

## Smart Power and the “War on Terror”

Lecture by Joseph S. Nye, Jr.

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*Hotel Okura, Tokyo  
February 14, 2008*

On February 14, 2008, the Institute for International Policy Studies (IIPS), with the support of the Nippon Foundation, hosted a lecture entitled “Smart Power and the War on Terror,” delivered by Dr. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., University Distinguished Service Professor, Harvard University. The venue for this event was the Hotel Okura in Tokyo.

Dr. Nye commenced his lecture by noting that Americans have a rhetorical tradition of declaring war on abstract nouns, as in the “war on drugs” or “war on poverty,” while the British have focused on concrete opponents. In the case of the current conflict, however, the British concern is that the language of war itself provokes recruiting and the rage of Al Qaeda and affiliated groups.



Dr. Nye pointed out that the next US president will need to understand and apply “contextual intelligence,” by which he means “the intuitive diagnostic skill that helps to align tactics with objectives to create smart strategies in varying situations.” Explained in detail in his new book, *The Powers to Lead*, “contextual intelligence” has as a basic foundation the understanding of the strength and limits of American power. He went on to say that context in current world politics has

three dimensions: the top layer of military power is unipolar, the middle layer of economic relations is multipolar, and the bottom layer of transnational relations is scattered.

Two other aspects of “contextual intelligence” involve the merging of hard and soft power into a strategy and the recognition of the importance to include a rising Asia into the international structure.

Dr. Nye calls this combination of hard and soft power “Smart Power” and asserts that the US should put more emphasis on diplomacy and foreign assistance which will both achieve such goals as the spread of democracy and human rights as well as raise the

attractiveness and influence of American culture around the world. He enumerated five areas that should receive focused attention.

After the conclusion of his lecture, Dr. Nye took questions from the attendees with whom he engaged in a lively exchange of ideas and opinions.

