

At the December Conflict Prevention and Resolution Forum the topic of *Approaches to the Second Bush Administration* was discussed. Lorne Craner (President of IRI) and Ken Wollack (President of NDI) were our speakers.

Many questions need to be raised when responding to conflict, including: What is the nature of the conflict: Is it ethnic or religious, does it involve refugee displacement, economic deprivation, etc.? What is the nature of international intervention, what are the motives of outside parties, and other questions concerning regional assistance, international assistance, and when these should be applied. Also, what is the role the international community has in negotiating peace accords and peacekeeping (such as in Bosnia)?

The notion that the Bush administration will have more time to resolve conflict in its second term was conveyed. During the first term, the administration was consumed with the ramifications of 9/11, including Afghanistan (creating a constitution, addressing human rights, etc.), planning for Iraq, and trying to change about fifty years of policy toward the Middle East. The intense involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan has started to go down, and there is a belief that it will continue to go down. This progress will enable more work in the conflict resolution field. In that respect, it is possible to categorize countries in different ways:

1. Post-authoritarian countries, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, where trying to introduce different methods of conflict resolution, including democracy, can be helpful.
2. Countries that have gone through a civil war, such as Nicaragua and Sudan, where international involvement can help.
3. Countries where recent wars have ended and where international organizations like Search for Common Ground, NDI, and IRI can be helpful.
4. Countries with remaining dictators, such as Burma, Cuba, and Zimbabwe, where it is extremely helpful to have neighbors involved.
5. Countries that have anarchic conflict, such as Lebanon, where there is a belief that the US should be involved.

Foresight is necessary in enabling the prevention of conflicts. Legitimate governments (when seen as legitimate by the people), have an easier time preventing conflict. This point has been central to the role the US sees for itself in international conflict and conflict prevention.

It is also important to state some things that have already come out of the first Bush administration, such as the State Department getting more funding, MEPI, and the Millennium Challenge.

The need and the willingness of both speakers to take part and to lead their organizations in the process of conflict resolution is evident.