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“The Shifting Strategic Era: How Far, How Fast?”



On Friday, November 20, the Asan Institute for Policy Studies held a Dosirak Series discussion with Mr. Michael Moodie, Assistant Director and Senior Specialist at the Congressional Research Service (CRS).

The talk addressed “The Shifting Strategic Era: How Far, How Fast?” Moodie highlighted that an emergent policy debate in the US revolves around whether the world has entered a period of transition from one paradigm of world order to another. If so, to what extent is this shift affecting the strategic behaviors of key actors in the international arena?

Moodie argues that analysts and policy makers see evidence of a world with profound changes, especially with the increase in international conflict and violence (e.g.: conflict in the Middle East, terrorism, brutality in Africa, and China's actions in its surrounding waters). Others hold an even more far-reaching view; Moodie quotes Robert Kaplan as an example who describes the post-Soviet Union liberal international world order as one that is "cracking, if not collapsing."

This disruptive global environment is closely linked to three factors:

- 1) The nature of power relationships between state and non-state actors,
- 2) The degree of acceptance or rejection of international rules, and
- 3) The relationship between society and its government.

As Moodie explains, these factors do not stand in isolation but interact to influence the international order. He points out that there is now considerable commentary in the U.S. emphasizing that Russia and China perceive the world and how it operates differently. Hence, there are profound disagreements over who should govern the world and the organizations that should be deployed to do so. The transition in global order is enabled by information and influenced by the evolving role of cities.

The key question at hand is how the U.S. should respond to this changing order. Moodie argues that the result of a global order transition will "not simply be a multipolarity of power, but increasing conflict." As policy makers and analysts, researching the requirements for appropriate behavior and leadership is an important responsibility. What values should we attempt to promote? What should we seek to achieve and pursue? What do we avoid? What should be the nature of relationships developed with other critical players (both adversaries and allies, state and non-state)? A better understanding of the factors influencing this transition and potential international response patterns will help in answering these questions, but much uncertainty and debate will inevitably remain.

Date/Time: Friday, November 20, 2015 / 11:00am – 1:00pm

Place: Conference Room (2F), The Asan Institute for Policy Studies

Written by: Rachel Leng

⇒ **Michael Moodie** is an Assistant Director and Senior Specialist at the Congressional Research Service (CRS) in the Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division. Mr. Moodie

has had a career of more than 40 years addressing international issues in government, the policy research community, and academia.