



The Realities Of Obama's Foreign Policy

Obama Tries To Defend Four Years Of Failed Leadership By Rewriting History

OBAMA HASN'T IMPROVED WORLD STANDING

"World No Longer Swoons For Obama"

Obama Has "Not Managed To Radically Transform America's Standing In The World Through The Illuminating Force Of His Biography Or Personality." "When presidential candidate Barack Obama swept into Europe in 2008, television screens showed massive, adoring crowds. But the latest TV images from abroad are far more ominous: mobs in the Muslim world besieging U.S. embassies, torching American flags and even burning Obama himself in effigy. The two sets of images show a gap between aspirations and reality: A president who is popular overseas has not managed to radically transform America's standing in the world through the illuminating force of his biography or personality." (Josh Gerstein, "World's Obama Fever Cools," [Politico](#), 9/21/12)

Obama's International Popularity "Has Dimmed In Much Of The World." "As Obama prepares to stand for reelection, the surge in good feeling toward the U.S. that he ushered in has dimmed in much of the world. And evidence is scant that his popularity has advanced U.S. interests with America's allies or its adversaries in a tangible way." (Josh Gerstein, "World's Obama Fever Cools," [Politico](#), 9/21/12)

- **Polling Shows Global Opinion Of Obama's International Policies "Has Declined Dramatically Since 2009."** "Global opinion of President Barack Obama has declined dramatically since 2009, according to a new survey of the president and his policies in 21 countries. Approval of Obama's international policies has dropped from 78 percent to 63 percent in Europe; from 34 percent to 15 percent in Muslim Countries; from 40 percent to 22 percent in Russia; and from 57 percent to 27 percent in China, reports the Pew Global Attitudes Project." (Tim Mak, "World Poll: Chill On Obama Policies," [Politico](#), 6/13/12)

Under Obama, "America's Image Is Again In Decline, Especially In The Middle East." "But while polls show Obama remains personally popular in many parts of the world, America's image is again in decline, especially in the Middle East, the focus of intense personal outreach at the start of the president's term." (Matt Spetalnick, "Obama Foreign Policy Bright Spot Now Looking Dimmer," [Reuters](#), 9/23/12)

- **In The Palestinian Territories, Pakistan, Syria And Even Europe, Obama's Failure To Fulfill Lofty Promises Has Damaged U.S. Standing And Credibility.** "Many add another failure, asking how a president who spoke so movingly about the plight of the Palestinians during his first trip to

the Middle East in 2009, and who said he could imagine Palestinian statehood by 2011, seemed to abandon that cause in face of overwhelming opposition. Ask Pakistanis about the signature achievements of the Obama presidency, and they will launch into the subject of civilian casualties from drone strikes. Ask the Syrian opposition, and they will describe an America of double standards that enters wars when they are relatively easy, as in Libya, but ignores carnage when the solutions could put American lives at risk. Even the Europeans, who were so eager to see George Bush return to Texas, and who massed at the Brandenburg Gate to hear candidate Obama in 2008, now grumble that there was more hope than change.” (David E. Sanger, *Confront And Conceal*, 2012, p. xvii-xviii)

- **Pivotal Nations In The Middle East Have More Hostile Views Of The United States Today Under Obama Than They Did Under President Bush.** “While the U.S. is more popular in many places than it was when Bush left office, American standing never got a huge boost in some critical regions, such as the Mideast. And in two strategically pivotal nations, Pakistan and Egypt, sentiment toward the U.S. is more hostile than it was under Bush — an anger experts attribute to Obama’s aggressive campaign of drone strikes against terror suspects and tumult related to the Arab Spring democracy movement.” (Josh Gerstein, “World’s Obama Fever Cools,” [Politico](#), 9/21/12)

66 Percent Of Americans Say That Barack Obama Has Either Made Things “Worse” Or “Not Made Much Difference” With Regards To America’s Standing In The World, While Just 33 Percent Say He Has Made Things “Better.” ([NBC News/The Wall Street Journal](#), 1000A, MoE 3.1%, 5/16-20/12)

OBAMA GRANTED WAIVERS ON SANCTIONS FOR IRAN

Fearing Higher Oil Prices And “Political Trouble In An Election Year,” The Administration Has Resisted Taking Strong Action Against Iran’s Nuclear Program. “Officials fear that too powerful a blow to the world’s third-largest oil exporter could cause an oil price increase, damaging the global economic recovery, undermining international support for the sanctions campaign and creating political trouble in an election year.” (Paul Richter, “Obama Administration Takes Back Seat On Iran Sanctions,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 2/17/12)

- **Despite Obama Administration’s “Vows To Cripple Iran,” “It Is Leaders In Congress And Europe Who Have Seized The Lead In The West’s Long-Running Campaign To Punish Tehran For Its Suspected Nuclear Weapons Program.”** “Despite the Obama administration’s vows to cripple Iran with economic sanctions, it is leaders in Congress and Europe who have seized the lead in the West’s long-running campaign to punish Tehran for its suspected nuclear weapons program. In recent months, the toughest moves to deter Iran from pursuing its presumed nuclear ambitions have come from a bipartisan group in Congress and European allies, especially Britain and France. The White House at first resisted these steps before embracing them as inevitable.” (Paul Richter, “Obama Administration Takes Back Seat On Iran Sanctions,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 2/17/12)

The Obama Administration Has Now Granted Waivers To “All Twenty Of Iran’s Major Trading Partners,” Including China, For Their Efforts To Reduce Iranian Oil Imports Ahead Of The Sanctions. “Though economic sanctions still haven’t slowed or stopped Iran’s nuclear drive, the Obama Administration has decided to make them even weaker. The Iran sanctions regime is looking like the U.S. tax code—filled with loopholes. It’s so weak, in fact, that all 20 of Iran’s major trading partners are now exempt from them. We’ve arrived at a kind of voodoo version of sanctions. They look real, insofar as Congress forced them into a bill President Obama had to sign in December. The Administration has spoken incantations about their powers. But if you’re a big oil importer in China, India or 18 other major economies, the sanctions are mostly smoke.” (Editorial, “Obama’s Iran Loopholes,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 7/2/12)

- ***The Wall Street Journal*: “The Current U.S. Approach To Sanctions ... Is Destined To Become Increasingly Ineffective Over Time. It Also Doesn’t Help That The Administration Is Waging A Behind-The-Scenes Campaign To Water Down Existing Sanctions.”** “All of this means that the current U.S. approach to sanctions, which depends on the ability and willingness of the Administration to go after individual Iranian or foreign companies, is destined to become increasingly ineffective over time. It also doesn’t help that the Administration is waging a behind-the-scenes campaign to water down existing sanctions by granting nearly every available waiver to countries that continue to buy Iranian oil.” (Editorial, “Iran Sanctions Test,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 7/30/12)

***The Washington Post*: “The Result Is That President Obama Is Not Even Leading From Behind On Iran; He Is Simply Behind.”** “The result is that President Obama is not even leading from behind on Iran; he is simply behind. At the forefront of the Western effort to pressure Tehran is French President Nicolas Sarkozy, who issued a statement Monday calling on the European Union, the United States, Japan, Canada and ‘other willing countries’ to ‘immediately freeze the assets of Iran’s central bank’ and suspend purchases of Iranian oil.” (Editorial, “More Half-Measures From Obama Administration On Iran,” [The Washington Post](#), 11/22/11)

OBAMA HASN’T BEEN CLEAR TO OUR ALLIES

Obama Has Struggled To Build “Leader-To-Leader” Diplomacy. “Obama’s record in leader-to-leader diplomacy is also mixed. He’s built close relationships with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Erdogan, South Korean President Lee Myung-Bak and Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev when he served as president. But Obama struggled to connect with former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown. And “the tension between Obama and [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu is palpable,” said Crowley, now a professor at George Washington University.” (Josh Gerstein, “World’s Obama Fever Cools,” [Politico](#), 9/21/12)

- **Obama Has Not Built Personal Bonds With Other Leaders.** “More than two years into his term, Obama cuts the image of an all-business envoy, seldom going outside normal business hours to turn on the charm with other heads of state. He appears to have built few deep personal bonds with foreign leaders, and his forays into public diplomacy — a burger run last year with Russia’s Dmitry Medvedev and a game of Ping-Pong last month with Britain’s David Cameron — are notable for their rarity.” (Carrie Budoff Brown, “Obama’s No-Schmooze Diplomacy,” [Politico](#), 6/8/11)
- **The G-8 Summit In May 2012 Marked The First Time Obama Has Invited Any Foreign Leaders To Camp David.** “Adding to the curious nature of the White House announcement was the fact that Obama rarely spends time at his presidential retreat. And unlike many of his predecessors, Obama has never hosted a world leader at Camp David.” (Julie Pace, “Obama Shifts G-8 From Chicago To Camp David,” [The Associated Press](#), 3/5/12)

Obama’s Lack Of Private Meetings With Key Allies During The U.N. General Assembly Signaled That “Campaigning Is His Imperative.” “Obama’s activities at the United Nations said plenty, too: There are not many of them. Campaigning is his imperative. He is skipping the private meetings with key allies that a U.S. president typically schedules when the whole international community comes to New York. The president will spend only 24 hours in New York in total this time, and he spent some of it Monday to appear on ‘The View,’ giving a talk show interview intended to sell his election pitch to a big TV audience.” (Ben Feller, “Obama At The UN, In Shadow Of Campaign Politics,” [The Associated Press](#), 9/25/12)

- **Both President George W. Bush And Bill Clinton Held Meetings With Foreign Leaders During U.N. Visits In Their Re-Election Years.** “Both Presidents George W. Bush in 2004 and Bill Clinton in 1996, though, held a series of meetings with foreign leaders during U.N. visits in their

re-election years. The Obama White House opted not to jam in a few and risk offending the allies who were left out, administration officials said.” (Ben Feller, “Obama, In Election Mode, Tightens His UN Diplomacy,” [The Associated Press](#), 9/22/12)

- **Obama Delegated Meetings With World Leaders To Secretary Clinton During “Some Of The Most Pressing Foreign Policy Crises The Administration Has Faced Since Taking Office In 2009.”** “That task he delegated to Mrs. Clinton, who churned through the first of dozens of meetings she will have over the next week. They deal with some of the most pressing foreign policy crises the administration has faced since taking office in 2009, like the deadly protests in the Islamic world and the confrontation between Japan and China over a handful of unpopulated islands. Mrs. Clinton met President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan (‘It’s been a difficult time for all of us,’ he told her after riots protesting a video trailer that denigrates the Prophet Muhammad and was made in the United States) as well as Mr. Karzai. By the end of a scheduled 12-hour day, she was to have met with President Mohamed Morsi of Egypt. A senior administration official said Mrs. Clinton’s meeting with Mr. Zardari and Pakistan’s foreign minister, Hina Rabbani Khar, represented a ‘re-energized dialogue at the highest levels’ — if not the very highest level with Mr. Obama. In between, she held an emotional meeting with President Mohamed Magariaf of Libya, who reiterated his apologies for the Sept. 11 killings of Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens and three other Americans in Benghazi. He noted the counterprotests, held in Benghazi and other Libyan cities on Friday, that expressed support for the United States.” (Helene Cooper and Steven Lee Meyers, “While U.N. Beckons Clinton, Obama Takes In ‘The View,’” [The New York Times](#), 9/24/12)

Obama And Netanyahu’s Relationship Is An “Odd And Unwelcome Rivalry Among Allies.”

“Diplomacy is, ultimately, about relationships. Obama and Netanyahu don’t really have one. And that’s created an odd and unwelcome rivalry among allies — a testy liberal-vs.-conservative chess match that mirrors Obama’s contest with Mitt Romney, who has known Netanyahu for years. ‘There is a lack of rapport between these two men — they don’t like each other very much. Plus there are serious differences between our interests and Israel’s own security interests,’ said former State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley, who was present for several of Obama’s nine face-to-face meetings with Netanyahu.” (Glenn Thrush, “Benjamin Netanyahu VS. Barack Obama,” [Politico](#), 9/13/12)

- **Obama Dismissed Netanyahu’s Calls For Stronger Action Against Iran’s Nuclear Program As “Noise.”** CBS’s STEVE KROFT: “You don’t feel any pressure from Prime Minister Netanyahu in the middle of a campaign to try and get you to change your policy and draw a line in the sand? You don’t feel any pressure?” OBAMA: “When it comes to our national security decisions-- any pressure that I feel is simply to do what’s right for the American people. And I am going to block out-- any noise that’s out there.” (CBS’s “60 Minutes,” 9/23/12)

The Washington Post: Central America Has Been “Mostly Ignored In Washington.” “Two elections in Central America have underlined the growing problems in a region that is mostly ignored in Washington. On Sunday former general Otto Perez won Guatemala’s presidential election with a slogan long favored by Latin American authoritarians: ‘mano dura,’ or iron hand, which he promises to apply to the Mexican drug traffickers and criminal gangs that have virtually taken over the country and sent the murder rate soaring. As with Honduras and El Salvador, Guatemala is in danger of being overwhelmed by the drug trade and the violence it engenders. But Mr. Perez’s promises to cut the crime rate in half are unlikely to be fulfilled by his plan to expand and deploy the army.” (Editorial, “Central American Elections Highlight U.S. Neglect Of The Region,” [The Washington Post](#), 11/8/11)

- **Obama's Neglect Of Latin American Relationships Allowed China To Take A Leading Trade Role In The Region.** "Perceived U.S. neglect of Latin America has allowed China to move strongly into the region and become the leading trade partner of Brazil and various other nations." (Andrew Cawthorne and Brian Ellsworth, "Latin America Rebels Against Obama Over Cuba," [Reuters](#), 4/15/12)

Obama Says One Thing, His State Department Says Another

Obama Said He Would Not Consider Egypt An Ally. TELEMUNDO/NBC's JOSE DIAZ-BALART: "Would you consider the current Egyptian regime an ally of the United States?" PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA: "I don't think that we would consider them an ally, but we don't consider them an enemy. They're a new government that is trying to find its way." (President Barack Obama, Interview With Jose Diaz-Balart, [Telemundo/NBC News](#), 9/12/12)

- **"Technically, Egypt Was Designated As A Major Non-NATO Ally In 1989."** "That comment had Egypt watchers scratching their heads, especially since technically, Egypt was designated as a Major Non-NATO Ally in 1989 when Congress first passed the law creating that status, which gives them special privileges in cooperating with the United States, especially in the security and technology arenas." (Josh Rogin, "White House Clarifies Obama's Statement That Egypt Is Not An 'Ally,'" [Foreign Policy's The Cable](#), 9/13/12)
- **Egypt Is Still Listed As A Major Non-NATO U.S. Ally.** "Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Saturday formally designated Afghanistan a 'major non-NATO ally,' setting the stage for tighter military cooperation even as international troops are on a path to withdraw from the war-torn country by the end of 2014. ... The list of major non-NATO allies includes Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea and Thailand." (Olivier Knox, "U.S. Anoints Afghanistan A 'Major Non-NATO Ally,'" [Yahoo! News](#), 7/6/12)

The Next Day, Obama's State Department Clarified That Egypt Is Still An Ally, Despite What Obama Said. "The State Department affirmed Egypt's legal status as an ally Thursday — an apparent contradiction to what President Obama said in a Wednesday interview. Asked repeatedly if the State Department still considered Egypt a major non-NATO ally — a designation they were awarded in 1989 — State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said simply: 'Yes.'" (Byron Tau, "State Dept: Egypt's Still An Ally," [Politico](#), 9/13/12)

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OBAMA DIDN'T SUPPORT REGIME CHANGE IN LIBYA

Obama Called Regime Change In Libya A Mistake Before Joining European Leaders In Calling For Regime Change In Libya

Obama Said Overthrowing Gadhafi Would Be A Mistake. "In this case, Obama, said, making the ouster of Gadhafi a targeted outcome would have been a mistake. 'If we tried to overthrow Gadhafi by force, our coalition would splinter,' he said. 'We would likely have to put U.S. troops on the ground to accomplish that mission, or risk killing many civilians from the air. The dangers faced by our men and women in uniform would be far greater. So would the costs, and our share of the responsibility for what comes next.'" ("Obama: Not Acting In Libya 'Would Have Been A Betrayal Of Who We Are,'" [CNN](#), 3/28/11)

- **Three Weeks Later, Obama Signed A Letter With French President Sarkozy And Britain PM Cameron In Calling For Gadhafi To Be Removed From Power.** "However, so long as Gaddafi is in power, Nato and its coalition partners must maintain their operations so that civilians remain protected and the pressure on the regime builds. Then a genuine transition from dictatorship to an

inclusive constitutional process can really begin, led by a new generation of leaders.” (“Libya Letter By Obama, Cameron And Sarkozy,” [BBC](#), 4/15/11)

Obama Was The Only Major Western Leader Who Didn’t “Speak Up On Libya” Right Away.

“Governments around the world have been condemning this appalling stance and the terrible slaughter it has caused. The European Union has agreed in principle to impose sanctions, and the Arab League has said Libya will be excluded from its meetings. British Prime Minister David Cameron, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi all condemned the regime’s violence. Said French President Nicolas Sarkozy: ‘The continuing brutal and bloody crackdown against the Libyan civilian population is revolting. The international community cannot remain a spectator to these massive violations of human rights.’ By late Wednesday only one major Western leader had failed to speak up on Libya: Barack Obama.” (Editorial, “Why Was President Obama Last To Speak Up On Libya?” [The Washington Post](#), 2/23/11)

- ***The Washington Post*: “Mr. Obama Appeared Eager To Make The Point That The United States Was Not Taking The Lead In Opposing Mr. Gaddafi’s Crimes.”** (Editorial, “Why Was President Obama Last To Speak Up On Libya?” [The Washington Post](#), 2/23/11)
- ***The Washington Post*: “Shouldn’t The President Of The United States Be First To Oppose The Depravities Of A Tyrant Such As Mr. Gaddafi? Apparently This One Doesn’t Think So.”** (Editorial, “Why Was President Obama Last To Speak Up On Libya?” [The Washington Post](#), 2/23/11)

***The Washington Post*: “Once Again, An Arab Dictator Is Employing Criminal Violence In A Desperate Effort To Remain In Power - And Once Again, The Obama Administration Has Been Slow To Find Its Voice.”** (Editorial, “Why Was President Obama Last To Speak Up On Libya?” [The Washington Post](#), 2/23/11)

- **“Nonetheless, Obama May Be Moving Toward Something Resembling A Doctrine. One Of His Advisers Described The President’s Actions In Libya As ‘Leading From Behind.’”** (Ryan Lizza, “The Consequentialist,” [The New Yorker](#), 5/2/11)