

Message from notional President to the US National Security Advisor:

A year and a half ago, I asked a group of distinguished Americans from public life and the private sector to advise me about issues they discern in the longer-term future that have potentially major impact on the international system and on the United States: not only in terms of the safety of the country, but in terms of its ability to meet these challenges successfully using the tools of liberal democracy. I also requested that this group make suggestions about how it might be possible for me to strengthen the capacity of the executive branch to think wisely and creatively about the longer-term future, so often neglected because of the press of immediate events.

Encouraged by the results of that first trial, I have repeated it several more times with new groups of people, in the hope of bringing fresh perspectives to bear on this task. I have not been disappointed, and in fact, the third and most recent group has left behind recommendations that I have decided to act upon. Specifically, they recommended that I establish what they termed an Office of Technological and Strategic Assessment (OTSA) for the purpose of assuring systematic consideration of the longer-term future, and of the challenges it presents for policy in the present. They further recommended that the OTSA should not be the usual brick-and-mortar institution, but instead be formed in the image of our new century by being virtual and network-based.

It was of particular interest to me that this last group went further than the original four-part agenda that I requested. The group adhered pretty strictly to my request for analysis of future events relating to science and technology, economics, and security. The group also responded to my request for an assessment as to the degree to which future events may force tradeoffs between sovereign governance under our own constitution and laws, and increasing participation in and subordination to what some call multilateralism, and others call global governance. In addition, however, the group reported that 21st century issues will require adaptations in our style of governance: in particular, that we vigorously adapt the processes of government to the potentials of modern networked systems, if we hope to keep government quick and responsive to major developments that are increasingly likely to come fast. In any future work, I would like to maintain this structure including attention to the implications of networking in government as a distinct focus.

You should now take the necessary step to set up OTSA, with the objective of reporting back to me this December, with your observations as to: major future issues; policy recommendations in relations to these; and proposals for improving the OTSA methodology based on your experience between now and the time we meet. I have signed an executive order which provides the necessary authority for proceeding.

EXECUTIVE ORDER

There shall be established within the Executive Office of the President, an Office of Technological and Strategic Assessment (OTSA). OTSA will serve three purposes:

- (1) to advise the President of potentially major events in the longer-range future, not yet on the current agenda of the government, but arguably important enough to have a significant bearing on the security and well-being of the United States;
- (2) to advise the President of possible options for contemporary policy in light of these on-coming events; and
- (3) to advise the President of measures needed to improve the ability of government to meet new classes of issues such as these through the application of advanced communications and networking technology. OTSA will focus on developments in science and technology, security, economics and governance.

OTSA will report on an ongoing basis to the National Security Adviser, the chair of the National Economic Council, the Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, the Science Adviser, the Chief of Staff, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, who shall comprise a steering committee. The National Security Adviser will act as chair of the steering committee. OTSA will report to the President on its activities at least once per year.

OTSA personnel will be recruited from within the executive office of the President, or by temporary assignment from the ranks of executive branch agencies. OTSA personnel will include a full-time director, a deputy, and one member of staff designated from each of the offices designated in paragraph two of this order. OTSA will, under the guidance of its director, establish a wide-ranging, networked relationship with experts in all pertinent fields of endeavor, both within the government and outside. Outside experts will be rotated once in the course of four years.

The first meeting of OTSA with the President shall be not later than three months from the date of issuance of this order.

This order expires on -----, unless renewed by the President.