

Letter from the Co-Chairs

It has been a year of tremendous disruption and challenge across the world: unprecedented uprisings in the Arab world; economic difficulties in the eurozone; the earthquake, tsunami, and subsequent nuclear crisis in Japan; and the killing of Osama bin Laden.

Such developments constitute a challenge to and an opportunity for organizations such as the Council on Foreign Relations. We are pleased to say that during this year, our fourth as co-chairs of CFR and the Council's ninetieth anniversary year, we continued to be deeply impressed by the range and depth of analysis the institution offers through multiple channels, including meetings and roundtables, publications, and the websites CFR.org and ForeignAffairs.com.

The events in the Arab world continue to remind all of us about the complexities of international relations and the challenges of foreign policy. At a time rife with uncertainty, the Council provided comprehensive analysis, and its experts contributed a range of recommendations on the situations as they unfolded. Since January, the institution has held over thirty general meetings and smaller roundtable discussions and nearly twenty conference calls on the uprisings in the Arab world for both CFR members and targeted constituencies.

The strength of the Council's [Middle East program](#) was evidenced by the town hall meeting in early February following the ousting of the Tunisian president and the protests in Egypt. The meeting was videoconferenced between CFR's New York and Washington offices, with Council fellows participating from both locations, and was teleconferenced for National members. The discussion featured in-house experts Elliott Abrams, Mohamad Bazzi, Steven A. Cook, Isobel Coleman, Robert Danin, Ed Husain, and Council President Richard N. Haass. Over six hundred members participated, representing one of the highest turnouts in CFR history for a single meeting. Other conversations focused on particular countries in the greater Middle East, including Libya, Iran, Syria, and Jordan; counter-radicalization; human rights; and the growing role of social media.

CFR hosted a number of conference calls for members of the press on the Arab uprisings with in-house experts. Average media participation doubled compared to last year. Additionally, as part of its Rapid Response Briefing series, the [Corporate Program](#) led three conference calls geared specifically toward executives on topics including assessing business risk in the Middle East and the effect of the turmoil on international energy markets.

In May, CFR and *Foreign Affairs* published an ebook, [The New Arab Revolt: What Happened, What It Means, and What Comes Next](#). During a time of complex transformation, the volume offers an intellectual context for understanding the upheavals in the Arab world. It brings together more than sixty articles, interviews, congressional testimony, and op-eds from experts and thought leaders; major public statements by Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, Hosni Mubarak, Muammar al-Qaddafi, and others; as well as other relevant primary source documents.



Co-Chairman Carla A. Hills



Co-Chairman Robert E. Rubin

Council staff and fellows published nearly 90 op-eds on the events in the region in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Time*, *Financial Times*, *Foreign Policy*, *Atlantic*, *Politico*, and CNN.com, among others, and have made over 160 appearances on major news outlets including ABC, NBC, CBS, FOX, CNN, al-Jazeera, BBC, PBS, NPR, and MSNBC. Council experts testified before both the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on U.S. policy toward Libya, Egypt, and Lebanon, and they have briefed U.S. government officials in the legislative and executive branches.

CFR.org published over one hundred articles on the uprisings in the Arab world. An online Issue Guide from May on the North Africa and Middle East protests that provides analysis of Syria, Egypt, and Libya and of U.S. interests in the region has been viewed over forty thousand times. Other articles examined parallels and differences between the Egyptian and Iranian revolutions, the debate over intervention in Libya and NATO's role, prospects for Syrian regime change, implications of the uprisings for food and oil prices, the future of economic policy in affected countries, and the agendas and prospects for opposition movements like the Muslim Brotherhood. CFR.org had nearly fifty postings on the topic by Council experts as part of the institution's growing blog initiative, with Steven Cook's post, "[Five Things You Need to Know about the Egyptian Armed Forces](#)" viewed over 6,500 times—an impressive number for a single post.

Foreign Affairs led its May/June issue with a seven-article package on the uprisings and also published over fifty online-only pieces. "[The Muslim Brotherhood After Mubarak: What the Brotherhood Is and How It Will Shape the Future](#)," a website piece by Carrie Rosefsky Wickham of Emory University, has been viewed more than sixty thousand times since it was published in early February. Of the articles published on *ForeignAffairs.com* since January, the Arab uprisings comprised 30 percent of the content and accounted for over 60 percent of traffic.

Following the crisis in Japan, the Council held a number of meetings, including a town hall discussion with its Japan expert Sheila A. Smith, energy expert Michael A. Levi, and economic expert Sebastian Mallaby, as well as a meeting with Governor of the Bank of Japan Masaaki Shirakawa on Japan's recovery. CFR.org published nearly twenty articles on the situation, and its [Issue Guide on Japan's Triple Crisis](#) has been viewed over twenty-five thousand times. Council fellows have published op-eds on the topic in the *Financial Times*, *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Beijing Review*, and the *Atlantic*, among others.

On the ongoing crisis in the Eurozone, the Council featured the head of the European Commission, the chief economist of the World Bank, the governor of the Bank of Spain and Spain's finance minister, and the prime minister of Ireland. CFR's International Institutions and Global Governance program published a series of five reports exploring the Eurozone crisis, ranging from its historic roots to the future of European integration. Scholars from the [Maurice R. Greenberg Center for Geoeconomic Studies](#) analyzed the crisis from different perspectives, including the effectiveness of the International Monetary Fund in managing the situation, the allocation of funds for Ireland's bailout, and the outlook for Greece. The center also examined the topic through its "[Geo-Graphics](#)" blog, which uses innovative graphs to illustrate economic concerns. One post that studied the correlation between sovereign risk and foreign deposits using Ireland and Spain as an example was viewed over five thousand times. Other graphs looked at public and bank debt in Ireland, compared corporate and government debt in



Vice Chairman Richard E. Salomon

Eurozone countries, and used German bond yields to assess the likelihood of a Greek default.

A [CFR.org Backgrounder that profiles al-Qaeda](#), originally published in November 2005 and updated numerous times, including following Osama bin Laden's killing, has been viewed twenty-five thousand times since May 2 of this year. The Council hosted meetings and conference calls with in-house experts on the implications of bin Laden's death, as well as a meeting with House Intelligence chair Mike Rogers on the lessons learned from the bin Laden operation. CFR experts testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee after bin Laden's death on U.S. policy toward Afghanistan. The Council published a [Task Force report on U.S. Strategy for Pakistan and Afghanistan](#) in November 2010, and following bin Laden's killing, published a report titled [Next Steps for Pakistan Strategy](#). In addition, the CFR.org interactive [Crisis Guide on Pakistan](#), which won the Overseas Press Club's first-ever award for Best Use of Multimedia, offers a detailed examination of the country's evolution, challenges, and future prospects.

The challenges that the United States and the world face are vast and complicated. With virtually simultaneous yet unique revolutions taking place across the Arab world, strained relations with Pakistan, nuclear challenges posed by North Korea and Iran, and ongoing financial crises, there are countless questions. The number of professionals in government, business, academia, and the media, as well as interested global citizens, who turned to the Council for insight and as a forum for discussion during this time of extraordinary change is a real testament to the institution's reputation for original, authoritative, and truly nonpartisan work. It was a demanding year, and we want to thank CFR Vice Chairman Richard E. Salomon and our fellow Board members for their guidance. We also want to recognize Council President Richard Haass for his creative and committed leadership. At a time when the mission of this institution was as vital as ever, the quantity and, most importantly, the quality of the work produced by CFR were truly exceptional.

Carla A. Hills
Robert E. Rubin
Co-Chairs of the Board

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