

Jan. 14, 2005. 01:00 AM

'Bumpy' new world foreseen by CIA group

America to face more competition

China, India to be global players in 2020

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ASSOCIATED PRESS

LANGLEY, Va.—And now, a look into the future: Al Qaeda, out; murky and scattered new terror cells, in. Hollywood, out; India's "Bollywood" in. America as sole superpower, out; China and India as world players, in.

At least, that's what U.S. intelligence future-gazers predicted yesterday. 20-20 vision

"How we mentally map the world of 2020 will change radically," said the National Intelligence Council chairman Robert Hutchings at the release yesterday of his panel's new report, **Project 2020**. http://www.cia.gov/nic/NIC_2020_project.html

Newly arriving powers "have the potential to render obsolete the old categories of East and West, North and South."

The unclassified forecasts offer a range of scenarios about the world 15 years on. Officials caution they are not meant to be predictions certain to come true but rather long-term outlooks designed to stimulate debate.

The council predicts an emergence of new global players — almost certainly China and India — but whether these new players fit into the world co-operatively or competitively remains an important uncertainty for the U.S.

Council vice-chairman David Gordon said the changes ahead could be "a very bumpy ride."

Among them, he said, the integration of 1 billion low-paid workers will cause global shifts in rich and poor nations alike. Changes will be experienced politically, economically and even culturally, as Korean pop singers gain international popularity and India's Bollywood movie industry outshines Hollywood.

"Of course, the United States is in good shape to participate in this world, but it will be a world that will be much more competitive for us," Gordon said.

Hutchings said this new order will raise the stakes for Arab countries, which may join in globalization trends or experience further alienation and humiliation. Terror threats, too, will change.

While radical extremism will continue to grow, the report says Al Qaeda is expected to be superseded by similarly inspired, decentralized groups.

Hutchings said he expects the innovation in terror attacks to come from new elements of surprise, rather than unconventional weapons.

The groups' members will be tapping technology that provides instant connections for communications and training, posing a significant intelligence challenge to organizations including the CIA.

"Our greatest concern is that terrorists might acquire biological agents or, less likely, a nuclear device, either of which could cause mass casualties," the report said. The council treads carefully on the success of democratization.

It predicts democratic progress in key Middle Eastern countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan, which may be an example for Muslim and Arab states still ruled by repressive regimes.

However, Russian and Central Asian countries could slip backward, according to the report.

The National Intelligence Council reports directly to CIA director Porter Goss but remains separate from the agency.

A team of analysts, consulting with over 1,000 international experts over the last year, worked to assemble Project 2020 which follows projects 2010 and 2015.