Foreign Policy Restructuring: How Governments Respond To Global Change

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Details of how the restructuring will operate have just begun to be defined. A soon-to-be-released strategic framework creates five categories representing challenges to development. Operational plans would design country-specific aid programs to meet those challenges. The restructuring is part of Secretary Rice’s “transformational development” initiative, that seeks to use foreign assistance to transform recipient countries’ economic development paths, and to graduate countries from a dependence on aid. While the current restructuring requires no legislative action, it raises a number of questions. How did contemporary pundits rate this new blueprint for U.S. foreign policy? A “vacuity” was the assessment of the New York Times, while others derided it as “too cautious” and lacking “vision.” Likewise, as a candidate in 1992, Clinton chastised his opponent for failing to enunciate a “new American purpose.” But Clinton often embraced short-term tactics that undermined his long-term global vision. Rather than rebuke antiglobalization protestors at the Seattle WTO negotiations and make the case for further trade liberalization, Clinton tried to appease domestic constituencies by calling for strengthened labor standards, possibly enforced by trade sanctions.