Decoding the Iran Nuclear Agreement for Leaders in Washington and Beyond

by Josh Burek

As one of the most far-reaching accords in recent memory, the framework agreement reached by P5+1 and Iranian negotiators over Tehran’s nuclear program in Switzerland on April 2 generated no shortage of opinions from pundits. Balanced, in-depth assessments were scarcer.

Determined to help serious minds in Washington and elsewhere make sense of an agreement that is as technical as it is political, the Belfer Center produced a definitive guide to examine key questions, points of divergence, pros and cons, pending legislation, and essential facts.

Edited by Gary Samore, the center’s executive director for research, Decoding the Iran Nuclear Deal brought together the insights of a diverse panel of experts, including Graham Allison, Matthew Bunn, Nicholas Burns, Shai Feldman, Chuck Freilich, Olli Heinonen, Martin Malin, Payam Mohseni, Laura Rockwood, James Sebenius, Steven Miller, and William Tobey.

Targeting leaders in Washington, where copies of the 60-page report were delivered days after the news broke, the report’s pros and cons address the very questions members of Congress are asking themselves. For example: Is the framework nuclear agreement with Iran a good deal? Why should the U.S. expect Iran to comply with the deal? How will America know if Tehran cheats? If this deal is not a “good deal,” why not walk away and ratchet up sanctions to compel Iran to accept a better deal?

Of particular interest to policymakers is the report’s detailed comparison of the summary documents published by both Tehran and Washington in the wake of the accord. The differences apparent in the “fine print” underscore the difficulty facing negotiators during the final drafting phase—and the intensity of congressional scrutiny.

Based on demand from policy leaders and analysts, Belfer Center experts are planning follow-up briefings in Washington this June.

For the complete Decoding the Iran Nuclear Deal handbook, see belfercenter.org/Decoding
FROM THE DIRECTOR

At our International Council meeting in April, we celebrated the 80th birthday of the man who endowed and revitalized the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs in 1997: Bob Belfer. As Dean David Ellwood noted in tribute: “Bob Belfer’s investment in the Belfer Center and in the Kennedy School has changed the world—it really has.” Those of us who work here today are deeply grateful for Bob’s ongoing support for the Center’s efforts to build a more secure, peaceful world.

One need not embrace the “great man” theory to recognize the impact that individuals have had on recent history. To explore the roles played by secretaries of state in shaping world affairs, the Center has been proud to support a major project that is engaging all the living former Secretaries.

“Bob Belfer’s investment in the Belfer Center and in the Kennedy School has changed the world.”

–David Ellwood
Dean, Harvard Kennedy School

The American Secretaries of State Project is an unprecedented collaboration of professors from Harvard’s schools of government, law, and business. Nick Burns, Bob Meeokin, and Jim Sebenius have provided faculty and students with an unparalleled opportunity to learn from James Baker, George Shultz, Henry Kissinger, and most recently, Madeleine Albright. Products will include a book, documentary films, and case studies.

With the April announcement of the Framework Accord between the U.S. and Iran, the Center’s bipartisan, international team of experts produced and delivered to members of Congress a special brief, Decoding the Iran Nuclear Deal: Key Questions, Points of Divergence, Pros and Cons, Pending Legislation, and Essential Facts. Amid the sound and fury of claim and counterclaim, the purpose of this primer was not to advocate support for or opposition to the deal, but rather to provide an objective, nonpartisan summary for leaders in Congress and the media to make their own judgments.

Far from being a watered-down work of consensus or groupthink, Decoding the Iran Nuclear Deal reflects spirited disagreement among the authors. Such scholarly independence is vital for the impactful and sometimes provocative work we publish in service of our mission. For example:

• Niall Ferguson’s upcoming biography of Henry Kissinger, which upends conventional wisdom by arguing that Kissinger, America’s indispensable strategic thinker, is best understood not as a hard-nosed realist but as a philosophical idealist.
• Jieun Baek’s paper and forthcoming book about how to “hack and frack” North Korea in ways that will liberate the Hermit Kingdom.
• Ayaan Hirsi Ali’s bestselling book, Heretic, which makes a bold case for reforming Islam.
• David Keith’s project on solar geoengineering (see page 7), which is creating safe space for the scientific and policy community to talk about a once-taboo approach that could prove to be one of our most effective tactics in the fight against climate change.

Each of these projects reminds us that Belfer analysts are bold enough to ask critical questions and reach controversial conclusions, but humble enough to engage with and learn from skeptical colleagues.

Remembering John Steinbruner

John Steinbruner, a friend, colleague, and alumnus of the Belfer Center, died April 16 following a long battle with cancer. Steinbruner was assistant director with the founding staff of what was initially called the Program for Science and International Affairs (now Belfer Center).

Subsequently, Steinbruner was for nearly 20 years the head of the Foreign Policy Studies Program at The Brookings Institution. His legacy includes his book The Cybernetic Theory of Decision: New Dimensions of Political Analysis, published originally in 1974, in which he presented a new theoretical perspective on the decision-making process in government.

Since 1996, Steinbruner had been a professor of public policy at the University of Maryland and also director of Maryland’s Center for International Security Studies.

“John Steinbruner combined high intelligence and unfailing thoughtfulness with unusual kindness and decency,” said Belfer Center Director Graham Allison.

“The academic and professional excellence and the sense of community that characterize the Belfer Center are in large part a legacy of our brilliant, dedicated, and caring young colleague and friend, John Steinbruner,” said Albert Carnesale, also a member of the founding staff.

See more rememberences at belfercenter.org/Steinbruner
Holdren Speaks, Acts on Climate Change

“T he challenge of climate change is profound. The risks it poses are dire,” said Harvard President Drew Faust as she opened discussions during Harvard’s Presidential Panel on Climate Change on April 13 at Sanders Theatre.

John P. Holdren, President Barack Obama’s science adviser and former director of the Belfer Center’s Science, Technology, and Public Policy Program, took part in the discussion along with Harvard’s Joseph Aldy, Rebecca Henderson, Daniel Schrag, and Naomi Oreskes, who co-chairs the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change with another panelist, Christopher Field. Duke University’s Richard Newell also participated in the panel, which was moderated by journalist Charlie Rose.

“This is not just a problem for future generations,” Holdren said. “Climate change is causing harm now.”

The effects, he said, include increased numbers and intensity of floods, storms, and drought. While it is too late to avoid at least some global warming, Holdren said serious actions today could have a tremendous influence on the magnitude of the effects.

He noted that the Obama administration has taken several meaningful steps to address the problem. These include the recent landmark agreement with China on greenhouse-gas reductions. Another action is the creation of the Arctic Executive Steering Committee which will coordinate federal Arctic activities and facilitate guidance to departments and agencies on this critical region. President Obama named Holdren to chair the committee.

Symposium Encourages Young Scholars, Fresh Ideas on Nuclear Nonproliferation

by Josh Anderson

The Project on Managing the Atom joined the Netherlands government, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), and the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey in convening a research symposium on the sidelines of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) 2015 review conference. The symposium, Fresh Ideas for the Future, took place on April 28 in the UN headquarters in New York City.

The day-long meeting brought together early-career scholars from around the world—including several current and former MTA/ISP fellows—to discuss new research on nuclear energy, nonproliferation, and disarmament, and to strengthen decision-making related to the future of the NPT.

Symposium participants were welcomed by Angela Kane, United Nations high representative for Disarmament Affairs, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands Bert Koenders, and UN Messenger of Peace Michael Douglas. The Belfer Center International Council’s Sam Nunn was on a panel of senior experts. Other Center presenters were International Security Program’s Steven E. Miller and Project on Managing the Atom’s Martin Malin, Mark Bell, Gene Gerzhoy, Francesca Giovannini, Behnam Taebi, and former Stanton fellow Tytti Erasto. UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon also sent greetings. He said he would count on the symposium participants to “inject fresh vision” into the crucial issue of moving toward a world free of nuclear weapons.

The symposium featured presentations from 30 researchers on topics ranging from ethical choices regarding multinational storage facilities for nuclear waste and coalition politics within the NPT to the efficacy and limits of coercive nonproliferation strategies and lessons for the Middle East from the African and Latin American nuclear weapons-free zones.

In closing remarks, Steven Miller characterized the new international approaches presented at the workshop as “healthy, desirable, and corrective,” and urged participants to keep their research focused on the practical challenge of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons.
The CIA, more than any other agency, [has been] instrumental in stopping terrorism and bringing terrorists to justice,” Central Intelligence Agency Director John Brennan said during a JFK Jr. Forum at Harvard Kennedy School in April. “Will we make mistakes in the future? Probably. But the Agency is a wonderful organization and… I am frustrated with its image because it doesn’t comport with reality.”

Belfer Center Director Graham Allison moderated the Kennedy School’s “Conversation with John Brennan,” which focused on the range of challenges facing the CIA and the U.S. intelligence community. About the nuclear agreement with Iran, Brennan said, “People who say ‘this deal provides a pathway to a bomb’ are being wholly disingenuous. I am pleasantly surprised that the Iranians have agreed to what they have.”

Following the event, Brennan joined members of the Belfer Center’s International Council for a reception and dinner event that opened the annual meeting of the advisory group.

The following day, International Council members shared views and insights during discussions on several critical issues. Belfer Center Senior Fellow David Petraeus presented his research related to “America’s New Wars—And America’s New Opportunities.” Board member Joseph Nye and Center Senior Fellow James Cartwright concentrated on “Cyber Governance,” and Board member Niall Ferguson discussed his biography of Henry Kissinger.

Mike Murphy, political media consultant and a Belfer Center senior fellow, offered his insights about “The 2016 Race for President.” “In order to win the money war,” Murphy said, “a lot of candidates respond to short-term incentives in the off-year, waste a ton of money trying to get an early advantage, and wind up out of money for the election year when it really counts. Primary voters decide late; so the last 4–5 weeks are very key.”
Environmental Sustainability Fellow Has Key Role in China’s Emissions Reduction Plan

by Sharon Wilke

Dongsheng Wu will play an important role in the development and implementation of China’s plans to reduce carbon emissions and, subsequently, climate change. As director of the Department of Climate Change at the Shanxi Provincial Development and Reform Commission, Wu is responsible for developing a greenhouse gas emissions policy for Shanxi, a region with the highest coal production and highest energy intensity in China.

A senior economist with extensive experience in renewable energy and climate change, Wu arrived at Harvard Kennedy School this spring as the first fellow in the China Environmental Sustainability Fellows Program. The program, run jointly by the Belfer Center’s Environment and Natural Resources Program (ENRP) and the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, invites top Chinese practitioners working on environmental issues in the government or private sector to join efforts with others at the Kennedy School working on complementary issues.

Wu’s focus at the School is to research new ways to build up the renewable energy industry and promote low-carbon development in Shanxi Province and decrease emissions from coal. He is credited for his previous impact on improving local environmental policy.

“A meaningful carbon emissions reduction plan for China will have to include a low-carbon development plan for Shanxi Province, the locus of many of China’s largest coal production mines,” said Henry Lee, director of the Belfer Center’s ENRP.

Wu’s research focus, “Comparative Study on U.S.-China Policies on Climate Change,” will culminate in a policy paper. His semester at the Center has been filled with activities that contribute to his research, including participation in numerous seminars and brainstorming meetings with faculty and fellows also working on energy and climate-related issues in China and the U.S.

“It’s my great honor to serve as a bridge and ambassador between China and Harvard,” Wu said. “Climate change is one of the greatest threats facing humanity,” he said. “By seizing the opportunity to address climate change,” he added, “the United States and China can further broaden and deepen the comprehensive, multi-area, and long-term cooperation, and achieve mutual benefits and win-win.”

Collaborative Workshop Will Inform Plans for U.S.-China Emissions Deal

The Belfer Center’s Energy Technology Innovation Policy group is co-organizing a major workshop with China’s Tsinghua University on “Energy Technology Innovation on the Backdrop of the U.S./China Emissions Deal.” Belfer Center’s Professors Laura Diaz Anadon, Henry Lee, and Venky Narayanamurti are planning the June event with Tsinghua University Professor Su Jun, a former Science, Technology, and Public Policy fellow.

The focus of the workshop will be to discuss how recent scholarly work and international experiences can inform China’s efforts to develop and deploy low-carbon energy technologies, which are widely recognized as a key ingredient to meet and exceed the targets of the November 2014 announcement to reduce emissions by Presidents Xi Jinping and Barack Obama. High-level scholars, practitioners, and industry executives from the National Development Reform Commission, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Environmental Protection, and China’s industrial sector will ensure that innovative policy ideas can be easily considered in practice.

The event will build on Belfer Center work to understand the role of governments in stimulating technological change in energy in China, the United States, and Europe. Previous Center research has investigated various aspects of China’s ability to develop and deploy new energy technologies. Ongoing research explores challenges facing wind power generation in China, the role of international entrepreneurs in building state-of-the-art technology capacity in photovoltaics in China, and the country’s overall approach to technological innovation and what it means for international relations.
In a recent TED Talk, you quoted Napoleon saying, “China is a sleeping lion, and when she wakes, the world will shake.” Is China wide awake today?

Napoleon was right about this. China has not just woken up, it has stood up and is on the march. The question for all of us is where will China go and how do we engage this giant of the 21st century?

You say in your new Belfer Center report that the future relationship between China and the United States represents one of the great mega-changes and mega-challenges of our time. Why is that?

China is already the largest trading nation, the largest exporting nation, and the largest manufacturing nation, and it’s also the biggest emitter of carbon in the world. If China’s economy surpasses that of the U.S. in the next decade—as it is likely to do—it will be the first time since the mid-1800s that a non-English speaking, non-Western, non-liberal democratic country will once again hold this position. This will reflect a shift in the center of global geo-economic gravity and in political power as well—and will affect the way the world develops in the future.

How optimistic are you that China and the U.S. will avoid the “Thucydides Trap” that can lead to conflict?

If you take a passive view and do nothing, or if you take a deeply pessimist, realist, almost Hobbesian view of human nature, it can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. However, if you temper that skepticism with what I call constructive realism and do work together that is useful to each side and reflects the values of each side, you start to build strategic trust, step by step. That gives you enough political capital long-term to solve some of the really hard stuff in the relationship.

What steps should Presidents Obama and Xi take in the next year?

The relationship between the U.S. and China is so vast, complex, and challenged at all levels that they need a common strategic narrative between the two of them, rather than just a privately held narrative in their minds about each other. The narrative needs to be realistic about where they disagree and constructive about where they can agree, and they need to work together to form a functioning regional and global order for the future against the huge challenges we now face.

My report lays out a script of what a common strategic narrative might be and explains how some policy platforms within that narrative can be relevant.

Recognizing the major differences in Chinese and American values and interests, what would a collaborative relationship look like? The question is the degree to which their values and interests do coincide. For example, if you have the U.S., China, and India rowing essentially the same way on climate change, then you save the planet.

What has surprised you most in your research?

I have been surprised to discover how deeply entrenched the stereotypes are on the part of Chinese policy elites toward America and American policy elites toward China.

Why did you choose to come to the Belfer Center to do research for this major study?

The Belfer Center’s vitality lies in the fact that it’s pulling the ideas from the academy into the practice of day-to-day foreign policy and security policy decision-making. So I was very pleased when Graham Allison invited me to the Center to undertake this study. It is a welcoming environment.
Environmental hero. Techno-optimist. Madman. David Keith has been called many things, but “unoriginal thinker” isn’t one of them. Ever since he won acclaim for his dissertation experiment, which demonstrated that atoms travel as quantum waves, Keith has been shaking the establishment.

On any given day, you might find this scientist and policy analyst:

• Teaching at Harvard’s School of Engineering.
• Advising Bill Gates on climate issues.
• Helping his company, Carbon Engineering, scale up technology to remove CO₂ from the atmosphere.
• Writing academic papers about solar geoengineering in leading journals.
• Giving speeches about environmental progress, and helping develop the “Eco-modernist Manifesto,” (ecomodernism.org) which is generating lots of press.
• Planning his next Arctic wilderness trip.

Keith says we’re at an environmental inflection point. Despite promising technology and social movements that will nudge smarter policies, public investment in focused energy R&D is “pitifully small”—less than we spend on nuclear weapons development. Given the importance of these efforts, Keith says, “that’s just goofy.”

"Culture of Absurd Caution"

Even more important than higher budgets, he says, is something counterintuitive: higher tolerance for failure. A major contributor of technological stagnation, he argues, is a “culture of absurd caution.” Scientific institutions like NASA and parts of DOE have become bureaucracies with minimal tolerance for failure. “If failure cannot be tolerated,” Keith says, “then you are certain to avoid success.”

This culture cannot be changed by blaming agencies. Government leaders need the courage to reframe fiascos like Solyndra as part of the discovery process. And Congress must prioritize a culture of competitiveness over “gotcha” hearings when things go wrong. Without such a shift, Keith says, America will lose the innovation race with China.

Keith is doing his part, working to build momentum for a once-taboo technology that could be one of our most effective tactics against climate change: solar geoengineering, also known as solar radiation management (SRM). In a nutshell, SRM injects aerosols into the stratosphere to block a portion of inbound sunlight, reversing the warming effect of carbon emissions.

SRM manages the symptoms of greenhouse gases only; it does not undo decades of damaging greenhouse gases, nor does it obviate the need for huge efforts to lower carbon emissions. Still, at a time when even the most aggressive global carbon treaties simply stop the problem from getting worse at a faster rate, Keith says this low-cost, high-impact technology represents one of the few tools we have to stop the planet’s dangerous warming.

Benefits and Risks

He is up-front about the risks of SRM, both to nature and national security, in which states could be drawn into conflict over earth’s thermostat. The need for greater clarity about both SRM’s promise and potential pitfalls, Keith says, is exactly why governments should support controlled experiments. Dispassionate analysis soon, he argues, will save us from desperate, ill-considered measures later. Meanwhile, Keith is leading a fundraising effort for Harvard’s own geoengineering initiative.

Keith is mindful that technological innovation alone won’t solve our climate problems. “There is absolutely no possibility of this issue getting solved by some kind of policy-free technology invention,” Keith says. “It’s all about policy.” Carbon, he explains, is basically a global public good. “We have to coordinate the provision of this public good. It’s a free-rider problem.”

To address this, policymakers must establish a carbon price. Despite major political barriers, Keith says even conservatives who find “carbon taxes” a non-starter should embrace a competitive policy that would diminish today’s crony capitalism and lobbying-driven subsidies.

Just as the Belfer Center took the lead in confronting nuclear weapons and nuclear proliferation, Keith hopes the Center will lead the effort to reduce the dangers of climate change. Stronger programs to help students gain mastery at the intersection of policy and science, he argues, are a must for the Kennedy School.

“We need the convening power of the Kennedy School to bear on the cutting edge of science and technology.”

David Keith is the Gordon McKay Professor of Applied Physics at Harvard’s School of Engineering and Applied Sciences and Professor of Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School, housed at the Belfer Center. He has worked at the interface between climate science, energy technology, and public policy for 20 years and has received numerous honors for his work, including the MIT prize for excellence in experimental physics and TIME magazine’s selection as one of its Heroes of the Environment.

by Josh Burek

Spotlight: David Keith

David Keith

David Keith is the Gordon McKay Professor of Applied Physics at Harvard’s School of Engineering and Applied Sciences and Professor of Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School, housed at the Belfer Center. He has worked at the interface between climate science, energy technology, and public policy for 20 years and has received numerous honors for his work, including the MIT prize for excellence in experimental physics and TIME magazine’s selection as one of its Heroes of the Environment.

Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright visited Harvard in April for an interview with Harvard’s new “American Secretaries of State Project: Diplomacy, Negotiation and Statecraft.” The project is jointly organized by the Belfer Center’s Future of Diplomacy Project and Harvard Law School’s Program on Negotiation.

The Secretaries of State Project is led by Harvard Kennedy School’s Nicholas Burns, Harvard Law School’s Robert Mnookin, and Harvard Business School’s James Sebenius. The professors also co-teach a new course at Harvard titled “Great Negotiators, Effective Diplomacy, and Intractable Conflicts.”

Students in the class joined other students and faculty for a three-hour interview of Secretary Albright by Professors Burns, Mnookin, and Sebenius, during which she spoke about notable moments and lessons she learned as the United States’ chief negotiator.

“We hope this ambitious project will help to illuminate for Americans the central lessons in great power diplomacy over the last forty years, from Vietnam, the opening to China, the end of the Cold War, and German Unification to the many complex challenges we confront today,” Burns said.

Madeleine K. Albright

“I think that the basis of any successful negotiation is to understand what the other person needs… because not everything that the person across the table needs is something that you automatically disagree with.”

“You have to figure out how to get a win-win because if it’s zero-sum it really has every danger of falling apart, so that’s the first part. The second part is because you’re going to spend an awful lot of time with this person, you have to know an awful lot about that person.”

Henry A. Kissinger

“In an international negotiation, the panoply of pressures and incentives that you can marshal is crucial, but you have to be careful not to marshal it in such a way that it looks like a demand for surrender, because then you are creating an additional incentive for resistance.”

“I tried never to leave Washington for a negotiation unless I had an 80 percent assurance it would succeed … don’t undertake shuttle diplomacy except to put fine points on an agreement.”

The project, directed by Eugene Kogan, will interview former U.S. secretaries of state about the most demanding and consequential negotiations they conducted while in the nation’s highest foreign policy office. Along with Albright, Secretaries George P. Schultz, James A. Baker III, and Henry A. Kissinger have shared their experiences. Secretaries Condoleezza Rice, Colin Powell, and Hillary Rodham Clinton have agreed to be part of this historic undertaking in the near future.

The co-organizers plan to produce a book, documentary films, and case studies based on the interviews.
“I’m a great believer that strength and diplomacy go together. You don’t bring any cards to the table, you’ve got nothing to bargain with. You’ve got to have strength, you’ve got to have cards.”

“When you have a problem somewhere, the first thing people do is say, ‘let’s withdraw our ambassador.’

That’s the dumbest thing you can do. Your station there is your listening post.”

“The most important thing for a secretary of state, in terms of whether he or she can be effective, is the relationship with their president…nobody was going to get between me and my president.”

“One major principle of negotiation, of course, is to understand and appreciate the political constraints on the guy across the table.”

“You’re never going to be a good negotiator unless you’re willing to walk away from a negotiation when it isn’t going to succeed. …if you’re not ready to walk, you’re not going to get anywhere.”

For more on the American Secretaries of State Project, see belfercenter.org/SecState >>
Good Deal or Bad? Gary Samore, executive director for research at the Belfer Center, makes a point to former Senator Kay Hagan at a Kennedy School JFK Jr. Forum on the Iran nuclear negotiations. Participants also included Graham Allison, William Tobey, and Nicholas Burns.

Unification Impacts: Victor Cha (left), senior adviser and Korean chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, discusses “Theories of Korean Unification” during a Belfer Center Director’s Lunch. Cha explained the possible results if North and South Korea were to unify. Stephen Bosworth took part in the discussion.

Warm Welcome: Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin E. Dempsey (left) is presented with a Harvard gift by Lt. Col. Damone A. Garner, Harvard Kennedy School National Security Fellow following a presentation at a special National Security Fellows event.


Top Tier: Belfer Center Senior Fellows Daniel Poneman (left), former deputy secretary of energy, James Cartwright (center), former vice chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and David Petraeus, former CIA director, chat during a reception opening the annual meeting of the Center’s International Council.

Ballot Briefing: Ambassador Dennis Ross (left), counselor at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and member of the Center’s International Council, discusses Israeli election impacts along with International Security Program Senior Fellow Chuck Freilich, former deputy national security adviser in Israel.
Security Strategies: Keith Alexander, former director of the National Security Agency (NSA) and former commander of the U.S. Cyber Command, discusses security issues at a Center brainstorming meeting hosted by Graham Allison. MIT Professor Nazli Choucri (left) was one of the participants.

Avoiding Conflict: Graham Allison (left) moderates a JFK Jr. Forum, “U.S.-China Under Xi Jinping: From Strategic Collision to Common Purpose?” The event focused on U.S.-China 21, a report by Center Senior Fellow and former Australian PM Kevin Rudd. Meghan O’Sullivan and Tony Saich added their insights.

Efficient Sustainability: Amory Lovins, chairman and chief scientist with the Rocky Mountain Institute, discusses the future of profitable low-carbon options for the U.S. and China, an event moderated by Meghan O’Sullivan, director of the Center’s Geopolitics of Energy Project.

What It Takes: U.S. Congressman Seth Moulton, a Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) alumnus and former United States Marine Corps Officer, talks with HKS students about his run for Congress in 2014 and the qualities and experience needed for those interested in congressional service.

Engaged Economist: Belfer Center Director Graham Allison (left) meets in Beijing with Liu He, a Harvard Kennedy School alumnus who is deputy director of the National Development and Reform Commission. President Xi Jinping considers Minister Liu highly important to China’s economic planning for the next decade.

Captive Audience: Harvard Law School Professor Susan Crawford discusses “Communications in Context” at a Belfer Center Cyber Seminar. A former special assistant to President Obama for science, technology, and innovation policy, Crawford discussed Internet policies and telecom industry power.
T
his spring the Belfer Center’s Future of Diplomacy Project appointed four notable global leaders as the 2015 Fisher Family Fellows. The fellows shared their expertise and personal experiences, gave presentations and interviews, and led several study groups for faculty, students, and fellows during the spring semester at Harvard Kennedy School.

The 2015 Fisher Family Fellows included: former Danish Prime Minister and NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, former European Union Commissioner for Trade and Minister of Foreign Affairs for Belgium Karel de Gucht, former National Security Advisor and Foreign Secretary of India Shivshankar Menon, and Brazil’s former Minister of Defense and Minister of Foreign Affairs Celso Amorim.

“We are delighted that these distinguished leaders joined us this semester,” said Nicholas Burns, faculty director of the Future of Diplomacy Project. “Their presence allows our students, faculty, and fellows to deepen our understanding of the complex challenges to international peace and security.”

Anders Fogh Rasmussen

Rasmussen was appointed the 12th NATO secretary general in 2009 and served through 2014. Before this he served as the prime minister of Denmark, and assumed the rotating presidency of the EU in 2002. During his presidency, he was influential in completing accession negotiations with 10 candidates for EU membership, including Poland and Cyprus.

Rasmussen’s study groups focused on “America and Europe: Coming together or drifting apart?” and “Russia: A friend or foe?”

Karel de Gucht

De Gucht served as the European Union commissioner for trade from 2010 to 2014, assisting in securing free trade negotiations between the EU and the U.S. through the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). Before his work with the EU, he served as Belgium’s deputy prime minister.

De Gucht’s study groups discussed “Ukraine torn between the EU and Russia,” “Eurasian Economic Union versus Eastern Partnership,” “Brexit: The big gamble,” and “The longer-than-expected road to TTIP.”

Shivshankar Menon

Menon was India’s national security advisor and foreign secretary, influencing various negotiations, including the India-U.S. civil nuclear initiatives. As a career diplomat, he was India’s ambassador to China and Israel and served as high commissioner to Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Menon’s study groups covered the “India-U.S. Civil Nuclear Initiative”; the “India-China BPTA, 1993”; “Cross-border terrorism from Pakistan”; “Sri Lanka, 2009”; and “India’s strategic culture.”

Celso Amorim

Amorim formerly served as Brazil’s minister of defense and was the country’s longest serving foreign minister, first under President Itamar Franco and later with President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. He played a key role in transforming Brazil into a major international leader and in 2009 was named the “world’s best foreign minister” by Foreign Policy magazine’s David Rothkopf.

Amorim’s study groups focused on the history and the future trajectory of Brazil’s foreign and defense policies.
Rethinking the Arab States and Their Future
by Jacqueline Tempera

In 2011, the world watched in awe as Arab citizens poured into the streets of Tunisia, Egypt, and elsewhere in the Middle East, and, in some cases, managed to topple long-standing authoritarian regimes through persistent protest. The uprisings and the ensuing turbulence have forced scholars to re-examine previously accepted propositions about legitimacy, the state, civil society, religion, and regional stability.

This semester, Professor Michael C. Hudson, a Kuwait Foundation Visiting Scholar with the Belfer Center’s Middle East Initiative, sought to tap into this intrigue. Through his well-attended study group, “Rethinking the Arab State,” Hudson led discussions about the erosion of political legitimacy in states following the Arab Spring.

“This is an intrinsically important place to be studying in a multi-disciplinary way because so many dramatic things have happened,” says Hudson. “It is important for us to collectively grapple with issues of political change, political transition, democratization, and the role of religion in politics.”

Hudson came to Harvard Kennedy School from Georgetown and Singapore. In Singapore, he was founding director of the Middle East Institute and professor of political science at the National University of Singapore. At Georgetown University, he is the Seif Ghanoush Professor of International Relations and Arab Studies, Emeritus. Among his books are Arab Politics: The Search for Legitimacy (Yale, 1977) and The Arab Uprisings: Catalysts, Dynamics, and Trajectories (co-editor, contributor, Rowman and Littlefield, 2015).

He says he designed the study group to help scholars identify the causes of the region’s continued state of political unrest and turmoil that followed the revolution.

“By the end of the semester, I had a new base of knowledge that I previously didn’t have about the region.”
—Khaled Kteily
Masters of Public Policy Candidate, 2016

During the semester, Hudson invited eight leading scholars in the field to come to the study group. Among them: Samer Shehata, an associate professor of Middle East Studies at the University of Oklahoma, presented “The Resurgence of Egypt’s ‘Deep State.’” “Deep state” refers to the idea that a powerful and clandestine group of people work to influence governmental control and law within the state. In Egypt, this has led to an increase in military control over the nation and is bringing the process of democratization to a screeching halt.

Yezid Sayigh, a senior associate and professor at the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut, spoke with study group participants about “ISIS: A State in Waiting.” Sayigh argues that ISIS is a clone of Saddam Hussein’s Iraqi state in terms of its use of violence and ideology. He says the group’s ties with other provinces resemble that of the Iraqi Ba’th Party of the 1980s.

Amaney Jamal, the Edward S. Sanford Professor of Politics at Princeton University, presented “The U.S. Military Deployments and the Status of Women in the Arab World.” Jamal’s hypothesis is that as U.S. military presence in Arab nations increases, women’s political rights suffer, especially in strong Islamist states. States will concede to Islamists’ demands, not on foreign policies, but on gender, she says. “Women’s rights are negotiated away.”

Harvard Kennedy School Professor Stephen Walt discussed the question: “Can the United States ‘Manage’ the Middle East? Should it try?” His answer was no. U.S. involvement, he says, has created more chaos than stability.

Hudson says the study group came to several conclusions, the most poignant being that states continue to be hostile to political participation except in their very limited terms, thus weakening legitimacy and contributing to instability. Through continued study and observation, he hopes to find out whether a more mobilized civil society can overcome this blockade.

“This would lead to a more democratic and stable Arab world,” Hudson says. “Hopefully, the fruits of our study group will add something positive to the ongoing debate about where the Arab world is going.”

For more on the Middle East Initiative, see belfercenter.org/MEI
As the U.S. experience in Iraq following the 2003 invasion made abundantly clear, failure to properly plan for risks associated with postconflict stabilization and reconstruction can have a devastating impact on the overall success of a military mission. In *Waging War, Planning Peace*, Aaron Rapport investigates how U.S. presidents and their senior advisors have managed vital noncombat activities while the nation is in the midst of fighting or preparing to fight major wars. He argues that research from psychology—specifically, construal-level theory—can help explain how individuals reason about the costs of postconflict noncombat operations that they perceive as lying in the distant future.

In addition to preparations for “Phase IV” in the lead-up to the Iraq War, Rapport looks at the occupation of Germany after World War II, the planned occupation of North Korea in 1950, and noncombat operations in Vietnam in 1964 and 1965. Applying his insights to these cases, he finds that civilian and military planners tend to think about near-term tasks in concrete terms, seriously assessing the feasibility of the means they plan to employ to secure valued ends.

“Why is the United States often unprepared for the peace that inevitably follows war?...Aaron Rapport’s intriguing answer, well grounded in theory and history, is essential reading for analysts of decision making and of American foreign policy.”

—Jack S. Levy, Board of Governors’ Professor, Rutgers University

Despite the nuclear accident at the Fukushima Daiichi plant in Japan, a growing number of countries are interested in expanding or introducing nuclear energy. However, nuclear energy production and nuclear waste disposal give rise to pressing ethical questions that society needs to face. This book takes up this challenge with essays by an international team of scholars focusing on the key issues of risk, justice, and democracy. The essays consider a range of ethical issues including radiological protection, the influence of gender in the acceptability of nuclear risk, and environmental, international, and intergenerational justice in the context of nuclear energy.

In *Heretic*, Ayaan Hirsi Ali writes that a religious reformation is the only way to end the terrorism, sectarian warfare, and repression of women and minorities that each year claim thousands of lives throughout the Muslim world. She argues that the violent acts of Islamic extremists cannot be divorced from the religious doctrine that inspires them. Instead, she says, we must confront the fact that they are driven by a political ideology embedded in Islam itself.

“Whatever one may think of her solutions, Hirsi Ali should be commended for her unblinking determination to address the problem.”

—Andrew Anthony, The Guardian

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Compiled by Susan Lynch, ISP/STPP
Tributes to Lee Kuan Yew

Lee Kuan Yew, the first prime minister of Singapore and “founding father” of independent Singapore, died in March at age 92. Lee’s legacy includes advising Chinese leaders from Deng Xiaoping to Xi Jinping and U.S. presidents from Richard Nixon to Barack Obama. In 2012, Belfer Center Director Graham Allison and Center board of directors’ member Robert Blackwill, with Ali Wyne, published Lee Kuan Yew: The Grand Master’s Insights on China, the United States, and the World, distilling Lee’s views on critical global issues and policy choices.

Allison, Blackwill, and longtime Lee friend Henry Kissinger share thoughts on Lee Kuan Yew:

Graham Allison

“Lee Kuan Yew…was one of two certifiable grand masters of international strategy in the last half century (Henry Kissinger being the other)….It is difficult to identify anyone whose words and actions in demonstrating what competent, clean, determined leadership can do have had more impact on the world.”

(Los Angeles Times, 3.25.15)

“To Western ears, the claim that an autocratic state can govern more effectively than a democratic one sounds heretical….But in the case of Singapore, it is hard to deny that the nation Lee built has for five decades produced more wealth per capita, more health, and more security for ordinary citizens than any of his competitors.”

(The Atlantic, 3.30.15)

Robert D. Blackwill

“…Lee was persuaded that peace and prosperity is not the innate order of things. Regarding the future of Singapore he put it like this, ‘I was…troubled by the apparent overconfidence of a generation that has only known stability, growth and prosperity.’

…Henry Kissinger has stressed and Lee Kuan Yew many times endorsed the proposition that maintaining in a determined and sustained way ‘a balance of power that enforces restraint where rules break down,’ to quote Kissinger, has given the world whatever order it has enjoyed since the 17th century.”

(The National Interest, 4.13.15)

Henry Kissinger

“Lee Kuan Yew was a great man. And he was a close personal friend, a fact that I consider one of the great blessings of my life. A world needing to distill order from incipient chaos will miss his leadership.

…Lee defied conventional wisdom by opting for statehood. The choice reflected a deep faith in the virtues of his people. He asserted that a city located on a sandbar with nary an economic resource to draw upon, and whose major industry as a colonial naval base had disappeared, could nevertheless thrive and achieve international stature by building on its principal asset: the intelligence, industry and dedication of its people.”

(The Washington Post, 3.23.15)

International Security

International Security is America’s leading journal of security affairs. It provides sophisticated analyses of contemporary security issues and discusses their conceptual and historical foundations. The journal is edited at Harvard Kennedy School’s Belfer Center and published quarterly by the MIT Press. Questions may be directed to IS@Harvard.edu.
The Belfer Center has a dual mission: (1) to provide leadership in advancing policy-relevant knowledge about the most important challenges of international security and other critical issues where science, technology, environmental policy, and international affairs intersect, and (2) to prepare future generations of leaders for these arenas.

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BELFER IN BRIEF

Rockwood to Lead Disarmament Center
Laura Rockwood, senior research fellow with the Project on Managing the Atom, has been named executive director of the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. Before coming to the Belfer Center, she was section head of Non-Proliferation and Policy Making in the Office of Legal Affairs of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Heinonen Aids UN Verification Efforts
Belfer Center Senior Fellow Olli Heinonen was appointed by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to a UN group that met in Geneva this spring to develop recommendations on verification of the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. The report by representatives of 25 countries will be discussed in the UN General Assembly this coming fall. It is the first time options and provisions for verification have been addressed by so many countries at an international level.

Reports Highlight Sovereign Wealth Funds
In April, the Belfer Center and Center for International Development (CID) published three reports to help policymakers, legislators, and practitioners wishing to establish a new sovereign wealth fund or reform existing ones. The reports include A Stable and Efficient Fiscal Framework for Saudi Arabia: The Role of Sovereign Funds in Decoupling Spending from Oil Revenue and Creating a Permanent Source of Income, authored by Belfer Center Fellow Khalid Alsweilem, and also Sovereign Investor Models: Institutions and Policies for Managing Sovereign Wealth and A Comparative Study of Sovereign Investor Models: Sovereign Fund Profiles.

Global Affairs Students Attend White House Summit on Extremism
Belfer Center International Global Affairs student fellows Olivia Zetter (left), Julia Stern (right), and IGA student Léa Steinacker were invited to participate in the first-ever White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism. The event brought together practitioners from local, national, and foreign governments, academia, and the private sector to share best practices.

Top Scholars Join Middle East Initiative
The Middle East Initiative welcomes new affiliates Robert Danin as senior fellow (Eni Enrico Mattei Senior Fellow for Middle East and Africa Studies, Council on Foreign Relations), Melani Cammett as faculty affiliate (Professor of Government, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Harvard), and Philippe Fargues as associate (Director, Migration Policy Center, European University Institute).

For more updates from the Belfer Center, see belfercenter.org/News

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