

# THE GLOBAL CENTURY

GLOBALIZATION AND  
NATIONAL SECURITY

VOLUME II

# Introduction: Dealing with Diverse Trends

Globalization is here to stay. Recent events make it clear that globalization is neither a passing fad nor an overly ballyhooed player on the world scene. Governments everywhere now take it seriously, and if recent protests are an indicator, their populations are starting to take it seriously as well. Indeed, globalization seems likely to make the 21st century the first truly Global Century. In past centuries, the course of human destiny was determined by the actions of only a few countries. In this Global Century, it will be determined by how countries and people all over the world act and interact. In essence, globalization is turning the entire world into a single stage, upon which a vast and compelling drama is unfolding.

Globalization's growing importance, however, says nothing about the kind of future that will evolve. Critical questions leap to the fore, and they demand answers. What will be globalization's strategic consequences, not only for the world economy and information era but also for future security affairs? Will globalization make the world more peaceful and prosperous, or will it have the opposite effect? What implications does globalization have for U.S. policies and for those of other countries? Can these countries rely upon globalization to produce progress on its own? Or will they need to influence and shape globalization in order to capitalize on its opportunities and ward off its dangers?

*The Global Century: Globalization and National Security* is a two-volume work that examines globalization's strategic consequences and policy implications. Whereas volume I provides an overall framework, volume II provides added insights on globalization's all-important and diverse details. As volume I makes clear, globalization is an uneven process that raises important policy challenges for the United States and other countries seeking to harness its forces. Volume II shows how globalization is manifesting itself in different ways and in different places. It brings the main themes laid down by volume I into clearer light and sharper relief. The two volumes thus work together and reinforce each other.

Exactly what is globalization? It can usefully be defined as the growing cross-border flow of trade, investments, finances, technology, information, ideas, values, cultures, and people. It thus measures the pulse of international activity today and tomorrow. This process of accelerating interactions is drawing countries and regions closer together, creating an expanding web of ties in geographical and functional ways. In practical terms, it means that events halfway around the world can now profoundly affect our lives, safety, and prosperity. This definition of globalization is meant to be neutral and empirical. It implies nothing about whether globalization will

produce progress or regression, or whether it favors one policy over another. The task of making these evaluations rests with the authors of both volumes.

The first part of this volume contains 12 chapters on how globalization is manifesting itself in a wide variety of different functional areas. It presents chapters on trends in alliances, the worldwide information net, multinational business corporations, the developing world, religion and culture, alternative foreign policies, the media, oil resources, international organized crime and terrorism, international law, and weapons proliferation. Together, these chapters exemplify the theme that globalization is not a uniform process pushing the world in a single direction. Instead, globalization is a diverse and multi-headed process that is producing unity in some ways, but fragmentation in others.

In addressing trends in different regions, the final 11 chapters further develop this theme of diverse strategic consequences and policy implications. As this section makes clear, the wealthy democracies of North America, Europe, and parts of Asia find themselves challenged in several ways, but overall, they seem well situated to benefit from globalization because they possess responsive governments, economies, and societies. Other countries and regions present a more complex picture. Latin America is laboring to consolidate democracy and build more prosperous economies. Such major regions as Eurasia, the Greater Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, and parts of Asia are struggling to surmount their own major difficulties and adapt to a globalized world. There and elsewhere, globalization often is seen as a mixed blessing, and sometimes it is even resented as a threat of disruption and domination allegedly being created by the United States and its allies.

The bottom line is that much depends upon the setting in which globalization occurs, the ability of countries to react effectively to its powerful and unsettling changes, and the inherent characteristics of each region. Much also depends upon the specific path that globalization takes, which can vary greatly from one region to the next. For example, a region's economy is clearly important, but its security affairs can be equally important. Whereas a stable security climate can help countries cooperate in ways that bring progress, an unstable climate can have the opposite effect. For these reasons, globalization should be seen as neither the world's savior nor a one-way ticket to a new Dark Ages. While nobody can pretend to know where the future is headed, globalization seems capable of bringing the world together, tearing it apart, or combining the two.

Globalization is propelled partly by impersonal dynamics, but it should be channeled by wise government policies aimed at promoting its beneficial features and dampening its harmful ones. Both volumes I and II make clear that forging such policies is a key challenge facing the United States and other countries—both for now and a long time to come. 🌐