

Where are U.S. national security strategy, defense plans, and diplomacy headed in the coming years? One answer to this important question comes from seven official studies issued in 2010. These studies provide an impressive welter of goals and activities, and they announce major innovations in U.S. policies. But they are hard to absorb in a single setting, and their interrelationships can be hard to determine unless viewed together. To help readers better understand them, this book assembles them into a single exposition, thereby providing “one stop shopping.” It describes them individually, shows how they blend together, and evaluates their strengths and limitations.

Five of these studies were written by the U.S. Government, and two were written by teams of independent experts, working with official sponsorship. The studies are:

- *National Security Strategy* (NSS 2010), issued by the White House in May 2010
- *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (QDR Report), issued by the Department of Defense (DOD) in February 2010
- *The QDR in Perspective: Meeting America’s National Security Needs in the 21st Century* (QDRP Report), mandated by Congress and DOD and issued by an independent study group in August 2010
- *Nuclear Posture Review Report* (NPR Report), issued by DOD in April 2010
- *Ballistic Missile Defense Review Report* (BMDR Report), issued by DOD in February 2010
- *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement* (ASDE Report), issued by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Group of Experts in May 2010

- *Leading Through Civilian Power: The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* (QDDR Report), issued by the Department of State in December 2010.

Separate Reports That Forge a Comprehensive Blueprint. While each of these studies deserves to be treated on its own merits, they are collectively important as they create a comprehensive blueprint for how future U.S. security efforts are to evolve. Together, they argue that if their policies are pursued in tandem, the United States can protect its homeland, advance its interests abroad, be prepared for future missions, help defend its allies, and dampen dangerous international trends while preserving peace and preventing war. NSS 2010 puts forth a new strategy that employs American economic renewal and a “whole of government” approach as engines for driving an assertive, refocused strategy of engagement abroad for handling today’s challenges and shaping a stable future international security order. Although NSS 2010 was issued ex post facto a few months after several of the other reports were published, it provides an overarching political framework for appraising how the other six studies of defense strategies and diplomacy fit together. The QDR Report puts forth a new agenda for U.S. conventional defense plans that emphasizes improvements to capabilities for current wars while maintaining flexible and adaptable forces for the future. The QDRP Report—a critique of the QDR Report—calls for an improved force-sizing construct, a larger Navy, more vigorous modernization, and reforms to the weapons-acquisition process. The NPR Report calls for strong policies to prevent nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism, reduces the role that nuclear weapons play in U.S. defense strategy, endorses the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), and preserves a smaller but modernizing nuclear triad posture. The BMDR Report puts forth a sea-change in U.S. strategy by calling for widespread deployment of SM–3 missile interceptors in order to provide stronger regional missile defenses and security architectures in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. The ASDE Report calls for NATO to adopt a new strategic concept and to improve its capabilities for expeditionary missions, cyber defense, and other new missions. The QDDR

Report calls for sweeping reforms of the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development in order to do a better job of carrying out U.S. diplomacy and development policies in troubled regions.

Lingering Issues. All of these studies are well written and cogently argued, but all leave unresolved issues in their wake. In addition to not fully addressing global political constraints ahead, the NSS 2010 does not provide enough analysis of regional priorities, adequately treat the risk of big-power competition, or address strategy options if Iran acquires nuclear weapons. The QDR Report fails to give full attention to long-term imperatives including force requirements, joint operations, and modernization. The QDRP Report fails to address how a larger Navy and a more robust modernization plan are to be funded. The NPR Report does not provide enough analysis showing whether its counterproliferation policies will succeed, and does not specify how additional nuclear force reductions beyond New START can unfold. The BMDR Report endorsement of regional SM-3 deployments is predicated on the assumption that regional allies and partners will agree with U.S. deployment plans. The ASDE Report agenda for improving NATO capabilities does not take into account the negative effects of austerity budgets and defense cutbacks across Europe. The QDDR Report fails to adequately address substantive priorities for diplomacy and development policies in troubled regions and to analyze how classical diplomacy—for example, big-power relations—will need to change.

Future Analytical Challenges. While the seven studies equip U.S. national security strategy and defense plans with new goals, policies, and priorities, they do not preclude the need for further thinking, analyzing, and refining. For example, they will require additional attention to the challenges of creating new regional security architectures in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Thus, they open the door to a new era of studies and analyses whose dimensions are only beginning to be understood.