

## **TITLE: Is Democracy Possible in the Middle East**

Author: Carol Heid

Grades: 12

Subjects: Government

**Overview of Lesson Plan/rationale:** In this lesson, students consider the possibilities of democracy in the Middle East. Students will compare the direction of American foreign policy between the former Bush administration and the current Obama administration. Students will then assess a variety of countries of the Middle East and determine if democracy is possible in this part of the world

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Compare and contrast President Bush's foreign policy to President Barack Obama's foreign policy and the idea of promoting democracy. Students will examine the reasons these policies have been proposed at this time.
2. Examine recent Middle East citizens practicing and analyze the extent of democracy in these areas.
3. Explore where democracy does exist in the Middle East and evaluate the extent of political rights citizens of individual countries experience.
4. Analyze diverse views of the prospects for democracy in the Middle East and draw conclusions on its relationship with the president's foreign policy of supporting peace around the world.

Suggested Time Allowance: 4 class periods

### **MATERIALS/RESOURCES**

Student handout one – Inauguration speech reflection

Student handout Two- Country Fact Sheet

Student handout three- Pillars of Democracy

Student handout four -Read and Reflect

President Bush inaugural address 2005

Barack Obama inaugural address 2009

Essay rubric

Wiki Rubric

*Can Democracy Succeed in the Middle East? (At Issue Series)*. Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2006. Print.

Article 1 *The Trouble With Democracy in the Middle East* Cato Institute

[http://www.cato.org/pub\\_display.php?pub\\_id=3325](http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=3325)

Article 2 *Is Democracy Possible in the Middle East* ABC News

<http://i.abcnews.com/International/story?id=707625&page=1>

Article 3 *The Democratic Ideal* American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

<http://www.aei.org/issue/21929>

Projector, student computer access

## 1. WARM-UP/:

Display each of the following quotes on the board. Lead students in a discussion about the tone, goals and ideas of each of the quotes. Tell students that they will be reading the full text of each of the inauguration speeches that these quotes were found.

And so, to all other peoples and governments who are watching today, from the grandest capitals to the small village where my father was born: know that America is a friend of each nation and every man, woman and child who seeks a future of peace and dignity, and we are ready to lead once more.  
Barack Obama

We are led, by events and common sense, to one conclusion: The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world.

George W. Bush

Divide the class in half and distribute President Bush's 2005 inauguration speech and President Obama's 2008 inauguration speech. After students have read each speech ask students to identify each of their ideas on foreign policy and their ideas on promoting democracy. Have students complete the leading questions from handout one for the day two discussion

## ACTIVITIES/PROCEDURES

### Day two:

Pair students according to the speech they read from day one. Have students compare their leading questions from handout one. After completing their discussion ask students to write a summary or blog of their findings and speculate why President Obama feels that his policy is a good policy for the U.S. to follow at this time. Do you agree or disagree and why?

**Technology Piece** – Create a student blog such as *21classes* to discuss their findings and opinions. Require students to reply to at least one student response.

## 2. ACTIVITY:

View Barack Obama's speech given in Cairo to extend discussion on foreign policy goals in the Middle East. The text and video can be found at <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=5061822n>

Homework: Have students read *Islamic Culture Provides a Sound Basis for Democracy* by Bernard Lweis and *Islamic Culture is not Compatible with Democracy* by Roger Scruten ( both readings are found in the Thomas/Gale At Issue series *Can Democracy Succeed in the Middle East*. Have class prepare for a group discussion.

### Day 2:

Seminar discussion on Islam and democracy. Set up class discussion in a circle so that all students can see each other. Direct students in a discussion answer the following three questions:

Can Islam culture and democracy work together?

Is the issue of equality a factor in a successful democracy combined with Islamic culture>

Address the old saying "Religion and politics don't mix" Is this the case for Islamic culture and democracy?

**Homework:** Have student answer the question Can Islamic culture and democracy work together on the classroom blog.

**Day 3:**

Have students remain in their groups and divide the three articles up so that each member has a different article. *The Trouble With Democracy in the Middle East* Cato Institute, *Is Democracy Possible in the Middle East* ABC News, and *The Democratic Ideal* American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. The Thomas/Gale At Issue series *Can Democracy Succeed in the Middle East*. also has relevant articles for discussion. Have each member read and review their article with the group. Following the review discussion has the group answer the questions on handout four.

What are the main points of each article?

What are some examples to support this view?

Is there any opposition to this point of view?

Who is responsible to help democracy succeed in the Middle East?

What role does the U.S. play in making democracy succeed in the Middle East?

**Day 4:**

Divide students into groups of two or three and assigned each group on of the following Middle Eastern countries. (Afghanistan, Morocco, Palestine, Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Syria). Using the U.S. world fact book at <http://www.cia/publications/factbook/> has students look up information on assigned countries. Fill out student handout two "Country Profile Sheet".

Government Type

Constitution (Does it have one? what is its function?)

Legal system

Suffrage (Voting rights, age, gender)

Powers of executive, legislative and judicial branches and how they are selected.

Political parties (Do they exist and how do they function?)

When students have completed this chart have students rate their countries level of democracy by using the pillars of democracy determined by the U.S. Department of State. You may want to take some time to discuss each of the pillars for understanding (handout three).

Sovereignty of the people

Government based on consent of the governed

Majority Rule

Minority Rights

Guarantee of basic human rights

Free and fair elections

Equality before the law

Due process

Constitutional limits on government

Social, economic, and political pluralism

Values of tolerance, pragmatism, cooperation, and compromise

Have students rate their countries as very democratic, somewhat democratic, only slightly democratic, or not democratic. Have students make a sign with their countries name and flag. Have students tape their county on a continuum line for democracy that has been placed on the wall. Allow student groups to share their findings with the rest of the class.

**Technology Piece-** Create a wiki page for democracy in the Middle East. Have each group design a page on the wiki with the information that they have gathered about their country and its place on the spectrum of democracy. Post your site for others to learn from.

**Day 5**

Students will write an essay addressing the question Can Democracy Exist in the Middle East? Students may use resources that were discussed in previous classes. Require students to include outside research to defend their point of view.

Note to teacher:

### 3. FOR HOMEWORK OR FUTURE CLASSES:

Related Resources:

Academic PA Content Standards:

GRADES: 11

1.1.11 Reading

- A. Locate various texts, media and traditional resources for assigned and independent projects before reading.
- B. Analyze the structure of informational materials explaining how authors used these to achieve their purposes.
- C. Use knowledge of root words and words from literary works to recognize and understand the meaning of new words during reading. Use these words accurately in speaking and writing.
- D. Identify, describe, evaluate and synthesize the essential ideas in text. Assess those reading strategies that were most effective in learning from a variety of texts.
- E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.
- F. Understand the meaning of and apply key vocabulary across the various subject areas.
- G. Demonstrate after reading understanding and interpretation of both fiction and nonfiction text, including public documents.
  - Make, and support with evidence, assertions about texts.
  - Compare and contrast texts using themes, settings, characters and ideas.
  - Make extensions to related ideas, topics or information.
  - Assess the validity of the document based on context.
  - Analyze the positions, arguments and evidence in public documents.
  - Evaluate the author's strategies.
  - Critique public documents to identify strategies common in public discourse.
- H. Demonstrate fluency and comprehension in reading.
  - Read familiar materials aloud with accuracy.
  - Self-correct mistakes.
  - Use appropriate rhythm, flow, meter and pronunciation.
  - Read a variety of genres and types of text.
  - Demonstrate comprehension (Standard 1.1.11.G.).

1.2.11

- A. Read and understand essential content of informational texts and documents in all academic areas.

- Differentiate fact from opinion across a variety of texts by using complete and accurate information, coherent arguments and points of view.
- Distinguish between essential and nonessential information across a variety of sources, identifying the use of proper references or authorities and propaganda techniques where present.
- Use teacher and student established criteria for making decisions and drawing conclusions.
- Evaluate text organization and content to determine the author's purpose and effectiveness according to the author's theses, accuracy, thoroughness, logic and reasoning.

Grade 12:  
Civics

5.1.12

J. Evaluate and analyze the importance of significant political speeches and writings in civic life (e.g., *Diary of Anne Frank*, *Silent Spring*).

5.4.12

- A. Analyze the impact of international economic, technological and cultural developments on the government of the United States.
- B. Analyze the United States' interaction with other nations and governmental groups in world events.
- C. Compare how past and present United States' policy interests have changed over time and analyze the impact on future international relationships.
- D. Explain how foreign policy is developed and implemented.

## Inauguration Speech Reflection Questions

1. As you read each of the speeches highlight what you feel is the most important statement made by each president concerning American foreign policy. Why?
2. What do you believe is the message of each of the speeches in relation to America's goals in world issues?
3. How does each of the speeches differ? Do you feel that each of the president's goals is legitimate? Explain your answer.
4. Are there any similarities between the two speeches? Explain.

**The New York Times**  
**January 20, 2009**  
**Transcript**  
**Barack Obama's Inaugural Address**

Following is the transcript of President Barack Obama's Inaugural Address, as transcribed by CQ Transcriptions:

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA: Thank you. Thank you.

CROWD: Obama! Obama! Obama! Obama!

My fellow citizens: I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you have bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our ancestors.

I thank President Bush for his service to our nation...

... as well as the generosity and cooperation he has shown throughout this transition.

Forty-four Americans have now taken the presidential oath.

The words have been spoken during rising tides of prosperity and the still waters of peace. Yet, every so often the oath is taken amidst gathering clouds and raging storms. At these moments, America has carried on not simply because of the skill or vision of those in high office, but because We the People have remained faithful to the ideals of our forebears, and true to our founding documents.

So it has been. So it must be with this generation of Americans.

That we are in the midst of crisis is now well understood. Our nation is at war against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred. Our economy is badly weakened, a consequence of greed and irresponsibility on the part of some but also our collective failure to make hard choices and prepare the nation for a new age.

Homes have been lost, jobs shed, businesses shuttered. Our health care is too costly, our schools fail too many, and each day brings further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries and threaten our planet.

These are the indicators of crisis, subject to data and statistics. Less measurable, but no less profound, is a sapping of confidence across our land; a nagging fear that America's decline is inevitable, that the next generation must lower its sights.

Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real, they are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this America: They will be met.

On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord.

On this day, we come to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and worn-out dogmas that for far too long have strangled our politics.

We remain a young nation, but in the words of Scripture, the time has come to set aside childish things. The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift,

that noble idea, passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness.

In reaffirming the greatness of our nation, we understand that greatness is never a given. It must be earned. Our journey has never been one of shortcuts or settling for less.

It has not been the path for the faint-hearted, for those who prefer leisure over work, or seek only the pleasures of riches and fame.

Rather, it has been the risk-takers, the doers, the makers of things -- some celebrated, but more often men and women obscure in their labor -- who have carried us up the long, rugged path towards prosperity and freedom.

For us, they packed up their few worldly possessions and traveled across oceans in search of a new life. For us, they toiled in sweatshops and settled the West, endured the lash of the whip and plowed the hard earth.

For us, they fought and died in places Concord and Gettysburg; Normandy and Khe Sanh.

Time and again these men and women struggled and sacrificed and worked till their hands were raw so that we might live a better life. They saw America as bigger than the sum of our individual ambitions; greater than all the differences of birth or wealth or faction.

This is the journey we continue today. We remain the most prosperous, powerful nation on Earth. Our workers are no less productive than when this crisis began. Our minds are no less inventive, our goods and services no less needed than they were last week or last month or last year. Our capacity remains undiminished. But our time of standing pat, of protecting narrow interests and putting off unpleasant decisions -- that time has surely passed.

Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America.

For everywhere we look, there is work to be done.

The state of our economy calls for action: bold and swift. And we will act not only to create new jobs but to lay a new foundation for growth.

We will build the roads and bridges, the electric grids and digital lines that feed our commerce and bind us together.

We will restore science to its rightful place and wield technology's wonders to raise health care's quality and lower its costs.

We will harness the sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories. And we will transform our schools and colleges and universities to meet the demands of a new age.

All this we can do. All this we will do.

Now, there are some who question the scale of our ambitions, who suggest that our system cannot tolerate too many big plans. Their memories are short, for they have forgotten what this country has already done, what free men and women can achieve when imagination is joined to common purpose and necessity to courage.

What the cynics fail to understand is that the ground has shifted beneath them, that the stale political arguments that have consumed us for so long, no longer apply.



MR. The question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works, whether it helps families find jobs at a decent wage, care they can afford, a retirement that is dignified.

Where the answer is yes, we intend to move forward. Where the answer is no, programs will end.

And those of us who manage the public's dollars will be held to account, to spend wisely, reform bad habits, and do our business in the light of day, because only then can we restore the vital trust between a people and their government.

Nor is the question before us whether the market is a force for good or ill. Its power to generate wealth and expand freedom is unmatched.

But this crisis has reminded us that without a watchful eye, the market can spin out of control. The nation cannot prosper long when it favors only the prosperous.

The success of our economy has always depended not just on the size of our gross domestic product, but on the reach of our prosperity; on the ability to extend opportunity to every willing heart -- not out of charity, but because it is the surest route to our common good.

As for our common defense, we reject as false the choice between our safety and our ideals.

Our founding fathers faced with perils that we can scarcely imagine, drafted a charter to assure the rule of law and the rights of man, a charter expanded by the blood of generations.

Those ideals still light the world, and we will not give them up for expedience's sake.

And so, to all other peoples and governments who are watching today, from the grandest capitals to the small village where my father was born: know that America is a friend of each nation and every man, woman and child who seeks a future of peace and dignity, and we are ready to lead once more.

Recall that earlier generations faced down fascism and communism not just with missiles and tanks, but with the sturdy alliances and enduring convictions.

They understood that our power alone cannot protect us, nor does it entitle us to do as we please. Instead, they knew that our power grows through its prudent use. Our security emanates from the justness of our cause; the force of our example; the tempering qualities of humility and restraint.

We are the keepers of this legacy, guided by these principles once more, we can meet those new threats that demand even greater effort, even greater cooperation and understanding between nations. We'll begin to responsibly leave Iraq to its people and forge a hard-earned peace in Afghanistan.

With old friends and former foes, we'll work tirelessly to lessen the nuclear threat and roll back the specter of a warming planet.

We will not apologize for our way of life nor will we waver in its defense.

And for those who seek to advance their aims by inducing terror and slaughtering innocents, we say to you now that, "Our spirit is stronger and cannot be broken. You cannot outlast us, and we will defeat you."

For we know that our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness.

We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, and nonbelievers. We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth.

And because we have tasted the bitter swill of civil war and segregation and emerged from that dark chapter stronger and more united, we cannot help but believe that the old hatreds shall someday pass; that the lines of tribe shall soon dissolve; that as the world grows smaller, our common humanity shall reveal itself; and that America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace.

To the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect.

To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict or blame their society's ills on the West, know that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy.

To those who cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent, know that you are on the wrong side of history, but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist.

To the people of poor nations, we pledge to work alongside you to make your farms flourish and let clean waters flow; to nourish starved bodies and feed hungry minds.

And to those nations like ours that enjoy relative plenty, we say we can no longer afford indifference to the suffering outside our borders, nor can we consume the world's resources without regard to effect. For the world has changed, and we must change with it.

As we consider the road that unfolds before us, we remember with humble gratitude those brave Americans who, at this very hour, patrol far-off deserts and distant mountains. They have something to tell us, just as the fallen heroes who lie in Arlington whisper through the ages.

We honor them not only because they are guardians of our liberty, but because they embody the spirit of service: a willingness to find meaning in something greater than themselves.

And yet, at this moment, a moment that will define a generation, it is precisely this spirit that must inhabit us all.

For as much as government can do and must do, it is ultimately the faith and determination of the American people upon which this nation relies.

It is the kindness to take in a stranger when the levees break; the selflessness of workers who would rather cut their hours than see a friend lose their job which sees us through our darkest hours.

It is the firefighter's courage to storm a stairway filled with smoke, but also a parent's willingness to nurture a child, that finally decides our fate.

Our challenges may be new, the instruments with which we meet them may be new, but those values upon which our success depends, honesty and hard work, courage and fair play, tolerance and curiosity, loyalty and patriotism -- these things are old.

These things are true. They have been the quiet force of progress throughout our history.

What is demanded then is a return to these truths. What is required of us now is a new era of responsibility -- a recognition, on the part of every American, that we have duties to ourselves, our nation and the world, duties

that we do not grudgingly accept but rather seize gladly, firm in the knowledge that there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our character than giving our all to a difficult task.

This is the price and the promise of citizenship.

This is the source of our confidence: the knowledge that God calls on us to shape an uncertain destiny.

This is the meaning of our liberty and our creed, why men and women and children of every race and every faith can join in celebration across this magnificent mall. And why a man whose father less than 60 years ago might not have been served at a local restaurant can now stand before you to take a most sacred oath.

So let us mark this day in remembrance of who we are and how far we have traveled.

In the year of America's birth, in the coldest of months, a small band of patriots huddled by dying campfires on the shores of an icy river.

The capital was abandoned. The enemy was advancing. The snow was stained with blood.

At a moment when the outcome of our revolution was most in doubt, the father of our nation ordered these words be read to the people:

"Let it be told to the future world that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive, that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet it."

America, in the face of our common dangers, in this winter of our hardship, let us remember these timeless words; with hope and virtue, let us brave once more the icy currents, and endure what storms may come; let it be said by our children's children that when we were tested we refused to let this journey end, that we did not turn back nor did we falter; and with eyes fixed on the horizon and God's grace upon us, we carried forth that great gift of freedom and delivered it safely to future generations.

Thank you. God bless you.

And God bless the United States of America.

## Government Fact Sheet

Country Name \_\_\_\_\_

Government Type	
Constitution – Does it have one? How does it function?	
Legal System	
Suffrage – Voting rights, age, gender.	
Powers of the Executive Branch – Selection, responsibilities, powers.	
Powers of the Legislative Branch – Selection, responsibilities, powers.	
Powers of the Judicial Branch – Selection, responsibilities, powers.	
Political Parties Do they exist and how do they function?	



## **Is Democracy Possible in the Middle East?**

Amid the First Signs of Change, Longing Competes with Mistrust of Western Democracy

Commentary By FAWAZ A. GERGES

April 30, 2005 —

From Baghdad to Beirut, and from Cairo to Jerusalem, stirrings of freedom are unsettling deeply entrenched autocratic rulers, as Arab civil societies are beginning to challenge their ruling tormentors.

In Egypt, for instance, one of the most populous and important Arab states, President Hosni Mubarak responded to critics of his autocratic style by agreeing to hold free elections. Although it is too early to draw any definite conclusions about the nature and substance of recent developments, they point to a more assertive civil society and a real longing for political empowerment and emancipation. Careful support and nurturing by the West will be critical for their success.

Most Arabs and Muslims in the Middle East are fed up with their ruling autocrats who had promised heaven but delivered dust and tyranny. These sentiments clearly show that there is nothing unique or intrinsic about Arab and Islamic culture that inhibits democratic governance. Like their counterparts elsewhere, Arabs and Muslims have struggled to free themselves from the shackles of political authoritarianism without much success, thanks partly to the support given by the West, particularly the United States, to powerful dictators.

### History

This support, of course, is rooted in history. At the heart of the problem in the developing world, including Middle Eastern countries, lays the fact that the new elite that assumed power after the end of colonialism came mostly from the military-security apparatus, one that is deeply hierarchical, rigid and authoritarian. The colonial state invested many more resources in the military-security apparatus than in other civil-legal institutions in order to maintain control over restive indigenous societies.

In the 1950s and 1960s, in most Arab/Muslim countries, including Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Sudan and Libya, young army officers launched coup d'états and seized power from the regimes affiliated with the loathed British and French colonialists. One can speculate at the extent to which the colonial state's conduct alienated people further from Western constitutionalism and the concept of representative government.

In the last decade, the further economic weakening of Middle Eastern states has brought popular dissatisfaction to the fore. Islamists -- political activists who aim to abolish secular, social and political order, and replace it with an Islamic one -- are the main beneficiaries of the decline of the post-colonial state. Of all the social and political groups, Islamists tend to be the most successful in building large constituencies, thanks to the social and economic services they provide to a suffering population. Instead of directly tackling the existential crisis facing their societies, secular Arab rulers have used the fear of Islamism to perpetuate their absolute control.

### Power of the Media

Now, however, we are witnessing the emergence of rudimentary social movements that could dramatically revolutionize Arab and Muslim politics. These movements -- be they professional associations, workers organizations, students or women's groups -- are much more assertive, mobilized and challenging of governments' autocratic methods, thanks to the power of the new media, which has broken official monopoly on the flow of information. As a result, consensus is emerging in the Muslim world regarding respect for human rights, legal transparency and the peaceful transfer of power.

Even mainstream Islamists, such as the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, the most powerful transnational organization, have now come to this very same conclusion: Democracy is the most effective mechanism to

guard against political authoritarianism and protect the human rights of the Muslim Ummah (the Muslim community worldwide).

Still, in the minds of many Arabs and Muslims, liberal democracy remains synonymous with Western political hegemony and domination. Democracy tends to be seen as a manipulative tool wielded by Western powers to intervene in Arab/Muslim internal affairs and to divide and conquer.

### Islamicized Democracy

Within the past 10 years, mainstream Islamic voices have worked arduously to redefine liberal democracy in Islamic terms and make it comprehensible and acceptable to Arab and Muslim masses. Simply put, Muslim and Islamic democrats have been trying to Islamize democracy and modernity and strip them of their Western clothing. Although they have come far, the journey is just beginning. Islamicizing liberal democracy is still a work in progress; a great deal of hard work remains.

There now exists a two-pronged dialectic: anti-Muslim sentiments in the Christian West and anti-Western sentiments in the world of Islam, which run parallel. Widespread apprehension remains regarding Bush's intentions and policies throughout Arab and Muslim lands. Many Arabs and Muslims are reluctant to buy what they perceive to be his inauthentic and faulty democratic goods. They view his rhetoric as a means to justify and legitimize his illegal invasion of Iraq to the American people, as well as to wage a relentless war against Arabs and Muslims. Leading social and political groups vehemently oppose intervention by the great powers, particularly the United States, in their internal affairs under any pretext, including that of spreading democracy.

On the other hand, anti-Islamic sentiment has risen in the West in the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks. Even in traditionally tolerant societies, like France and the Netherlands, there have been growing voices against Islam.

While Muslim liberal and democratic voices are concerned about Islamophobia, they are also anxious about public backlash against American intervention in their countries' internal affairs. They prefer that the international community led by the United Nations, not the United States, lead the drive for promoting democratic governance in the area by exerting pressure on Muslim dictators to open up their political systems. For all these reasons, the promotion of liberalism and democratization must be accompanied by a genuine and systematic struggle to confront the root causes and manifestations of the rising Islamophobia in the Christian West and deepening anti-American sentiments in the Muslim world.

### Refreshing Rhetoric

For now, some of the rhetoric coming out from Washington is refreshing, and carries tremendous potential for American foreign policy and Middle Eastern societies alike. There is no denying that there is fresh thinking in Washington regarding the need to support the aspirations of democratic voices in the area, as well as to keep a healthy distance from Arab dictators. Only time will tell if this appreciation gets institutionalized within the decision-making process, or whether U.S. policymakers will ultimately revert to the simple business-as-usual approach with Arab dictators.

The United States could be much more effective if it worked jointly with the international community in assisting progressive forces in the region. A broad coalition could more successfully exert systematic political, economic and diplomatic pressure against Arab ruling autocrats and force them to be attentive to their citizens' aspirations. This complex multilateral approach would produce the desired effects much more effectively than military pre-emption à la Iraq.

The United States must also recognize that actions speak louder than words, and that institution building requires the resolution of simmering regional conflicts, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, and reducing the socio-economic inequities that breed militancy and extremism. Only then may this exceptional historical moment be

translated into a concrete political reality, whereby the Muslim Middle East can undergo genuine democratic transformation.

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## Pillars of Democracy Check List

<b>Pillars of Democracy</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<b>Sovereignty of the people</b>	
<b>Government based on consent of the governed</b>	
<b>Majority Rule</b>	
<b>Minority rights</b>	
<b>Guarantee of basic human rights</b>	
<b>Free and fair elections</b>	
<b>Equality before the law</b>	
<b>Due process</b>	
<b>Constitutional limits on government</b>	
<b>Social, economic, and political pluralism</b>	
<b>Values of tolerance, pragmatism, cooperation, and compromise</b>	