

# Power through Diplomacy, Not War

Century International's *Blueprint for a Progressive U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East*

## What's at stake:

The United States built a vast military infrastructure after 9/11 that dominates all other tools of statecraft, including diplomacy and aid. This model is bloody, expensive, and encourages reckless behavior by Middle Eastern partners. It's also ineffective. Neither America nor the Middle East is getting more safe, stable, free, or prosperous.

## The opportunity:

A progressive U.S. policy must scale back defense commitments and the U.S. military footprint in the Middle East. Nimble tools can address America's counterterrorism and defense interests. Meanwhile, U.S. policy must invest equally in the tools of diplomacy and soft power—good for the interests of both the United States and the Middle East.

## Executive actions:

- Reduce CENTCOM's physical footprint and entangling commitments.
- Withdraw U.S. troops from northeastern Syria and stabilize the partnership with Iraq.
- End recurring military assistance to Israel, Jordan, and Egypt.
- Stop U.S. weapons from being used for war crimes—enforce the Leahy Laws.
- Negotiate a de-escalation in the Red Sea with Yemen's Houthis.
- Initiate an ongoing high-level dialogue with Iran.
- Reinvigorate nuclear nonproliferation efforts.

## Congressional actions:

- Revoke blanket war authorizations (the 2001 and 2002 AUMFs).
- Pass the National Security Powers Act to overhaul the War Powers Resolution.
- Overhaul arms sales laws to prevent U.S. weapons from being used for war crimes.
- Hold hearings on the U.S. footprint and strategy in the Middle East.
- Enhance the Leahy Laws and codify the Conventional Arms Transfer policy.

Read the full recommendations in Century International's "[A Blueprint for a Progressive U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East.](#)"