

Pillar Three: Strong and Resilient Communities

America must make renewed investments in the physical and social infrastructure that unifies our communities and ensures our domestic security. Threats emerging from fragile states, natural disasters, and cyberspace can transcend national borders at the speed of light. American communities must be robust enough to withstand the challenges they face, and we need strong and just communities across the globe so that threats ranging from viruses to virulent ideologies do not take hold or spread. America must continue to lead a global exchange of creative ideas, local innovation, and social advancement that strengthens all communities while keeping us strong, and knowing we strengthen ourselves and the world when we lead by example.

Strengthening Communities at Home

Our communities are the bedrock of American strength and resilience. Strong communities require cohesion and trust at every level. A community must see itself represented in its government and institutions in order to trust them. Government bodies and civic institutions must be accountable to the people they serve.

Trust between law enforcement agencies and the people they protect and serve is essential in a democracy. The key to safe and stable communities is the integrity of our criminal justice system, resources and training for the law enforcement professionals who work hard every day to keep our communities secure, and the safe and effective delivery of policing services.

Many disenfranchised communities across the U.S. feel threatened by the justice system that is supposed to protect them. This not only divides and weakens our communities, but erodes confidence in democratic values and institutions abroad. This disconnect threatens American security and leads to unnecessary violence between citizens and police. Ultimately, a lasting solution to these tensions can only be resolved by ensuring that the yields of the most productive society in human history are shared by all who contribute to it.

Strong bonds between the criminal justice, government, and law enforcement institutions and communities they serve have never been more important. Extremist groups adhering to various ideologies seek to inspire and exploit disaffected Americans from all walks of life and economic backgrounds, but especially young people. The threat of violent extremism here at home is real and could grow.

Communities with strong relationships with law enforcement that are based on trust will have help recognizing threats, identifying those who might be at risk of radicalization, and working

with authorities to ensure those risks are managed and threats are neutralized. Most importantly, if those strong relationships exist, the community will feel secure in reaching out to law enforcement when they need help.

Communities that are alienated from law enforcement, or view law enforcement as a threat or enemy, will not get the help they need, and will be less likely to reach out when trouble arises. Communities in which local social, religious, or cultural leaders do not trust and are not trusted by law enforcement will have a much harder time managing these risks, and law enforcement will have a much harder time ensuring safety and security.

Recommendations:

- 1. Train law enforcement to counter violent extremism in our communities.** Increase investment at the federal and state level for officer training, education and outreach tools. Officials should provide recurrent and consistent culturally-intelligent training for law enforcement, including federal prosecutors and support staff in U.S. Attorneys' offices involved in countering violent extremism (CVE) and other law enforcement activities that are associated with at-risk communities. Trainers should have subject-matter expertise and be credible within the community they are speaking on for such programs to be effective. These trainings should be developed in cooperation with local partners and representative community leaders.
- 2. Increase law enforcement engagement in at risk communities.** Whether the issue is a disproportionately high crime rate or greater potential for ideologically-driven violence, securing our communities requires effective engagement and partnership between law enforcement and those they serve. This engagement should include regular roundtables with community leaders and members, partnerships that bring together the private sector, civil society and others, and investments in afterschool programs, mental health counseling, and youth programs. This engagement should not only occur in reaction to a specific event—it should be ongoing and should include positive non-enforcement activities.
- 3. Empower community leaders.** Partnerships among community leaders, the private sector, and civil society groups are crucial to addressing the underlying causes of ideologically-driven violence and other criminal activity. Forums for community members to voice their concerns regarding crime and policing, and mechanisms to educate local communities, are critical for empowering community leaders and law enforcement to work together. Local leaders are key to effective community-based policing strategies because they serve as trusted messengers and understand the needs and resources of those most at-risk.
- 4. Create standards for law enforcement surveillance programs.** Effective surveillance techniques are critical to keeping our community safe—but without the proper oversight and accountability mechanisms, they can also create mistrust in the communities they are meant to protect. Law enforcement officials should establish

working groups to develop appropriate use and oversight standards for surveillance technology and tactics. These working groups should include community leaders, as well as representatives from local, state, and federal law enforcement entities, and should ensure that outreach and engagement programs are not used as intelligence gathering tools, and do not undermine the credibility and efficacy of community-based policing strategies.

- 5. End profiling and discrimination.** Officials should adopt and enforce policies prohibiting profiling and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, gender, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, immigration status, disability, housing status, occupation, and/or language fluency. Profiling has proven to be an ineffective technique and one that creates mistrust among law enforcement and communities. Additionally, state and local law enforcement entities should decouple federal immigration enforcement from routine local policing for civil enforcement and non-serious crime.

Securing Our Critical Infrastructure

As we continue to build trust and cohesion within our communities, it is equally critical that we invest in a 21st century infrastructure. There are too many risks and missed opportunities relying on an infrastructure largely built after World War II. In order for our communities to remain strong and prosperous, we must once again look to American innovation and ingenuity.

Ours is truly a digital age in which our communities are increasingly dependent on safe and secure information networks. From critical infrastructure such as our electric grid and transportation systems to our personal communications via cellular phone and email, we all interact with computer networks on a near-constant basis. As the quantity of data being created and transported through the internet increases exponentially, networks are ever more prone to misuse and abuse. We must prevent nefarious actors from disrupting our lives by unlawfully gaining access to our networks and information, and at the same time maintain the values and principles, established in the Constitution, that make America great.

We must secure the essential networks needed for our communities to function. Cyberspace is a rapidly changing environment in which it is increasingly difficult for defense to keep up with a quickly adapting offense. We must accept that successful attacks can and will occur in the future and put processes in place to ensure that these attacks do not seriously threaten our economy or public safety.

Phrases such as “cyber-Pearl Harbor” and “cyber-9/11” are thrown around all too casually to describe the consequences and ramifications of a cyber attack on our nation’s critical infrastructure. While the comparisons to historic tragedies may not be applicable or appropriate, the threat and vulnerability are real. Cyber attacks, including attempts at disruption, intrusion, and espionage, against U.S. government networks occur every minute of every day.

These security challenges are not limited to federal government networks. Similarly, the solutions to these challenges are not always discovered by federal government employees. Though almost all government communications move on networks owned and operated by the private sector, it remains very difficult for the government and private sector companies to collaborate and share information on critical issues. Local, state, and federal government agencies must be able to communicate, cooperate, and share information and best practices. It is in everyone's best interest to equip private sector companies with the best possible information to secure their networks and data, especially given that the vast majority of critical infrastructure in the United States is privately owned and operated.

Of particular concern is energy infrastructure, which in the United States is highly centralized, leaving it vulnerable to disruption from physical and cyber attacks by both state and non-state actors. In 2013, for example, a substation in California was disabled with small arms fire from an unknown group. On a wider scale, similar attacks could plunge large portions of the country into blackouts of unprecedented duration. The centralized nature of energy infrastructure, with its inherent risks, is not unique to the United States, and the globalized nature of energy markets leave us vulnerable to disruptions abroad as well. A 2012 attack on natural gas infrastructure in Yemen, for example, almost led to a fuel crisis in New England. The race to make the grid smarter, more interactive, and more flexible has inspired numerous start-up companies, industry innovations, and increased efficiencies. The effort to "win the future" of the grid has relied heavily on online communications infrastructure, meaning that the energy grid is now much more connected—but also much more vulnerable to cyber attacks. Despite this, utility cybersecurity efforts in the U.S. remain voluntary.

What must not be forgotten as we strengthen our communities against malicious actors in cyberspace, privacy, trust, and transparency are deeply important to Americans, and rightly so. Mass-surveillance tools increasingly available to law enforcement agencies, even at the local level, Americans must be confident that data about their daily lives is protected and used only within the appropriate Fourth Amendment restraints. In a world in which cyber criminals and other bad actors will take advantage of privacy vulnerabilities to do mischief, robust privacy protections actually strengthen, not threaten, strong security.

Though intentional attacks by malicious actors, both state and non-state, constitute a major threat to our national and community security, a far greater risk is that of natural disasters. Even disasters which initially seem small can, if they disable critical infrastructure like power plants, water treatment facilities, or roadways, have ripple effects on a community and economy.

Resilient systems are key. As we saw during Hurricane Sandy and during major outages such as the 2003 blackout in the Northeast, our power grid is susceptible to major disruptions, and such disasters can be fatal to the most vulnerable among us, especially the ill, the elderly, and the poor. In the modern age, hospitals, grocery stores, water infrastructure, and the providers of many other necessities require power, and even internet to function at capacity. Distributed power networks with diverse sources of production dramatically reduce the risk of catastrophic failure, and smart networks can temporarily assign limited production to where it is most vital.

Investments in repairing aging roads, bridges, levies, and dams can mitigate secondary disasters, like flooding in the aftermath of a hurricane or structural failure in the aftermath of an earthquake or tornado.

Climate scientists predict that climate change will bring more frequent and more violent storms over the coming decades. This will be particularly true in coastal areas as warming seas fuel increasingly severe tropical storms and hurricanes. Combined with rising sea levels, this poses a significant threat to many coastal communities in America and abroad. While we should not retreat from efforts to mitigate climate change through reductions in carbon pollution, we must also brace our communities for the effects of climate change that may now be unavoidable. We must invest in the infrastructure that will allow communities to adapt to rising oceans and weather severe storms, including more sophisticated and resilient energy and communications networks, and more secure bridges, harbors, port infrastructure, and levies.

The military has long identified climate change and our dependence on fossil fuels as threats to security at home and abroad. Many people are unaware of the necessity and challenge of maintaining military readiness during blackouts. Domestic military bases are involved in disaster relief missions here in the U.S, and as climate change brings about more frequent extreme weather events, this role will become more vital. Domestic military bases are also increasingly home to frontline operations abroad. A significant number of bases are highly vulnerable to power outages. The military continues to invest and spur innovation in clean energy technology that is helping them mitigate the threats to their capabilities, creating new manufacturing jobs, and making communities more resilient.

Cities and towns across the U.S. face many of the same challenges as military bases; they too are vulnerable to power outages resulting from extreme weather events. They often find themselves without the expertise or financial resources to sufficiently back up their critical infrastructure. Utilities, meanwhile, do not have the resources or the regulatory mandate to make the investments required to make the grid resilient.

Recommendations:

- 1. Protect government agencies and critical infrastructure from cyber security threats.** Government entities must work closely with technological innovators to clearly identify and implement cybersecurity objectives and metrics for public agencies, and ensure that these standards remain applicable and relevant even as technology rapidly advances. In addition, working groups between government agencies and private sector entities that own or operate critical infrastructure should be established to ensure these enterprises are meeting baseline security standards by incorporating best practices identified in the 2013 Executive Order on cybersecurity.
- 2. Assess and address threats to critical infrastructure in the U.S.** Adopt a systematic policy approach for hardening infrastructure and creating a more distributed, renewable, and more resilient architecture across sectors. This requires improving the security of U.S. government computer networks and mandating that defense

contractors to do the same. Regulatory standards should be flexible enough to adapt to the rapidly changing cyber environment but tight enough that private entities can budget for the new reality of constantly improving and upgrading their defenses. These standards—and all policies regarding infrastructure—must include robust privacy protections.

- 3. Incentivize private sector cybersecurity improvement.** Create incentives for implementation of stronger cybersecurity protections across all critical infrastructure sectors and private industry. Continue leveraging groups like InfraGard, a private sector partnership with the FBI, and the Information Sharing and Analysis Centers for private owners and operators of sector-based critical infrastructure entities to share information with appropriately vetted businesses and organizations.
- 4. Improve public-private sector cybersecurity information sharing.** Develop a process to quickly declassify and share crucial information relevant to private sector companies, especially regarding attack signature, zero-day vulnerabilities, phishing techniques, and other data that will improve security.
- 5. Train communities to protect their critical infrastructure.** Train government officials, private sector leaders and others who are responsible for maintaining critical infrastructure to identify and address vulnerabilities to that infrastructure. Create an outreach and education program focusing on systems resilience for state and local government, as well as utilities and other critical infrastructure nationwide.
- 6. Fund preparation, not just recovery.** Federal investments should not only be made in the wake of a disaster; there should be funding for communities to build more resilient critical infrastructure to minimize potential damage from storms or other disasters. There needs to be a resilience financing service, similar to the Rural Utility Service, which helped electrify much of the U.S. during the 20th century.
- 7. Make the electrical grid smarter.** Public Utility Commissions and corresponding private sector entities should offer “demand response” mechanisms, which allow consumers to strategically shift their energy consumption patterns in order to save money and ease demand during peak periods on the electricity grid. To ensure price stability during disaster or crisis, these entities should also adopt price-recovery techniques for installing batteries along their power-delivery systems. Encourage state legislatures and Public Utility Commissions to incentivize or offer parity for residential energy solutions such as efficiency improvements or solar.
- 8. Scale-up successful energy resilience projects.** Build replicable models from the numerous micro-grid and energy resilience pilot projects on military bases, such as the SPIDERS program, and in civilian settings. New York City, for example, currently has an ongoing project funded by the U.S. Department of Energy to develop a solar resilience plan in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. These types of lessons learned should be shared

with other cities and communities, potentially through programs funded by a sector-based resilience financing service.

- 9. Encourage the construction of energy-efficient buildings.** The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system for design, construction, operation, and maintenance of buildings is a model for how to encourage the private sector to develop energy efficient buildings. For example, data centers should be encouraged to adopt best practices for energy efficiency, since they are emerging as one of the largest and fastest growing consumers of electricity. In 2013, data centers consumed 91 billion KWh of electricity, which is twice as much as all households in New York City.
- 10. Improve energy security on military installations.** The Department of Defense (DoD) should develop guidance for bases to procure secure renewable energy systems in a replicable way. This could include the adoption of cost-benefit analyses that recognize the value of energy security and enable resilient renewable energy systems to be procured at a premium above the price of non-secure energy. DoD should also provide funds to support projects on DoD installations that improve facility energy security. This project could mirror the existing Energy Conservation Investment Program (ECIP).
- 11. Leverage renewable energy deployment on military bases to build resilience in the surrounding community.** U.S. military bases should identify opportunities to jointly pursue secure renewable energy with their local utilities and surrounding communities. There could be significant opportunities for new partnerships focusing on energy security, particularly given increasing interest in climate adaptation planning on the part of federal, state, and local governments and the reliance of DoD bases on state and local infrastructure. Rather than working to improve resilience separately, by working together, both sectors can cut costs and add benefits. For example, DoD can provide justification for why power companies need to enhance resilience of their infrastructure. Plus, cooperation on research and development for resilient infrastructure will cut costs.
- 12. Increase research and development funding for energy storage technologies.** Advances in energy storage will help to increase the overall resilience of the energy grid and other critical infrastructure, helping companies and military bases manage peak loads and providing backup power in the event of an emergency.
- 13. Make our cities more sustainable.** Mitigate the urban heat island effect by implementing sustainable urban development strategies, including green roofs, trees and vegetation, and cool pavements. Mitigating the heat island effect will reduce demand for air conditioning in warm temperatures. City governments play an important role in planning for and developing regulation instruments for sustainable urban development.

14. Reduce America's emissions while preparing our communities for the impact of climate change. Move forward with implementation of President Obama's Climate Action Plan, including his executive orders to prepare the United States for the impacts of climate change, and to promote climate-resilient international development. At home, encourage support for the EPA Clean Power Plan, which aims to reduce power-sector greenhouse gas emissions 30% by 2030.

Preparing American Communities for Global Opportunities

Long gone are the days when a community in America was isolated from global events. In order to take advantage of the opportunities and overcome the challenges of the 21st century, communities must effectively engage with the world. To guarantee resilience and survivability during future adverse events, whether man-made or natural, communities need to "think locally and act globally." This means identifying strategies that have served other communities, whether in a different state or a different country, in times of strife. Partnerships between communities that share similar threat profiles can amplify the benefits of strong approaches to resilience. This could mean partnerships between two towns in Arizona that share the same limited water source, or partnerships between a city in southern California and a city in Japan that must both prepare for earthquakes, or even a partnership between a city on the Gulf Coast and a city in the Netherlands that will both need to develop plans to face the rising sea levels that climate change will bring.

The Sister Cities International program is an example of this local-global perspective that has been successful at strengthening cooperation between communities across the world, while simultaneously providing opportunities at a broader perspective for Americans here at home. Many young people in the United States, especially those from disadvantaged communities, have very little opportunity to see the world, either physically or intellectually, beyond their own neighborhood, let alone their national borders.

Businesses and corporations have a critical role to play in this economic and cultural community integration. Many companies have globally distributed supply chains, and are heavily reliant on employees and managers with high degrees of cultural and linguistic competency, and benefit from community integration that develops those skills and strengthens international ties. Businesses can work together with each other or with local and state governments to institutionalize these connections and make them more broadly available.

Developing global awareness and providing global opportunities to young people in communities across America will be critical not only to enhancing community resilience and strength, but also to developing a workforce and popular knowledge base that is competitive in an increasingly global economy. Exchange, language training, and cultural literacy programs all work to advance these goals and must be a priority for any community that seeks to grow its human capital and global appeal and competitiveness.

In many cases, many of the structures are already present. As a nation of immigrants, we have enormous untapped pools of cultural and linguistic knowledge, human capital in the form of familial, social, and economic relationships that transcend national borders. Wise community leaders, both in government and civil society, will leverage those connections to enhance their community's resilience, relevance, and economic potential.

Recommendations:

- 1. Expand citizen diplomacy.** Support the expansion of “citizen diplomacy” programs like Sister Cities International, Atlas Corps, and Peace Corps to bring together cities, elected officials, and young people from countries and regions of critical national security importance, including the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Programs through these exchanges should require participants exchange lessons learned and best practices in public policy on similar challenges relating to issues such as inequality, at-risk youth, education, crime and safety, transportation, energy, and climate change.
- 2. Connect local officials across the globe.** The U.S. Department of State should house an office to facilitate intergovernmental opportunities for states and cities to establish or develop their international presence across sectors. One key objective should be to establish and formalize inter-community relationships, both within the United States and with communities abroad. This office could assist mayors representing foreign cities to participate in events hosted by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and other convenings of local and state officials.
- 3. Help American companies of all sizes take advantage of global economic opportunities.** The interconnectedness of the 21st century economy allows companies, large and small, opportunities to invest, expand, and connect to commercial opportunities in every corner of the world—if they know how. The Small Business Administration and U.S. Department of Commerce should engage communities across the country to help teach these businesses to take advantage of these opportunities.
- 4. Encourage global entrepreneurship, particularly among women and young people.** The U.S. should convene a Global Entrepreneurship Summit with an emphasis on getting America businesses to support and mentor emerging entrepreneurs, particularly women and youth. Private sector firms should establish international partnerships and connect to young entrepreneurs in cities in America and abroad to facilitate trainings, workshops, and people-to-people exchanges.
- 5. Develop stronger business ties through diaspora communities.** Push for minority and women-owned small and medium sized business to develop stronger ties to their countries of origin or cultural background. Leverage these connections to create cultural exchange programs that bring new ideas, energy and resources to the United States in order to source our communities and strengthen local economies.

Building Resilience Abroad

In today's interconnected world, threats to stability and security abroad can quickly become threats at home. Natural disasters and civil conflicts, whether on our doorstep in Latin America and the Caribbean, or seemingly far off in Asia or Africa, can cause humanitarian and refugee crises that require American involvement to mitigate or resolve. American security is maximized when these crises are minimized. We are more secure when communities around the world are more resilient and strong. The world is looking for America to demonstrate how strong communities can withstand adversity. This is an opportunity for us not only to mitigate future conflicts and security threats, but also to establish economic partners and build mutually beneficial relationships.

Communities that are rigidly divided, traumatized by a legacy of violence, lack access to key resources, or marginalize minorities and the poor, are more susceptible to conflict, disease, hunger, and the effects of natural disasters. Communities with strong social capital and institutions are more resilient to these threats, benefitting both themselves and the international community. These institutions serve as a bulwark against the spread of humanitarian and transnational crises, keeping risks small and far away.

Communities are changing. By 2030, of the world's estimated 8.1 billion people, 5 billion will live in cities, with potentially 2 billion residing in slums. Fragile cities – with limited infrastructure and governance systems that cannot meet the health, security, and economic needs of residents, can threaten American security. There is ample opportunity for the U.S. and its allies to support the development of inclusive cities that limit the potential for rapidly spreading diseases, increased rates of inequality, and havens for hostile non-state actors. Without that support, already fragile governments that fail to adapt their policies and provide real social support to accommodate urbanizing populations will face economic and demographic disasters that will threaten to topple them—posing a direct threat to America and our allies.

Many of the most densely populated communities of the world are along coasts, making them vulnerable to rising sea-levels, and climate change-fueled storms. In East Asia, 250 million people live in the “megadeltas” of coastal Bangladesh, India, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Many of these communities will face a great loss of arable land as ocean waters are driven further and further inland as seas rise and storm surges grow. Others could face annihilation in the face of cyclones if critical investments in infrastructure resilience are not made. The United States must work with governments around the world to protect their people from these effects, or else face the devastating humanitarian and security consequences of the displacement of tens of millions of people.

In addition to protecting the critical infrastructure that serves them, strong communities have structures in place to protect their citizens' rights and safety—whether they are threatened by their own government or other actors. Civil society activists are struggling to create strong and resilient communities after decades of corrupt and unaccountable governance and in the face of violence and instability. This increased volatility means there are countries, such as Yemen, Libya, and Syria, where the United States has vital national security interests but no longer has

a diplomatic presence. To complicate matters further, the U.S. government is structured to build long-term bilateral relationships with foreign governments rather than civil society. The result is a disconnection from local concerns that leads to a misalignment between the goals of US policy in the region and the way they are perceived by local populations. We must reach out to foreign citizens directly, in addition to the usual government-to-government channels.

As the U.S. grapples with new threats and opportunities, emanating from an ever more urbanized and connected world, we can and should learn from our past. Across Democratic and Republican administrations, the U.S. has consistently supported the spread of inclusive, responsive, effective democratic institutions for decades. We can also embrace the future, learning how to more effectively spread these values and make them meaningful in the lives of citizens.

Recommendations:

- 1. Exercise moral leadership by the power of our example.** Successful international leadership requires strength through broad buy-in and support that can only come from integrity and credibility. The U.S. must resume a position as a model of compliance with international laws and standards of conduct, both to speak as a credible authority and to illustrate the just application of rule of law as a viable alternative to violence. When we excuse certain excesses by countries against their citizens as lawful or with legal pretext, we foment further extremism, and undermine our foreign policy objectives and long-term ability to influence positive change.
- 2. Protect our diplomats and other civilians serving abroad.** Recognizing that expeditionary diplomacy cannot be conducted exclusively from behind the high walls of secured compounds, the U.S. government must develop evidence-based protocols for risk management to appropriately balance staff protection and mission accomplishment.
- 3. Increase resilience and reduce inequality in communities worldwide.** Development agencies and national governments must reduce risk and inequality as well as support growth; risk and resilience should be incorporated into the 2015 Millennium Development Goals.
- 4. Help build safe, strong and prosperous cities.** Three quarters of urban growth will be in cities under 500,000 people, or in urban centers of one to five million, which is where we should focus our efforts. The U.S. should lead the international community's efforts to identify and share best practices in city governance. As cities continue to grow we should ensure their infrastructure is resilient, prevent or eliminate slums, and engage with immigrant and diaspora communities to combat recruitment by gangs or organizations committed to ideologically-driven violence.
- 5. Fight disease by helping communities provide basic services.** Clean drinking water and efficient sewage are the most basic social services and greatly reduce the potential for

rapidly spreading diseases. U.S. investments should prioritize improvements in local systems to provide clean water and primary health services. They are essential to preventing pandemic disease.

- 6. Expand America's international relief role.** The United States should increase the amount of civilian government and military resources devoted to international humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operating throughout vulnerable regions. This means continuing to employ the resources of the Department of Defense, Coast Guard, USAID and the Department of State, and coordinating support with non-governmental organizations working locally.
- 7. Support communities as they prepare for the impacts of climate change.** The U.S. government should provide technical assistance to support NGO implementers, universities, and public-private partnerships working to improve climate change adaptation and resilience, particularly in island countries and densely populated coastal regions. These should focus on the development of innovative projects harnessing the power of technology and the internet to gather, sort, and communicate information to citizens during natural disasters, such as floods or earthquakes.
- 8. Prevent violence against women.** Support a multi-pronged response to gender-based violence, especially in fragile or failed states where populations are most vulnerable. Programs should emphasize prevention, including early engagement, investment in education, support for shelters, psychosocial and medical support, and training for first responders including law enforcement. Efforts to end gender-based violence should involve men who can serve as champions and partners, who can amplify this issue not only as a private and personal tragedy, but as a public-facing crime that has real and negative impact on the American economy and security.
- 9. Provide aid to refugees and others in need.** The United States should continue its proud tradition of aiding those suffering from overwhelming humanitarian catastrophe. One current example: the United States is the single largest provider of humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people, contributing more than \$3 billion to the more than 12 million people in need of aid.
- 10. Support democracy and good governance.** The U.S. should increase funding for programs that support democratic growth and combat corruption at all levels of government. Funding should support institutions ranging from a country's judicial systems and legislatures to civil society groups—including non-political organizations focused on issues like environmental conservation and historical preservation. The U.S. government can support those fighting for open and honest governance by enforcing visa bans and seizing corrupt officials' assets, by supporting the rights of a free and independent press, or by building access to justice with programs to expand training for defense attorneys and champion justice centers in underserved or remote communities.

- 11. Expand our diplomats' engagement in communities around the world.** Ambassadors, Foreign Service Officers, and visiting government officials should find creative ways to engage local populations, travel as much as possible outside of capital cities and solicit more input from civil society and a diverse set of ethnic and religious leaders—not just the elite. The U.S. as a matter of policy should diplomatically engage with all relevant political parties and organizations, regardless of their opinions of their own government or our own.
- 12. Increase political engagement among young people.** The United States should incentivize partner nations to provide the political space for young citizens to participate constructively in the civic affairs of their country. The U.S. can also work with regional organizations, such as the African Union (AU) or the Arab League, as well as regional economic communities, like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Organization of American States (OAS), to encourage the development of a political space for youth. Partnering with local governments and NGOs, the U.S. should help extend this outreach to the grassroots level and to rural areas or areas outside of capital cities.
- 13. Empower women as political leaders.** Make a concerted effort to elect and appoint more visible, highly accomplished women from key emerging countries and critical regions to the most senior levels of the U.N., international financial institutions and other senior-level, high profile roles. Create a U.S. bilateral or regional women's initiative in partnership with regional organizations or in partnership with the U.N.
- 14. Reduce tension by promoting community and interfaith dialogue.** The U.S. should focus on supporting community and interfaith dialogues particularly at local levels. Including ethnic, religious, and business leaders so lines of communication are already established in the event of a crisis. Particularly when states take action to exacerbate tension, the U.S. should make special effort to communicate with and message to these populations at local and national levels.
- 15. Fight internet censorship.** The U.S. government, through the Department of State, should increase funding for the development and dissemination of various means of overcoming internet censorship, including improved virtual private networks (VPNs). It should do so openly, framing the effort as a uniquely American responsibility to allow people within our borders the freedom to connect seamlessly to family and friends around the world. This will show why and how internet freedom is a deeply-held U.S. value, not a plot to destabilize foreign governments.