



Beyond the Headlines
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Major Foreign Policy Challenges Facing the Next Administration

Patricia Ellis: Good afternoon everyone, and welcome. Thank you so much for joining us for our Beyond the Headlines event with Anne-Marie Slaughter, who is currently a professor of political science and international relations at Princeton. I think a number of you know her from her former position at the State Department—first woman director of Policy Planning, and that was 2009 to 2011. Today she's going to be talking about Major Foreign Policy Challenges Facing the Next Administration. The timing could not be more perfect. The last debate was, supposedly, a foreign policy debate. [*Laughter.*] and the election is just a few days away, so the timing is excellent. This event will be on the record, but Q&A will be off the record, and we ask that everyone please observe that. Thank you very much.

What a great turnout today, in our beautiful new space. I hope you all had a chance to take a look at some of the gorgeous Ansel Adams photographs. This is the main place where they are housed on the east coast. Also, it's very exciting to come back again, because it's not crowded, it's open to the public, and they're really beautiful. I am Patricia Ellis, President of the Women's Foreign Policy Group. We promote women's leadership, women's voices on pressing international issues of the day. And I just want to give special thanks to Anne-Marie for being with us here today. Not only does she have an incredibly busy schedule, but she came from Princeton, New Jersey, and did not have power until when?

Anne-Marie Slaughter: Until last night.

Ellis: Until last night. And so we really greatly appreciate it, and we all are deeply concerned about everybody there in New Jersey and New York.

So, the Beyond the Headlines series focuses on issues that are on the top of the news, and lately we've done a number of programs on Syria and Iran, the eurozone crisis, and China—to mention a few. So I'd like to give a warm welcome to the members of the diplomatic core, and I'd just like to briefly—no names, no titles—but just tell us what countries you're from.

[Diplomats from New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Romania, Germany, Rwanda, Canada, Denmark, Switzerland, Barbados, and Mali introduce themselves.]

Ellis: Well, fantastic. It's great to have our diplomatic colleagues here. And also I want to recognize our board member, Theresa Loar, who is here with us today. And just before I say a few more words about Anne-Marie, I want to give you an update on some very interesting programs that we have coming up. We have a program on Egypt, which is about women's rights on November 16th. On the 27th of November, the Ambassador—a woman ambassador—of Jordan is hosting one of our Embassy Series events. The 29th we have an event on Turkey's role in Syria with a Turkish parliamentarian, which will be quite interesting. And on December 5th we're going to have Tara Sonenshine, who a number of you know is the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, talking about Women,

Girls, and Public Diplomacy. So we have a lot going on, and we hope that as many of you as possible will take advantage of it.

I wanted to say a few more things about Anne-Marie, who has had a really impressive career, which has spanned government and academia. And I'm just giving a few highlights. I mentioned she's now at Princeton. She graduated with a BA from Princeton and previously was Dean of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. She also attended Oxford and graduated from Harvard Law School, where she taught for many years. And, as I mentioned, she was at the State Department's Director of Policy Planning—the first woman there. And upon her departure she received numerous awards, and I like to keep intros brief, but I just want to mention that she did get the Secretary's Distinguished Service Award, the Meritorious Honor Award from USAID, and a joint civilian service commendation award from the Supreme Allied Commander for Europe. Pretty impressive. [Laughter.] So I think you all know her too, because she is frequently in the media, both main stream and new media—she is the consummate Twitter person and you should all follow her—a lot of people already do. She's authored and edited six books, and a know a lot of you are familiar with her because of her recent article in *The Atlantic* on Why Women Still Can't Have It All, which has definitely created lively discussions.

So after Anne-Marie speaks I'll open it up to Q&A and then go to the audience. So please join me in welcoming Anne-Marie Slaughter. [Applause.]

Slaughter: Thank you. I love these little mic[rophone]s. So first of all, I'm very glad that we could finally do this. Patricia has been wonderfully persistent, and I do mean that genuinely, because we've been trying to make this work probably for almost a year, and I'm just very glad it did. I come down probably a couple times a month and try very hard to fit things in, and this was something I've wanted to make work for a while, so it's lovely to see so many people around that table. It's nice to come from no power to power. We did finally get power late last night. Initially my two sons thought no school and no power was just great, then they started thinking no school was just great, but no power was not. We rediscovered Scrabble, we went to bed early, they slept late. But all things considered we came through the storm much easier, obviously, than a lot of other folks, but it's still nice to come down to a much more intact part of the world.

What I'd like to do is talk about a number of the issues that I think President Obama would like to address if he's reelected. And I'm going to focus more on him because I think I have more expertise in that regard. And then I will talk a little bit about what I think is likely to happen regardless of what he wants to do. And I will focus on those issues, and then in the Q&A we can talk about, either specific countries, but also I know a number of you are here from CIPE, from the world of tri-sector collaboration, which is my—I prefer that term to public-private enterprise because I think it better captures what's actually going on. I could give you a whole separate talk on how I think that's actually the foreign policy of the future, and we can talk about that in the question period, but I thought to focus my remarks I would stick to more traditional foreign policy challenges.

So, assuming President Obama is reelected—and I'm not assuming anything at the moment, but for the purposes of our discussion—if he could wave a wand and say, okay now I get to have my way with the foreign policy agenda for the next four years, I think it would look roughly like the following, in no particular order. But I think the first things he would think of are two clear hold-over issues from his first term, and in light of our most recent hurricane I think climate change will be much higher on the agenda. He tried to get it through. He failed. There are a number of reasons why it didn't go through, and a number of them actually could be back on the agenda. It's even possible—in some fairly realistic scenarios—that in a budget deal we might even get a carbon tax through as a way of—carbon tax has been sort of anathema, “are you kidding,” but as a part of tax reform there are some scenarios that actually say this would raise revenue that would allow you to make cuts in other places. So, whether it's that, whether it's another try at cap-and-trade, whether it's something else, I think that will be back on

the agenda. Of course, you haven't heard a word about it, but there are obviously a number of groups that feel very strongly about it, and again, I think the time may be propitious.

So that is one issue. A second, which you might not always think of as foreign policy but definitely is, is immigration. I actually think that—I've written that this is more likely to be a century of the Americas than of America, meaning the United States. It's interesting that Governor Romney hit that very hard in the last debate. Now, I know he was not targeting me and my writings, he was targeting Hispanic voters, but nevertheless he was right. That if you look demographically at where this country is going and you look at what we need to do economically in terms of being part of a larger trading bloc, and you look at energy politics, all of that points to a much greater north-south integration of the hemisphere. But you can't do any of that without immigration reform. You stop there at pretty much every turn. So I think that's a second issue, that will in fact again be on the agenda, and I think there is bipartisan support—or there could be bipartisan support for it. So those are two clear issues that he tried. One he actually had legislation, and the other in the end—well actually on both—he turned to executive regulation, but I think he could try to put through Congress.

The next two are both in the Middle East. I do think he will try again to make a sustained and serious effort at getting Middle East peace on the agenda—not the process, but actual end-stage peace negotiations. I think he's learned some things from the first go-around. Obviously this is not up to us. If it were, we would be in a different place. And I am no expert in Israeli domestic politics, but I do think that there is a—for many people, the time for a two-state solution has already passed. I'm not that pessimistic. I think there is still a small chance, and I think we would be absolutely derelict in our responsibilities if we didn't do everything we could to try to see if we couldn't push that through one more time. And again, you know, depending on a number of issues—both on the Palestinian side, the Israeli side, and the surrounding countries—I think you're going to see a big push, and maybe a new special envoy. But I think that will be back on the table.

Closely related is his desire—when he was first elected—to be the president that ushered in a new relationship with the Muslim world, with Muslim majority countries. And in many ways you might say this is a president that came into office with this as one of his major goals, and he has been handed an unbelievable opportunity. The governments of these countries are changing. The demographics are such that we have a whole new generation of young people who could have a different relationship with us. For those of you who follow my writings, this was my biggest argument for intervening in Libya. And look for all the chaos in Libya, and frankly I think that no matter what when the Qaddafis went—and they were going to go sooner or later—there was going to be a lot of chaos. You know what's new is that you have Libyans marching holding signs saying, 'America we're sorry'. That has never happened after an attack on one of our embassies or consulates to my memory, much less than marching on Ansar al-Sharia as the authors of this. So, in the sense that there are lots of Libyans that have a very different view of this country, that's exactly why—one of the main reasons I thought we should intervene. This is obviously a much more complicated proposition, because it was never just one set of policies, it was always having to customize policies to different countries. That's even more true now, but our security and our economic interests, and our energy interests, and his legacy, I think all point in the direction of working very hard to do everything we can. And a lot of it may well be below the surface of the state. Going back to—Dennis Ross actually interestingly said to me recently, thank goodness we can be reaching out to entrepreneurs in Egypt, which is a program I worked on in the State Department, precisely because our relations with the government are less certain. So, a lot of the work we need to do there may well be not government-to-government initiatives, but government-to-society initiatives and society-to-society initiatives. But I do think it will continue to be high on the agenda.

This is interesting because, of course, of late it's all been about the rebalancing toward China—although I'm sure I'm not the only person who noticed he said pivot in the debate. [*Laughter.*] He said the pivot to Asia, and I thought we weren't using that language anymore, but if it's the president he can describe it any way he wants. I think that's real, that's something that many members of his

administration think is very important, and I think he agrees. But those two things I just said, obviously keep us firmly in the broader Middle East and North Africa.

The fifth issue, and again it's related, is the global zero. This is a president who believed very strongly when he came into office that he needed to put the world on a path to no nuclear weapons. And I am conscious sitting in Washington when I say that—that that still sounds fairly outlandish, but we have to remember this is Henry Kissinger and George Schultz and Bill Perry and Sam Nunn who are pushing this agenda. This is not a lightweight coalition, and it's a serious bipartisan coalition. And when you think about 30 countries having nuclear weapons, it should be very obvious why it is a high-priority issue. This is an issue where—a little like Security Council reform—we know we have to get there, but we just can't quite imagine how. And I think this president is going to try very hard to lock us and Russia into further cuts, but also to both convene and to push on different countries to actually start down that path. I don't even think our allies—as in the French and the British—are with us, necessarily, on this. I'm quite certain that the Russians and the Chinese are not. But it's hard for the nuclear states to resist any cuts, any movement down that path. How are we, the nuclear states, to say to other states, 'no you can't have nuclear weapons when we're not willing to live up to our commitments under the NPT [Non-Proliferation Treaty] and other associated commitments'. So I do think you're going to see another big push in this direction. Indeed, in my view, were there to be an attack on Iran it would be fueled as much by the fear of proliferation across the Middle East as it would be for Israeli security. I am not saying that Israeli security is not very important, but I think for this president, the specter that if Iran does have a nuclear weapon—not nuclear weapons capability, but a nuclear weapon—that Saudi Arabia might want to purchase one from the Pakistanis, and then you have the Turks and the Egyptians, that is just not a future that we want to contemplate. Again, I cannot tell you exactly what measures he will take—he started down that road, he had many things, obviously, other things that he had to deal with—but I expect him to come back to it.

So as I said, if he could wave a magic wand I think that he would have a climate change bill, I think he would get immigration reform, I think he would get the Israeli-Palestinian process seriously on track, I think he would be building a whole new set of relationships with a new generation of Muslims across the Middle East and North Africa, and I think he would move the world on a path where we could actually see a place where we could give up nuclear weapons.

Now, this is Washington. What is likely to be—you know he is going to set that agenda, or some version of that agenda, and then he will confront the inbox. Most immediately he is going to still be confronting Afghanistan and Pakistan. 2014 is going to be here before we know it and we are not going to be in a position where we can easily hand over to the Afghan army. And again you are going to see the same round with a lot of the same players as we have seen twice now—before the surge, after the surge, and now again arguing about what are long-term security needs in Afghanistan and then of course particularly in Pakistan. Pakistan is probably the single hardest issue in the sense of so many different variables, the risks being so enormously high, the neighborhood being so dangerous, and also affecting everyone. It affects the Middle East, it affects Europe, it affects China, it affects Russia. If you ultimately need to have some kind of regional settlement to help us get out of Afghanistan, how are you going to get India and Pakistan there? How—just generally—is the Pakistani government, in terms of civil-military relations and relations with us, how are we going to navigate this? And, of course, in this town there are different views of Pakistan depending on what agency we are in. So Afghanistan and Pakistan together I think are going to be enormously complicated. I think the president will try to live up to his commitment, but I am not certain that will happen. Just depending on what happens between now and then—troop drawdown, yes, but completely out, we will have to see. So that is hugely on his agenda.

Second is Europe. You know, speaking of the debates, I just sat there listening, going this is—there was a mention of Greece, we could end up like Greece—that was lovely. [*Laughter.*] And then there was a mention of Poland at some point on missile defense, but we are talking about the world's largest economy. If I could wave a wand, the one thing I would do is have every single newspaper tell the truth.

We are the world's second largest economy. China is the world's third largest economy. Japan is the world's fourth largest economy. The EU is the world's largest economy. Check the CIA Fact Book. It is the world's largest economy. [*Laughter.*] And if we just saw that every time we looked at rankings it would come home to you every time that we are talking about a crisis in the world's largest economy that affects just about everything we do. We need the Europeans on everything that we do, whether it is military—and we don't give them nearly enough credit for the troops that they put in—or, how on earth are we going to stabilize the Middle East and North Africa without EU funds? We are not going to create a Mediterranean community. We are not going to pour in the billions of foreign aid that they have been pouring in both as the EU and separate countries. How on earth, looking forward into northern Africa and Africa as a whole—you know that is where the EU has routinely been a full partner. And when we say we want to pivot to Asia we are generally assuming the EU is right there in the Middle East and North Africa, and the rest of Africa. So, the longer-term consequences—I think the euro will survive—but I still think we are looking at a necessarily introspective and preoccupied EU getting the weaker countries on a path of convergence with the richer countries. That is a ten-year proposition. So I think, again, the president is going to have to focus on that. The other dimension of that, that we don't focus on enough, is the EU's economic crisis is a big problem for China. The EU is China's biggest trading partner. Once again, I wish we could see that every time we see the EU. The EU's economic problems are China's economic problems, and China's economic problems are possible political instabilities for us, in the sense of how China deals with those problems. But that again comes back to the EU.

So, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the EU—I think we may well have some very real issues with Japan. I actually am very high on Japan, in terms of longer-term, we are looking at 2025 and we are looking at what we need in terms of a sustainable economy and how to deal with a rapidly aging population. We need that, China needs that, the Japanese are way ahead of us. That is what they do. They work on sustainable energy, and they work on how you deal with an aging population. And I was just there, there are some very, very interesting scenarios about how they are going to develop. In the short-term, their political system is going through lots of change. We have just seen the formation of a nationalist party with Governor Ishihara of Tokyo. And I think you are going to see a lot more, kind of, turmoil within Japan and assertiveness about Japan-US relations versus Japan-China, Japan-Korea relations. And our entire Asia strategy—even though we focus more on our adversaries than our friends often—is dependent on Japan. And really dependent on Japan. So if we have to be working with Japan, and at the time when China continues—for internal reasons of its own—sort of constantly roiling the waters, shall we say, in the East-China and South-China Sea, that is a big problem. And that is a problem that we will have to do a lot of work on. And the last time that happened was the late 1990s, and we had the Nye Doctrine, you know, reassuring Japan—it was a major preoccupation for the Clinton administration during that period.

So those are—one very foreseeable Afghanistan, Pakistan—the EU should be foreseeable, the Treasury focuses a lot on it, but the rest of the administration doesn't. Japan, I think, is unanticipated, but we should be looking at it. The last things I would say are, much more work on middle-powers. Turkey and Indonesia. Now we have been spending a lot of time working with Turkey, that much is quite evident. But it has been in the context of a partnership where our interests have been fairly aligned in the Arab Awakening or the Arab Revolutions. That is not always true. Remember when Turkey and Brazil tried to cut a deal with Iran? We are not always aligned with where Turkey is, and there are some indications inside of Turkey that suggest to me that that could definitely continue. That's a relationship that we haven't historically had to focus on very much, but I think much more so. Similarly with a country like Indonesia in Southeast Asia, we are relying on these countries as stabilizing countries in their region. And that works as long as we are aligned with them, but when we are not, then suddenly—it's not like alliance in the way we have with Europe or Japan or Korea, but these are countries that we need to partner with. And when things go wrong domestically that could be a big issue.

And finally Brazil. And I don't see this as a trouble spot, but I think—Brazil—in terms of what we can do in this hemisphere—Brazil is enormously important. It's very important that we have a good relationship with Brazil. I do think that both Cuba and Venezuela will change governments within—that may not be within the next four years, certainly it's going to be within the next—well, how long can Castro live? [*Laughter.*] Or the Castros both. But realistically it could well be in the next four years, that one or both countries would undergo a major change. Now when that happens that's really going to change the politics of Latin America, because Brazil positions itself between the Bolivarians and us. But if they're not there on the left, then where does Brazil go? How does Brazil position itself? And more importantly, can we take advantage of that moment of change? You know, the Caribbean could be as dynamic a place as the Mediterranean in terms of energy, in terms of economic investment—there's a huge amount of investment in the Caribbean. We could really see Venezuela—you'd go Cuba, Miami, down through Central American over to Venezuela—as a real engine of growth in the hemisphere. Or you could see all sorts of fracturing, again, and Brazil playing kind of spoiler in some ways. So, in terms of thinking about our long-term interests, I think we are going to have pay much more attention to Brazil.

So, I've given you five things that president would like to do. I have given you five areas that I think are likely to be on his agenda, and of course I'm leaving out huge swaths of the world, and I'm leaving out many of the other non country-specific issues—global pandemics, terrorism, drug rings, arms rings, money laundering, and obviously food security, water security, and any other kinds of development issues. But that's what the Q&A is for, so thank you very much.

Ellis: Thank you so much Anne-Marie, that was absolutely fantastic. I'm going to open it up with a few questions, and then we can get to everybody.

[*Q&A session was held off the record.*]