PBS series looks at Arab Spring, Border War and More

Great Decisions in Foreign Policy on PBS offers impartial, thought-provoking analyses on global issues

New York – Democratic movements in the Arab world, the violent conflict along the U.S.-Mexico border and the drawdown from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are the focus of the 2012 Great Decisions in Foreign Policy television series on PBS.

Featured guests include former Secretaries of State Madeline Albright and George Shultz, Former CIA and NSA Director General Michael Hayden, David Sanger of the New York Times and CNBC’s Maria Bartiromo.

The series, produced annually by the nonpartisan Foreign Policy Association for more than 40 years, takes a comprehensive look at the most critical issues facing America in the year ahead.

Each episode takes on a different region or topic, offering insider tidbits and expert opinion on where we are, where we’re going and how we can get there, encouraging Americans to make a Great Decision of their own.

Everyone has been at a dinner party or even just watching the news, where they had some of the facts on a topic, but wished they understood the bigger picture, said MacDara King, executive producer of the series. We hope Great Decisions reminds people that you don’t need to be a political scientist to understand the global issues that affect us every day.

2012 Episode Synopses

After the Arab Spring
Following decades of repression and autocratic rule, uprisings in North Africa and throughout the Arab world have upended the status quo ushering in a new political era now known as the Arab Spring or Arab Awakening. How will this revolutionary moment affect American objectives in the Middle East? After the Arab Spring.

Shining City on a Hill: Exporting Democracy
Democracy promotion has long been a stated goal of U.S. foreign policy. But following the grass-roots uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East, can democracy really be exported? Democracy and foreign policy.

Beyond the Border: U.S. Mexico Relations
Relations between the U.S. and Mexico have been tense for decades, now even more because of a violent drug war along the border. How best can the two countries confront troublesome border issues while fostering greater economic and cultural ties? Beyond the Border: The U.S. and Mexico.

Cybersecurity: Defense in the Digital Age
Hackers from Bulgaria to Beijing have infiltrated government networks, military installations and the private sector at an alarming rate in recent years. As governments and industries seek to bolster their defensive and offensive capabilities, is the U.S. at risk? Cybersecurity: Defense in the Digital Age.

Drawdown: Exiting Iraq and Afghanistan
A decade of heavy American military engagement in both Afghanistan and Iraq is slated to wind down in 2012 under the Obama administration. Extrication will not be easy. Do these countries still pose a threat to the U.S., and what’s the return on the American investment in blood and treasure? Drawdown: Exiting Iraq and Afghanistan.

Anybody that’s watching the Great Decisions series sees that it is a much more nuanced debate than you hear from political candidates on the stump.

Col. Michael Meese
U.S. Military Academy at West Point and advisor to General David Petraeus, Head of U.S. Central Command
2012 Episode Synopses

Living Planet: The State of the Seas
Declining fish populations. Coral erosion. Polluted waters. The human impact on the world’s oceans has scientists and other observers alarmed around the globe. A look at the health of the world’s seas.

Inside Indonesia
Indonesia was the childhood home of President Barack Obama. It’s also the world’s most populous Muslim country, a secular democracy and an economic rising star. What challenges does Indonesia - a former dictatorship - face in the region and the world, and what is the state of U.S.-Indonesian relations today?

Race for Resources: Energy and Geopolitics
With declining global oil reserves and fierce competition for commodities, minerals and other natural resources, the race among countries to secure energy supplies has heated up. Who’s ahead in the competition for the world’s natural resources, and what does this mean for the U.S.? Energy and geopolitics.

The New Global Economy
The slow recovery from global economic recession has been fraught with setbacks. Debt crises on both sides of the Atlantic have scared markets, while emerging and so-called “frontier” markets provide some signs of hope. What major trends will define the next global economic chapter, and what rules will govern the next economic order?

Featured Guests

What we're seeing in the Arab world is a desire to be themselves. Madeleine Albright

We are in a tough period right now, but we’ll come out of this. Maria Bartiromo

There is no question that the costs were very high. Stephen Hadley

I’m disappointed that the president decided all surge forces would be out by the end of 2012. Mike Hayden

There is no weapon of this kind that has been invented and then not used. David Sanger

In Studio

After the Arab Spring
Guest 1
Mona Eltahawy
Columnist and international public speaker on Arab and Muslim issues

Guest 2
Shadi Hamid
Director of Research, Brookings Doha Center

Host
Ralph Begleiter
Former World Affairs Correspondent, CNN

I think your materials are of excellent quality and we in the international education field are lucky to have your organization as such a valuable resource.

Dana Devon
Vice President of Education and Public Programs, World Affairs Council of Philadelphia
**Production Team**

**MacDara King**  
**Executive Producer**

MacDara King is the Executive Producer & Communications Director at the Foreign Policy Association. In the past decade at FPA, he has produced nearly one hundred programs for broadcast on PBS, managed the development of some of the world’s premiere global affairs web properties and founded FPA U, an international career development program in the North Eastern U.S. Mr. King studied Political Science and Computer Science at New York University with a focus on Japanese language and East Asian Studies and holds a Master of Science degree in Internet engineering.

**Robert Nolan**  
**Editorial Producer**

Robert Nolan is Editor in Chief of New Media at the Foreign Policy Association, and producer of the Great Decisions Television Series on PBS. He has written extensively on issues related to African politics and culture for publications including the Village Voice, the Christian Science Monitor, UN Wire and Global Rhythm world music magazine. A former Peace Corps volunteer in Zimbabwe and graduate of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, he has interviewed heads of state, foreign ministers, artists, musicians and Nobel laureates.

**Richardo Lopes**  
**Director and Producer**

As a producer and director of The Lopes Picture Company and XXL Media, Rick has produced and edited an eclectic range of award winning work: over 2000 commercials; branded content (The Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory; webisodes/internet content CitationAir by Cesna; documentaries From Pharoahs to Facebook - Egypt Today, The Rescue of Flight 1549, Vietnam POW - Alvarez, Sails Over Ice and Sea (in post-production); four off-off Broadway plays and a PBS foreign policy series, Great Decisions produced with the Foreign Policy Association.

**David Heidelberger**  
**Editor**

A graduate of Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, David Heidelberger has been editing for XXL Media for the past seven years. He’s edited television programs and commercials that have been seen across the United States and internationally. For six years, he has been the editor of the PBS television program Great Decisions in Foreign Policy, including an award-winning on-location episode about Egypt, where he sometimes doubled as a cameraman. He has also worked in London for the BBC, where he edited the critically-acclaimed documentary Chasing for Alexander, about filming Oliver Stone’s Alexander the Great biopic in Morocco. He was also the editor of The Legends Behind the Comic Books, directed by Chip Cronkite, an award-winning documentary about the founding fathers of modern comic books.

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Great Decisions has broadened personal understandings of foreign policy so that our members are more active in discussing and encouraging the development of policies.

*Joan Byerhof*  
The Wilderness Discussion Group  
Naples, Florida