Since 1921, the Council on Foreign Relations has sought, in the words of its founders, to “afford a continuous conference on international questions affecting the United States, by bringing together experts on statecraft, finance, industry, education, and science.” Under the leadership of Senior Vice President James M. Lindsay, CFR’s David Rockefeller Studies Program has expanded its intellectual agenda to stay true to its guiding principles and ahead of emerging international issues. In keeping with CFR’s mission, the think tank has evolved into a twenty-first-century incubator of ideas poised to address the most significant challenges facing the United States and the world today.

More than seventy full-time, visiting, and adjunct fellows cover major geographical regions and issues. CFR scholars provide fresh thinking and concrete recommendations to officials at all levels of government, who consistently turn to CFR to inform their decision-making.

CFR’s International Institutions and Global Governance (IIGG) program, directed by Senior Fellow Stewart M. Patrick, exemplifies the kind of intellectual innovation that is central to sustaining CFR’s mission. The work of IIGG, which analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of existing multilateral institutions, is informed by the recognition that the system of international governance established in 1945 reflects the world as it existed then, not the geopolitical realities of today. For example, increasingly segmented food and pharmaceutical supply chains have facilitated the global spread of counterfeit and unsafe food and medicine. IIGG launched a new project this year that considers ways to establish international standards in order to ensure a safe supply of both.

IIGG produces work in a variety of formats, including the Global Governance Monitor, an award-winning interactive tool that tracks, maps, and evaluates multilateral efforts to tackle transnational threats. This year, the program unveiled its Global Governance Report Cards—annual assessments of international performance in six areas: nuclear weapons proliferation, terrorism, climate change, armed conflict, financial instability, and global health.

Directed by Sebastian Mallaby, Paul A. Volcker senior fellow for international economics, the Maurice R. Greenberg Center for Geoeconomic Studies (CGS) produces rigorous analysis at the intersection of economic and political affairs. As the world considers fluctuating markets and interest rates, austerity measures, and currency crises, CGS has developed engaging new ways to deliver its work on these issues and more. In June, CGS introduced “Global Economics Monthly,” a report and electronic newsletter in which Robert Kahn, CFR’s Steven A. Tananbaum senior fellow for international economics, delves into the macroeconomic issues he covers on his blog, Macro and Markets. Geo-Graphics, another CGS blog, led by Benn Steil, senior fellow and director of international economics, explains complex economic issues from central banking to U.S. fiscal policy through charts and graphs generated by CFR experts.

With the aim of preventing or resolving violent conflicts around the world, the Center for Preventive Action (CPA) engages leaders from the...
public and private sectors. The center’s Contingency Planning Memo-
randa target plausible conflict scenarios with potential impact on U.S.
interests and propose measures to prevent and mitigate them. Recent
CPA endeavors examined political instability in Jordan, a Sino-Japanese
clash in the East China Sea, electoral violence in Kenya, and political
unrest in Venezuela. An executive branch official touted the program, led
by General John W. Vessey Senior Fellow for Conflict Prevention Paul B.
Stares, as “rich and thought provoking,” adding that it was “impressive to
hear the frank discussion and fresh ideas.”

The Civil Society, Markets, and Democracy (CSM&D) initiative is
continuously challenging established notions of how to secure sustain-
able, meaningful development across the world. Under the direction of
Senior Fellow Isobel Coleman, CSM&D organizes its work into three
programs: Markets and Democracy in the 21st Century, Combating
Extremism Through Civil Society, and Women and Foreign Policy. For
the collection Pathways to Freedom: Political and Economic Lessons From
Democratic Transitions, Coleman and Fellow Terra Lawson-Remer edited
case studies by CFR and outside scholars, identifying seven lessons
critical to democratization, and the Women and Foreign Policy program
released a report, Ending Child Marriage, by Fellow Rachel Vogelstein.

The Studies Program publishes over a dozen expert blogs, counts thirty-
three scholars active on Twitter, and has a strong presence on Facebook
and other social media channels. It produces a range of interactive tools
and infographics, including the Nigeria Security Tracker, edited by CFR
Senior Fellow for Africa Policy Studies John Campbell, which uses maps
and graphs to document violence and unrest across Nigeria; the Vaccine-
Preventable Outbreaks Map, from Senior Fellow for Global Health Laurie
Garrett, which plots instances of diseases that are mostly preventable by
inexpensive vaccines; and the Insurgency Tracker, which draws on Senior
Fellow Max Boot’s most recent book, Invisible Armies, to present a visual
history of more than two thousand years of guerilla warfare. Boot’s book
was one of eleven published or edited by scholars or staff this year, part of
the strong intellectual culture that endures here. The output of the David
Rockefeller Studies Program is remarkable, in quality and quantity alike,
demonstrating the ways in which the think tank has expanded its agenda to
stay ahead of emerging issues, while adapting to new forces, including the
explosive growth of social media, that have changed the way CFR delivers
its work to the public.

The world has changed since 1921, and through the work of the Studies
Program, CFR has changed with it. And yet, for all of the organization’s
innovation, CFR has forged its success—as a membership organization,
a publisher, and a think tank—by adhering to the principles and charac-
teristics that have always set this institution apart: serious, authorita-
tive analysis of the highest standard that is thoughtful and relevant to policy.
We are grateful to CFR Vice Chairman David M. Rubenstein and outgoing
vice chairman Richard E. Salomon for their many contributions to
the organization. We thank our colleagues on the Board of Directors for
their work throughout the year.

Finally, we congratulate Richard N. Haass on his tenth anniversary as
president, and thank him for all that he has done to preserve CFR’s legacy
while overseeing the expansion of its work, reach, and influence.

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

Vice Chairman David M. Rubenstein
Vice Chairman Richard E. Salomon