

## Options in Brief

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### Option 1: Police a Rough Neighborhood

The attacks of September 11 and the aggressive dictatorships of the Middle East prove that the world is a dangerous place. The United States cannot hide from the hatreds that fester in this region. U.S. citizens must accept that the United States' strength and influence in the Middle East and around the world present an irresistible target for hate-mongers and extremists. To ensure U.S. security and the security of U.S. friends and allies, the United States must confront the forces that have aligned themselves against peace and stability before they unleash more havoc. The United States has destroyed the government of the most dangerous and aggressive tyrant in the region, Saddam Hussein. The United States must remain in Iraq until a new, stable, U.S.-friendly government can be established. And the United States must stand up to other countries in the region that sponsor terrorism and are trying to acquire dangerous weapons.

### Option 2: Focus on Oil

U.S. citizens have no choice but to recognize the critical importance of Middle Eastern oil to economic and political stability. As the events of the 1970s illustrated, a disruption in Middle Eastern oil supplies has the potential to send shock waves throughout the global economy. In the face of such a threat, it should be clear that the flow of oil from the Middle East is vital to U.S. prosperity and security. U.S. policy in the Middle East must be focused on ensuring that the United States and its allies have access to the region's oil resources. For too long, the United States' absolute support of Israel has complicated its relationship with leading Arab oil-producers. Economic common sense demands a more balanced approach. Likewise, there is no benefit in picking fights with Iran or Syria or carrying out a campaign against Islamist movements that needlessly alarms U.S. allies.

### Option 3: Promote Democracy and Freedom in the Region

Over the past decade, the world has changed for the better. But democracy has made scant headway in the Middle East, where basic freedoms and the rule of law count for little. No region of the world spends a higher proportion of its wealth on weapons. Regrettably, U.S. policy has contributed to the Middle East's lack of progress. For too many years, the United States has put its oil interests and security concerns ahead of principle. The time has come for the United States to use its enormous influence to nudge the region toward reform. Governments that take steps toward establishing democratic institutions, open societies, and economic freedoms should be rewarded. At the same time, the United States should withhold favors from those that refuse to budge. Change is possible, but only if the United States is willing to commit its strength and its resources and play a fair and evenhanded role with all states in the region.

### Option 4: Break Free of Entanglements

Since the end of the Cold War, much of the United States' foreign policy attention has shifted to the Middle East. But U.S. efforts have only increased anti-American sentiment. The United States must break free of entanglements in the region. The U.S. military presence must be eliminated to avoid U.S. involvement in another, potentially far more deadly and expansive war. The United States cannot continue to serve as a convenient target for anti-American extremists. Likewise, the United States should not be held responsible for guaranteeing peace between Arabs and Israelis. U.S. relations with countries in the Middle East should be limited to issues that do not entangle the United States in the controversies of the region.

## Option 1: Police a Rough Neighborhood

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The attacks of September 11 and the aggressive dictatorships of the Middle East prove that the world is a dangerous place. The forces opposed to the United States and its interests did not disappear with the end of the Cold War. Many of them reside in the Middle East. The United States cannot hide from the hatreds that fester in this region. U.S. citizens must accept that the United States' strength and influence in the region and around the world present an irresistible target for hate-mongers and extremists.

To ensure U.S. security and the security of U.S. friends and allies, the United States must draw a clear line in the sand. On one side belong trusted friends and allies in the region. Fortunately, there are many. Israel, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, and most of the Persian Gulf states have been reliable partners for decades. When their security is threatened, either by enemies beyond their borders or within, the United States should stand beside them. On the other side are the forces that have aligned themselves against peace and stability. They must be confronted before they unleash more havoc on their neighbors and on the United States.

The United States has destroyed the government of a dangerous and aggressive tyrant, Saddam Hussein. The United States must remain in Iraq until a new, stable, U.S.-friendly government can be established. There are also other countries such as Iran and Syria that sponsor terrorism and are trying to acquire dangerous weapons. Terrorists have demonstrated their ability to strike worldwide. Still more chilling is the prospect that a rogue state such as Iran may eventually be armed with nuclear weapons. Only the United States has the power and the prestige to confront the outlaw regimes of the Middle East. The job of police officer is not fun, but in a neighborhood as rough as the Middle East the alternative is chaos and war.

### What policies should the United States pursue?

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- The United States should maintain strong alliances with key friends in the Middle East and provide foreign aid and military assistance to Middle Eastern governments that are fighting against Islamist movements.

- The United States should work for a settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict that ensures the security of Israel while satisfying the United States' Arab allies. The United States should pressure the Palestinian Authority to reign in Hamas and recognize Israel's right to exist.

- The United States and its coalition allies should remain in Iraq until a stable government that is friendly to the United States can be established.

- The United States should use its economic, diplomatic, and military strength to prevent states in the region from developing nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons or from gaining access to advanced military technology.

- The United States should restrict the fundraising and organizational activities of groups in the United States that are linked to Islamist movements in the Middle East.

- The United States should press its allies and trading partners worldwide to impose sanctions on Iran and control the flow of funds to terrorists.

## Option 1 is based on the following beliefs

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- There is no hope for compromise between the United States and the anti-Western leaders who despise U.S. values and way of life.
- The United States has the right to

### Arguments for

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1. Confronting tyrants will, in the long run, reduce tension and promote stability in the Middle East and around the world.
2. Standing by allies and friends in the Middle East will reassure countries worldwide that the United States honors its commitments.
3. Addressing Israeli security concerns in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict will serve as a solid foundation for lasting peace in the region.

take the initiative to eliminate tyrants who threaten it, its allies, or the rest of the world.

- The U.S. appetite for oil should not overshadow the need for security.

### Arguments against

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1. If the United States continues its military presence in Iraq, this will further inflame Middle Eastern public opinion and jeopardize the stability of the region.
2. Branding Islamist leaders as U.S. enemies will only provoke deeper hostility toward the United States within the Muslim world and may result in an increase of terrorist attacks both within the United States and against U.S. allies in the region.
3. Confronting Iran will leave the United States further isolated from the rest of the international community and cost U.S. companies opportunities for business.
4. Entangling the United States further in the Middle East will draw U.S. resources away from urgent problems at home, such as reducing crime and improving education.
5. Continuing support for corrupt, undemocratic regimes in the Middle East will discourage democratic and economic reform and provide fuel for claims of U.S. hypocrisy.
6. Pledging unconditional support for U.S. allies when their security is threatened will mean that the United States must continue to support Israel at the expense of the Palestinians, a position that only fans the flames of anti-American sentiment in the region.
7. Imposing economic sanctions to achieve political goals harms innocent civilians rather than oppressive dictators.
8. If the United States commits itself to a large military role in the Middle East, it will be stretching the military too thin. This will make the United States vulnerable in other parts of the world.

## Option 2: Focus on Oil

**T**oday's world runs on oil. Much of industrialized society has been built around it. Without oil, the engines of the global economy would grind to a halt. The Middle East contains over 60 percent of the world's proven oil reserves. Saudi Arabia alone holds one-fifth of the planet's supplies. U.S. citizens have no choice but to recognize the critical importance of Middle Eastern oil to economic and political stability. As the events of the 1970s illustrated, a disruption in Middle Eastern oil supplies has the potential to send shock waves throughout the global economy. Not only would people in the United States be jolted, but the economic earthquake would strike key U.S. allies and trading partners in Western Europe and East Asia with even more devastating force. The entire international economy could very well crumble. In the face of such a threat, it should be clear that the flow of oil from the Middle East is vital to U.S. prosperity and security. No other issue in the Middle East rivals the importance of energy.

U.S. policy in the Middle East must be focused on ensuring that the United States and its allies have access to the region's oil resources. With so much at stake, the United States cannot afford to lose track of its priorities. For too long, the United States' absolute support of Israel has complicated its relationship with leading Arab oil-producers. Economic common sense demands a more balanced approach. Likewise, there is no benefit in picking fights with Iran or Syria or carrying out a campaign against Islamist movements that needlessly alarms U.S. allies. U.S. interests require that the United States maintain a military presence in the Persian Gulf, but U.S. troops should be there to promote stability, not to provoke another war. Above all, the United States must be careful not to rock the boat in a region that is both dangerously explosive and critically important.

### What policies should the United States pursue?

- The United States should scale back its support for Israel and take an evenhanded approach to resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict.
- The United States should ensure that Iraqi oil continues to flow and that this oil is available to the United States, its allies, and the global marketplace.
- The United States should maintain friendly relations with Middle Eastern governments that respect U.S. oil interests and offer the United States assistance in resolving disputes that threaten regional stability.
- The United States should support the efforts of U.S. oil companies doing business in the Middle East.
- The United States should continue to use its economic and diplomatic leverage to prevent OPEC from again dominating the world oil market.
- The United States should maintain a military presence in the Persian Gulf sufficient to safeguard shipping lanes and to deter attacks against the main oil fields of the region.
- The United States should respond quickly and firmly, using force if necessary, against countries that threaten U.S. oil interests in the Middle East.
- The United States should end economic sanctions against Iran and instead work to draw it back into the international community.

## Option 2 is based on the following beliefs

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- The free flow of oil from the Middle East is essential to the security and prosperity of the United States.
- By showing respect and tolerance, the United States can live peacefully with the growing political influence of Islam in the Middle East.

### Arguments for

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1. Pursuing a more balanced policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict will boost U.S. prestige and influence in the Middle East and allow the United States to play a more effective role in promoting regional stability.
2. Ending the United States' confrontational posture with Iran will remove a needless source of friction in Middle Eastern politics. Improved relations will also allow U.S. companies to do business in Iran and compete with their European rivals on an equal footing.
3. Emphasizing economic interests in U.S. relations with the Middle East will place U.S. foreign policy on a steadier, more predictable course.

- The United States' one-sided support for Israel has undermined U.S. relationships with Arab countries and contradicts U.S. economic interests in the Middle East.

### Arguments against

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1. Focusing on U.S. economic interests in Iraq rather than on the establishment of democracy will indicate that the United States has been hypocritical in its rationale for war with Iraq and will fuel anti-American sentiment in the region.
2. Stabbing Israel in the back after decades of close cooperation will invite an Arab attack against Israel and lead U.S. allies worldwide to question U.S. commitments.
3. Treating the rulers of oil-rich nations as a privileged class will embolden them to crack down on government opposition at home and will inflame anti-American sentiment in the region.
4. Abandoning sanctions against Iran will be seen throughout the Middle East as a victory for U.S. enemies and a defeat for the United States.
5. Ignoring the brutality and corruption of tyrannical regimes in order to gain access to oil will tarnish the United States' international reputation as a force for democracy and freedom.
6. Focusing U.S. resources on protecting the oil supplies of the Middle East will distract from the more important goal of developing new sources of energy and promoting conservation.
7. Focusing on U.S. access to Middle East oil will only prove to the international community that the United States is not interested in collaborating to solve the region's pressing problems.

## Option 3: Promote Democracy and Freedom in the Region

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Over the past decade, the world has changed. More countries than ever have embraced democracy and economic freedom. International standards of human rights have gained widespread acceptance. But troubles continue to exist in the Middle East. Democracy has made scant headway. Basic freedoms and the rule of law count for little in many nations of the Middle East. The rights of women are cruelly neglected. Government officials keep a tight grip over industry and commerce. No region of the world spends a higher proportion of its wealth on weapons. Regrettably, U.S. policy has contributed to the Middle East's lack of progress. For too many years, the United States has put its oil interests and security concerns ahead of principle. It has looked the other way as heavy-handed rulers have abused their own people. As U.S. experience first with the shah of Iran and then with Saddam Hussein proved, such policies inevitably lead to future problems.

The time has come for the United States to use its enormous influence in the Middle East to nudge the region toward reform. In countries whose regimes are both brutal and tyrannical, the United States should help democratic opposition forces change their governments. In others, the United States should encourage positive change. Governments that take steps toward establishing democratic institutions, open societies, and economic freedoms should be rewarded. At the same time, the United States should withhold favors from those that refuse to budge. Fortunately, there are a few states that serve as models for the region. Israel has a solid record of democracy. Turkey's political system has overcome several setbacks. Jordan and Lebanon also appear to be moving toward greater political participation. But no country should be above criticism. For the United States to bring reform to the Middle East, U.S. policies must be seen as fair and evenhanded by those in the region and by the wider international community. Change is possible, but only if the United States is willing to commit its strength and its resources to this endeavor.

### What policies should the United States pursue?

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- The United States should use foreign aid, trade benefits, and diplomatic pressure to promote democratic and economic reform in the Middle East.

- The United States should ensure the survival of Israel and persuade Arab states to establish peaceful relations with Israel. At the same time, the United States should pressure Israel to end human rights abuses against the Palestinians living under Israeli jurisdiction.

- The United States should base its support for Palestinian statehood on whether the Palestinian Authority reins in Hamas, recognizes Israel, and promotes democracy and human rights.

- The United States should stop selling arms to governments that use force against their own people.

- The United States should punish governments that abuse the rights of minority groups, violate the principles of religious tolerance, or discriminate against women. This must apply evenly to both U.S. allies and U.S. enemies in the region.

- The United States should work to foster domestic democratic opponents of the Iranian mullahs and other brutal, tyrannical rulers in the Middle East.

- The United States should reduce its military ties with governments that refuse to take steps toward establishing democratic institutions and economic freedoms.

- Now that it is there, the United States should stay in Iraq and build a democracy there.



## Option 3 is based on the following beliefs

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- The advancement of democracy, tolerance, human rights, equality for women, and economic freedom in the Middle East is essential to bringing peace and stability to the region.
- Without political and economic

reform, the Middle East will fall further behind other regions of the world.

- The United States has the prestige and influence to nudge the governments of the Middle East toward reform.

## Arguments for

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1. Promoting democracy and economic freedom in the Middle East will restore the United States' reputation as a nation of principle and strengthen the cause of reformers worldwide.

2. Taking a firm stand against abuses of human rights and adopting an evenhanded policy toward all countries in the Middle East—friend and foe alike—will strengthen the U.S. position in the eyes of the Middle East and the world.

3. Gaining acceptance for international standards of human rights in the Middle East will serve as the basis for the resolution of disputes in the region.

## Arguments against

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1. Trying to impose U.S. values on cultures that are distinctly different will only contribute to further hostility toward the United States.

2. Presenting Israel and Turkey as models for the region—despite their records of human rights violations—will lead others to accuse the United States of having a double standard.

3. Picking fights with countries that control a large share of the world's oil reserves flies in the face of vital U.S. economic interests.

4. Needlessly rocking the boat by encouraging opposition forces in one of the most explosive regions in the world will lead to the downfall of many traditional U.S. friends and allies in the Middle East.

5. Transition to democracy in many of the countries of the region could lead to regimes that are more, not less, hostile toward the United States.

6. Forcing Middle Eastern countries to adopt reckless economic changes will deepen poverty and play into the hands of extremists.

7. Entangling the United States further in the domestic affairs of the region will inflame public opinion against the United States at home and abroad.

## Option 4: Break Free of Entanglements

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Since the end of the Cold War, much of the United States' foreign policy attention has shifted to the Middle East. The United States has fought two wars against Iraq, occupied that country, and established an extensive military presence in the region. In addition, it has committed vast diplomatic and security resources to resolving the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. And what has been the result? Only increasing anti-American sentiment stirred up by Islamist militants. The United States has become the target of terrorist attacks aimed at punishing the United States for its involvement in the Islamic world. History has shown that U.S. policymakers have often misunderstood developments in the Middle East. As September 11 demonstrated, U.S. involvement in the region can be a costly, dangerous adventure.

The United States must break free of entanglements in the Middle East. The military presence it has built up in recent years must be eliminated to avoid U.S. involvement in another, potentially far more deadly and expansive war. The United States cannot continue to serve as a convenient target for anti-American extremists. Likewise, the United States should not be held responsible for guaranteeing peace between Arabs and Israelis. Ultimately, disputes in the region must be resolved by those involved, not by U.S. diplomats or U.S. military forces. U.S. relations with the countries of the Middle East should be limited to issues that do not entangle the United States in the controversies of the region. Like the nations of Western Europe and Japan, the United States should concentrate on doing business with the Middle East, not on meddling in local affairs. By keeping its distance, the United States would remove itself from the sights of Islamist extremists and avoid further terrorist attacks.

### What policies should the United States pursue?

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- The United States should turn responsibility for rebuilding Iraq to the Iraqi government.

- The United States should withdraw its military forces from the Middle East and end its alliances with countries in the region.

- The United States should scale back its involvement in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict and instead advise the countries of the region to take the initiative in pursuing the peace process.

- The United States should pursue open trade and business relations with

all of the countries of the Middle East.

- The United States should repeal its economic sanctions against Iran.

- The United States should reduce its dependence on Middle Eastern oil by encouraging U.S. oil companies to invest elsewhere in the world and by promoting the development of alternative energy sources, such as solar and wind power.

- The United States should limit foreign aid in the Middle East to humanitarian crises.



## Option 4 is based on the following beliefs

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- The United States' expanding involvement in the Middle East has contributed to the rise of anti-American feelings in the region.

- As a region, the Middle East is no more important to U.S. interests

than other parts of the world.

- Peace and progress in the Middle East can only come from changes within the region, not from U.S. pressure.

## Arguments for

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1. As the United States decreases its involvement in the affairs of the Middle East, it will reduce the sources of anti-Americanism in the region that serve as fuel for dangerous Islamist extremists.

2. Ending the U.S. military presence in the Middle East will remove a leading grievance against the United States and allow the United States to focus its resources on addressing economic and security needs at home.

3. Untangling the United States from the web of Middle Eastern politics will lessen hostility toward the United States and make it possible for U.S. companies to pursue business in more countries in the region.

## Arguments against

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1. Walking away from any role as a peacemaker in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will only lead to a further escalation of the conflict.

2. Withdrawing U.S. military from the Middle East will set off an even more dangerous arms race and increase the likelihood that biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons will spread in the region.

3. If the United States withdraws from this region, it will give the rest of the world cause to believe that the United States will sit back and do nothing in other areas as well. This will encourage other states unfriendly to the United States to accelerate their weapons programs.

4. Ending the U.S. military presence in the Middle East will end any hope for a democratic transition in Iraq and change in other countries like Iran and Syria.

5. Abandoning responsibility to rebuild Iraq after a U.S.-led war will give rise to charges of hypocrisy and undermine U.S. credibility around the world.

6. Failing to stand up to Iran could open the door to Iranian aggression in the oil-rich Persian Gulf.

7. A U.S. withdrawal from the Middle East will remove one of the few forces for democratic change in the region.