

George Friedman's Note to Readers on New Series: "The 2020s and Its Historic Shift"

by George Friedman - September 7, 2025

In "The Next 100 Years," written over several years and published in 2009, I made a number of forecasts for the 2020s:

1. The United States would undergo a cyclical internal crisis and significantly shift its involvement in the global system, militarily and economically.
2. Russia would move to retrieve the borders of the former Soviet Union, beginning with Ukraine and Belarus and then moving onward in other directions, but it would fail to achieve its goals.
3. Partly as a result of this, Poland would become a major regional power.
4. With the reduction of the U.S. and Russian presence in the Middle East, Turkey would emerge as the major power there and to some extent in the Balkans.
5. With the U.S. less engaged, Japan – already a massive economic power – would significantly increase its military power to contain China.
6. China's economy would begin weakening after its great surge of the past 40 years, and internal tensions between regions would arise.

The first two forecasts are well underway and obvious today. The evolution of Poland, Turkey and Japan is also underway, but not yet obvious.

Therefore, I am starting a new series on these three countries and how they will evolve, and on the future of Russia, China and the United States. The final piece in the series will take stock and look forward as we pivot to the new geopolitical era.

As needed, I will also write articles on more immediate events that arise from these ongoing shifts. Look for the first article in the series on Monday.

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