Transcending Traditional U.S. Foreign Policy: Track Two Diplomacy and the Challenge of Global Religious Diversity

2010 – 2011 UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWS REPORT

A PROJECT OF THE DOYLE ENGAGING DIFFERENCE INITIATIVE
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The Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University, created within the Office of the President in 2006, is dedicated to the interdisciplinary study of religion, ethics, and public life. Through research, teaching, and service, the Center explores global challenges of democracy and human rights; economic and social development; international diplomacy; and interreligious understanding. Two premises guide the Center’s work: that a deep examination of faith and values is critical to address these challenges, and that the open engagement of religious and cultural traditions with one another can promote peace.

About the Doyle Initiative

The Doyle Engaging Difference Initiative serves the entire Georgetown University community and is a campus-wide collaboration between the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, the Center for New Designs in Learning and Scholarship (CNDLS) and Georgetown College designed to deepen the university’s own commitment to tolerance and diversity and enhance global awareness of the challenges and opportunities of an era of increasing interconnectedness. The Doyle Initiative is made possible by a generous gift from alumnus and Board of Directors member William J. Doyle (C’72).

About the Undergraduate Fellows Program

The Undergraduate Fellows Program combines a four-credit seminar with a collaborative research project that addresses issues at the intersection of religion, culture, society and politics. Along with the in-depth reading, writing, and dialogue typical of an upper-level seminar, student fellows conduct original research and formulate policy recommendations culminating in a written report. The Fellows program is part of the Doyle Engaging Difference Initiative.

Cover image shows Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visiting the shrine of Sufi mystic Shab Abdul Latif Kazmi in Pakistan. Courtesy of the U.S. Department of State.
About the Project

From January through April 2011 a group of 13 Georgetown University students met weekly for a course titled “The Future of Track Two Diplomacy.” The purpose of the class was to learn about traditional forms of diplomacy as well as society-centered “Track Two Diplomacy.” The course explored whether and how the United States can more effectively engage civil society abroad to advance foreign policy goals, with a particular focus on how the U.S. government engages religious themes and actors, as well as the role of religiously-inspired peacebuilding. Key questions for study included: How does “Track Two diplomacy” differ from and relate to “Track One diplomacy” centered on interstate relations? What are the tools available to policymakers and activists to engage diverse societal groups around the world in pursuit of peace, human rights, development, and other goals? How have those tools been applied in specific cases, and to what effect? Is there a logical division of labor between traditional diplomacy and Track Two efforts, particularly in settings marked by violent conflict?

In order to understand trends in contemporary diplomacy, student participants left the classroom and interviewed dozens of foreign policy, security, and development experts. The findings of those interviews inform the entirety of this Report. In general, both those who formally serve the U.S. government as well as experts outside government indicate that the role of religion in world affairs is likely to continue to grow, but that traditionally the U.S. government has not done well in assessing and engaging the religious multi-dimensionality of the world. That being said, many interviewees pointed to new initiatives as well as the important role of non-governmental actors in promoting dialogue, responding to human need, and building bridges on behalf of peace. The results of a semester of study, from primary readings to expert interviews, are included in this report along with a series of policy-relevant recommendations for the U.S. government.

We gratefully acknowledge the participation in this project of dozens of interviewees from in and out of government and four guest lecturers who came to our class: Chic Dambach, Thomas F. Farr, Douglas Johnston, and Chris Seiple. We are also deeply appreciative for the time and expertise of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and Georgetown alum James R. Moore who shared a dinner discussion with us about careers in the Foreign Service. We realize that this report would be impossible without the support of the Doyle Initiative and the Berkley Center, and we consequently thank those responsible for supporting our study and research.

Report Co-Authors

**Undergraduate Researchers**
Proshanti Banerjee
Brandon Butterworth
Anaf Cenaj
Rulyong Chen
Will Cousino
Josefin Dahlerus
Emily Gaard
Nora Hajjar
Saaliha Khan
Sara Mofarrij
Valerie Oliphant
Lucy Stephenson

**Faculty Advisor**
Eric Patterson
Associate Director of the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs and a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Government

**Graduate Advisor**
Xander Vagg
M.A. Candidate, International Law and Global Security Program
# Table of Contents

- Executive Summary .................................................. 5
- Introduction ............................................................. 7
- The Global Resurgence of Religion ................................. 9
- Understanding U.S. Foreign Policy .................................. 11
- Practitioner Views on Religion and U.S. Foreign Policy ........ 14
- Track Two Diplomacy .................................................. 22
- Conclusion .............................................................. 28
- Findings and Recommendations ..................................... 31
- Research Team Biographies .......................................... 33
- Select Bibliography .................................................... 35
- Endnotes ................................................................. 37
Executive Summary

Headlines and polling data point to an increasing prominence of religion in the public sphere since the end of the Cold War. Although there is some debate about the causes of this religious resurgence, the fact remains that there is a growing awareness and potency of religious factors in international life. Religious individuals make religiously-informed decisions about whom to vote for, religious organizations sponsor political parties, religious denominations fund development and humanitarian efforts in failed states, religious authorities make political pronouncements, religious peacemakers mediate conflict, and terrorists claim religious legitimacy for violence. In the context of global religious diversity, how is the U.S. government to act?

The challenges of the twentieth century were largely ideological: traditional imperialism, fascism, and communism. The U.S. pursued its interests and promoted its ideals primarily through traditional government-to-government (Track One) diplomacy. U.S. foreign and national security policy were informed by the realist and liberal internationalist schools of thought, which privileged a secular, materialist approach to the national interest. These schools of thought continue to be useful frameworks for approaching tough policy choices, but for the past century both approaches have largely avoided considerations of religion and culture. Moreover, the current Administration has consistently called for a wider set of civil society partnerships—including religious actors and “Track Two” diplomats. Consequently, the U.S. must adapt its approaches to foreign policy thinking in order to understand and appropriately engage friends and adversaries for whom religion is a source of meaning, identity, and policy.

In order to study these dynamics a group of 13 Georgetown University students met weekly from January through May 2011 for a course titled “The Future of Track Two Diplomacy.” The course focused attention on traditional U.S. foreign policy approaches, contemporary religious dynamics on the global scene, and the increasing prominence of Track Two efforts, particularly in conditions of insecurity. In addition to a wide set of readings, including recent blue-ribbon panel reports on religion and U.S. foreign policy, student researchers left the classroom and interviewed dozens of foreign policy, security, and development experts from both in and outside of government. A portion of those interviews, in fully transcripted form, are available at the Berkley Center website, www.berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/transformingdiplomacy. The second half of this report is heavily informed by those interviews.

Our findings suggest that those inside and outside of government appreciate the growing role of religion in world affairs but note that there have been few significant structural changes or investment either to the U.S. approach to religious engagement or to the training and development of diplomats, aid experts, or military personnel. When asked about how those outside the country view the U.S., there was some disagreement about whether the U.S. is seen as “Christian” or “secular” abroad—but most agreed that U.S. religiosity and morality is of significant concern in foreign societies, especially those that are highly religious. To our surprise, a majority of respondents indicated that U.S. foreign policy is not a “strictly
secular affair,” although there were many differing approaches to what this meant. For instance, some respondents pointed to the role of domestic religious interest groups and their clout on Capitol Hill; others pointed to USAID development funds going to faith-based organizations or the role of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

Interviewees pointed to growth areas and challenges for increased U.S. government focus on religious factors. The most promising and widely-accepted approach is simply to level the playing field between U.S. engagement of secular civil society and faith-based actors. U.S. representatives can meet, entertain, and develop relationships with most religious authorities and organizations just as they would with democracy activists, media, labor unions, and other groups. Many respondents argued that the U.S. could do more in preparing its personnel, particularly those deploying overseas, for the highly religious environment where they will be living.

However, interviewees did note challenges for U.S. government involvement with religion, most notably a poor understanding and inconsistent interpretation of the Establishment Clause and “separation of church and state,” which makes many government lawyers and program managers nervous about such matters. Another challenge is the dearth of well-funded, structured systems for training and education on religion and culture within federal agencies. Interviewees suggested numerous ways to get at these challenges, such as White House-level clarification on rules and limitations regarding religious engagement as well as reforms to the educational trajectory and training systems, especially for military officers and diplomats.

The second half of the report focuses attention on the diffusion of diplomatic efforts aimed at resolving conflict: Track Two diplomacy. Track Two refers to any diplomatic effort of a decidedly political nature where at least one of the parties is not a government agency. Real-world examples abound: in Africa USAID-funded faith-based organizations work on development projects in partnership with Abuja; in the Middle East a NGO privately works with a national government on behalf of religious freedom; and in Mozambique, the civil war was brokered by a third-party religious mediator. In each case, the religious actors worked on behalf of the interests of the local people and while remaining consonant with U.S. values and interests.

We also uncovered some limitations on Track Two diplomacy. The foremost is that when traditional forms of power—military and money—are called for, it is the U.S. government that has preponderance of resources. Track Two diplomats must be careful. Track Two diplomacy is one area where the U.S. government and non-traditional diplomats intersect on behalf of peace and security. Many of those interviewed argued that the U.S. has a vibrant religious capital that does good abroad and is a rich resource for the U.S. government. American colleges and universities, think-tanks, religious congregations, faith-based organizations, expatriate communities, and religious authorities are all resources upon which the U.S. government can call. In fact, the U.S. has a comparative advantage in this area over other Western countries as many of its closest allies have highly secular publics.

The report concludes with a number of policy recommendations focused on specific sectors and agencies. In general, we call for enhanced preparation of government foreign and national security policy practitioners on the relationship of religious factors to world affairs and U.S. foreign policy. We recommend that the U.S. engage with religious leaders and organizations abroad just as it would with other civil society actors, and we suggest that faith-based and other NGOs take care in how they present themselves, their work (proselytism vs. peacebuilding), and their relationship to the U.S. government. We recommend that Track Two diplomats be thoughtful and transparent about what their mission is and what the nature of their relationship (or lack thereof) to the U.S. government is, lest they be misconstrued abroad as shadow agents of American intelligence. Care is also called for with regards to finances and mission, from poor financial accounting to mixing church-related funds (e.g. for evangelism) with external monies expressly designated for humanitarian assistance. Any of these scenarios could negatively impact other faith-based actors as well as U.S. interests.

In conclusion, a reality of contemporary affairs is the multidimensionality of religious phenomena in the daily lives of billions of people worldwide and thus in their government and institutions. The U.S. government must do a better job of understanding and engaging religious diversity and can benefit in many instances by the work that Track Two diplomats do alongside or outside formal diplomatic channels.
Vibrant religious diversity is a fact of contemporary international affairs. The new geopolitical era, termed the “global resurgence of religion” by political scientist Scott Thomas, has been characterized by events such as the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the rise of religious practice in former communist populations, religious-political ideologies like those of hindutva and Salafism, and the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington. Religion has altered the context of U.S. foreign policy by redefining facets of the United States’ enduring national interests and amplified the role that transnational non-state actors, human rights and international development have in defining the United States’ national security. For much of the twentieth century our civilian and military personnel and their tools were trained and designed to interpret, intercept and respond to traditional military threats, such as Soviet weaponry in the Cold War context. The world has changed: have U.S. approaches to engaging the world?

With traditional national security thinking in mind, some claim that a “dogmatic secularism pervades the diplomatic, intelligence and defense apparatus of U.S. foreign policy.” Preceding the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 for example, the U.S. supported the shah in the face of socialist, labor, communist, and other domestic threats. However, despite State Department reports indicating that Ayatollah Khomeini was a formidable opponent of the Iranian government with a strategic position among a strengthening Islamic opposition, other agencies—notably the CIA—seemed to miss trends that eventually developed into the theocratic Iranian Revolution. The political salience of religion in Iran brought about a reversal in the nature of our bilateral relations, which has been characterized by sharp disagreement and confrontation for the past thirty years.

The relationship between religion and U.S. foreign policy is and has been multi-dimensional: faith-based groups in the United States have significantly influenced U.S. foreign policy toward Sudan and China, while religiously-motivated transnational groups like al Qaeda have threatened U.S. national security. These examples illustrate the varying roles that religion can play, particularly in conditions of conflict. Religion has been used to instigate, justify, and sustain, as well as mitigate, resolve, and prevent conflict: since 1990 there have been over 24 religiously based conflicts. Examples of this can be seen in the religious rhetoric used by clerics in the Balkans, in recent violence in Nigeria and the Philippines, and the persecution and killing of Protestants in Mexico in the 1990s. In contrast, in Mozambique and Colombia religious actors have been key intermediaries on behalf of peace. The National Intelligence Council’s Global Trends 2025 report recognizes the varied impulses of religion, arguing that religious leaders will increasingly be “major power brokers in both instigating and mitigating conflict.”

With the increasing salience of religion in world affairs in mind, a group of Georgetown University students spent the Spring 2011 semester investigating two broad themes. The first theme is the intersection of religion and traditional U.S. foreign policy. The second theme is the world of Track Two Diplomacy, particularly the efforts of faith-based organizations. Although we will describe and discuss Track Two Diplomacy in greater detail below, in general it means efforts at diplomacy, political problem solving, or conflict.
resolution where at least one of the parties is not a traditional
government entity. In order to apprehend these issues, the class went
beyond traditional classroom assignments and readings to directly
engage and interview those professionals directly involved in these
issues, including past and present American diplomats, aid experts,
NGO representatives, and government officials. This document
reports our findings, both from primary and secondary readings
as well as from nearly ninety interviews. In general we found that
religion’s multidimensionality on the world stage will continue
to play a major role in peace, development, and conflict but that
the approaches and worldview of government agencies remain
significantly different from those of non-governmental actors.
This report begins with an overview of the resurgence of religion in
international affairs followed by a look at the traditional approaches
to U.S. foreign policy (e.g. realism, liberal internationalism) and
their failures to account for contemporary religious phenomena.
The report then looks at several of the intersections of religion and
U.S. foreign policy and then turns to the promise, and limitations,
of Track Two diplomacy. Our general finding echoes the following
conclusion made by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright,
“to lead internationally, American policy-makers must learn as much
as possible about religion, and then incorporate that knowledge in
their strategies… [it is comparable] to brain surgery—a necessary
task, but fatal if not done well.”
The Global Resurgence of Religion

For much of the twentieth century, Western social scientists argued that secularization was the natural by-product of modernization: as societies modernized industrially, religion would become increasingly obsolete. Although this seems to be true for parts of Western Europe, religion is on the rise in communities from Latin America to South and Central East Asia, to the Middle East and Africa, and it is critical that this phenomenon be acknowledged as an important contemporary social influence and an integral part of many communities around the world. Religion is becoming more prevalent not only in poor communities, but throughout all socio-economic levels, and in varying degrees. The majority of popular religious revivals do not involve extremist ideologies, nor do most religious communities embrace violent jihad or oppressive fundamentalism. According to political scientist Scott Thomas, population growth and the population shift from the global north to the global south is influenced by and influencing trends in global religiosity. Fertility rates are influenced by religion, as is urban living, with large cities serving as "havens for religious revival." According to one study, over the past 20 years, belief in God has risen on every inhabited continent except Western Europe. In Eastern Europe, for example, belief in God has risen 10% following the fall of the Berlin wall. There is also a convergence of belief on the world’s four largest religions. Adherence to Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism rose from 67% in 1900 to 73% in 2005 and may reach 80% by 2050. Surveys of mass publics by the Pew Foundation indicate that religion is "very important to [my] life" for majorities of the population in Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Egypt, Turkey, South Africa, India, and Brazil—all regional leaders in whom the U.S. is interested. Likewise, over 90% of the people in 46 countries surveyed say that religious freedom is important to them, despite the fact that many of those countries have legal or societal barriers on religious practice.

Christianity and Islam in specific are experiencing a resurgence in religion, with the largest growth experienced by Pentecostalism and evangelical Protestantism, especially in Latin America, Africa, and parts of Asia. Protestants have also become more active in the political arena, supporting democratic regimes in Latin America and promoting religious freedom, a trend that is anticipated to expand in future years. Vibrant Islam is also seeing a renewal, particularly as secular Arab nationalism—often associated with corruption and authoritarianism—is on the wane. Islam’s growth is not isolated to the Arab world, Asia, Africa, and Central and South East Asia. Individual practice and daily commitment to Islam has also grown, as evidenced by trends such as a higher percentage of Muslim women who wear the hijab and greater concern with religious law in Muslim communities.

These trends are of course of interest to anthropologists, sociologists, and religious practitioners, but what do they mean for international relations and U.S. foreign policy in specific? A recent report by a task force assembled by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs attempts to provide meaning for these trends. The Chicago Council report, Engaging Religious Communities Abroad, identifies six patterns of global religious resurgence that are relevant for U.S. policy. The first pattern involves the growing influence of religious groups on culture and politics in many parts of the world, particularly in places where religious actors and themes were previously marginalized. This means that the U.S. can no longer assume that foreign diplomats—many of
whom were trained at secular Western institutions like Oxford and Harvard—will act without taking into consideration the cultural and religious sensitivities of their publics. Second, the increased religiosity we associate with parts of the Muslim world is not an isolated event and it is not simply a reemergence of personal faith, although this is true in some places like parts of Russia and Eastern Europe that formerly throttled religious expression due to communist ideology. Rather, it is the reemergence of personal faith in tandem with collective expressions of faith, outside the walls of houses of worship and in conjunction with other adherents in ways that have direct impacts on domestic and international politics. The third pattern the Chicago Council task force noted is the relationship between religion and globalization. On the one hand, transnational religious movements—from a Midwestern televangelist’s global radio audience to al Qaeda messaging and fundraising—have a global reach and a potentially transnational constituency. On the other hand, globalization-as-Westernization often results in reactionary domestic forces, usually led by religious leaders, demonstrating against Hollywood morality and Western imperialism.

Fourth, religion can often serve as a stabilizing force during periods of economic stress or government failure, as we have recently seen during the global economic crisis of 2008-2010. People often turn to faith for personal succor, while at the same time it is often churches, synagogues, and mosques that are the first contact points for charity and benevolence. However, in times of political strife and economic difficulty political and religious elites may manipulate religious themes and symbols in order to escalate political unrest or increase tensions. We have seen this in the vocabulary of religiously-inspired terrorist organizations like Colombia’s ELN and the Pakistani Taliban as well as in the Balkan conflicts of the past decade. Finally, the Chicago Council task force observes that religion can be a positive moral force social and political stability, particularly as the impetus for international religious freedom, the dignity of the human person, and in defense of universal human rights.

These trends seem to underlie some of the dynamics of the massive upheaval that occurred in the greater Middle East while we were preparing this report. In early 2011, riots began in Tunisia calling for a change in regime and for democratization. These demonstrations quickly spread to various countries of the Middle East, prompting political change in Egypt and popular riots in Syria, Bahrain, Libya, and other neighboring states. At this writing the ramifications of these popular uprisings remains uncertain; the Middle East may experience widespread regime change and democratization as a result. One critical issue that the United States faces, especially in the Middle East, is the possibility of democratization as a means of empowering religious or extremist political groups that are hostile to American interests. Another difficulty is that in many regions of the world, U.S. regional influence is perceived negatively, immorally, or secularly, with the implication that the U.S. is imposing its hedonistic values on local communities. One former government interviewee told us that he thinks policy officials often hang back from official engagement with non-governmental actors and pro-democracy activists out of fear it will be politicized. Or, it is possible that even regime change in favor of elections and some form of democracy will still result in public and official violations of religious freedom, such as violence directed at Egyptian Copts, barriers to worship throughout the Gulf states, or Pakistan’s draconian blasphemy laws that can result in imprisonment and even death. In short, taking religion seriously is necessary—these are highly religious societies—but there are multiple, overlapping issues that affect U.S. interests and ideals which are nonetheless often beyond U.S. control.

In dozens of interviews with U.S. foreign policy, security, and development experts from in and out of government, we heard four recurring comments that were also echoed in the Chicago Council task force report and in other readings. The first is simply that religion is a multidimensional set of factors in global affairs—this is the reality of contemporary life and we must no longer turn a blind eye to it. The second is that U.S. foreign policy has traditionally treated religion, when noticing it at all, solely as a “problem to be solved, instead of an important social and political influence in the daily lives of people as well as a factor in international relations.”

The obvious recommendation is thus for the United States to undertake a fundamental shift in how it defines and treats religion, to include it in general analyses of political life in a value-neutral way. Third, we will see in later sections of this report that many warned against using religion as a “tool” of U.S. foreign policy. Attempts to utilize religion instrumentally are bound to backfire as people realize the insincerity of such efforts. Finally, there are many actors with wide legitimacy and authority in the socio-political landscape who are simply not traditional government officials or elected representatives. Their authority and legitimacy often derives from their religious office, their spiritual leadership, or other factors associated with faith. The U.S. would do well to include such individuals and groups in its analysis, and engage them as it would any other civil society leader or organization.

For the moment however, we will transition our attention on the making and practice of U.S. foreign policy. Is there a coherent approach to U.S. foreign policy? Has there been continuity in the approach to U.S. foreign policy over time? What principles undergirded U.S. foreign policy in the past, and how are the nation’s interests defined in 2011? What is the intersection of religion to traditional U.S. foreign policy? It is to answering these questions that we now turn.
To state that two hundred and thirty-five years of American foreign policy is marked by continuity would be simplistic. With respect to defining national interest and using the tools of diplomacy to advance and secure those interests, national leaders since 1776 have been fairly consistent in the application of realist principles informed by American values to preserve vital U.S. interests. However, a history of the execution of foreign policy over two centuries demonstrates significant changes in the relative power of the United States, the structure of the international system, and the nature of the global economy that today have placed the U.S. as a player in almost any significant international affair conceivable. That being said, the U.S. has been willing to shift its understanding of and approach to world affairs at critical junctures, as in the aftermath of the World Wars, and it must do so again to understand the increased salience of religious and cultural factors in international politics.

Our reading suggested at least two paradigms for understanding long-term trends in U.S. foreign policy. The first is a debate that has ranged in international relations theory and practical statecraft for the past century between “realists” and their opponents, often termed “idealists,” “liberals,” or more recently, “liberal internationalists.” Realists argue that world politics are best understood as a competition between governments for finite resources defined in terms of security and power. The effort by one state to secure itself paradoxically results in the insecurity of its neighbors, driving a security dilemma that was just as real for Sparta and Athens as it is today on the Korean Peninsula. Liberal internationalists, in contrast, argue that the security dilemma can be overcome through various forms of cooperation, as governments lower barriers to information and intentions through participation in international organizations, adherence to international law, mutually beneficial trade, and the institution of democratic mechanisms. At least since World War I, this debate has informed U.S. national security policy thinking and the way that different administrations and leaders have approached international life, although the reality is that most presidents have epitomized some blending of the two approaches.17

What is noteworthy, however, is that neither the pristine realism/liberalism of the university syllabus nor their practice in U.S. foreign policy in recent decades has taken much account of religious factors. Realists tend to think in terms of power and competition between national governments, and thus the “power” of the Dalai Lama, Pope John Paul II, or Desmond Tutu seems ethereal and divorced from real-world security concerns. Likewise, realists and liberal internationalists tend to focus on governments, often neglecting religious identity, particularly in its communal form, as a mechanism for mobilization and political legitimization. Perhaps most importantly, realists and liberal internationalists tend to agree that politics is largely driven by material interests, and thus either through competition or cooperation issues of resources can be adjudicated. Such a view entirely neglects the very real way that ideational factors, such as ethnicity, religious belief, the sanctity of a holy location (e.g. Jerusalem), the call to holy war, and other issues can play real roles in political controversy. Moreover, it is nearly impossible for realists and liberal internationalists to
understand spiritual and religious values of mercy, forgiveness, and reconciliation that are locally-appropriate and may be the only antidotes to overcoming long-term grievance and violence.

A second way of thinking about trends in U.S. foreign policy is that developed in Walter Russell Mead's book *Special Providence*.

Mead argues that the success of U.S. foreign policy over time is due to four major competing schools of thought (or political traditions) that to various extents have guided the decision-making of American foreign policy officials and influenced the utilization of US diplomacy. These schools of thought, which Mead associates with four important American figures (Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, and Woodrow Wilson) each emphasize the importance of different core values: free trade and global commerce (the Hamiltonians); protection of domestic democratic institutions (Jeffersonians); military pride and national honor (Jacksonians); and, finally, an idealistic foreign policy that supports global change (Wilsonians).

Undoubtedly, all or most of these four constellations of values appeals to and describes most Americans. Most Americans support free trade and commerce; desire to preserve domestic rights, freedoms, and institutions; want the homeland to be defended; and would like to see democracy and human rights take root abroad. Particularly this latter point is of great interest to Mead. He argues that the U.S., from the landing of the Pilgrims, has understood itself to benefit from a “special providence,” and thus has a mission beyond its own borders, even if only to serve as a beacon of liberty. Mead points to the missionary efforts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries’ to the vision of Woodrow Wilson enshrined a generation later in the UN Charter, various international covenants on human rights, and the collective security of NATO, as America’s effort to preserve its own interests in a world shaped to be increasingly commensurate with its own values.

Perhaps then, we should not be surprised to observe the congruence between Mead’s four types and what President Obama’s National Security Strategy (2010)—written nine years after *Special Providence*—calls our four “enduring national interests:” the security of our citizens and allies, a strong economy in an open global economic system, respect for “universal values” at home (and abroad), and “an international order advanced by U.S. leadership that promotes peace, security, and opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet global challenges.” These four enduring national interests sound very much like Jackson, Hamilton, Jefferson, and Wilson.

The question, then, for Mead, President Obama, or adherents to any of the four schools of thought, is this: how do these approaches and interests which have withstood the test of time approach and understand the religious multidimensionality of the post-9/11 era? How should Hamiltonians respond to religiously-inspired
challenges to the global economic architecture, particularly when it is stressed and in many places corrupt? How should Hamiltonians and Jacksonians deal with alternative ways of viewing citizenship and collective interests when faith perspectives are part of the discussion? How should Jeffersonians respond to clerics who say that “popular sovereignty” sinful because only God can be sovereign, or to charges that decisions made by elections are morally suspect because they do not derive their authority from sharia or scripture? Must Wilsonians couch their language of universal rights and progress only in secular terms, or are there religious justifications for female enfranchisement, freedom of worship, human rights, and representative government? In the past, these traditions have largely neglected religious factors, tending to agree on the materialist, statist, and interest-focused assumptions that underlie classical realism and liberal internationalism.

Hence, we return to the question presented earlier: are the traditional assumptions and practices of U.S. foreign policy robust and flexible enough to successfully encounter the twenty-first century world, one marked among other things by a heightened sense of religion and religious identity in many corners of the globe? A survey of practitioners provides some insight into the limitations and potential of U.S. foreign policy as well as non-traditional Track Two approaches.
This project began with three upcoming anniversaries in mind. The first, not surprisingly, was 9/11, a day that demonstrated the potency of religiously-inspired violence across borders. As this Report will be published at about the same time as the ten-year anniversary of 9/11, the class was interested to learn what had changed over the past decade in U.S. approaches to diplomacy and national security in the aftermath of attacks on the American homeland by violent Islamists. The second two anniversaries are those of publications. The seminal work on religion and international affairs is Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson’s *Religion, The Missing Dimension of Statecraft* which was conceived nearly twenty years ago. That book argued that the U.S. government turns a willful blind eye to religion in world affairs to the peril of U.S. interests. The third milestone was the five-year point from a 2006 research project that ultimately became the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) report, “Mixed Blessings: US Government Engagement with Religion in Conflict-Prone Settings.” *Mixed Blessings*, based on over 230 interviews with foreign policy experts in Washington, D.C., concluded that U.S. government officials are generally reluctant to consider religious factors or engage religious actors in their work for a variety of reasons—despite the fact that many contemporary conflict-prone settings consist of highly religious publics. The class not only read both books, but hosted Douglas Johnston in class and interviewed one of *Mixed Blessings* authors. We also contacted dozens of those interviewed by CSIS in order to learn what, if anything, had changed in the past five years.

In order to develop an understanding of the intersections of U.S. foreign policy, religion, and Track Two diplomacy, the class engaged in two forms of research: reading and interviews. In the past two years alone, a number of studies have come out calling for drastic changes in the way that U.S. diplomats, soldiers, and aid experts are trained and deal with their foreign counterparts, particularly when it comes to religion and culture. Thus, we carefully investigated each of these documents, such as *Changing Course: A New Direction for U.S. Relations With the Muslim World* (2008) (a report led by former Secretary of State Madeline Albright and former Congressman Vin Weber), *Engaging Religious Communities Abroad* (2009) (Report of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs Task Force on Religion and U.S. Foreign Policy), and the report of President Obama’s Religious Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (2009).

In addition, each student conducted interviews with foreign policy, national security, and/or Track Two experts. We created a master list of those who were listed as involved with any of the reports cited above (totaling more than 300 names) and added to that list an additional 150 experts from inside and outside of government. Due to the condensed nature of the academic semester, we spent about eight weeks interviewing individuals, transcribing interviews, and getting “clearance” from interviewees on the transcripts. In the end, this report is heavily informed by 74 interviews conducted between March 1 and May 1, 2011. Most interviews were conducted in person, although those outside of Washington, D.C. were conducted via telephone. Each interview began from a short list of set questions, and then proceeded in an open-ended fashion. The list of interviewees includes past and present employees of the Defense Department, the State Department, other government practitioners, and a diverse array of foreign policy experts.
agencies, as well as faith-based organizations, academics, and secular NGOs. We are grateful to all those interviewed, including those who spoke off the record, for assisting us with their expertise. A number of the interview transcripts are available at www.berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/transformingdiplomacy.

**Interview Themes and Findings**

Because of the size and composition of our set of interviews, we do not claim this data set to be fully representative of either the U.S. government or the diverse constellation of faith-based NGOs. Nonetheless, on some of the key questions that were asked of nearly all respondents, there was considerable continuity of answers. From a short list of questions, many interviews then proceeded to wider discussions based on the interviewees areas of expertise and experience. Many of those more specific comments and recommendations are captured in the next section.

**Is U.S. foreign policy strictly a secular affair?**

More than three-quarters of all respondents, regardless of their professional affiliation, responded “no” to this question. In other words, less than a quarter of all interviewees agreed that U.S. foreign policy is a strictly secular affair. Not surprisingly, respondents expanded their answers differently. For example, some argued that U.S. foreign policy is always influenced to some degree by interest groups, including religious ones. Others noted that some government officials, including Presidents Bush and Obama, have made public expressions of faith and thus are perceived as being influenced to some degree by religion. Others pointed to U.S. government development funding to faith-based organizations in poor countries or the cultural awareness that foreign service officers should have when operating in highly religious environments like Saudi Arabia or Nigeria. In sum, only a fraction of respondents suggested that U.S. foreign policy is “strictly” secular, and in separate questions later in the interview a majority of government and non-governmental experts reported that they had worked across such divisions (government partnering with NGOs) in the past.

**Is it in U.S. interests to fund faith-based organizations?**

All of the non-governmental interviewees responded affirmatively to this question as did an overwhelming majority of governmental interviewees. The general sentiment seems to be that if religious organizations are willing to carefully separate their evangelistic activities from humanitarian and development assistance, then the U.S. government in theory can partner financially with them. In practice, it is often faith-based organizations and other NGOs that have extensive local networks to provide services to those who most need them in the developing world, particularly when it comes to medical services and care for children and orphans. Indeed, it is generally the case that non-governmental agencies were there long before U.S. funding became available and they will stay long after U.S. attention moves on. Relying on partners when the U.S. government simply cannot do it all, and funding existing programs with track records of excellence—whether faith-based or not—was seen by most interviewees as clearly being in the U.S.’ interests.

**Is the Establishment Clause, or a poor understanding of it, prohibitive to U.S. interests?**

Although at first glance the Constitutional provisions to a) protect individual religious liberty (“free exercise”) and b) prohibit the federal government from sustaining a national church (“establishment”) appear to apply only to American society at home, many of our readings indicated that the notion of “separation of church and state” is so fixed in the minds of government bureaucrats as to stymie efforts at thinking about and engaging religious factors abroad. This charge has been made by many of our guest speakers as well as the reports cited above.

Thus it may be surprising that about two-thirds of the government officials interviewed said, “No, the Establishment Clause is not prohibitive to U.S. interests.” In contrast, about 80% of the NGO respondents took the opposite viewpoint: the Establishment Clause or a “poor understanding of it” is prohibitive to U.S. interests. For those who answered “no, it is not prohibitive,” it is clear that many felt that certain policy proscriptions were necessary and appropriate to keep the U.S. government from supporting missionary work and to protect the government from getting involved in complex religious and cultural issues that were beyond its ken. In contrast, those who saw the Establishment Clause as prohibitive tended to argue that U.S. government officials are risk-adverse, and thus marginalize religious organizations when it comes to competing for federal funding in a manner that goes far beyond what the Founding Fathers or the courts imagined. Others argued that strict “separation of church and state” is really a cover for a “dogmatic secularism” in the foreign policy establishment, one that blinds the U.S. government from understanding the lived religion of populations around the globe.
Is the U.S. viewed abroad as secular (as opposed to highly religious or Christian)?

This question is one of the few in which there was some divergence between government interviewees and their non-government counterparts. Government interviewees were evenly split on whether foreign publics saw the U.S. as secular; two-thirds of NGO interviewees responded that the U.S. is viewed abroad as “secular.” With the small size of our sample of interviews, it is difficult to hazard a full explanation of this trend, but suffice it to say that there was not an overwhelming sense among our general pool of interviewees that the U.S. was seen abroad as a Christian crusader or the U.S. public as highly religious. One theme that recurred in numerous interviews was the sense in conservative-religious populations overseas that the U.S. was hedonistic and/or materialistic as opposed to devout or spiritual. This is attributable to the Hollywood effect that exports American pop music, cinema, and other aspects of popular culture that are often seen as unrestrained, licentious, or downright sinful abroad.

Will Track Two diplomacy play a wider role in the future?

Over ninety percent of respondents agreed that Track Two diplomacy will “play a wider role in the future.” This finding was true both for the governmental as well as NGO participants. Of course, interviewees gave several different reasons for why they think this will be the case. Some cited Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s calls for increased partnerships with civil society in her Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review. Others suggested that the general trend is U.S. government “out-sourcing” of its security and development functions to contractors and NGOs and that this trend will continue into the future, widening the aperture for Track Two work. One respondent, referring to religious conflicts, seemed to speak for several other interviewees when he said, “if religion is part of the problem (e.g. in war), then it will likely be part of the solution.” This suggests a continuing relevance of Track Two actors, particularly when it comes to long-term conflict prevention and conflict transformation. Finally, in an era of globalization and shrinking government effectiveness around the globe, there is simply a wider stage upon which sophisticated, technologically-savvy, globalized Track Two actors can work.

Intersection and Challenges for U.S. Foreign Policy on Religion

Over the course of practitioner interviews, a set of related observations and critiques came into focus. Many of the respondents focused attention on four key intersections of religion and U.S. foreign policy: the challenge of transnational forces (as opposed to traditional government-to-government interaction), the growing role of human rights and religious freedom discourse, the critical role of faith-based actors in international development, and informal but vital links between formal diplomacy and Track Two peacebuilding—the latter often led by individuals with past government experience and networks. However, those interviewed also pointed to difficult challenges faced by the U.S. government, including the alienation of Muslim communities abroad, poor public diplomacy, an unwillingness to institutionally “mainstream” religious issues in the training and work of government officials, and weak institutional support and funding for religious literacy.

Global Religion as a Transnational Phenomenon

The global resurgence of religion is a transnational phenomenon in which non-state actors are shaping contemporary U.S. foreign policy. These new agents utilize religion to expand their spheres of influence, transcending state boundaries and inciting a call for
change on a global scale. This severely alters the context of U.S. foreign policy, one that was based on state boundaries and government platforms. One of our interviewees stated, “I remember speaking with Presidential Envoy Paul Bremer, who was in charge of reconstruction efforts [in Iraq]. He dismissed the importance of religion in Iraq and the broader Middle East, thinking that he’d take care of providing basics like water and electric first, but he soon realized he couldn’t even do that without taking religious issues into consideration.” Transnational and non-state actors have are not necessarily defined by geography; their ideas and influence can stretch far and wide. Their success in propagating a message is due in part to their use of religion as a mobilizing force that can be easily infused into all facets of public life.

One of our guest speakers, former diplomat Thomas F. Farr, writes, “a world of public faith will continue to have serious implications for the interests of the U.S. abroad and the security and prosperity of the American people at home.” Farr points to al Qaeda and Saudi-funded Wahabbism as examples of the influence of religious transnational actors in shaping the geopolitical realities of today. How is the U.S. to deal with the Saudi government, home to major oil deposits and Islam’s two holiest sites but also a regime that has exported a reactionary theology to Pakistan and elsewhere? Even more difficult is how Washington, and Riyadh, are to deal with cyber-movements and transnational terrorist rings. Religion has now added a new set of conditions into the relations of the two countries, drastically altering the context of U.S. foreign policy. Whether it is al Qaeda or Catholic charities, cheap international travel, porous borders, the ease of financial remittances, and nearly free internet communications make the reach and autonomy of transnational actors more independent of governments than at any time in modern history.

**Human Rights and Religious Freedom**

In addition to bolstering the importance of transnational actors, religion has reinvigorated the debate on human rights abroad, especially in the context of religious freedom. It has done so in a paradoxical fashion. On the one hand, some human rights activists point to religious hierarchies as models of repression—particularly of women and minorities in places like India, the Arabian Peninsula, and Sudan. Often, it is places of religious repression where radicalism grows, and thus religious freedom abroad has taken on a new importance for U.S. democracy promotion policy. By securing freedom of religious practice and religious expression, in tandem with other liberties such as press, association, and assembly, radicalism can be checked. Democracy allows for equal opportunity for all religious groups, which in turn diminishes sectarian strife and counters terrorism, creating a positive effect on national security. Moreover, countries that respect the civil liberties of their own populaces tend not only to be more open and stable, but also tend to share a culture of rule of law and representative government with the U.S. and its allies. As Thomas F. Farr told us, “The freedom to worship and the freedom not to worship are reflected in our Constitution and ought to be advocated abroad. The International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA), signed in 1998, is one of the ways that human rights and religious freedom advocacy is legally rooted in U.S. foreign policy and it has been buttressed by additional legislation (e.g. the 2005 Advance Democracy Act) and presidential emphases, such as President Obama’s June 2009 Cairo address.

An example of IRFA’s positive implementation can be seen in the Vietnam, where religious persecution was rampant from 2001 to 2006. Protestant evangelists, leaders of the indigenous Hao Hao, and Buddhists were constantly monitored and under threat of arrest. Vietnamese authorities placed foreign religious groups under close scrutiny. The American Ambassador-at-Large for Religious Freedom at the time, John Hanford, took a “carrot and sticks” approach by recommending designation of Vietnam as a “country of particular concern” (CPC, thus eligible for sanctions), but subsequently worked with Hanoi to draft laws easing restrictions on unregistered groups. NGOs, including the Institute of Global Engagement founded by past Ambassador-at-Large Robert Seiple, also exerted some influence on Hanoi. By 2006, Vietnam had improved and was removed from the CPC list. This example demonstrates a renewed commitment by the U.S. government on human rights and religious freedom, and the intersection of national interests in terms of trade, economics, and human rights.

“Religiously free countries are more democratic, more stable, more prosperous, and more secure. Religious freedom is in every government’s long-term interests.”

*Thomas Farr*
One idea that resulted from our discussions was whether there might not be some new, creative “carrots” that could provide positive reinforcement for positive trajectories toward religious freedom. For instance, the U.S. could design Religious Tolerance Standards, similar to LEED regulations that could “certify” countries for their openness. In some cases, highlighting positive examples might give countries struggling with the issue of reform a model toward which they could look. Economic benefits could even be incentivized, through programs like the State Department designating a specific grant that only countries who achieved this standard could receive.

**Religion and Economic Development**

The growth and resilience of faith-based organizations suggest that the U.S. government must educate itself on the potential that various religious institutions and faith-based organizations have for economic development. Faith-based organizations are often deeply rooted in developing countries and have a moral imperative to aid others. In some instances, faith-based organizations provide basic services that governments fail to provide. Through the trust and social capital gained over faith-based and other NGOs are highly sensitive to the needs and issues of the local community that they serve. Consequently, USAID and the Department of State should continue to invest time and resources in building relationships with non-governmental partners to facilitate international development.

A positive example is the Asian-Muslim Action Network, an organization that operates in eighteen Asian countries to provide education to youth who might not otherwise have the opportunity to attend school. However, it is crucial for the U.S. government to discern how some organizations mix humanitarian goals with other objectives, such as Hamas’ charitable work that parallels its violence against Israeli civilians. The ambiguities of groups like Hezbollah or Hamas suggest that the U.S. must carefully educate itself on which organizations are indeed focused on peaceful development.

**Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding**

More will be said in Track Two section on the role of religious peacebuilding, but it is clear that it is in the U.S. interest for non-governmental actors to work on behalf of peace and security. There are various models for integrating religion and peace building that have been effective in the international arena, many involving Track Two diplomacy and non-state actors. For example, the Alliance for Peacebuilding is a group of various organizations that support conflict resolution through mediation and other peacebuilding activities. Alliance President Chic Dambach has conducted mediation and “collaborative connections” between conflicting groups in Sudan, the Western Sahara, Eritrea/Ethiopia, and Rwanda. Dambach and a small team of former Peace Corps volunteers were integral in shuttling between the opposing sides of the Eritrea/Ethiopia conflict and ultimately helped mediate the lasting peace settlement. Another organization, the Institute for Global Engagement (IGE), has focused on interfaith communication in the North West Frontier Provinces of Pakistan as well as engaging on religious freedom in China, Cambodia, and Vietnam. IGE President Chris Seiple embraces a dual bottom-up, top-down approach of “relational diplomacy” in which community involvement and government engagement is integral to peace-building progress. The International Center for Religion and Diplomacy facilitates a program in Pakistan that helps with teacher training in the madrassas. The Center trains faculty to teach critical thinking and analytical skills in addition to the

Chris Seiple
traditional rote memorization of the Qur’an. Center President Douglas Johnston and his team often succeed in changing the views of madrassa leaders regarding Americans and the United States. One of our interviewees told us we should be “more aware of engaging corporations—especially in mining, oil, etc. In El Salvador, the government has opposed a mining corporation coming in, but because of NAFTA and corporate interests, the US has not stepped in.”

As part of U.S. strategic goals, these different methods of direct community engagement and interaction are integral to improving both the image of the U.S. and in protecting U.S. security. Interestingly, in all three cases the NGOs are led by individuals with past U.S. government experience and with informal relationships across Washington, D.C., allowing for back-channel communication between governments in the service of peace and understanding.

**Challenges for U.S. Foreign Policy**

While some great groundwork has been laid, an assessment of U.S. foreign policy reveals that the government on the whole is not proceeding strategically on this subject. For instance, there has not been an integration of religious freedom with other democracy promotion and development activities, nor is there evidence of systematic changes to the training of diplomats and foreign policy experts since 9/11. Furthermore, there are major differences in the ways that certain branches of the U.S. government decide to engage with religious actors. Based on our interviews, there appear to be several issues that remain to be addressed. First, there is an uncertainty about how to engage the Muslim world, and as a result an over-large focus on counter-terrorism. Second, ambiguities in church-state guidelines, particularly in terms of funding allocations, need to be resolved. Third, there is a lack of mainstreaming religion throughout government programming and ideals.

**Limited Use of Institutional Resources**

Addressing religion in the practice of diplomacy is not simple. Neither the Department of Defense nor the Department of State have cohesive and comprehensive approaches to dealing with actors and states in which religion is prominent. The tragedy is that both departments have the authorizations and authority necessary to engage religious factors, but neither follows through in a thoughtful, structured fashion.

Since the attacks perpetrated on the U.S. by al Qaeda operatives in 2001, the Defense Department and associated security agencies have held primary responsibility for the execution of the counterterrorism operations. However, many countries where Islamist terrorists operate feel demonized as “enemies” of the United States. Whether this perception is accurate or not is debatable, but survey data indicates a widespread alienation of Muslim populations around the world. The irony is that the U.S. over the last three Administrations has taken military action to protect Muslim populations in Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, Kuwait, and elsewhere. So why is that message not getting across? At a minimum, this exemplifies a gross problem of public diplomacy or strategic communications in addressing the fears and expectations of Muslim societies that will be addressed below.

Nevertheless, the U.S. does have a variety of resources at its disposal. One is its 6,000-plus military chaplains. The primary role for military chaplains is to provide for the free exercise of religion by military personnel living in restricted environments. But, particularly in Iraq, military chaplains have begun to communicate with local religious leaders in ways commensurate with their status as non-combatants. In November 2009, a new policy document, “Religious Affairs in Joint Operations” (Joint Publication 1-05), expanded the potential role of military chaplains based on their practical experiences in Iraq and elsewhere. When directed by their commander, military chaplains may “address religion in human activity without employing religion to achieve a military advantage.” In other words, chaplains are able to meet with local religious leaders to promote understanding and security as well as advise their commanders on ways to avoid religious and cultural faux pas. Nonetheless, we were surprised that it was thirty years after the Iranian Revolution before such activities were formally codified in a policy document, and that among the million military and civilian employees of the Department of Defense, at least through 2007 there were no permanent billets for non-clerical religious affairs specialists.

The State Department likewise does not appear to fully utilize its resources and has legitimate claims for more. In 1998, Congress passed the International Religious Freedom Act. Among other
things, it created the Office of International Religious Freedom (IRF) at the Department with instructions from Congress to implement the promotion of religious liberty as a tenet of U.S. foreign policy. The mission statement was to monitor and respond to religious persecution and to promote tolerance in the public practice of religion. The Office provides a superb annual report on global religious freedom, although it often appears to take an inconsistent approach to religious freedom. However, it is unclear to us how the Department utilizes the experience of the IRF Office in its day-to-day dealings with highly religious societies, and it is clear that the position of Ambassador-at-Large for Religious Freedom, which has sat empty for about a third of its existence, is not a top priority to either this Administration or the previous one. Furthermore, having a Senate-confirmed Ambassador-at-Large who reports up through an Assistant Secretary of State, rather than directly to the Secretary (as do other Special Envoys), suggests that these internal resources—small as they are—are not taken seriously within the department.

**Engaging Muslim Communities Abroad**

Many U.S. attempts to engage Muslim societies have fallen short, and may have even had the opposite of the intended effect by insulting Muslim communities and further alienating them. In some instances this had nothing to do with religion, but rather a sense that the U.S. preached democracy but allied itself with authoritarian regimes in the region. The Bush Administration’s backpedaling when Hamas won Palestinian elections and the Obama Administration’s tepid response to the second Arab Spring (2011)—despite the president’s visionary Cairo speech in 2009—are cases in point.

A recurring, related critique is that the U.S. approach to Muslim-majority societies is through the lens of counter-terrorism. After the events of 9/11, programs directed toward the Muslim world have been marketed, at least to Congress, as counterterrorism efforts. This may stem from confusion over terms like “political Islam” and “Islamism,” which have led to the association of violent Islamists with wider Muslim populations, a perception that can disservice mainstream Muslim populations. Furthermore, exchange programs and dialogues have remained rather one-sided, and many Muslim communities feel their American counterparts have no interest in listening to or learning about their culture. This failure to understand and properly engage Muslim communities can be seen in the State Department’s Shared Values Initiative, which began in 2001. The object of the project was to counter negative images of the Unites States in the Muslim World, and was based on the theory that conflicts can be mitigated and prevented by emphasizing similarities between groups. However, this theory led the project to avoid anything that discussed ways in which American and Muslim communities might differ. This in turn led Muslim communities to feel that Americans did not show respect for people of faith, did not want to learn about Muslim values, were exporting Western ideals, and were avoiding issues of significance by implementing programs that lacked any real substance. For these reasons, the Shared Values Initiative was discontinued. One of our interviewees stated, “There are problems when the U.S. government gets involved with religion.” For example, when the U.S. realized that it needed to improve its image in the Muslim world, the State department prepared a movie about Muslims in the U.S. living freely, which backfired. Many imams saw these Muslims as living an impure life. This is an example of the inability of the U.S. to understand the multifaceted nature of Islam.

To their credit, both the Bush and Obama Administrations named a special envoy to the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and President Obama also named a special envoy to Muslim communities. However, as long as the broader U.S. government struggles with religious, cultural, and linguistic literacy, it will be challenged to change perceptions of indifference, hostility, and hypocrisy in Muslim publics worldwide.

**Church-State Guidelines**

Although the inherent benefits of faith-based organizations (FBOs) have been recognized, a long history of both perceived and actual
limitations to approaching religion has hindered their ability to obtain government funding. While the percentage of U.S. foreign aid funds given to FBOs during the Bush era rose to 20% in 2005, nearly doubling what it had been previously, some uncertainty about guidelines remains.29 According to the Mixed Blessings report, "government officials remain concerned about developing and implementing religion-related policies abroad in part because legal guidelines on the applicability of the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses to foreign policy are still evolving."30 As some State Department employees noted, fear of the implications of the establishment clause hinders engagement. Part of this issue within the culture is linked to the responsibility that the department officials have to the Constitution; anything which may conflict with that responsibility is treated with caution. This culture of fear has created bureaucratic and logistical obstacles for faith-based organizations. Despite USAID’s Faith Based Organizations Guidelines (published 2005) to clarify funding options for faith-based organizations as well as recommendations from various groups, including President Obama’s Religious Advisory Council, ambiguity and a resulting hesitancy still exists. Even the Obama Administration acknowledges that recommendations “call for greater clarity in the church-state guidance given to social service providers so that tax funds are used appropriately and providers are not confused or sued.”31 Indeed, it is telling that the USAID guidelines, developed under the previous Administration, disappeared from the USAID website along with most references to partnerships with religious organizations shortly after President Obama took office. As one of our respondents explained, “Church and state are not always separate… There is a problem in making definitions. This is why we have a separation of religion and politics. There are no firewalls between them; history proves this. There are relative roles and powers and we must unpack where each of these belong.”

**Religion Mainstreaming**

Mainstreaming refers to the idea that a topic or issue, in this case religion, must be taken into account in mainstream institutional activities and not marginalized into specialized programs. In the case of religion, the creation of the IRF Office at the State Department has led to concerns of religious freedom being marginalized within the IRF Office and not being integrated throughout the other bureaus. This has also led to a lack of formal and mainstreamed structures to guarantee that diplomats fully account for religious factors. According to the Mixed Blessings report, “many government officials surveyed, including those who have worked on religious freedom, believe the issue has been limited conceptually and structurally.”32 Our interviews tended to confirm this view. This can lead to an ad hoc approach to religion mainstreaming, where programs adopt a particular toolkit or technique, or appoint a ‘focal point’ or ‘religion specialist,’ often in the absence of an overall theoretical framework. ‘Focal points’ or ‘religion specialists,’ of which we could find few, are charged with acting as catalysts or facilitators of a response by all staff. Problems with focal points include: time constraints (often focal point duties are in addition to existing responsibilities); lack of training and support; and devolved organizational responsibility. All of these factors lead to a perception that incorporating and considering religious factors are an add-on to a project rather than relevant to core programs.

Religion has not historically been a dominant priority for U.S. foreign policy makers, an oversight which has weakened U.S. policy decisions and shifted U.S. national security concerns. Because of this, it is imperative that religion be given a greater emphasis as a strategically important factor. This can be done in a variety of ways, both directly and indirectly involving the U.S. government. The U.S. must invest in more research and awareness programs regarding religious communities in areas of concern for U.S. foreign policy, especially in locations where we have committed our military. Greater cultural and religious education programs must be developed for foreign policy practitioners. Religion should be treated as another important foreign policy area for engagement and analysis, like economics, culture, institutions, and security structure. The U.S. government should continue to support NGO activities that involve community level dialogue and engagement with religious communities, and the State Department may wish to begin expanding its own initiatives involving community engagement. Regardless of the specific methods utilized by the U.S. government to integrate religion into its policy-making, the most important outcome is that religion be accepted by the U.S. government as a vital and influential agent in international relations.

“In diplomacy it is integral that one listen to all stakeholders and not come in with a predetermined solution. The solution will evolve out of the process.”

**Chris Dambach**
Understanding Track Two Diplomacy

When former U.S. diplomat Joseph Montville first used the term “Track Two” diplomacy in 1982, he referred to “an unofficial, informal interaction between members of adversary groups or nations that aims to develop strategies, influence public opinion, and organize human and material resources in ways that might help to resolve their conflict.” According to one of our interviewees, Track Two diplomacy assists government officials “by exploring possible solutions out of public view and without the requirements to formally negotiate or bargain for advantage.” Over the past few decades, a variety of perspectives on nontraditional diplomacy have arisen, including the Institute for Multilateral Diplomacy’s eight track wheel which promotes a variety of non-traditional strategies including business, faith groups, and professional conflict resolution efforts. In short, while Track One diplomacy, or traditional diplomacy, is defined as those official relations between governments, Track Two acknowledges that domestic factors like religion and ethnicity can inherently change where power lies and that non-governmental actors can be important influencers of society. Consequently, for the purposes of this Report, Track Two refers to any diplomatic effort of a decidedly political nature where at least one of the parties is not a government agency. As this report is focused on faith-based Track Two diplomacy, some examples include: a faith-based organization working on development projects in partnership with a national government, a NGO privately working with a national government on behalf of religious freedom, adversarial governments turning to third party religious actors to mediate conflict, and religious groups engaging in peacebuilding outside traditional government channels. Based on our interviews and research, there are a number of key points to be made with regards to the promise and limitations of Track Two diplomacy. The most essential is for whom they are working: government officials’ primary job is to safeguard and extend the interests of their home government whereas Track Two diplomats often cite a spiritual vocation or religious calling for their work. Moreover, Track Two diplomats have a variety of tools available to them that are distinct from the tools and methods of traditional state-to—particularly those unique to faith-based mediators—will be discussed below.

Redefining Interests

It should be noted that Track Two diplomats working for peace often approach the entire idea of conflict very differently from traditional diplomats. One of our guest speakers, Chris Dambach of the Alliance for Peacebuilding, emphasized that in trying to engage the warring governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea, he and his team made it clear that they did not represent any U.S. national interest—they were there as neutral friends concerned about the common interest of ending the bloodshed. With a team of former Peace Corps volunteers Dambach was able to facilitate far more progress in peace negotiations between Ethiopia and Eritrea than outside governments thought possible, simply because both parties trusted him and the sincerity of his intentions. ICRD President Douglas Johnston made the same point about his engagement with Pakistani educators, madrassa leaders, and religious authorities—he and his organization do not represent the U.S. government but rather are motivated through faith to try to help Pakistan for its
own benefit, understanding that Pakistan's security is also of benefit to them as Americans. This highlights the fundamental difference between government officials, whose primary job is promotion of the national interest, and Track Two practitioners, who see themselves as agents of common interests for mutual gain.

**U.S. Government Support for Track Two**

There are many benefits for the United States in supporting this type of diplomacy. The U.S. can benefit from Track Two by playing a background role as convener and financier. One could imagine the U.S. government organizing social events for religious leaders to discuss certain countries' domestic problems in order to help connect like-minded organizations. In Argentina, the U.S. Embassy holds an annual NGO fair which connects NGOs with similar organizations and potential funders. This process allows the NGOs opportunities for cooperation and further development. A more dramatic example comes from Iraq in 2007. It took several years for the U.S. to move beyond its early mistakes of sidelining religion in favor of secularist exiles like Ahmed Chalabi. Only in 2007 did the U.S. partner with a religious NGO, the Anglican Bishop of Baghdad's Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East (FRRME) to bring together a representative group of influential clerics (including extremists), with the goal
of peace. Following three days of intense negotiations, the forty-two attendees signed the Baghdad Accords, an explicit statement condemning sectarian violence and terrorism in support of democratic ideals and peaceful conflict resolution. These clerics, representing everyone from Grand Ayatollah Sistani to Muqtada al Sadr to minorities (Yazidis, Christians, etc.) put their lives at risk by going on national television to promote the Accords and declare their support for a new era in Iraqi history. The U.S. government provided security, a meeting venue, and transportation at a cost of $2 million and other governments followed suit as quarterly meetings of the group continued. This Iraq Inter-Religious Congress, in tandem with the Sunni Awakening and the military surge, put Iraq on a new path in 2007 and could not have happened without the leadership of Canon Andrew White, FRMME’s leader, who has developed personal relationships across religious divides since first settling in Baghdad in 1998.33

**Track Two as Mediation**

Another tool that illustrates the influential role of religious actors in conflict resolution is mediation. The act of mediation is usually directed by a third party that has credibility in the eyes of all parties involved in the conflict. The negotiations that brought Mozambique’s civil war to an end, which were organized by the Catholic lay organization Community Sant’Egidio of Rome, is a case study in faith-based mediation. The Community arranged meetings and provided a channel for communication between Frelimo, the ruling party of Mozambique, and RENAMO, the opposition. To address the issue of religious repression, the Community first worked to build strong relations with the ruling government; sending airplanes and ships full of essential supplies to Mozambique as “no-strings attached” assistance and motivating the Mozambique government to eventually meet with representatives of Sant’Egidio.34 This established the Community’s credibility and legitimacy in these negotiations. Sant’Egidio was in contact with both factions simultaneously and eventually persuaded the two sides to meet and sign the Peace Accords of 1992. This case exemplifies the important role that religious organizations can have in mediation due to their perceived legitimacy.

**Track Two and Gender**

Track Two diplomacy may provide an aperture for those groups traditionally marginalized from political or community decision-making, such as women. This aligns with Secretary Clinton’s recent remarks that “the subjugation of women is a threat to the common security of our world and to the national security of our country.

That is why across all of our work in the last 23 months or so, from our initiatives on food security and climate change and global health to our efforts on peace and security, we have made this a primary focus.”35 Interestingly, the role of women and religion in international affairs was rarely discussed by our interviewees, but it is an area that demands more attention. Catholic University professor Maryann Cusimano Love told us that policy leaders need to be aware of not simply engaging “key religious actors,” but rather “religious actors and factors.” By focusing all of their efforts on engaging traditional male patriarchs, leaders run the risk of leaving out two very important demographics: women and young people. Women and youth have been critical players in the second Arab Spring and Jasmine Revolutions of 2011.

In Africa, the effects of sustained warfare are most severe among women and children, yet their voice and stories continue to go unheard. Their position within traditional African societies is not one to be discounted, and although they may not be given political prominence within their communities, without them society would cease to function. For example, women are a significant component of the food economies of developing countries.

The “engendering” of conflict resolution is an emerging trend in Track Two diplomacy, and it is often in churches that women develop skills and find their critical voice. An example of religious women acting on behalf of peace comes from Liberia. The second Liberian Civil War, fought by the regime of President Charles Taylor and the opposition Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), was particularly violent, with both sides committing atrocities against the civilian populations including mass rape and maimings. Few voices seemed effective in bringing
the combatants to negotiations. However, Leymah Gbowee rallied her fellow Christian women towards a peace movement, and she was soon joined by Muslim women as well.36 The women prayed, sang, and rallied, ultimately forcing President Taylor to publicly accept their written call for real government efforts toward peace. The women similarly lobbied rebels and the international community, traveling to neighboring countries in order to influence the peace talks. At a critical moment when the peace talks, hosted by former Nigerian President Abubakar, were about to stall and delegates return to conflict, Gbowee’s women—the Women in Peacebuilding Network—barricaded the doors, forcing both sides to remain in the building and continue the talks. Ultimately a peace deal was achieved, and has held to this day. Furthermore, WIPNET has continued its work on behalf of peace, supporting reintegration and reconciliation efforts. Gbowee and WIPNET demonstrate how religious symbols, rituals, belief, and inspiration can be a source for inspiration and activism on behalf of peace, despite the fact that the women were not traditional religious authorities.37

**Religious Authorities and Conflict Resolution**

National governments and practitioners of traditional diplomacy have limited reach into human networks involved in conflict around the world. The relationships that maintain these networks cost social capital and time. The size of networks religious communities constitute is immense and religious actors, whether formal or informal, hold considerable influence within these spheres. Thus, imams and mullahs, rabbis and Talmud scholars, priests and vestry members have an access to individuals engaged in conflict that many government diplomats do not. Through inter-religious dialogue, proactive engagement and reconciliation religious peace-builders can aid the people subjected to conflict and violence and mindset which promotes it. The U.S. foreign policy apparatus would do well to build relationships with faith-based actors when working to bring peaceful conclusion to conflict.

First, the access and authority of religious actors and their social organization make an approach to peace through these channels extremely beneficial. As discussed by Douglas Johnston, religious leaders and institutions draw on a number of advantages when promoting a rehumanization of conflict, including credibility, a moral basis for opposing injustice, ability to mobilize national and international support, follow-through in the aftermath of political settlement and perseverance in the face of obstacles.38

The approaches used in religious peace-building vary depending on whether or not the conflict is imminent, on-going or concluded. In the case of imminent violence, proactive education and mediating infrastructure are effective tools to disarm potential conflict. Educating adult and youth leaders with mediation tools to counter violent behavior forms a parapet against senseless violence. Prior to contentious elections in Nigeria in 2003, the Inter-Faith Mediation Centre made a national effort to train youth, women and elders in peacemaking practices. The program was focused especially on Christian and Muslim youths to increase their interaction and understanding of one another to discourage inter-religious violence.39 At the end of hours of conversation between young people who were often at odds, the participants in this program promised not to kill in the name of their faith. They also resolved to love one another and emphasize learning more about the “other” to combat discrimination. Upon their return home these empowered individuals formed a regional infrastructure to resist violence.

When it comes to on-going conflict, the void in communication between the fighting parties must be filled. When government officials’ hands are tied such that it might be costly even to speak with a belligerent, negotiations can grind to a halt. One can observe this problem between India and Pakistan and Israel and Palestine. Especially in conflicts where the religious narrative becomes more salient each time attacks are perpetrated in the name of God, religious actors have the power to intervene. One intriguing model that illustrates the advantages of Track Two peacebuilding are the Kashmir Diplomacy Roundtables, which take place on either side of the Line of Control. The mechanics of this initiative connect the two warring parties by forming civil society roundtables on both sides of the border and convening them together. In meetings overseas in London and Geneva, dialogues are begun and respect is built between parties to the conflict who have never met before. The goal of this roundtable process is to form what Daniel Philpport calls an “organic linkage” between civil society members committed to
peace and government officials. However, the pressure that these groups of concerned people of faith apply to governments will be insufficient unless their numbers and influence grow. Removing participants from the geographic location of the conflict to facilitate reconciliation is a luxury that cannot be afforded to all Kashmiris. Thus, gaining cooperation from the national governments in New Delhi and Islamabad, peacemakers need to find a way to hold reconciliation programs in Kashmir to let the forgiveness of the process be accelerated.

Forgiveness and Reconciliation

As important as the ideal of justice is for religious peacemakers, perhaps the most unique strength of religious peacemakers is their even higher regard for the ideals of love and forgiveness. Many of the world’s most horrific conflicts, including especially those which have occurred in African nations like Sierra Leone and Liberia, feature widespread and indiscriminate rape, murder, and mutilation of civilians. No war crimes tribunal can hope to impose a sentence upon all perpetrators, nor restore the lives lost or dignity shattered. Furthermore, on issues like the use of child soldiers, governments seem to be at a loss to form a response as the lines are blurred between victim and perpetrator. In such situations, religious teachings not only provide a context within which people can find meaning in their intense suffering, but also enable them to find the individual and societal peace that can only come through forgiving past injuries. Religion’s de-emphasis of the material also empowers victims by asserting that their personal value lies in their qualities of heart; a safe haven from physical violence. When forgiveness-focused religious peacemakers and retribution-centered politicians work together and enrich each others efforts, relationships between people are able to be restored.

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The archetypal example of political forgiveness and reconciliation is the role of Archbishop Desmond Tutu during apartheid in South Africa in the 1980s-1990s. Tutu built an alliance with varied black churches and set up South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which transparently discussed the roles of truth, justice and mercy from a religious perspective. Although this Commission was not necessarily religious, it was founded on Christian theology and local principles (such as ubuntu’s stress on collective identity and responsibility). Tutu, a prominent religious authority, rallied various groups behind the Christian identity that capitalizes on non-violence to counter the violent approach undertaken by other groups like the African National Congress (ANC). Tutu used his influence and his Christian identity to create a successful movement founded on principles of equality, eventually contributing to the abolition of apartheid.
Limitations of Faith-Inspired Track Two Diplomacy

While religious actors are often rich in wisdom, dedication, and popular legitimacy, their capacity for peacemaking is limited by their lack of traditional coercive power. Effective religious peacemaking involves cooperation between religious and political actors, and its success requires that these two segments’ differing interests be brought into sync. Religious actors can only accomplish so much on their own: they cannot make laws, sign treaties, or implement public policy. They offer only their wisdom, which may or may not be heeded, and their service, which may or may not be accepted. By accepting the help of religious peacemakers, however, politicians stand to gain legitimacy by proving that they care about humanitarian goals. They can equip themselves with the human (and sometimes financial) resources of organizations steadfastly dedicated to improving lives. Finally, they can open themselves up to a new domain of dialogue based on human relationships and ideals of love and justice, rather than limiting themselves to the cold and rigid structure of power politics.

In contrast to the work of religious women peacebuilders during Liberia’s second civil war, the first Liberian civil war (1989-1996) provides a textbook example of how religious efforts at peacemaking can fail. Religious actors can provide a powerful call to peace when they address combatants impartially on behalf of suffering humankind. This is the appeal that the Christian-based LCC (Liberian Council of Churches) and later the RLL (Religious Leaders of Liberia), a joint Christian-Muslim movement, made to the ruling regime under Samuel Doe and the NPFL (National Patriotic Front of Liberia) revolutionaries under Charles Taylor. However, both Doe and Taylor were entirely egotistical characters, seeking only personal gain without any regard for the welfare of their people. It was difficult for the RLL peacemakers to find common purpose with combatants whose interests were so purely selfish. In other cases, religious peacemakers have been effective by using their moral authority to pressure outside political actors in the international community who can then apply traditional coercive methods to intransigent combatants. However, in the case of Liberia, the call fell upon deaf ears. With unreceptive political backers, the RLL’s efforts were doomed to failure, and civil war dragged on for years.

With the growing role of religion on the world’s stage, how to approach these issues has evolved into a preeminent strategic concern for the United States. Track Two offers the United States a new approach to international engagement and a break from the realist school of strategy, which often fails to incorporate non-state dynamics. This model can be applied by any of the world’s decision-makers, from community members and religious leaders to NGOs and governments to achieve a wide range of goals. In particular, as the global paradigm shifts to include religion as a vital part of both foreign policy and engagement, the United States can employ Track Two to gain access to certain key individuals or outcomes that might have otherwise been impossible. Only by engaging these third party actors can the United States grasp its opportunities to advance democracy and religious tolerance and promote national security. Faith-based diplomacy is ideal because it focuses not only on resolving existing conflict but also on the prevention of future violence.
The relevance of religious diversity in world affairs is a significant trend in the twenty-first century. The high level of religious capital in the United States is one of the primary reasons why it is well positioned to engage in a highly religious world. The story of religious freedom, diversity, inclusiveness and pluralism in America is a story untold in many parts of the world. The U.S. must further explore and share this story through Track Two diplomacy in order to promote diplomacy, dialogue, understanding, respect, peace and security around the world.

**Drawing on America’s Religious Capital**

Among all the Western nations, the United States of America is best placed to engage a very religious world due to a domestic “religious capital” unmatched in Europe. One author writes, the U.S. has “human and intellectual resources that can provide expertise and wisdom on religious dynamics in a variety of disciplines. With its roots in the struggle for religious freedom by Puritans and others, the U.S. has a long tradition of religious practice among its citizenry, which the founding fathers acknowledged and incorporated into the nation’s framework and foundation. The first amendment guarantees the right to freedom of religion, and other parts of the Constitution make it clear that no one can be denied their political rights—including service in high office—based on religious belief. Furthermore, the United States is a land of immigrants, through which Americans are exposed to various cultures, traditions, and religious practices. Hence, the United States possesses several of the ingredients for a religiously literate foreign policy. The U.S. is well placed to engage religion, religious and non-religious actors, in and out of government in the name of international security. In dealing with a religious world, the U.S. foreign policy could be improved upon if it adopted a more religiously literate approach.

Imam Abdul Rauf, founder of the Cordoba Initiative, acknowledges that the U.S. is a nation rich in religious capital. On a recent trip, Imam Rauf, who was interviewed for this report, traveled abroad on behalf of the U.S. State Department, he told shocked audiences. He says that people in the Middle East were pleasantly shocked to find out “the Jewish mayor in one of the largest Jewish cities in the world, New York, approved the Park51 mosque.” Despite the negative media attention, the mosque received letters of support from all fifty states in the U.S., a strong statement on America’s religiously pluralistic identity. Imam Rauf points to other stories that highlight America’s religious pluralistic fabric, including: when a mosque was burned partially in Panama City, Florida, it was Jews and Catholics who raised the money to rebuild what was burned; when a daycare in Los Angeles was burned some time ago, it was the Muslims who were the first to condemn the act for a Jewish daycare. In America, there are churches where Jewish people hold their Sabbath; there are churches where Muslims hold their Friday prayer services; and mosques where Christians pray. Thus, America is a nation with high levels of religious diversity and tolerance. Unlike in Europe, where many religious communities and immigrant communities are highly isolated and marginalized, many of the minority religious communities have integrated and succeeded academically and socioeconomically in the U.S. But, Rauf says, the U.S. has done a poor job of broadcasting this narrative.

**Conclusion**

The relevance of religious diversity in world affairs is a significant trend in the twenty-first century. The high level of religious capital in the United States is one of the primary reasons why it is well positioned to engage in a highly religious world. The story of religious freedom, diversity, inclusiveness and pluralism in America is a story untold in many parts of the world. The U.S. must further explore and share this story through Track Two diplomacy in order to promote diplomacy, dialogue, understanding, respect, peace and security around the world.
According to Imam Rauf, sending the right message to the Muslim majority countries is extremely significant. He said that when Muslims overseas hear in the media that a pastor is planning to burn the Quran or that Americans are not allowing American Muslims to create mosques, the way the U.S. is perceived is greatly affected. On the other hand, President Obama supporting the rights of Muslims to build a place of worship helps to aid the image of the United States abroad. Imam Rauf provided the example that people in Egypt were very happy to see the headline, “Obama supports Ground Zero Mosque” in the Egyptian newspapers. If the U.S. deals with the role of religion in a sophisticated manner, then people overseas would be more likely to perceive the U.S. as a supporter of true democracy and human rights. As a result, the U.S. would likely face a decreased possibility of security threats and/or terrorist attacks.

Paul Wee, of the Religion and Peacemaking Initiative at the U.S. Institute of Peace, concurs that the U.S. possesses high religious capital. Wee suggests that “religion and politics” are separate institutionally but functionally interact. Since the founding of this nation, churches, mosques, and synagogues have worked together with the state for the public good of the entire population.

Imam Yayha Hendi is the founder of Clergy Beyond Borders and serves as an imam at Georgetown University. Imam Hendi states that America has a “beautiful religious story” to tell. He says Americans debate religion not only with passion, but also with “patience, intelligence and wisdom.” In America, people of all backgrounds and traditions find ways to work with each other in places such as Georgetown University, as well as around the country. Imam Hendi calls this “The untold story of America—the story of
religious pluralism, being the best public diplomacy America could ever explore and be proud of.”

Imam Hendi argues that this narrative must be told domestically and more importantly, internationally. In order to do that, it is necessary to involve the American clergy who are engaged in intra-religious and inter-religious dialogue, such as rabbis, priests, ministers, monks, activists and imams. Hendi stresses that the U.S. government needs to send these clergy overseas to talk about the American story of religion. “I have done so much of that” Hendi has stated, “and every time I spoke abroad, I felt so proud of America and like I was making a difference.” He spoken to Muslims abroad about how often he would get invited to lead Sunday services, to preside over a Christian sermon or how often he would give the khutba (sermon) in a Jewish service. Sharing his stories with Muslims overseas helped to positively transform their perceptions of America. Instead of sending ambassadors abroad to talk about the constitution, it is more effective to reach out and reach individuals in terms of interfaith dialogue, intercultural understanding, and inclusion domestically. The imam concludes that “The best testimony for American diplomacy, if diplomacy is about making real friends, is about eradicating enemies only by making them friends.”

Many of the respondents echoed these themes: that America’s religious diversity is a source of spiritual and intellectual strength that can inform policy makers and that America’s clergy and religious people are a resource that the U.S. government can draw upon. Moreover, some respondents pointed to the wealth of international knowledge and experience on issues of faith and culture at some U.S. universities and think tanks as part of America’s wider religious capital and a resource for U.S. foreign policy.

When it comes to thinking about or engaging with religious people, ideas, or organizations, some suggest the United States government has failed. According to Imam Hendi, religion and religious actors have not been dealt with very positively during the Obama administration, especially at the State Department. He believes that there has been “too much fear and too much restriction on the role of religion because of fear of overlooking the constitution and the separation between the church and State.” According to many of our non-government interviewers, the U.S. government has done little to support American religious actors as agents of public diplomacy abroad. Several suggested that the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs has simply not had religious actors and themes on the agenda; this would not be surprising as the previous Administration’s guidelines for public diplomacy clearly stated to avoid religious terms and ideas.

Even though the U.S. is equipped with domestic religious capital and thus well placed to engage a greatly religious world, the U.S. government has yet to do a good job in dealing with the role of religion globally. The U.S. still needs to “get religion right” as well as acknowledge the various viewpoints on the relevance and significance of religion in the 21st century. To help achieve U.S. foreign policy goals, it should be recommended that the U.S. government initiate and continue ongoing efforts towards increasing inclusion and integration of religious themes, actors and narratives in America’s political discourse and policies.

In order to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives, the story of America’s religious pluralism must be highlighted and expressed around the world. The peaceful way in which so many ethnic, cultural, racial, and religious groups coexist in this nation could be a successful model for other countries. The U.S. government should try to promote a positive religious agenda to confront extremism with a counter narrative. The untold story of American religious tolerance has the potential to show people another role religion can play—one of reconciliation, positive relations and peacebuilding.

While none of our respondents argued that the U.S. foreign policy and national security apparatus are relics of the past, most tended to agree that some form of evolution was necessary in order to successfully engage a highly religious world. This evolution could be possibly be seen in a coordinated division of labor, with Track Two diplomats working at the grassroots level over long periods of time and foreign service and military officers engaged internationally and on the battlefield. In some cases, it is appropriate for the U.S. to engage religious authorities in foreign countries just as in some instances the U.S. will partner with secular organizations and democracy activists. In short, there are many intersections of traditional diplomacy and Track Two efforts. Traditional approaches to U.S. foreign policy can be expanded to include religious factors which draw from the wealth of domestic religious capital in the U.S. to inform a religiously intelligent diplomacy for the years ahead.
Findings and Recommendations

The U.S. government and the American people live in a world where religious leaders, religious ideas, religious identity, and religious practice influence daily life and politics. As discussed earlier in this report, our survey of dozens of foreign policy experts indicated that the majority of them believe that U.S. foreign policy is not a strictly secular affairs, but is at times influenced by religious factors and engages partners in highly religious societies. Our interviewees had mixed feelings about how U.S. government officials view the role of the Establishment Clause and “separation of church and state” as it relates to U.S. activity abroad. Many indicated that a “poor understanding” of the law and weak guidance from senior leaders is the essential problem—and this issue transcends political party or presidential administration. Our respondents recognized the power of labels such as “Christian nation” and “secular country” when applied to the U.S. by foreign opinion-shapers, but there was some disagreement about how the U.S. is viewed abroad.

With these interview findings as well as our general research in mind, we conclude with a number of general policy recommendations directed at specific agencies and organizations. In general, we call for enhanced preparation of government foreign and national security policy practitioners on the relationship of religious factors to world affairs and we note the rich resources and religious capital available to assist that effort here in the U.S. We recommend that the U.S. engage with religious leaders and organizations abroad just as it would with other civil society actors, and we suggest that faith-based and other NGOs take care in how they present themselves, their work (proselytism vs. peacebuilding), and their relationship to the U.S. government.

Defense Department/Military: In the past three years there have been efforts to provide some modest pre-deployment information on culture and religion as it applies to the greater Middle East. However, we found that there is considerable resistance to the use of the word “religion” and that religious factors are typically marginalized in discussions of culture. Furthermore, we found that there are a few elective courses available for in-residence professional military training, but the vast majority of officers and senior enlisted personnel do not have access to them. We recommend a much more comprehensive approach in the training and development of not only foreign affairs specialists and chaplains, but all officers and deploying personnel, to include the study of religious factors as they apply to contemporary security issues.

U.S. Religious Freedom Policy: We found that U.S. State Department’s list of countries that are egregious violators of religious freedom and human rights remains relatively stable year to year, and that there is only a single country that has been singled out for specific economic sanctions uniquely and directly tied to its repression of religious liberty. Thus, for “shaming” to be effective, we recommend that the Department of State consider a more robust use of sanctions (sticks). On the other hand, it is equally clear to us that there seem to be few inducements (carrots) in the toolbox to reward positive examples of tolerance and religious liberty. We recommend interagency (e.g. State, USAID, MCC, etc.) consultations on how to link religious liberty to material inducements, such as civil society grants to study legal reform (on religious and other freedoms) in countries transitioning from authoritarianism. Such an approach seems especially appropriate in the wake of the second Arab Spring.
**Department of State/USAID:** Although the routine training of Foreign Service officers includes economics, governance, and a host of social factors, it is unclear to us that the global and contextual multidimensionality of religion is a part of that training. Moreover, it was clear that the word “religion” was unsettling in many quarters. We recommend adding religion where appropriate in the curriculum of the Foreign Service Institute. We believe that diplomats will be more effective engaging civil society abroad if they engage the strong role that religion plays in people’s daily lives, and we recommend that senior leaders clearly state that Secretary Clinton’s emphasis on “partnerships” includes faith-based actors. Finally, it is apparent that USAID does work with religious organizations, but the standards for and stories of doing so have become increasingly opaque during the Obama Administration. We recommend that both State and USAID publish guidelines for dealing with faith-based organizations and that they report such activities.

**Engaging religious leaders:** U.S. relations abroad could be improved by interacting with the religious leaders on the same level as other non-governmental authorities (e.g. secular NGOs, universities, civil society, media) in other countries. This is the basis for long-term trust and respect.

**Faith-Based and other NGOs:** Our research led us to study a variety of different types of secular and faith-based NGOs, from those involved in development work to others promoting international peace. Our general observation is that such groups can in some instances be partners or force-multipliers for U.S. government efforts, but that in other cases their work is entirely divorced from government agencies. Thus, we recommend that NGOs and Track Two diplomats be cautious and clear about what their mission is and how they engage both the U.S. government as well as other governments and powerful non-governmental actors abroad. Unless handled with care, there are a variety of potential errors that could drastically effect the future of other faith-based and civil society actors, from poor financial accounting to misrepresenting relationships with the U.S. government, to mixing church-related funds (e.g. for evangelism) with external monies expressly designated for humanitarian assistance. Any of these negative scenarios could negatively impact other partners.
Eric Patterson, Ph.D. is the course advisor for this project. Patterson is Associate Director of the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs and has a visiting appointment in the Department of Government at Georgetown University. His work focuses on ethics and international affairs, religion and contemporary statecraft, and just war theory in the context of ongoing conflict. He is the author or editor of seven books, including most recently Ending Wars Well (forthcoming, 2011) Ethics Beyond War's End (2011), Politics in a Religious World (2011), and Debating the War of Ideas (with John Gallagher, 2010). Prior to coming to Georgetown, Patterson spent three years working for the federal government. He served as a White House Fellow and a William C. Foster Fellow in the State Department’s Bureau of Political and Military Affairs.

Xander Vagg is the course graduate assistant. Xander is a first year master’s student in Georgetown University’s International Law and Global Security program. He graduated cum laude from the University of Florida in 2009 with a double major in History and Political Science. Xander is a dual American-Australian national and spent the past year working in abroad in Melbourne, Australia. His research focuses on two-track diplomacy, international law, and security studies. He has over ten years experience in percussion and drum-set technique and has performed locally and abroad. He is fluent in French.

Proshanti Banerjee is a second year student in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. She is majoring in Culture and Politics with a concentration/theme in religion and politics, focusing particularly on South Asia. Being from the suburbs of Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, she particularly enjoys going to school in such an interesting city. At Georgetown, she serves as interfaith chair/coordinator of the Hindu Students Association and as a member of Georgetown University’s interfaith council.

Brandon Butterworth is a senior in the School of Foreign Service majoring in International Politics and Foreign Policy Processes. He is from Hollywood, FL. He has served as the Chief Executive Officer of the Georgetown International Relations Association, Inc.

Anaf Cenaj is a third year student at Georgetown University majoring in Government and minoring in History and English. Originally from Tirana, Albania, Ana is committed to studying conflict resolution and peacekeeping. In her spare time, she enjoys reading The Economist and watching CNN. Ana hopes to study international law after college and help Eastern European countries integrate into the European Union.

Ruiyong Chen is a sophomore in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. She is pursuing a major in International Politics with a concentration in Foreign Policy and Policy Processes. Originally from Hangzhou, China, she has lived all over the world and now resides in Lexington, MA. In her spare time, she enjoys trying foods from different countries and training for the Boston Marathon in 2012.

Will Cousino is in his third year of study at the School of Foreign
Service at Georgetown University. He hails from Sylvania, Ohio and studies international politics. He is particularly interested in religion, anthropology, and security. Outside the classroom he enjoys leading the Corp's Service and Outreach Committee and participating in Model UN conferences.

**Josefin Dahlerus** is a junior in the School of Foreign Service, majoring in International Politics with a concentration in International Law, Norms and Institutions. Aside from studying international politics, Josefin has also done research on butterflies in the Department of Zoology at Stockholm University and is looking forward to spending a semester abroad at Saint Petersburg, Russia in the fall of 2012. Josefin is originally from Stockholm, Sweden.

**Emily Gaard** is originally from Cedar Falls, Iowa. She is a senior in the College double majoring in Government and English. While studying at Georgetown, she has had the opportunity to intern in the press department of Senator Chuck Grassley. She also spent time last fall doing research for *The Washington Post*. After graduation this May, she plans to work and live in Washington, D.C.

**Nora Hajjar** is a Junior in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. An International Politics major and student of Arabic and Spanish, Nora is interested in travel and learning about different languages and culture, as well as religion around the globe. In her spare time, she follows the Middle East and loves learning new phrases in different languages; she is also an avid music enthusiast and nature adventurer. She hails from Boston and loves the Northeast.

**Saaliha Khan** is a rising junior studying Government, Arabic, and Justice and Peace Studies. Born in New Jersey, raised in Pakistan, and now based in Los Angeles, Khan enjoys learning, traveling, dancing, and believes in the power of faith, compassion, and energy. She is currently a Patrick Healy Fellow, which promotes Jesuit values of being men and women for others and builds community and unity in diversity on campus. A global citizen, she aspires to lead a life of public service.

**Sara Moufarrij** is a third year student in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. She is currently pursuing a degree in International Politics and a pre-medical certificate. She is from Beirut, Lebanon, but has lived in Dubai, Switzerland, Turkey, and South Korea, and is very interested in global affairs. She is also fascinated by the intersection between medicine and international law and the role that doctors have in policymaking. She loves Latin music, learning languages, playing tennis and skipping across the globe.

**Valerie Oliphant** is a first year graduate student pursuing a MA in Conflict Resolution at Georgetown University. She graduated from the University of Arizona with a BA in International Studies, focusing on development and environmental issues in Africa. She has just received a Boren Fellowship to study Yoruba in Nigeria for a full year, where she will also look at the role of religion and women in peace processes and religious conflict.

**Lucy Stephenson** is an exchange student from the University of Melbourne studying Government at Georgetown University for the Spring semester. She is majoring in Law and International Relations at her home university. Born in Brisbane and raised in Melbourne, she is enjoying the opportunity to live overseas. Upon graduating at the end of 2011, she will begin working as lawyer and hopes to eventually work in international arbitration.
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Past Doyle Engaging Difference Initiative
Undergraduate Fellows Reports

Bridging Babel: New Social Media and Intercultural and Interreligious Understanding
Spring 2010

This project explored the relevance of new social media for intercultural and interreligious understanding, with a focus on how Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other similar platforms foster a vibrant exchange of ideas and advance knowledge and collaboration in our increasingly diverse world. Fellows conducted a survey of best practices covering Georgetown, other universities, scholars, faith leaders, and more sources, and made recommendations for taking advantage of new social media to promote dialogue and understanding between religions and cultures. Prof. Michael Nelson, a visiting professor in the Communication, Culture, and Technology program at Georgetown, served as the faculty advisor.

When Cultural and Religious Diversity Meets the Global Market
Spring 2010

This project examined the significance of cultural and religious diversity for business today and how Georgetown can promote tolerance and intercultural understanding among students as they transition into positions as leaders in business and the professions. The project included a survey of best practices at Georgetown and other universities, an exploration of alumni experiences, an interview series, and recommendations for curricular changes that better prepare students to succeed in a world marked by unprecedented cultural and religious diversity. Professors Patricia Hewlin (Business School) and Michael Kessler (Government) served as faculty advisors.

Check out the Publications and Program at
http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/projects/undergraduate-fellows-seminars