



GREAT DECISIONS 2024

Foreign Policy Association

Discussion groups are co-sponsored by The League of Women Voters of La Plata County, the Durango Branch of the American Association of University Women, and the Durango Public Library.

The order of topics in the briefing book may be different from the schedule shown below due to moderator availability. **Program updates and changes are in RED.**

Topic	Tuesdays 11:45 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.
Science across borders <i>Holly Vaughn</i>	January 30
Pandemic preparedness <i>Mike Todt</i>	February 13
Climate technology and competition <i>Dick White</i>	February 27
Mideast realignment <i>Katherine Burgess</i>	March 12
High Seas Treaty <i>Ruth Alminas</i>	March 26
NATO's future <i>Guinn Unger</i>	April 9
U.S. - China trade rivalry <i>Mearl Webb</i>	April 23
Understanding Indonesia <i>Tamara Joslin</i>	May 7

Durango Public Library
1900 East Third Avenue
Program Rooms 1 & 2, Main Floor
(Feel free to bring a brown bag lunch.)

To take advantage of our group order for briefing books, please send checks, \$28 for each book, made out to "LWVLPC," and mailed no later than October 20th with the order form located at the top of the next page to: Susan McGinness, 756 E. 6th Ave, Durango, CO 81301.

We have a limited number of books in our group order. Upon notification from Susan in early January, purchased books will be available at the Durango Public Library Reference Desk in the priority of orders received. You may contact Susan about books at mcginnesssss@gmail.com. You may also purchase briefing books from FPA for \$35 plus postage, www.fpa.org.

Other questions: Janice Sheftel 970-259-5845 janicesheftel@gmail.com

For more information about Great Decisions and the Foreign Policy Association, www.fpa.org or the LWV La Plata web site www.lwvlaplata.org



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2024 Topic Summaries

Science across borders - Scientific advances benefit from collaboration between researchers, but what happens when material, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) is controversial and important to a nation's national security? Is there a middle ground between sharing information and denying access? How can we regulate cooperation?

Pandemic preparedness - Looking back at the covid-19 pandemic, there are many lessons to take away in terms of domestic and international policies. Although this pandemic seems to have waned, how can we apply these lessons to future pandemics? Will countries cooperate, and will a consensus emerge on how to manage global health challenges?

Climate technology and competition - Will the United States and China, with other powerful countries following suit, approach current and future climate initiatives with an increased commitment to trade protectionism and nationalism, by various measures including trade restrictions? Or could a growing spirit of international accord develop to confront the "common enemy" of climate change?

Mideast Realignment - The United States and Middle East are at a crossroads. In spite of a reduced presence in the Middle East, the U.S. still has significant national interests there and the area is a key arena for global power politics. Can the U.S. continue to defend its interests in the Middle East and globally with a lower level of military and political involvement, or should it recommit to a leading role in the region?

High Seas Treaty - Areas of the seas beyond national jurisdiction comprise the high seas, which are facing a degradation of ecosystems due to climate change and the increase in human activities, such as shipping, overfishing, pollution, and deep-sea mining. The recently negotiated High Seas Treaty, also known as the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction treaty, will attempt to address these issues. How difficult will it be to convince nations to participate?

NATO's future - Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has come under increased scrutiny, not because NATO troops are involved in the conflict, but because of its role in relations between Russia and its neighbors. Will expanding membership in NATO protect countries, or will it further provoke Russia?

U.S. - China trade rivalry - China's economic rise and its current policies of increasing the role of the state in the economy have led some U.S. policymakers to seek to deny China access to U.S. technology and investment. This is seen as a necessary corrective to decades of predatory Chinese economic policies. Is this a wise strategy, and how effective can it be?

Understanding Indonesia - Despite its large size, Indonesia remains virtually invisible to most Americans. But as one of the world's largest democracies, the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, and as an economic driver of ASEAN, why does it fly below the radar? What are current issues in U.S.-Indonesian relations, and what role can the country play in Asia?