



The Public Diplomacy Council

Basic Principles on Improving U.S. Public Diplomacy

A broad consensus of the Public Diplomacy Council membership believes that efforts to strengthen U.S. public diplomacy must be based on the following premises:

1. Effective public diplomacy is essential to the nation's long-term national security interests and must have active White House oversight and commensurate importance in the U.S. budgetary and policy processes.
2. To regain credibility overseas, the U.S. must engage in genuine dialogue rather than one-directional communication.
3. Reinvigorated research on global public opinion must be available to policy-makers so they may judge the impact of policies and pronouncements.
4. Public diplomacy programs must be nimble, flexible and networked, keeping pace with contemporary geopolitical challenges and technological opportunities.
5. Significant and sustained increases in U.S. government funding for public diplomacy programs worldwide are imperative and should include resources for robust planning, analysis and evaluation.
6. Exchange programs at all levels require increased funding; these non-partisan programs reflect the diversity of thought and opinion in the United States.
7. The public diplomacy profession needs sustenance and recognition—more staff, more training in tradecraft, American studies and language proficiency, better career tracks, and more involvement in public diplomacy activities from the entire foreign affairs community.
8. The continued expansion of partnerships with American businesses, citizens and the NGO community will enhance public diplomacy programs.
9. The basic tenets of the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961, the Educational and Cultural Affairs Charter and the VOA Charter must continue to guide public diplomacy activities.
10. Senior public diplomacy leadership must be granted direct authority over personnel and budgets, and the budget separation of policy advocacy from educational and cultural activities must be maintained.
11. The public diplomacy and strategic communication activities of all U.S. government agencies require greater coordination.
12. Instantaneous global communications make it impossible for the U.S. government to segregate information intended for domestic and foreign audiences; the Smith-Mundt Act must be amended accordingly.