

Where are U.S. national security strategy, defense plans, and diplomacy headed in the coming years? An answer to this important question comes from seven official studies that have been issued during 2010. This volume assembles these studies into a common framework, examines their individual contents, shows how they work together to forge a comprehensive official blueprint for the future, and evaluates them individually and collectively. Five of these studies were written by the U.S. Government; two were written by teams of independent experts but had official sponsorship. The studies are:

- *National Security Strategy*, issued by the White House in May 2010
- *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, issued by the Department of Defense (DOD) in February 2010
- *The QDR in Perspective: Meeting America's National Security Needs in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, mandated by Congress and DOD and issued by an independent study group in August 2010
- *Nuclear Posture Review Report*, issued by DOD in April 2010
- *Ballistic Missile Defense Review Report*, issued by DOD in February 2010
- *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement*, issued by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Group of Experts in May 2010
- *Leading Through Civilian Power: The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, issued by the Department of State in December 2010.

The first study describes the basics of U.S. national security strategy for the coming years, including core goals, concepts, and activities for guiding foreign policy and diplomacy worldwide. The next four studies bore down into the associated details of U.S. defense planning, including conventional

and nuclear forces and missile defenses. The sixth study examines the issues surrounding the Alliance's strategic concept and defense improvement plans. The final study analyzes future U.S. diplomacy and development policies, and focuses on reforms to the Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development internal structures and operations.

While each of these studies has a purpose of its own in ways that demand careful appraisal, they need to be viewed collectively because they are interdependent, and together they aspire to cover much of the waterfront for U.S. security strategy and future directions for defense plans and diplomacy. A collective appraisal can illuminate their interrelationships, show how they form a cohesive whole, and reveal their strengths, shortcomings, and lingering issues. Whereas roughly 75 percent of the following pages are devoted to describing and explaining the seven studies, 25 percent are devoted to critiquing them.

The purpose of this volume is not only to help educate readers, but also to evaluate emerging U.S. strategies, policies, and plans. This work addresses each of these seven studies individually in sequential order. In each case, it endeavors to summarize the main features of the study and to evaluate its contents. At the end, this book examines how these studies interlock to form an overall blueprint, identifies lingering issues that call for further analysis, and offers constructive ideas for further research and analyses.

A main theme emerges from the following pages, one that derives from the highly interactive nature of each of the seven studies. Taken together, these studies provide an impressive edifice of goals, policies, plans, and activities in ways that often surpass earlier official efforts. They aptly illustrate the complex challenges facing the United States, the need to handle them effectively, and the necessity of employing a wide range of instruments, military and civilian. They put forth many fresh ideas and innovative departures—for example, building effective regional missile defenses—even as they foster continuity in areas deemed appropriate. They argue that if their strategies and plans are pursued with energy and adequate resources, the United States can aspire to protect its vital interests and those of its allies in the coming years while also contributing to a stable international order.

Nonetheless, these studies are not perfect, they do not resolve all controversies, and, at times, they seem to create gaps or at least leave unresolved issues in their wake. The task facing the U.S. Government will be one of building upon these studies in order to further strengthen them.