

THE GLOBAL CENTURY

GLOBALIZATION AND
NATIONAL SECURITY

VOLUME I

Introduction: Policies for a Globalized World

For a term that entered the vernacular only a few years ago, *globalization* has come a long way. It is now a household word, spawning books, newspaper stories, public debates, and protest movements. While people argue about whether its effects are good or bad, virtually nobody doubts its importance. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has spoken of its criticality. *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*¹ proclaimed globalization as the transforming reality of our times, one that will have a major impact on the 21st century. Because this judgment seems correct, globalization requires careful study not only to understand its properties but also to determine how best to deal with it. Like all powerful changes capable of propelling the entire world toward an uncertain destination, a dynamic this important is not something to be taken for granted.²

Globalization already is the subject of a burgeoning literature about its key features. Even so, its widespread consequences and policy implications are not yet well understood. To be sure, globalization is reshaping the world economy and altering how people communicate with each other. But its impact seems destined to be even broader and more strategic. In potent ways, globalization likely will affect how international security affairs unfold in the coming years. Directly or indirectly, it will help determine whether the future brings war or peace. As a result, it will influence not only American economic policies but also overall U.S. foreign policy and national security strategy, including defense strategy and military forces. For these reasons, the time has arrived for a serious examination of globalization, where it is taking the world, and how it can best be channeled in healthy directions.

The Global Century: Globalization and National Security is a two-volume work. Volume I provides an overall framework. It focuses on globalization's impact on world affairs and on the task of forging responsive U.S. policies and strategies. Volume II provides additional analyses of specific global and regional trends, and of policies for dealing with them. Scholarly in their tone and content, both volumes aim to illuminate and educate, not advocate. They do not put forth any single theory of globalization's future or a fixed policy blueprint to follow. Indeed, they present a wide range of opinions, interpretations, and recommendations from more than 50 experts drawn from multiple disciplines and specializations. They offer core themes, including a weighty sense of globalization's strategic essence and an insightful portrayal of the policy choices facing the United States and other countries. Their goal is to help inform the reader about globalization, its consequences, and its policy implications.

The stage for both volumes can best be set by briefly explaining what is meant by *globalization*. The dictionary defines the term as “the act of making something global or worldwide in scope and application.” As used here, globalization is a dynamic process of change characterized by the growing cross-border flows of trade, investments, finances, technology, ideas, cultures, values, and people. It thus measures the pulse of international activity today and tomorrow. As noted in *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, this process of accelerating interaction is drawing countries and regions closer together, creating a growing web of ties in both geographical and functional terms. In practical terms, it means that events halfway around the world can now profoundly affect our lives, including our safety and prosperity. This definition of globalization is meant to be empirical and neutral. It implies nothing about whether globalization will produce overall progress or regression, or whether it rewards one policy over another. The task of making these evaluative judgments rests with the authors.

This book begins with a chapter written by Stephen J. Flanagan that summarizes the main messages of both volumes. Part I provides 5 chapters that help put globalization into strategic and policy perspective. Part II offers 10 chapters that address emerging priorities for U.S. foreign policy and national security strategy. Part III offers 10 chapters on the challenges facing U.S. defense strategy, military forces, and naval power.

Taken together, the 26 chapters of volume I make it clear that in the coming years, the United States and many other countries will face a strong imperative to design wise, effective policies for handling globalization. The reason is clear. Globalization helps promote progress abroad by encouraging market capitalism, democracy, the free flow of information, and cooperative security affairs. But it also can contribute to economic dislocation, political turmoil, inflamed security rivalries, and even war. Globalization should be neither wholly celebrated nor wholly vilified, but instead seen for what it is worth and the complex changes that it produces. Acting in concert with other trends on the world scene, globalization can have both good and bad effects. Much depends upon the regional settings in which it occurs. Whereas the wealthy democracies are well situated to benefit from globalization, other regions present a more complicated picture. There and elsewhere, globalization is far from a purely impersonal force. Its course will be greatly influenced by how governments everywhere react to it. If governments design sound policies for handling globalization, they will greatly enhance their prospects for channeling it in directions that promote progress and minimize its damaging effects. In essence, globalization has the potential to become whatever governments, countries, and people around the world decide to make of it.

Because the United States is a global power, the policy agenda confronting it will be especially important, demanding, and different from past agendas. The United States will need to think and act globally like never before. It will need not only to see the world as a whole but also to consider the changing relationships among its parts. Clearly, the United States will need to forge sound policies for handling globalization’s powerful economic dynamics. But the challenge does not end there. The United States also will need to work hard at blending its foreign economic policies

with its diplomacy and its national security strategy abroad. Prospects for war or peace will be determined by how economic, political, and security affairs interact in the coming years. The United States can best safeguard its own interests, encourage progress, and lessen impending dangers by ensuring that its policies in these and other areas work together, not alone or at cross-purposes. Acting in these ways will not be easy. Indeed, the U.S. Government will face difficult challenges in harnessing its many departments and agencies to this demanding task. It will need to design new ways of making and carrying out foreign policy and national security strategy in the Global Century.

The United States also will face the challenge of forging its defense strategy and military forces to meet the new requirements being created by globalization and other trends. In the past, the Department of Defense has not viewed globalization as a major consideration in defense planning. But the reality is that globalization will have a profound impact on future international security affairs. It will lessen some security dangers, but it will magnify others. It will help give rise to new military missions, purposes, and priorities in new geographical locations. It will influence the ways in which future wars are fought. The United States will need to remain the world's strongest military power. Working in concert with allies and partners, it also will need to use its military forces to shape the strategic terrain in peacetime, to respond to crises and other situations, and to win the wars of the future. For these reasons, an agenda of change lies ahead in U.S. defense strategy. This judgment applies to the full spectrum of U.S. military forces, but it holds especially true for the Navy and maritime operations: areas where the new demands and requirements of globalization will be powerfully manifested.

Will the U.S. Government and other countries respond effectively? Only time will tell. What can be said is that the challenge of shaping the new Global Century is already upon us. The time to act is now. 🌐

Notes

¹ The White House, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, December 1999).

² In a recent public opinion poll of American attitudes, fully 87 percent of respondents said that they are aware of globalization; 30 percent said it is good for the United States; 22 percent said it is bad; and 25 percent said it makes no difference. See *The Washington Post*, October 27, 2000, A13.