



Understanding the (possible) direction of United State's Foreign Policy under President Trump

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President Elect Mr. Donald Trump has, on 19 December 2016, won in the US Electoral College votes (Mr. Trump-304 votes, Mrs. Hillary Clinton 227 votes) to officially win the US elections. As the Republican Party nominee his campaign did touch upon some key issues of US foreign policy often leading to more questions from policy makers within the US, as well as across the world. His views were at times seen to be damaging to relations the US had build over the year with allies and other nations. Now that he has been officially elected and his cabinet begins to take shape there are indications that, the new President might follow up on his campaign pledges.

This paper is a study of the summary of the statements that were made by President Elect Trump during his campaign and his views post his election on some key issues.

Issue	Campaign Statements	Post election statements
1) China	In his speech announcing his candidature Mr. Trump was critical of China claiming "China has our (US) jobs..."and "(he)...will bring back the jobs from China and Mexico." He has repeatedly claimed during his campaign and also on his campaign website that China is an	Mr. Trump broke from protocol to take a congratulatory phone call from Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen, becoming the first US president or president-elect to speak directly with that officeholder since 1979. He further questioned whether the US should continue its "One China" policy stating that he saw no reason

¹ Transcript of the speech of Mr. Donald Trump's Presidential Announcement, <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/transcript-donald-trump-2016-presidential-announcement-article-1.2260117>, Accessed on 20 Dec. 2016.

	<p>adversary of the US and accused the government of not taking adequate steps to check the growth of China. He has accused China to be a currency manipulator. He has pledged to take steps towards stopping hacking of US websites especially government website from Chinese entities and threaten the Chinese government with steep tariffs if it doesn't agree to rewrite trade agreements. He said he would toughen rules against the theft of intellectual property and combat subsidies China offers to boost exports.</p> <p>He has also stated that he would also expand the US's military presence in the South China Sea as a deterrent to China's territorial claims to artificial islands there.</p>	<p>to continue with the policy unless he received concessions from China on trade, North Korea, the South China Sea and other issues.</p> <p>His tweets, that China could keep the US drone it had 'stolen' has also caused some concern about US policy makers about US relations with the Asian power.</p> <p>His comments have been criticised by China which has warned of strained relations in the future.</p>
<p>2) North Korea</p>	<p>In his campaign speech early in the election he has stated that he was willing to sit down with Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un, if the latter visited the US. In his first presidential debate he stated "China should solve that problem for us. China should go into North Korea. China is totally powerful as it relates to North Korea."² He has reiterated that China has total control over the island nation and that he would get China to tackle</p>	<p>In his victory speech Mr. Trump said, "... (the US) we will get along with all other nations willing to get along with us..."³ However, North Korea's main newspaper Rondon Sinmun, while not referring to President-elect Donald Trump's victory specifically, warned that the incoming administration would have to deal with North Korea as a nuclear power.⁴</p>

² Aaron Blake, "The first Trump-Clinton presidential debate transcript, annotated," https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/09/26/the-first-trump-clinton-presidential-debate-transcript-annotated/?utm_term=.aa299e843403, Accessed on 19 Dec. 2016.

³ Transcript: Donald Trump's Victory Speech, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/10/us/politics/trump-speech-transcript.html>, Accessed on 19 Dec. 2016.

⁴ Yohap News Agency, "N.K. vows not to give up nuclear weapons as Trump elected new U.S. president," <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2016/11/10/50/0401000000AEN20161110005000315F.html>, Accessed on 20 Dec. 2016.

	the issue of North Korea.	
3) Russia	<p>During his campaign he has stated he would improve US-Russia relations. He was not critical of Russia's 'annexation' of Crimea or Ukraine. He courted criticism for his remarks calling on Russia to hack into the emails of Mrs. Hilary Clinton and Democratic National Convention. At a rally in Ohio state he claimed that if the two nations could work together to defeat Islamic State of Syria and the Levant (ISIL), and also be friendly with Russia it would be in the interest of the United States.</p>	<p>Mr. Trump has praised President Vladimir Putin leadership skills and has nominated a secretary of state (Mr. Rex Tillerson) and a national security adviser (Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn) who are seen to have a pro-Russia view and business connection in the country.</p> <p>Mr. Trump has also dismissed as "ridiculous" a classified CIA assessment that found Russian hackers likely interfered in the US presidential election to tilt the contest in Mr. Trump's favour suggesting that the report was politically motivated. However, his tweet ("If Russia, or some other entity, was hacking, why did the White House wait so long to act? Why did they only complain after Hillary lost?"), has led some analysis to conclude that the President elect and his team might have been aware of the hacking. Mr. Trump is of the opinion that friendly relations with Russia are important for the defeat of ISIL and the US should let Russia fight the terrorist forces.</p>
4) Iran	<p>Mr. Trump has repeatedly criticised the deal and has also termed it as the 'worst deal ever made.' He is of the view that the deal has given Iran US\$ 150 billion with nothing in return for the United States.⁵</p>	<p>Mr. Trump has nominated Gen. James Mattis as his Secretary of Defence. Gen. Mattis favours a tough stand against Iran and has stated that the nuclear deal might have slowed Iran's ambition for a nuclear weapon but it has not stopped it.</p> <p>Mr. Trump continues to be of the opinion that the deal is harmful to</p>

⁵ Republican Party, "Acceptance Speech of Donald Trump at RNC," <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/07/full-transcript-donald-trump-nomination-acceptance-speech-at-rnc-225974>, Accessed on 20 Dec. 2016.

		<p>the US. However, both the intelligence community and political analysis have warned against the consequences that could lead to the US being isolated internationally as well as the harm to US reputation.</p> <p>Boeing says its \$17 billion deal with Iran Air will help support thousands of U.S. jobs. This deal has been made possible as an outcome of the Iran nuclear agreement⁶, which allows Iran to upgrade its commercial airlines. If the Iran agreement is re-negotiated, then deals such as the one Boeing have agreed to will need to be relooked or put on the back burner for the moment. This will affect the possibility of creating jobs or supporting jobs in the US. This would be against the foundation of the Mr. Trump’s campaign which focused on jobs for Americans in America. It is likely that Mr. Trump would have to support the Iran agreement while continuing to impose unilateral US sanctions on Iran.</p>
<p>5) Syria</p>	<p>Mr. Trump in his acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention (RNC) stated that while President Obama had announced ‘a red line’ that Syria should not cross, it has meant nothing to the world. In his answer to a question on removing President Assad from power in Syria, in an interview to the New York Times Newspaper he stated that, he would like to remove</p>	<p>In his interview with The Wall Street Journal he said that his administration’s top priority in Syria would be to defeat the Islamic State (IS) group, rather than ousting Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.</p>

⁶ Jackie Northam, “A Boeing-Iran Deal Could Be On President-Elect Trump’s Chopping Block,” <http://www.npr.org/2016/12/12/505311150/a-boeing-iran-deal-could-be-on-president-elect-trumps-chopping-block>, Accessed on 19 Dec. 2016.

	<p>President Assad from power. However, for the moment ISIL is a bigger threat than Syria. His priority would be ISIL.</p>	
<p>6) Cuba</p>	<p>During his initial campaign speeches he was of the opinion that fifty years was enough and the need to open up relations with Cuba was ‘fine’, however, he felt that US should have ‘made a better deal’. After his nomination he differed and stated that he would reverse President Barack Obama's reopening of diplomatic ties with Cuba if the island nation did not meet his demands for a more open society. He stated that he would require the Cuban government to allow freedom of speech and religion and for them to free political prisoners, or he would reverse President Obama executive orders that re-established diplomatic ties after a 50-year embargo⁷.</p>	<p>Mr. Trump has stated that as President he would he would do all he can “to ensure the Cuban people can finally begin their journey toward prosperity and liberty.”</p> <p>His decision to reverse the new US policy towards Cuba could face pushback from U.S. companies now deeply invested in Cuba under the current administration’s policy. Those companies include major airlines, hotel operators and technology providers, while big U.S. phone carriers have signed roaming agreements on the island.⁸</p>
<p>7) International Trade</p>	<p>At the RNC Mr. Trump pointed out that, “The TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) will not only destroy our manufacturing, but it will make America subject to the rulings of foreign governments.” He pledged to never sign any trade agreement that hurts US workers, or that diminishes freedom and independence of the US. Instead, he has stated that he would make</p>	<p>After winning the November election Mr. Trump announced that he brokered an agreement between the state of Indiana and the Carrier Corporation in which the US-based company agreed to keep between 700 and 1,100 jobs at its factory in Indianapolis in exchange for \$7 million in state tax incentives over a decade. The maker of heating and cooling units still plans to move</p>

⁷ Eric DuVall, “Donald Trump threatens to end U.S.-Cuba relations without more Cuban freedoms,” http://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2016/09/17/Donald-Trump-threatens-to-end-US-Cuba-relations-without-more-Cuban-freedoms/5081474133272/?spt=sec&or=tn, Accessed on 19 Dec. 2016.

⁸ FELICIA SCHWARTZ and CAROL E. LEE, “Death of Fidel Castro May Pressure Donald Trump on Cuba Promises,” <http://www.wsj.com/articles/death-of-fidel-castro-may-pressure-donald-trump-to-keep-cuba-promises-1480290496>, Accessed on 19 Dec. 2016.

	<p>individual deals with individual countries.” In other statements he has been critical of WTO and stated he would reconsider the United States’ membership to the organisation. He also wants to renegotiate trade agreements with China, Japan, South Korea and other nations and he would leave the NAFTA.</p>	<p>hundreds of Indiana manufacturing jobs to Mexico. He also claimed credit for ensuring car manufacturing company FORD would not be moving to Mexico and Japan’s Softbank, a technology company would invest in the US. The news while true on all accounts, seem to have exaggerated the role of Mr. Trump, as most the companies claim they were not shifting out of US in the first place.</p> <p>Mr. Trump has reiterated his plan to levy 35 percent tariffs on goods imported by US-based firms that have moved their production offshore.</p> <p>He is also still opposed to the TPP and will move out of it on day one of his office. "Instead, we will negotiate fair, bilateral trade deals that bring jobs and industry back onto American shores.</p>
<p>8) ISIL</p>	<p>In his acceptance speech at the RNC he stated that the United States would need three things to protect it from terrorism. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) We must have the best intelligence gathering operation in the world. b) We must abandon the failed policy of nation building and regime change. Instead, we must work with all of our allies who share our goal of destroying ISIS and stamping out Islamic terror. This includes working with our greatest ally in the region, the State 	<p>The ISIL continues to be a priority for Mr. Trump. He has stated that he would like to concentrate solely on bombing ISIL He has suggested that when he would take office he might withdraw support to some Syrian opposition groups that have been fighting both the ISIL and the Syrian government forces to concentrate on ISIL.</p>

	<p>of Israel.</p> <p>c) Lastly, we must immediately suspend immigration from any nation that has been compromised by terrorism until such time as proven vetting mechanisms have been put in place.</p> <p>In a March 2016 debate, he indicated he would be willing as president to deploy tens of thousands of US troops to battle the Islamic State. He also stated the US should suspend buying oil from Saudi Arabia for not continuing enough to fight the ISIL</p>	
<p>9) Immigration</p>	<p>Illegal immigration was the centre point of Mr. Trumps presidential campaign. His speech announcing his candidature claimed Mexico was sending violent criminals to the US. He stated that he would build a wall on the southern border to stem the flow of illegal immigrants. He also called for the deportation of the more than eleven million undocumented immigrants living in the US, a ban on allowing Muslims to migrate to the US, he would "suspend immigration from areas of the world when there is a proven history of terrorism against the US, Europe, or our allies." He had said that he would not only prevent Syrian refugees from</p>	<p>He has moved away from his call to remove all undocumented immigrants from the US. In an interview post his victory, Mr. Trump stated that he would deport three million illegal migrants. "What we are going to do is get the people that are criminal and have criminal records, gang members, drug dealers, we have a lot of these people—probably two million, it could be even three million—we are getting them out of our country or we are going to incarcerate," Mr. Trump said in an interview with CBS' 60 Minutes. "But we're getting them out of our country. They're here illegally."⁹</p> <p>On the issue of building a wall on the southern borer he stated that he</p>

⁹ ` Katie Reilly, "Donald Trump Plans to Deport Up to 3 Million Immigrants," <http://time.com/4569034/donald-trump-undocumented-immigrant-deportation/>, Accessed on 19 Dec. 2016.

	<p>entering the United States, but also deport those already resettled in the country. He also wants to end the current administration’s policy of granting citizenship to the U.S.-born children of undocumented immigrants.</p>	<p>might consider a fence in parts with points for entry for legal migrants.</p> <p>Representative Peter T. King, Republican of New York, after meeting with the president-elect in Trump Tower, proposed that Mr. Trump adopt a national counterterrorism strategy based on the surveillance efforts of Ray Kelly, the former New York police commissioner. Mr. Trump in some of his earlier tweets has been supportive using such methods, which has been deemed unconstitutional by the Federal District Court of New York.</p>
<p>10) Climate Change</p>	<p>Mr. Trump has denied the science of climate change many times in recent years, calling it a “con job” and a “myth,” and even suggesting the concept was “created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive.” He has also promised to redirect the billions of dollars the Obama administration pledged to UN climate change programs toward fixing U.S. infrastructure. He says the United States should pursue all forms of energy, including renewable energy, without privileging one source over another.</p>	<p>Mr. Trump has selected former Texas Governor Mr. Rick Perry to be his nominee for energy secretary. Mr. Perry has previously called for the energy department to be shut. He has advocated lighter regulation on the fossil fuel industry, and has called the science around climate change “unsettled”. He is also on the board of directors for Energy Transfer Partners, the company building the Dakota Access Pipeline in North Dakota, which has been stalled by protests by the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and supporters.</p> <p>Mr. Trump has also appointed, Mr. Scott Pruitt to head the Environmental Protection Agency. Mr. Pruitt is the attorney general of the oil and gas-intensive state of Oklahoma and spent a considerable time fighting litigation against the EPA.</p>
<p>11) Defence Policy</p>	<p>During his campaign speeches Mr. Trump had stated that his</p>	<p>There are indications that defence spending under the new</p>

	<p>administration would strengthen US defence forces by increasing their size and readiness. He wanted an increase in the defence budget.</p> <p>He has also raised questions on the utility of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) as it was designed to fight terrorism. He also stated that the US would not be in a position to protect its allies such as Japan and South Korea if they did not significantly contribute to defence spending that the US undertakes for their protection.</p>	<p>administration would increase. He said that the US defence policy would be 'Peace through Strength'. He stated that the military will be more and better equipment for less money while negotiating for tougher deals.</p> <p>He said that the US will stop building new nations in far off lands/areas. The US will concentrate on its own strength and respect. Instead will focus on national security threat of US which is terrorism and radical Islam.</p>
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There has not been much mention of South Asia in Mr. Trump's speeches or any clear indication of the direction of the administration's policy towards the region or India in particular.

It is hoped that the tough position that Mr. Trump has on terrorism would also be tied to the issue of global networks of terrorism and would also mean that he would take a position on States sponsoring or supporting terrorism. India can leverage the new administration's views against terrorism by working with the Trump Administration to define terrorism.

Based on his pronouncements, the economic policy that Mr. Trump may follow could mean pressure on India for more market access, particularly in the defence sector while also protecting US domestic industry. His policy to tax US companies that shift manufacturing abroad will be at cross roads with the Make in India initiative of the Government of India.

The growing tensions between Beijing and Washington will be detrimental for regional stability. A larger US military presence in the region has its advantages and disadvantages for India. This could lead to greater U.S. assistance in Indian capacity building, particularly as it relates to enhancing the Indian Navy's capabilities. It is also likely that China would also take assertive action such as increased patrolling to counter US presence in the areas such as the South China Sea.

The likely possibility of a deterioration in the relation between US and Iran could also negatively impact India. Iran remains an important supplier of crude oil to India as well as the fact that India and Iran are working in close cooperation with Afghanistan on the development of the Chabahar port in Iran and INSTC (International North-South Transport Corridor).

Afghanistan was hardly mentioned during the campaign nor after his election, though on Pakistan he stated that the US would need India's help to stabilise the region. Mr. Trump has called Pakistan the most dangerous country and has stated that the United States needs to engage with India more and more to stop Pakistan. Nonetheless, the need to stop US aid, especially military aid to Pakistan is an issue that has not found mention in his views till now.

India also has no indication if the new administration would be supportive of its membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

Changes in immigration laws, especially provisions for the H1B visa and L1 visa are another cause of concern for India. The H1B visa is used by Indian and US companies to hire skilled workers from India and other countries. The largest recipient of these visas is Indian skilled workers. Mr. Trump sent mixed signals during his campaign, sometimes criticizing the visa programmes but other times calling them an important way to retain foreign talent. His proposed nominee for attorney general, Senator Jeff Sessions, has been a long time critic of the skilled-worker programme and has called for it to be curtailed.

While it may yet be early days, the U.S.-India relationship will likely continue on a positive trajectory under the new Trump administration. India continues to enjoy strong bipartisan support in the US, where the country is seen as an emerging power, a strategic and economic partner, and a counterweight to China. India itself appears to be in good shape to leverage its support structures in the US in general and the Republican establishment in particular, to further its key objectives.¹⁰

Mr. Trump is currently in the process of nominating members for his cabinet. The one major criticism he is facing on his nomination is that while he promised change and a break from the lobbyists who control the political sphere in Washington, he has been unable to do so. As the first billionaire US president he has appointed two billionaires and at least 10 millionaires, with a combined net worth of about \$5.6 billion, to run government departments. The members of his cabinet have military experience and have considerable time in politics but very few have any experience in heading departments and most appear to be at odds with the departments they have been nominated to head. Many of his nominees have close ties to Wall Street and corporate America. Thus, India and the international community would have to give Mr. Trump and his administration some time before they are able to determine the possible direction of the foreign policy of the US.

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Disclaimer: Views expressed are of authors and do not reflect the views of the Council.*

¹⁰ Rohan Joshi, "What Does a Trump Presidency Mean for India?" <http://thediplomat.com/2016/11/what-does-a-trump-presidency-mean-for-india/>, Accessed on 20 Dec. 2016.