of the Middle East. The American people have no appetite for this, and the people of the region, too, are tired of being beholden to outside powers. The Middle East must chart its own vision for the future.

There is reason for hope. The fact is that now, more than any time in the Middle East’s modern history, the region has significant capabilities and resources of its own to define and work toward this vision and secure better opportunities for its people. And more than ever, there are also indications that people and some governments in the Middle East have the will to take on the region’s hard challenges.

Although not always evident at first glance, there are promising developments happening in the Middle East, even in the most unexpected places. In Saudi Arabia, female entrepreneurs are founding startup companies at a rate three times that of women in Silicon Valley, as they begin to claim their rightful place in Saudi civic life. In Egypt, the social enterprise Nafham is using technological solutions to address the problem of overcrowding in Egyptian schools. And in Jordan, Syrian refugees are using innovative 3D printing technology to help develop more affordable prosthetic limb components for friends and neighbors who bear the physical scars of Bashar Assad’s war on his own people. The region’s vast population of educated youth, commonly understood to be a liability, can in fact be a tremendous asset.

Some governments are beginning to understand that their future depends on promoting these efforts and partnering with their people to build a common future. Tunisia is showing that revolution need not result in either chaos or authoritarianism, but can begin a transition to an inclusive, democratic future. The UAE has led the way for positive economic and social reforms and Saudi Arabia has now adopted its own vision for the future. Jordan is making its own efforts. These can be examples for other countries in the region.

Renewed and enhanced American leadership is needed in the Middle East. But not to impose our will militarily or otherwise. Instead, America has a clear interest in supporting and accelerating the positive changes that are already happening. The goal of our strategy in the region should be to help the Middle East move from the current vicious cycle in which it finds itself to a more virtuous one -- one in which the Middle East no longer spawns violence and refugees, is not a drain on international resources, and does not through its instability and political vacuums aggravate great power competition.

With this goal in mind, US foreign policy toward the Middle East should be informed by a set of guiding principles that represent the new reality of the region since 2011.

First, the old order is gone and is not coming back. Stability will not be achieved until a new regional order takes shape. The region should assume the principal responsibility for defining this new order, which should offer the people of the region the prospect of a stable and prosperous future free from both terrorist violence and government oppression.

Second, disengagement is not a practical solution for the West. Disengagement will only allow the region’s problems to spread and deepen unchecked, creating further threats. Instead, it is in the interest of the United States and others to help the Middle East achieve a more peaceful vision. But their role must be different from what it has been in the past. Rather than dictating from the outside how countries should behave, they should support and facilitate the positive efforts that some people and governments in the region are beginning to take