



- Beyond the Water's Edge -

SPECIAL EDITION: 2022 in Review

A Note from the Executive Director:

As we enter the new year, we would like to thank you all for your support & readership over the past 21 months. Since the Vandenberg Coalition launched in April 2021, our goal has been to promote a strong & principled U.S. foreign policy that makes all Americans more prosperous, safer, and more free.

We are proud that in the past year—thanks to your support—the Vandenberg Coalition has grown into a one-stop shop for smart conservative perspectives on today's most pressing national security challenges from China, Russia, and Iran to homeland security, cyber threats & technology, foreign trade & investment, and beyond.

Our in-house staff and network of over 120 affiliated experts has shaped the foreign policy conversation on a wide range of issues, including by publishing a comprehensive report on the Afghanistan withdrawal & recommendations for U.S. policy going forward, broadening the base of support for military aid to Ukraine, and convening leading trade experts from both the "free trade" and "protectionist" wings of the debate to outline a consensus position on conservative principles of trade & investment.

All told, we briefed over 60 Congressional campaigns & gubernatorial offices; had over 240 touch points with members of Congress, committees, & their staff; and our work was featured in over 90 op-eds & articles on foreign policy. Beyond the Water's Edge has grown by thousands of subscribers on Capitol Hill, throughout D.C., and beyond.

We look forward to sharing even more exciting projects with you in 2023, including a conference on foreign policy & defense issues for our inaugural class of National Security Media Fellows and the continuation of our *Future of Conservative Foreign Policy* interview series featuring members of Congress & other senior officials. In the meantime, enjoy this look back on some of the top stories & foreign policy issues from 2022.

American security depends on American leadership. We are proud and grateful that with your support, we will continue to lead.

Honest Candor: Revisiting Twelve Top Stories from 2022

Washington in Slumber

TVC Chairman Elliott Abrams | National Review | January 23, 2022

Bottom Line: Although 2022 dawned on a somnolent Washington, D.C. emptied out by COVID & telework, the storm clouds gathering over Eastern Europe and elsewhere in the world made it clear that a turbulent year for American foreign policy was in the offing.

[Read the Article](#)

Experts Put Aside Differences to Offer Next Steps on Afghanistan

Susan Crabtree | RealClear Politics | February 16, 2022

Bottom Line: For six months following America's calamitous withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Vandenberg Coalition's expert working group convened to discern the appropriate path forward for the United States on relations with the Taliban, humanitarian aid, refugee policy, counter-terrorism, and more.

[Read the Vandenberg Coalition's Report on Afghanistan](#)

[Read the Article](#)

How Russia's War on Ukraine Will Change the World

TVC Board Member John Hillen | National Review | March 26, 2022

Bottom Line: After a month of war, it was clear that Russia's invasion of Ukraine was not proceeding according to Moscow's plan. By the same token, protracted war in Europe was clearly having wide-reaching ramifications from nuclear deterrence to energy security to the very position of Russia as a great power in the international system.

[Read the Article](#)

Inflation is the New Sequestration

TVC Advisory Board Member Mackenzie Eaglen with Dustin Walker | Defense One | April 1, 2022

Bottom Line: Once-in-a-generation inflation has hurt the Pentagon's buying power just as it has ordinary Americans' pocketbooks. Biden's proposed defense budget assumed rosy inflation numbers for 2022, leaving it to Congress to make up the difference.

[Read the Article](#)

Reshoring Isn't Enough

TVC Advisory Board Member Amb. J. Peter Pham | Newsweek | June 1, 2022

Bottom Line: From the CHIPS Act to new incentives for state-side production of critical minerals, 2022 was a year for reshoring; however, the U.S. must still work with friendly countries to maintain access to the raw materials needed by a modern high-tech economy.

[Read the Article](#)

Why Sweden and Finland Joining NATO Makes Perfect Sense

TVC Advisory Board Member James J. Carafano | 1945 | June 30, 2022

Bottom Line: Adding Sweden & Finland to NATO advances American interests and will serve to deter future conflict with Russia. Both countries have highly capable, modern militaries and sit at a critical economic & military crossroads on the Baltic Sea.

[Read the Article](#)

Shinzo Abe Invented the 'Indo-Pacific'

TVC Board Member Matt Pottinger | Wall Street Journal | July 10, 2022

Bottom Line: Cut down by an assassin's bullet in July, former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe left a legacy defined by the breadth of his geopolitical vision, efforts to strengthen Japan's alliances, and commitment to human dignity.

[Read the Article](#)

The Lesson of Pelosi's Trip: Don't Be Afraid of Engaging Taiwan

TVC Advisory Board Member Daniel Twining with J. Michael Cole |

Bottom Line: China's protests over House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's August visit to Taiwan culminated in hostile military exercises directed against the island country. However, the U.S. and other democracies should recognize that the benefits of constructive engagement with Taipei outweigh the consequences of provoking Beijing's ire.

[Read the Article](#)

What Grade Does Biden's National Security Strategy Get?

TVC Sr. Policy Director Amanda Rothschild, Advisory Board Member Matthew Kroenig, et al. | Scowcroft Center | October 2022

Bottom Line: After much delay and speculation, the Biden administration released its National Security Strategy in October. While the document can generally be awarded high marks for being clear-eyed about the challenges posed by Russia and China, it suffers from a lack of focus as well as concerns about how to implement its ambitious aims.

[Read the Article](#)

Iran's Hard-Liners are Starting to Crack

TVC Advisory Board Members Ray Takeyh & Reuel Marc Gerecht | Wall Street Journal | November 2, 2022

Bottom Line: Since September, Iran has been roiled by protests following the death of a young woman at the hands of the regime's morality police. Unlike during past episodes of domestic unrest, Ayatollah Khamenei's allies are distancing themselves from his regime.

[Read the Article](#)

Taking on China and Russia

TVC Advisory Board Member Richard Fontaine | Foreign Affairs | November 18, 2022

Bottom Line: Despite the Biden administration's initial hopes that it could foster a "stable & predictable" relationship with Moscow and focus on Beijing, Russia & China now present two enduring, differentiated challenges that must be managed simultaneously.

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2023: A Year of Living Dangerously

TVC Advisory Board Member Zack Cooper | Washington Examiner | December 5, 2022

Bottom Line: Looking ahead to 2023, a confluence of events are likely to make for a turbulent year in U.S.-China relations. Tensions over Taiwan have been growing for years, and neither the domestic political pressures on the CCP & in the U.S. Congress nor the upcoming American & Taiwanese presidential elections are likely to cool heated tempers.

[Read the Article](#)

In Case You Missed It...Select Vandenberg Events from 2022

Future of Conservative Foreign Policy Series

[Sen. Tom Cotton](#) | [Amb. John Bolton](#) | [Matt Kroenig](#) | [Matt Pottinger](#) | [Nadia Schadlow](#) | [Peter Berkowitz](#) | [Will Inboden](#) | [Colin Dueck](#)

Other Vandenberg Coalition Events

[The CCP's Silent Domestic Invasion](#) | [A Conservative Consensus on Key Principles of Trade & Investment](#) | [Energy Security as National Security](#) | [Left Behind in Afghanistan](#)



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