

Foreign Policy Experts: Christians Cannot Be Silent on Foreign Policy

This week, a group of faith leaders and foreign policy experts gathered in Washington, D.C., to discuss *A Christian Declaration on American Foreign Policy* published by the Institute on Religion & Democracy and The Philos Project.

According to its authors, the declaration “comes at a needful time.”

“The 2016 presidential election has presented a clarion moment for a statement of principles,” they stated. “We invite those who agree with us to endorse our vision, and those who disagree, whether Christians or non-Christians, to engage in a thoughtful and sustained dialogue with us.”

Click [here](#) to read the declaration in its entirety. The following is the preamble of the document:

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has struggled to define its role in the world. Americans' ambivalence about their place in the world in the 1990s was punctuated by the deadliest terrorist attack in history and succeeded by troubled wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. More recently, the United States has moved away from its historic post-World War II role as the guarantor of international peace and security, even as the world and its dangers continue to press in. In reaction to all this, some Americans have embraced a reactive, populist approach to world affairs that emphasizes a peculiar, paradoxical combination of American toughness towards her enemies and withdrawal from world leadership.

Thoughtful Christians who take seriously the roles assigned

by God to the church and the state, and who value the equal importance of justice and ordered liberty, should not be silent in the face of this shift. While we are advocates of American leadership, we are also in favor of American prudence and virtue in the exercise of power abroad.

We are Christians who have studied, practiced, or carefully observed American foreign policy. We believe it is our responsibility to speak out at this time in order to provide a much-needed corrective to the current foreign policy debate. We offer this joint declaration that articulates a simple yet serious framework for thinking about American power and world order. While this declaration is about American foreign policy, we believe these are principles Christians around the world—Americans and others—can affirm.

This declaration has been titled “A Christian Declaration” and not “The Christian Declaration” because we do not presume to speak for all Christians. Our purpose here is to attempt to apply biblical principles to American foreign policy, an exercise that necessarily involves calculations of wisdom and reasoned judgment. We hope that our arguments are both clear and persuasive to fellow Christians as well as to non-Christians.

This declaration comes at a needful time. The 2016 presidential election has presented a clarion moment for a statement of principles. We invite those who agree with us to endorse our vision, and those who disagree, whether Christians or non-Christians, to engage in a thoughtful and sustained dialogue with us.