

Introduction

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Founded in 2019, the core principle of the Reagan Institute Strategy Group (RISG) is that America's role in the world is indispensable to preserving the free, open, and peaceful political and economic system that provides the foundation for how countries interact. Conversations about U.S. national security and foreign policy often become esoteric, and RISG is committed to stepping back to assess what is really at stake. In the context of rising threats from authoritarian competitors, the question of America's global leadership is crucial to the survival of the free world itself.

The Reagan Institute is dedicated to promoting President Reagan's timeless principles as a lens through which to view the challenges we face today. That is why in July of 2021, the Institute gathered a group leading foreign policy and national security thinkers and practitioners of leaders to discuss and debate the way forward. The essays collected here reflect the discussions that took place at the second RISG summer retreat in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

A shared set of beliefs guides deliberation among members of the Reagan Institute Strategy Group: that American leadership, including military strength and economic engagement, is the best guarantor of peace, security, and prosperity; that America's national success is inextricably linked to the that of the free world; and that American values are universal, as freedom and human dignity are the birthright of all peoples regardless of their country of birth.

The goal of RISG is to chart a course for reviving a Reaganesque approach to foreign policy and national security. Any set of policy ideas is only valuable insofar as it is politically viable. And the end of one presidential administration and beginning of another offers the chance to reflect, review, and regroup. Our hope is that the following essays will continue the conversation about the principles and policies that will promote a world where peace, freedom, and opportunity will flourish—but also that are responsive to the shifting political environment.

Fundamentally, the Reagan Institute Strategy Group is not a nostalgia exercise yearning for a bygone era that will not return. Rather, it is a forward-looking endeavor that focuses on the new ideas, priorities, and frameworks needed for meeting the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century based on the timeless vision and values of our 40th President.