



How Biden Can Restore America's Role Abroad

by [Dennis Ross](#)

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Doing so means finding the right mix of hard and soft power, creating new mechanisms with democratic allies, and answering hard questions about various countries and conflicts in the Middle East.

Historically, America's leaders have faced inflection points on determining what our role in the world would be. While Barack Obama was an internationalist and believed that U.S. leadership was still needed to shape the global agenda, he was mindful of the very real limits on our power and the high costs of interventions. Donald Trump, however, challenged the very idea of American leadership on the world stage. It was not just his slogan of America First that seemed to turn the clock back to the period before the assumption of U.S. leadership and responsibilities internationally; it was that he doubted the benefits of alliances. With his defeat, it might be easy to dismiss his view of the world, one in which his policies too often produced not America First but America Alone. But his instincts are rooted in a long-established strand of the American tradition of foreign policy, and it would be a mistake to dismiss the factors that produced him and led to basic questions about our role in the world during the Obama administration...

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