**Learning Objective:**

Explain the various military and diplomatic responses to international developments over time.

**Thematic Focus:**

*Diplomatic, economic, cultural, and military interactions between empires, nations, and peoples shape the development of America and America’s increasingly important role in the world.*

1. United States policymakers engaged in a cold war with the authoritarian Soviet Union, seeking to limit the growth of Communist military power and ideological influence, create a free-market global economy, and build an international security system.
2. Postwar decolonization and the emergence of powerful nationalist movements in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East led both sides in the Cold War to seek allies among new nations, many of which remained nonaligned.
   1. The U.S. had agreed to lend money to Egypt under the leadership of Colonel Gamal Abdul Nasser, to build the Aswan Dam but refused to give arms.
   2. Nasser drifted toward the USSR and in 1956 established diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China. The U.S. responded by withdrawing its loans to Egypt. Egypt then seized the Suez Canal.
   3. Without U.S. assistance, France, the UK, and Israel attacked Egypt but Eisenhower demanded that they pull out, and a cease-fire was announced shortly thereafter.
   4. According to the Eisenhower Doctrine, the U.S. was prepared to use force in the Middle East against aggression from any country controlled by the Soviet Union. Under this doctrine, the U.S. marines entered Lebanon in 1958 to promote political stability and prevent a civil war between Christians and Muslims.
3. Cold War competition extended to Latin America, where the U.S. supported non-Communist regimes that had varying levels of commitment to democracy.
   1. Communism in Cuba
      1. Fidel Castro gained control over Cuba in 1959.
      2. Castro soon began criticizing the United States and moved closer to the Soviet Union.
      3. The U.S. prohibited the importation of Cuban sugar in October 1960 and broke off diplomatic relations the following year.
   2. Alliance for Progress
      1. Cold War competition extended to Latin America, where the U.S. supported non-Communist regimes that had varying levels of commitment to democracy.
      2. The Alliance for Progress was initiated by President John Kennedy in 1961. It aimed to establish economic cooperation between North American and South America.
      3. The Alliance for Progress was intended to counter the emerging communist threat from Cuba.
      4. The Alliance was a brief public relations success. Despite some limited economic gains, however, the Alliance for Progress was widely viewed as a failure.
   3. Bay of Pigs Invasion
      1. President Kennedy inherited from the Eisenhower administration a CIA-backed scheme to topple Fidel Castro from power by invading Cuba with anti-communist exiles.
      2. When the invasion failed, Kennedy refused to rescue the insurgents, forcing them to surrender.
      3. Widely denounced as a fiasco, the Bay of Pigs defeat damaged U.S. credibility.
      4. The Bay of Pigs failure, along with continuing American covert efforts to assassinate Castro, pushed the Cuban dictator into a closer alliance with the USSR.
      5. Soviet Premier Khrushchev responded by secretly sending nuclear missiles to Cuba.
   4. Cuban Missile Crisis
      1. The Cuban Missile Crisis was precipitated by the discovery of Soviet missiles in Cuba.
      2. The Soviets withdrew their missiles from Cuba in exchange for a promise from the United States not to attack Fidel Castro.
      3. As part of the negotiations to end the Cuban Missile Crisis, President Kennedy promised to refrain from a military invasion of Cuba.
4. Cold War policies led to public debates over the power of the federal government and acceptable means for pursuing international and domestic goals while protecting civil liberties.
5. Americans debated the merits of a large nuclear arsenal, the military-industrial complex, and the appropriate power of the executive branch in conducting foreign and military policy.
   1. In his farewell address, Eisenhower warned of the danger posed by a strong defense industry and the armed forces (military-industrial complex); despite his own background, Eisenhower wanted to control military spending.