

Making Diplomacy Great Again

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May 15, 2017

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Washington won't achieve foreign policy successes without better diplomacy, and the first step is to understand what diplomacy can and can't do.

The profession of diplomacy is in crisis in the United States today. The rise of near peer competitors threatening the U.S.-led global security system, the disappointing results of U.S. Middle Eastern engagement -- Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, even the Iran nuclear agreement -- and the Trump Administration's cuts to State Department funding (and tardiness in nominating Department leaders below the level of Secretary), have all contributed to this crisis. But at its core the present crisis is not the result of a bad conjuncture of disparate elements; rather, at the core lies a failure of the primary practitioner of diplomacy, the Department of State, and of the larger American foreign policy community, to understand what diplomacy does. Getting this right is as important as any other aspect of foreign policy. Fortunately, the threats aimed at America and the reform that budget cuts will require of State provide twin incentives to get diplomacy right. But reform must start by understanding the problem...

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