

SDF Quarterly Dispatch (May)

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This was a busy quarter for the Security and Democracy Forum. In this edition of the Quarterly Dispatch, we're sharing several new programs and resources for the community. If you find it useful, please share it directly or on social media so it reaches practitioners and emerging leaders who care about the core SDF premise: our national security institutions should protect, not erode, our domestic liberties. -*Graham Markiewicz, SDF Executive Director*



SECURITY &
DEMOCRACY
FORUM

Announcing: The Václav Havel Emerging Voices in Democracy Writing Competition

The Security and Democracy Forum is launching
the **Václav Havel Emerging Voices in Democracy**

Writing Competition, an annual student op-ed prize honoring Havel’s belief in civic courage and “living in truth.” We invite current students to submit an original, unpublished op-ed that meets SDF submission guidelines and engages the intersection of national security and democratic governance. The winning authors will be eligible to split a **\$500 prize pool** and publication through SDF, with finalists considered for additional publication opportunities. Submissions should be practical, evidence-based, and written for an informed public audience. Details, rules, and the submission form are [available here](#).

Useful Fiction and Enjoyable Beach Reads

Thanks to our active community of readers, we received a great set of recommendations and pulled together a robust summer fiction list. Fiction can sharpen judgment, broaden perspective, and explore the human dimensions of conflict, leadership, and power in ways traditional analysis often cannot. I’m proud of the range of viewpoints reflected here, and I think these picks will make you a more well-rounded and analytically grounded policy professional. See the [fiction recommendations here](#) or the full list on our site.

Featured! U.S. Army Sustainment Magazine

The U.S. Army Sustainment Magazine ran an analysis by Security and Democracy Forum and Executive Director Graham Markiewicz on the Army's Integrated Visual Augmentation System (IVAS) in development. This article examined if the IVAS could solve a trillion dollar problem faced by the military if deployed correctly. You can read more on the U.S. Army's website: [IVAS: A Solution to a Trillion-Dollar Problem, Not a Video Game.](#)

Top Articles This Quarter



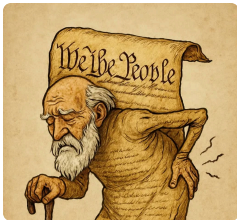
[National Security in the Anthropocene: New Risks and Challenges](#)

This piece, by contributor Bryan Fok, argues that these shifts create concrete national security challenges: more extreme weather that strains state capacity and undermines public trust, climate-driven migration that can destabilize politics when services and integration fail, and sharper competition over natural resources like water.



[Renew USMCA to Guard U.S. Economic Security](#)

On January 20, 2025, President Trump signed his America First Trade Policy memorandum, reaffirming his first Administration's position: trade is important for national and economic security. Therefore, by his own standards (if the Administration is going to be consistent and adhere to its stated goals) Trump should support renewing the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) for another sixteen-year period. Guest post by Margaret Cekuta.



[Unit Cohesion or Civil Rights? Reconsidering Extremism in the Ranks as a National Security Threat](#) [The War Clause at 250: Congress Must Reassert Its Constitutional Role in War Decisions](#)

In 2026, the United States will mark the 250th anniversary of its founding, a milestone that invites both celebration and reflection. Amid the festivities, Congress should revisit one of the most neglected provisions of the Constitution: the War Clause. For too long, the authority to decide when and how the nation goes to war has drifted

from Congress to the executive branch. This erosion of legislative war powers undermines democratic accountability and threatens the integrity of our republic.

Now Open: National Security Essentials Course

The *Security and Democracy Forum* has launched a new professional development course designed for early-career policy professionals, veterans, and civic leaders. *National Security Essentials* covers the fundamentals of how America's security institutions actually work, from the NSC and interagency process to Congress's power of the purse. If you want to understand how decisions are made, how budgets move, and how strategy becomes policy, this course is for you. [Learn more or enroll.](#)

Get Involved

We're actively looking for [volunteers, contributors, and advisors](#) to join our growing team. Right now, we're especially in need of an operations manager. We're seeking a detail-oriented, mission-driven volunteer to help manage the internal operations of our growing organization. This is an ideal role for someone with experience in nonprofit administration, program coordination, or startup operations who wants to help build infrastructure that supports public impact.

Play SDF Supporter Bingo

There are many ways to support the community without stepping out of your comfort zone. In fact, you can have a bit of fun while you do, if you want to check out our bingo card: [Play SDF Supporter Bingo](#). Five in a row wins a prize!

Call for Submissions

Have an idea that belongs in the national conversation? We welcome op-eds, analysis, and long-form essays from practitioners, academics, and emerging voices. Our editorial team is especially interested in topics that intersect with DIMEFIL dimensions of power: diplomacy, information, military, economics, finance, intelligence, and law. [Pitch us your piece!](#)

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