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CSBA President Articulates Strategy of Assured Access

November 1, 2012

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In the wake of his reelection, President Obama's first pledge was to focus on "the economy and jobs and moving the country forward." CSBA President Dr. Andrew Krepinevich believes that America's economic recovery and long-term growth require secure access to three key regions--the Western Pacific, Persian Gulf, and Europe--and to the global commons--space, cyberspace, and the undersea. However, save for Europe, U.S. access to these regions and domains is being increasingly challenged, writes Krepinevich in *Strategy in a Time of Austerity: Why the Pentagon Should Focus on Assuring Access* (<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/138362/andrew-f-krepinevich-jr/strategy-in-a-time-of-austerity?gp=135462:fc1edee552794129>), published in the November/December 2012 issue of *Foreign Affairs*.

Due to the spread of precision-guided weaponry and the prospective proliferation of nuclear weapons, the U.S. military is confronting rising challenges to its access to the Western Pacific and Persian Gulf in the form of anti-access/area-denial forces. Access to the global commons is being increasingly challenged as well. The development and testing of anti-satellite weapons by the Chinese threatens America's access to space. Numerous state and non-state entities are pursuing means to wage economic warfare through cyber-attacks whose potential threat to U.S. critical infrastructure has led Defense Secretary Leon Panetta to warn of a possible cyber Pearl Harbor. The enormous undersea energy infrastructure, put in place since World War II, is expanding, as are the technologies enabling hostile state and non-state actors to inflict significant damage upon it.

Yet, while the challenges to the U.S. ability to project power and secure the global commons are increasing, the resources available to address them are diminishing, as witnessed by declining defense budgets, unsustainable growth in military personnel costs, decreasing NATO ally military capability, and an eroding Defense Industrial Base.

In his *Foreign Affairs* piece, Dr. Krepinevich articulates a *Strategy of Assured Access*. It encompasses setting security priorities, leveraging the U.S. military's comparative advantages and, where possible, aligning these advantages against adversaries' weaknesses. Recognizing that, with limited resources, he who attempts to accomplish everything risks accomplishing nothing, the strategy explicitly states what missions the U.S. military will not undertake, to include regime change operations and large-scale stability operations along the lines of those conducted in Iraq and Afghanistan.