

# Letter from the Co-Chairs



Co-Chairman Carla A. Hills



Co-Chairman Robert E. Rubin

We are pleased to be writing one year after becoming co-chairs of the Board of Directors. It was a year with many highlights for the Council and for us.

There is much we could say here about the Council's recent achievements, including the purchase of a new building in Washington, DC, the \$123 million fundraising success of the Campaign for the Council, record numbers for *Foreign Affairs*, and a continually evolving website that remains the best of its kind. Instead, we would like to devote this year's letter to one area that consistently sets this institution apart—its convening power.

Large or small, on the record or not for attribution, in New York, Washington, DC, or across the nation and the world, Council meetings set a high standard for much-needed dialogue on foreign policy. The number, range, and quality of meetings—which are intrinsic to the Council—remain truly impressive.

Over the past year we participated in a number of the more than one thousand meetings and conference calls the Council held that brought together prominent and influential scholars and practitioners from government, academia, and the private sector. Among these individuals were the late Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation co-chair Melinda French Gates, Iraqi prime minister Nuri al-Maliki, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Royal Dutch Shell CEO Jeroen van der Veer, and World Bank president Robert B. Zoellick. We welcomed also Treasury Secretary Henry M. Paulson,

National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley, Senators Joe Biden and Chuck Hagel, President Evo Morales of Bolivia, and Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner of France. Council programming during the opening of the UN General Assembly featured fifteen heads of state and government and foreign ministers within a twelve-day stretch.

Meeting formats this year were richly varied and included forty-four roundtable series led by fellows, seven named lectureships, seven half-day policy symposia, six two-day conferences on subjects ranging from geopolitical realities to foreign policy for the next U.S. administration, and hundreds of general meetings, as well as book clubs, webcasts and teleconferences, study groups, and advisory committee meetings. The Council also held seven briefings and twelve conference calls for the media, including one after the assassination of Benazir Bhutto that attracted nearly 120 reporters.

Council meetings reached beyond traditional constituencies. More than thirty of the nation's top college and university presidents participated in the new Higher Education Working Group to discuss how their institutions can meet the challenges of globalization. The first Religion and Foreign Policy Summer Workshop convened a diverse group of nearly fifty high-level religious leaders to discuss global developments. More than two dozen chief executive officers attended the inaugural CEO Forum to find ways to integrate geopolitical and geoeconomic risks into corporate strategy.



Vice Chairman Richard E. Salomon

Council events looked to the past to better prepare for tomorrow's policy challenges. A new meeting series in association with the National History Center featured prominent historians examining the events and times that have shaped foreign policy today. The Lessons Learned and HBO-sponsored History Makers series hosted distinguished individuals such as former Federal Reserve Board chairman Alan Greenspan and our Board colleague and former head of the Environmental Protection Agency Christine Todd Whitman, who reflected on experiences and takeaways from their careers.

This expansive convening power is evident as well in the advisory bodies tasked with reviewing Council publications—Council Special Reports, Policy Options Papers, books by Council fellows, and other publications—while they are in draft form. Council members also participate in Independent Task Forces, which this year enlisted the leadership of Board member and former U.S. trade representative Charlene Barshefsky and former commander of U.S. Southern Command James T. Hill for U.S. policy toward Latin America, former governors George E. Pataki and Thomas J. Vilsack for climate change, former senator Bob Kerrey and former CIA and FBI director William H. Webster for civil liberties and national security, former secretary of defense William J. Perry and former national security adviser Brent Scowcroft for nuclear weapons policy, and former governor Jeb

Bush and former White House chief of staff Thomas F. McLarty III for immigration policy.

What we have described here only scratches the surface of activity at the Council. In an era defined by globalization, we believe that the need for this organization has never been greater. We also believe that the Council has never done better at meeting this need.

As we cap off the Council's eighty-seventh year, we would like to thank Chairman Emeritus Peter G. Peterson and Vice Chairman Richard E. Salomon for their unwavering leadership during the Campaign for the Council. We would also like to thank Council President Richard N. Haass, whose essay appears in the following pages of this annual report, for a wonderful five years of leadership. We look forward to many more.

Carla A. Hills  
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*Co-Chairs of the Board*