



[EAI Online Seminar] Richard Haass on “The World”

An Era of Disorder: “Are We Up to It?”

East Asia Institute (EAI)

※ Provided below are selected excerpts from Dr. Richard Haass’s statements during the seminar.

I. From Disarray to Disorder

An Era of Disorder, Led by Traditional and Global Issues Combined

- This is an important time in history. We have the traditional issues of international relations, and in particular, great power rivalry. This includes the growing rivalry between the United States and China, the renewed rivalry between the United States and Russia, rivalry between China and India, China and Japan, and so forth. This is the traditional dynamic of international relations. But what makes this era so different—what makes the 21st century so different—is that in addition to great power dynamics we have some other things going on. Most importantly, we have the emergence of global issues. Right now, the focus is on public health, but in the West Coast, we have these terrible fires which are clearly linked to a changing climate. We also live in a world where power is being diffused or disseminated in many forms to many places.

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*I think the question is, **are we up to it?**”*

You are in the shadow of just that when it comes to North Korea’s nuclear missile programs. So, all of this is happening at a time when the arrangements in place, regional and global arrangements are inadequate. Many of these arrangements date back to the immediate period after World War II. Many new issues like climate change or how to regulate cyberspace are relatively new and have arisen relatively recently. So, there’s a trend in the world away from order. Growing rivalry, inadequate institutions, diffusion of power, global issues are more and more pressing at this time. So, this is an extremely demanding period of history where we have to deal with both the traditional agenda, traditional threats to order and with the new additional set of threats to order coming from globalization. And I think the question is, are we up to it? Will the governments of the world be able to put aside their differences and meet both the traditional and the new challenges?

U.S.-China Strategic Dialogue: The First Step towards Order

- I agree with the assessment that the relationship between the United States and China is critical and has been fast deteriorating. I think what we are seeing is a very different China. Xi Jinping's China is very different. It's more oppressive at home. It's much more assertive in its foreign policy. We are seeing that with Japan, Taiwan, India, and the South China Sea. We saw what happened in Hong Kong. China has not improved behavior in vis-a-vis intellectual property, and also in economic espionage.
- I do not like the phrase 'New Cold War.' China represents a fundamentally different kind of challenge than the Soviet Union. Unlike the Soviet Union, China is integrated in the world economically. I also do not think China has the same kind of global universal ideological ambitions that the Soviet Union had.
- If I had to say what my goal is, my goal is that the United States and China manage their competition. We cannot eliminate the differences, but we do not want the differences to lead to conflict. We also do not want our differences to make it impossible to cooperate where our interests overlap. So the United States and China do have differences, say over the South China Sea or over Taiwan or various issues. But we have some overlapping interests in North Korea, Afghanistan, or in global public health or in climate change. So, to me, the intellectual challenge, the foreign policy challenge is how do we manage our inevitable differences? How do we manage our rivalry? How do we manage our economic competition in a way that does not make it impossible for us to also cooperate where it's in our collective interest to cooperate?
- The United States and China need much more diplomatic interaction. People always point out that our militaries—that our navies and our air force—operate in close proximity. I wish our diplomats operated in close proximity. We do not have serious sets of strategic conversations. We will have to make some changes, and the United States and China have to build strategic dialogue.

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Intl Organizations Have Their Own Ceilings: What We Need Is the Willingness of Nations

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- At any time in history, at any time in the world, order and disorder coexist. We always have both. What matters is the balance between the two. And what also matters is the trend. Order usually requires two things: It requires a balance of power, and it requires certain understandings, certain agreements, among the powers about how the world is to be organized. It also needs a consensus on what principles the order is to be based upon. When you have a balance of power and some degree of consensus then the world tends to be fairly peaceful, fairly stable. When there is no balance of power, or when the balance of power is challenged by a rising power or by the weakening of existing powers, that usually is a recipe for conflict. We have seen this various times in history before World War I and before World War II.
- Can we maintain a balance of power? What explains power is not just military might but also the willingness to use it. I think what will affect order and disorder is not simply the traditional considerations of balance of power and a consensus of the rules. But also, a willingness and ability to come together to deal with global

challenges. To put it another way, we could actually have agreement in principle, say between the United States and China about the South China Sea or Taiwan. But if there was willingness in the world to address climate change, or address global public health, or deal with setting the rules for world trade, we could have balance of power. We could avoid conflict.

- This fall and next month is the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. And to me the United Nations is an example of an institution that cannot play a meaningful role in dealing with what I have described, either with the great power dynamics or with globalization. So institutions like the East Asia Institute(EAI) and the Council on Foreign Relations(CFR) will be important, since it will take great intellectual activity to resolve disorder. But it will also take political willingness by the United States, China, and the governments to do what is necessary to promote order.

II. Trump's "Inbox" for the Next U.S. Administration

Trump's 3.5 Years: Enough to Change U.S. Foreign Policy Trajectory

"I would say (Mr. Trump) has changed American foreign policy more than it has changed him."

- I knew Mr. Trump before he was president. I knew him from the world of golf and also living in New York. When he was a candidate, he asked if I could come by and talk to him about foreign policy, which I did one day at Trump Tower. He did not have highly developed views of foreign policy at the time. He had two things that came through. One, he was very critical of America's trade agreements. Secondly, he was very wary of foreign policy in general. I disagreed on both. I basically advocated for the value of free trade to the United States overall. Although I did not persuade Mr. Trump of the wisdom of my views, I did think that once he was in office, he would evolve and become more traditional. He has not.
- President Trump is different from most of the post-World War II presidents. To me, he reminds me of a 19th century President Jackson. He reminds me in the 20th century, some of the isolationists we had at various times particularly in the senate. More recently, like Pat Buchanan or Ross Perot with their unilateralism, isolationism, protectionism. He represents very different tendencies in American foreign policy and so far, I would say he has changed American foreign policy more than it has changed him.

Next Administration's "Inbox": Repairing U.S. Alliances Abroad and the Situation at Home

- It is still early September and we have had several surprises since September already. Between now and early November we have 53 to 54 days. There could well be 53 to 54 surprises between now and the election, so I have no idea what the result will be. And as you have read and heard, it could also be that we do not find out who the next president will be right away. There could be a very complicated situation in dealing with all the ballots because many Americans, due to COVID-19 and other reasons will choose to vote by mail. Therefore, this will probably be a closed election and a very bitterly contested election. But sooner or later we will have a president. It will either be Donald Trump or Joe Biden. Whoever it is will inherit a very difficult inbox. One of my sayings is "When you run for president, you can choose your vice president, you can choose the policies you run on, you can choose what you say if you win in your inaugural address, you can choose your cabinet. The only thing you cannot choose is your inbox." And that will be the same whether it is Mr. Trump or Mr. Biden. It will be a very difficult inbox.

- I would hope that the next president would spend a lot of time trying to “repair” America’s alliances in Europe and in Asia. I think if Mr. Biden were to be elected that would be a priority for him. Mr. Trump however has a slightly different view of alliances, to say the least. Unless his thinking changes, I do not think he would make the repair of American alliances a priority. He has not made alliance maintenance or improvement a priority for the last three and a half years. You do not need an American to tell someone from the Republic of Korea about the difficulties of the relationship. So again, unless Trump has a change of heart, I would not predict there would be a significant improvement in our Asia-Pacific alliance system. I would hope though, that he would rethink it particularly if he wants to pursue a serious policy towards China. The best way to pursue it is not unilaterally but is with our allies and partners. I hope he would come to see that logic. Mr. Biden, I believe, would certainly see that logic.
- In addition to coordinating with allies in Europe and Asia, the United States should find a way to enter what was the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). There would have to be some renegotiation, but I think it is essential for the United States to rejoin the region’s principle in trade and economic initiative. The United States also needs to address some of its domestic challenges: education, infrastructure, race, immigration, the amount of money spent on basic research. We need to compete with China. So, there are things we need to do for ourselves.
- Let me say two other things about the next president. One is that whoever the president is, there will be a difficult relationship between the United States and China. The friction is not simply a result of Mr. Trump. But a lot of Americans, Republic and Democrats alike have a more concerned view about China and the direction it is taking. And second of all, whoever is elected is going to inherit a difficult inbox. An important part of this inbox is going to be dealing with domestic issues in the United States. It is going to be dealing with COVID-19. It is going to be dealing with tens of millions of unemployed. We are going to have deep political divisions, possibly deeper coming out of this election. We have obviously got all the challenges dealing with race and racism. So, the next president is not going to have the luxury of just being a foreign policy president. He is also very much going to have to be a domestic president.

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III. North Korea and the Korean Peninsula

An Alternative Approach to North Korea: “Something-for-Something”

- We have tried various approaches to North Korea. To use an American expression, we have tried honey and vinegar and we do not have much to show for either. We have fought a war with North Korea. We have tried traditional diplomacy. We have tried dramatic summitry and personal diplomacy. We have tried sanctions. We have tried incentives. I do not think there can be anything fundamentally new. What we see is a North Korea that remains closed, heavily militarized and obviously has increased nuclear and missile capabilities. My own view is we should hold to the long-term goal of denuclearization. But this is not something we can negotiate. We should be open to partial agreements and essentially, what I call in my informal English, “something-for-something”: giving North Korea certain sanctions relief in exchange for their taking certain steps in the nuclear area. That is something that the United States, South Korea, Japan need to coordinate very closely on in the first instance, and China and Russia should also be included in those consultations. We are going to have to operate in a very frustrating, but realistic way through the gray area of managing the problem to gradually limit it. I think that is probably the best that the next administration could do. ■

Speaker & Moderator

■ **Richard Haass** is in his eighteenth year as president of the Council on Foreign Relations, the preeminent independent, nonpartisan organization in the United States devoted to issues of foreign policy and international relations. He has served as the senior Middle East advisor to President George H.W. Bush, the State Department's director of policy planning under Secretary of State Colin Powell, and in various positions in the Defense and State departments during the Carter and Reagan administrations. He was also U.S. coordinator for policy toward the future of Afghanistan and the U.S. envoy to both the Cyprus and Northern Ireland peace talks. A recipient of the State Department's Distinguished Honor Award, the Presidential Citizens Medal, and the Tipperary International Peace Award, Haass is also the author or editor of fourteen books on U.S. foreign policy and one book on management. His latest book is *The World: A Brief Introduction*. A Rhodes Scholar, he holds master's and doctorate of philosophy degrees from Oxford University and is the recipient of numerous honorary degrees.

■ **Young-Sun Ha** is chairman of the board of trustees of the East Asia Institute. He is also a professor emeritus at Seoul National University's department of political science and international relations. Ha currently serves as a member of the senior advisory group for the Inter-Korean Summit Talks Preparation Committee. He also served as a member of the Presidential National Security Advisory Group, co-chairman of Korea-Japan Joint Research Project for New Era, president of the Korea Peace Studies Association, and research fellow at Princeton University's Center for International Studies and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. His recent books and edited volumes include *A New Perspective on the Diplomatic History of Korea*, *World Politics of Love: War and Peace*, *U.S.-China Competition in the Architecture of a Regional Order in the Asia-Pacific*; *Korean Peninsula Among Big Powers: 1972 vs. 2014*, *Complex World Politics: Strategies, Principles, and a New Order*, *The Future of North Korea 2032: The Strategy of Coevolution for the Advancement*, *The Emergence of Complex Alliances in the 21st Century*, and *A New Era of Complex Networks in Korea-Japan Relations*. He received his BA and MA from Seoul National University and his PhD from the University of Washington.



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