

2010 Topics

Special envoys

Special envoys can help bring attention and diplomatic muscle to resolve conflicts and global challenges but they also bring with them their own "special" problems. Will the Obama administration's reliance on special envoys increase the ability of the U.S. to deal with major international issues or complicate our diplomatic options?

Kenya & R2P

Post-election rioting in Kenya in December 2007 brought pressure on Nairobi, from international and regional diplomats, to end tensions and avert bloodshed on a massive scale. What lessons can be learned from the intervention in Kenya? What does it mean for the UN's emerging responsibility to protect doctrine?

Global crime

From the booming sex trade in Eastern Europe, to online fraud syndicates in Africa and the drug cartels of Asia and Central America, crime is becoming increasingly organized and globalized. How can countries better protect citizens seeking the benefits of a globalized world from being exploited? What international actors can effectively fight global organized crime?

U.S.-China security relations

China's influence is growing, along with its military expenditures. How will this growth affect China's relations with its neighbors and with the U.S.? Will China's expanding military and economic power affect traditional U.S. roles and U.S. alliances in East Asia? How will countries like Japan, South Korea and India respond?

Global financial crisis

The global financial crisis that began in late 2007 revealed major deficiencies in the regulation of markets and institutions – all of which came perilously close to collapse. Emergency measures to prevent a full collapse of the global financial system have led to mixed results. How will governments and the world community respond to this challenge?

Russia and its neighbors

Russia's policy of maintaining a sphere of influence in former Soviet satellites has been challenged in recent years by movements against pro-Russia regimes. Russia has pushed back by cutting Ukraine's natural gas supply and intervening in Georgia's campaign in South Ossetia. Will Russia regain its traditional leadership role in the region?

The Persian Gulf

Now more than ever, the Persian Gulf region offers many difficult challenges to U.S. policymakers. How will Obama's direct appeal to Arabs and Muslims impact U.S. foreign policy in the region? What will the fallout of withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq be? Can the U.S. and its allies prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons?

Peacebuilding and conflict resolution

U.S. campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan have shown that military force alone cannot ensure peace in all conflicts. How can the U.S. successfully integrate the tools of peace building into its statecraft? At what point do poverty, disease and climate change threaten national security? What role can non-governmental actors play in supporting government led efforts?