



Foreign Policy

Election Guide

- ★ China ★ Cuba ★ Iran
- ★ North Korea ★ NATO and Russia ★ ISIS
- ★ National Security ★ Trade ★ Immigration
- ★ Energy and the Environment



2016



China

- ✓ **Can the U.S. risk further escalating tensions in the South China Sea?**
- ✓ **Does China's possession of U.S. debt safeguard the country from sanctions if it fails to act in accordance with political agreements?**
- ✓ **When the U.S. arms other Asian nations, does this strengthen or weaken its negotiating stance with regard to China?**

Facts

Population: 1.368 billion (2015 est.).

GDP: 10.98 trillion (2015 est.).

Leaders: Xi Jinping, 63, general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party and president of China; Li Keqiang, 61, premier of China.

Important Dates.

1949: The People's Republic of China is established.

1950: China enters the Korean War by supplying troops and arms to North Korea.

1966–76: The Chinese Cultural Revolution is launched under Communist leader Mao Zedong.

1972: U.S. President Richard Nixon visits China.

1979: The U.S. and China normalize relations.

Foreign Relations.

The Chinese government under Xi Jinping is focused on expanding global influence. China has built strong relations with North Korea, and with other East Asian neighbors. China has also begun expanding its influence outside of Asia by building relationships with African and Latin American countries. While the relationship between the U.S. and China has improved during the Obama administration, there remain areas of distrust, particularly as concern freedom of navigation through the South China Sea and cybersecurity. China's refusal to recognize a recent decision by an international tribunal in The Hague adds to concerns about the country's cooperation in the current international order. The tribunal rejected Chinese claims to sovereignty in the South China Sea.

Current U.S. Policy

Security and the South China Sea.

China's military buildup in the South China Sea is one of the greatest sources of contention in U.S. relations with the country. China and several of its neighbors dispute island territory there. The main policy focus for the U.S. in this area is to protect freedom of navigation laws for trade and commerce among nations. The U.S. has sent naval vessels to patrol the waters around several islands newly constructed and militarized by the Chinese. The U.S. also opened up arms trading with many of China's neighbors. President Obama recently lifted the embargo on arms with Vietnam, and also increased the U.S. military presence in Taiwan and the Philippines. The U.S. argues that these policies are not meant to intensify hostilities in an already volatile area. But such actions do represent an effort to mitigate China's increased regional sphere of influence.

China-U.S. Trade Policy.

China was omitted from negotiations surrounding, and entry into, the ambitious Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a free trade agreement that would link the U.S. and several countries bordering the Pacific Ocean. Many experts see the partnership as a way for the U.S. to nullify some of China's influence in the economies of the Asia-Pacific region. "We can't let countries like China write the rules of the global economy," President Obama said in a statement on the deal. While these policies seem to point toward a move away from trade with China, the country remains the U.S.' second largest trading partner and its biggest source of imports. A bilateral investment treaty that would ease market access for investors in both countries is also under negotiation.

New Model of Great Power Relations.

Chinese President Xi has made several public calls for negotiations between his government and the U.S. with the aim of improving relations. This so-called "new model" involves agreements in multiple areas of policy, including climate control, counterterrorism and cybersecurity. The climate agreement reached in 2014 between China and the U.S.—the two largest emitters of greenhouse gases—was an important step, with both countries pledging to begin cutting emissions by 2030.

The U.S. and China also share information and resources on counterterrorism. They have met to discuss cybersecurity, and agreed to anti-hacking principles in the wake of Chinese cyberattacks targeting U.S. commercial secrets. Both countries affirm that government support of cyberattacks will be met with heavy sanctions.

Candidate Positions



Hillary Clinton is critical of China’s human rights record and its actions in the South China Sea. She pledges to crack down on trade and currency violations by the country. As secretary of state, she was the face of the Obama administration’s “pivot to Asia,” which China received as an attempt to mitigate its regional influence. During this time, then-Secretary Clinton elicited a strong negative response from the Chinese when she called the South China Sea dispute a matter of U.S. “national interest” and “pivotal to regional security.” While serving in the Obama administration, she was openly critical of China’s human rights record, especially treatment of activists and dissidents. As first lady, she delivered an address at the United Nations Fourth World Congress on Women in Beijing: “Human rights are women’s rights, and women’s rights are human rights,” she said, condemning certain Chinese practices.



Donald Trump has made China—more specifically, trade with China—a central issue of his campaign. Mr. Trump outlines a policy for U.S.-China trade relations that involves immediately declaring China a currency manipulator; forcing China to recognize U.S. intellectual property; promoting American manufacturing jobs; and strengthening the U.S. negotiating position by lowering the U.S. corporate tax rate, reducing debt and increasing U.S. military presence in the East and South China Seas. He has also spoken of imposing a 45% tariff on Chinese imports. “A strong and smart America is an America that will find a better friend in China,” he said in his “America First” foreign policy speech. He added that Obama administration weakness had resulted in a loss of respect for the U.S. and more belligerent behavior by China.

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Cuba

- ✓ **Should the U.S. lift the trade embargo on Cuba?**
- ✓ **Should the U.S. return Guantanamo Bay Naval Base to Cuba?**
- ✓ **Why are Americans more open to ending the embargo than in the past?**

Facts

Population: 11 million (2015 est.).

GDP: \$77.1 billion (2013 est.).

Leaders: Raúl Castro, 85, first secretary of the Communist Party and president of Cuba.

Important Dates.

1898: The Spanish-American War ends Spanish control of Cuba.

1959: Fidel Castro, leader of the Cuban Revolution, seizes power from U.S.-supported dictator Fulgencio Batista.

1960–62: After the fall of Batista, the U.S. signs the Cuban trade embargo. This is followed by the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, the formal alliance of Cuba with the USSR and the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.

1990s: Cuba enters a deep economic depression after the collapse of the USSR. The U.S. signs the Helms-Burton Act, which expands the Cuban trade embargo.

2015–2016: The U.S. and Cuba reopen diplomatic relations after a historic meeting between Barack Obama and Raúl Castro. Obama visits Cuba, making him the first U.S. president to do so since the Cuban Revolution.

Foreign Relations and Trade.

Since 1959, Cuba has aligned itself in opposition to the U.S. in Latin America, regularly supporting various communist groups in revolts against U.S.-backed leaders. Cuba was long supported economically by the U.S.S.R, but struggled after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. The country has since established strong ties with Russia under Vladimir Putin. Cuba also has strong relations with socialist powers in Latin American countries, especially with Venezuela.

Current U.S. Policies

Cuban Trade Embargo.

Signed after the establishment of the Communist government in Cuba, the U.S. embargo banned most exports from Cuba, excepting certain products. The embargo was expanded by the Cuban Assets Control Regulations of 1963, the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 and the Helms–Burton Act of 1996 to encompass all trade between the two countries and end diplomatic relations.

The embargo has led to a strained and distrustful relationship between the U.S. and Cuba. The UN General Assembly criticizes the embargo as a show of unnecessary force against the island’s economy. The U.S.-operated Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, located in Cuba, has also been a longstanding source of tension between the countries.

President Barack Obama has championed efforts to normalize relations between Cuba and the U.S., flying to Havana to meet with Raúl Castro, reopening the embassies in the two countries and publicly calling for an end to the embargo. Congress continues to ignore these calls, but public sentiment seems to favor normalized relations, and in early 2016 the president presented Congress with a new plan to close the detention facility. The Obama administration is not considering plans to return the Naval Base to the Cubans.

Candidate Positions



Hillary Clinton is in favor of normalized Cuba-U.S. relations. As president, she would push for an end to the economic embargo, employing executive authority if necessary.

Serving as first lady, Mrs. Clinton supported the Helms-Burton Act of 1996. During her 2008 presidential campaign, she again spoke in favor of the embargo and challenged Cuba on its human rights record. As secretary of state, Mrs. Clinton shifted her position. She spearheaded the campaign to normalize relations, and promoted President Obama’s call to loosen travel and trade restrictions against the country. In 2014, she responded to the administration’s announcement that it would begin to normalize relations, saying, “Our decades-long policy of isolation has only strengthened the Castro regime’s grip on power.”



Donald Trump calls for an end to the U.S. embargo on Cuba—a position contrary to that of many in the Republican Party establishment—but says he would keep Guantanamo Bay detention center open. Mr. Trump approves of normalized diplomatic relations, with the caveat that he would have “made a better deal” than the Obama administration. He has expressed that lifting the embargo would do more to improve human rights in Cuba than leaving it in place.

This is a change from the candidate's stance during his brief Reform Party presidential bid in 1999. In an op-ed for the *Miami Herald* at the time, he wrote against lifting the economic embargo, citing the Castro regime's human rights record as the reason he had declined to join European investors in developing real estate on the island.

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Iran

- ✓ **Will the Iran Deal mark the start of an era of rapprochement between the U.S. and Iran?**
- ✓ **Does the nuclear deal assure the U.S. that Iran will not attempt to develop nuclear weapons?**
- ✓ **Can the U.S. pursue relations with Iran while maintaining strong ties with Israel and Saudi Arabia?**

Facts

Population: 81.824 million (2015 est.).

GDP: 387.6 billion (2015 est.).

Leaders: Sayyed Ali Hosseini Khamenei, 77, supreme leader of Iran; Hassan Rouhani, 67, president of Iran.

Important Dates.

1925: Reza Khan seizes power and becomes shah of Iran, taking on the name Reza Shah Pahlavi.

1941: Allied forces overthrow Reza Shah during WWII. His son, Mohammad Pahlavi, succeeds him.

1951: Mohammed Mossadegh, head of the coalition National Front party, becomes prime minister of Iran and begins the process of nationalizing the Iranian oil industry.

1953: A combined CIA and MI6 effort overthrows Mossadegh in a coup and reinstalls Mohammed Pahlavi as shah.

1979: The Iranian Revolution deposes the shah and Ruhollah Khomeini becomes supreme leader of the New Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iranian Relations with the U.S.

During the shah's rule, Iran was considered one of America's most reliable allies in the Middle East. Since the 1979 Iranian Revolution, relations with the United States have been adversarial. Anti-American sentiment in Iran is strong. Washington and

Tehran regularly find themselves on opposite sides of issues affecting the region, as Iran is a rival of both Saudi Arabia and Israel, the U.S.' main allies in the Middle East. The U.S. lifted longstanding sanctions against Iran with the successful completion of a landmark nuclear deal last year.

Current U.S. Policies

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

JCPOA is the agreement between Iran, the UN Security Council and the European Union, reached in 2015. More commonly referred to as the “Iran Deal,” JCPOA pertains to the Iranian nuclear program and the longstanding sanctions levied against the country. The deal grants the International Atomic Energy Agency the right to monitor Iran’s nuclear facilities to ensure that they are not being used to develop weapons. The agreement also brings an end to the many economic sanctions that had been levied against Iran, including the freezing of overseas assets.

Candidate Positions



Hillary Clinton supports the Iran Nuclear Deal, but adopts a tougher tone than President Obama. She characterizes her attitude as “distrust and verify,” calling Iran a “subject” and not a “partner” in the agreement. She advocates for stronger sanctions against Iran for continued ballistic missile testing, and specifies that she would be ready to use military force should the country pursue nuclear weapons. She also emphasizes the need to contain Iranian and allied militant activity in the Middle East, and pledges continued military support to Israel.

As secretary of state, Mrs. Clinton spearheaded the Nuclear Deal negotiations between Tehran and Washington, and supported increased sanctions that pressured the country to come to the negotiating table.



Donald Trump opposes the entirety of the Iran Nuclear Deal as it now stands. He has criticized the unfreezing of \$150 billion of Iranian foreign assets, or what he calls the U.S. “giv[ing] \$150 to Iran,” and has also contended that the deal amounts to letting an untrustworthy Iran self-inspect its nuclear sites. He says he would tear up the deal with the intention of renegotiating for greater concessions. He has not articulated specific proposals for a revised deal.

Mr. Trump says he would punish Iran for ballistic missile testing and that he would significantly increase existing sanctions. In a speech addressed to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, Mr. Trump called Iran “the biggest supporter of terrorism around the world.”

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North Korea

- ✓ **Can the U.S. and North Korea achieve normalized relations as long as the Kim Dynasty remains in power?**
- ✓ **Under what circumstances should the U.S. consider opening negotiations on sanctions with North Korea?**
- ✓ **How dangerous would a nuclear-capable North Korea be for the U.S. and the world?**

Facts

Population: 25 million (2015 est.).

GDP: \$28 billion (2013 est.).

Leader: Kim Jong Un, 32, chairman of the Worker's Party and supreme leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Armed Forces: 1,200,000 active, 7,700,000 reserves (2015 est.).

Important Dates.

1945: Korea is split into the North and South following its emancipation from Japanese control after WWII. Control of the South is given to the U.S.; the North is put under the jurisdiction of the U.S.S.R.

1948: The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) is founded.

1950–53: The Korean War begins after the leader of North Korea, Kim Il Sung, authorizes an invasion of the South in order to “reunify” the peninsula.

1991: Both North and South Korea join the United Nations.

1998: North Korea tests a long-range missile for the first time.

2003: North Korea withdraws from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

2006: North Korea is first reported to test its nuclear program.

2011: Kim Jong Un takes control of the North Korean government after the death of his father, Kim Jong Il.

Foreign Relations and Trade.

North Korea aligned itself with the Soviet Union and China during the Cold War. It has remained at odds with the Western world, continuing to defy economic sanctions meant to slow down its nuclear program, though such measures have left the country economically weak and isolated. North Korea's major trading partner is China. Trade has also opened up with South Korea in recent years.

Current U.S. Policy

Preventing a Nuclear North Korea.

Most current U.S. policy with regard to North Korea deals with curtailing development of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles. President Barack Obama made efforts to open relations with Kim Jong Un, but the administration recently placed sanctions directly on Kim and other top officials for the first time. Pyongyang responded by cutting off its only diplomatic channel with the U.S.

North Korea began developing its nuclear program after withdrawing from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 2003, citing hostile U.S. policy. Harsh rhetoric between the U.S. and North Korea tends to escalate rapidly after North Korean nuclear tests. The Obama administration has appealed to China as North Korea's closest and most supportive ally, urging Beijing to work to disarm its neighbor. But recent developments in the South China Sea have cooled Chinese-U.S. relations, and China also opposes plans for deployment of the U.S. Army's Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system (Thaad), an advanced anti-ballistic missile system, in South Korea.

Candidate Positions



Hillary Clinton favors punitive sanctions against the North Korean regime in response to continued nuclear tests, saying that belligerence must be met with “an unmistakable message that [Pyongyang’s] nuclear brinksmanship won’t succeed.” Clinton supports the creation of stronger missile defense systems by the U.S. and allies to counter the North Korean nuclear threat. She has urged China to be more assertive in pressuring its neighbor to end missile testing. She denies the possibility of negotiations with North Korea until the country dismantles its nuclear program and improves its human rights record.

As secretary of state, Mrs. Clinton supported the Obama administration’s “pivot to Asia,” one element of which involved bolstering the military resources of North Korea’s neighbors. During her tenure, a multilateral sanctions regime was established against the country in response to failed multi-party talks and missile testing.



Donald Trump has expressed willingness to meet face to face with North Korean leader Kim Jung Un as part of his approach to dismantling the country's nuclear program. This would make him the first world leader to meet with Kim. Still, Mr. Trump locates the onus of responsibility for discouraging North Korea's nuclear policy with China, and has said that if a Chinese solution is not forthcoming, the U.S. "should make trade very difficult" for Beijing. Mr. Trump also expresses support for allowing nations like Japan and South Korea to develop their own nuclear programs as deterrents. In his book *The America We Deserve* (2000), Mr. Trump wrote in favor of a pre-emptive strike should the regime refuse to discontinue its nuclear program.

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NATO and Russia

- ✓ *Is NATO's current military presence in Eastern Europe adequate to deter Russian expansionism, or are additional troops necessary?*
- ✓ *Can NATO function as a deterrent to Russia without using armed force?*
- ✓ *What are the costs and benefits of NATO expansion?*

Facts about NATO

Members: Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States.

Leaders: Curtis Scaparrotti, 60, supreme allied commander for Europe; Jens Stoltenberg, 57, secretary general; Petr Pavel, 54, chairman of the NATO Military Committee.

Background.

Founded in 1949 after the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty (also known as the Washington Treaty), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was created to “safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their [the Parties’] peoples.” NATO’s biggest adversary at the time was the growing Soviet Union, which sought to expand territorial gains made in Eastern Europe during World War II. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, many thought that NATO was no longer necessary—a relic of the Cold War. However, recent actions taken by the Russian Federation to expand control over former Soviet satellite countries have restored a sense of purpose for NATO in Europe.

Facts about Russia

Population: 142.5 million (2015 est.).

Military Power: 771,000 active, 2,000,000 reserves (2015 est.).

Leaders: Dmitry Medvedev, 50, prime minister of Russia; Vladimir Putin, 63, president of Russia.

Important Dates.

1991: The modern Russian Federation is founded after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

1999: Vladimir Putin is appointed prime minister of Russia. He subsequently becomes acting president.

2014: NATO-Russia Council cooperation is suspended after Russia annexes Crimea.

Background.

Russian policy under Vladimir Putin has constantly put the country at odds with NATO. Events like the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008 and the recent Russian annexation of the Crimea have increased hostile rhetoric between NATO leaders and Putin. NATO has since augmented the number of troops in Eastern Europe in an effort to combat what it sees as Russian expansionist policy. NATO also deploys naval warships to patrol the Black Sea, adding to tensions over a potential outbreak of conflict. Russia has faced heavy sanctions from many NATO members, plunging the country into recession and further straining relations.

Current U.S. Policies

North Atlantic Treaty.

The North Atlantic Treaty established NATO and is the basis of U.S. foreign policy with regard to the organization. The defining element of the treaty is Article 5, a shared promise among all parties that an attack against one will be regarded as an attack against all. President Obama calls NATO “the cornerstone of our collective defense and U.S. security policy.” The administration has been very supportive of sanctions against Russia, which it maintains should be ongoing until such time as Crimea is returned to Ukraine. At the recent NATO Summit in Warsaw, President Obama announced the addition of 1,000 U.S. troops to Poland, constituting one of four multinational combat battalions to be deployed to Eastern Europe under NATO auspices.

Candidate Positions



Hillary Clinton favors a stronger NATO to counter aggressive Russian foreign policies. She supports sanctions in response to Russia’s actions in Ukraine and Crimea, as well as to its use of airspace over Turkey—a NATO ally—in its campaign to defend Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Mrs. Clinton has denounced a suspected Russian cyberhack of Democratic National Committee computers, and accuses President Putin of attempting to influence the U.S. presidential election.

As secretary of state, Mrs. Clinton was instrumental in the so-called “reset” of U.S.-Russia relations, which earned some early successes—including joint sanctions on Iran’s nuclear program—but did not achieve sustained cooperation. Her relationship with the Russian president has been particularly fraught since Mr. Putin’s 2012 presidential campaign, during which Clinton voiced support for anti-Putin protestors and called for transparent elections. At the time, Putin accused her of actively working to undermine him.



Donald Trump revoked his previous assessment of NATO as obsolete, citing the creation of a counterterrorism division as the reason for this change of opinion. Still, Mr. Trump says that NATO as it stands is a “bad deal” for the U.S. He drew international criticism when he indicated that U.S. obligations under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty should be conditional on countries’ financial contributions to the alliance.

Mr. Trump expresses admiration for Russian President Vladimir Putin’s leadership style, calling him “a better leader than Obama.” In the wake of a suspected-Russian cyberhack into the DNC, Mr. Trump made a public statement encouraging Russia to hack into Hillary Clinton’s email. He has since described those comments as sarcastic. In a departure from his party, Mr. Trump seemed to indicate that his administration would not supply defensive lethal weapons to the Ukrainian government, and that he would consider recognizing Crimea as Russian.

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ISIS

- ✓ **Can the U.S. and other countries defeat ISIS without the introduction of ground forces?**
- ✓ **How can the U.S. and allies stem the tide of Westerners joining ISIS?**
- ✓ **Does a territorially weakened ISIS imply a long-term upsurge in terrorist attacks abroad?**

Facts

Names: ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria), ISIL (Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant) or Daesh (an acronym for the group's name in Arabic).

Number of fighters: 19,000–25,000 (2016 est.).

Leader: Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, 44, self-proclaimed caliph.

Important Dates.

March 2011: The Syrian civil war breaks out.

June 10, 2014: ISIS forces capture Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, in an initial streak of victories.

June 29, 2014: ISIS declares a caliphate over the territory it controls.

Background.

Originally formed as al-Qaeda in Iraq, the Islamic State rose to prominence in 2011, taking advantage of the instability caused by the Syrian civil war. As the country rapidly deteriorated, ISIS was able to recruit large numbers of fighters.

After capturing Mosul in northern Iraq, ISIS declared a caliphate—developing its own state institutions and providing public services—with Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as its leader. ISIS has taken advantage of the Internet and social media to spread its message and recruit thousands of supporters worldwide. ISIS currently controls areas in eastern Syria and northwestern Iraq. This past year, international efforts resulted in significant territorial losses for the group, including half of the major cities it once claimed, as well as access to key resources like oil. The loss of territory has been accompanied by an increase in ISIS-inspired or directed terrorist attacks abroad.

Current U.S. Policies

The stated objective of the Obama administration is to “degrade and ultimately destroy” ISIS. This has led to a three-pronged policy aimed at stopping the flow of money, cutting off recruitment and using direct military force against the group in its core territory.

Operation Tidal Wave II.

Launched in October 2015, this U.S. military operation seeks to diminish ISIS’ oil revenue by conducting tactical air strikes on ISIS-controlled oil fields and refineries in Syria and Iraq. Convoys and transports of oil and gas are also subject to attack, although these targets pose a higher risk of civilian casualties.

UN Resolution 2170 and 2178.

Much of U.S. policy to stop recruitment of foreign fighters to ISIS is formulated through UN resolutions. The theory is that practices adopted by the UN General Assembly are more likely to be successful in stopping the flow of fighters to Syria and Iraq. Resolution 2170 and 2178 assert that states must take actions to restrict the travel of individuals looking to join groups like ISIS and al-Qaeda. They must also restrict the transfer of weapons and money.

Training Programs, Leadership Decapitation and Special Forces.

The Obama administration has put forward multiple programs to combat ISIS forces, including the arming and training of groups within Syria and Iraq. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) outlines the vetting process for these groups, and the amount of money they receive. Among the groups receiving aid are the Syrian Democratic Forces, the Iraqi Armed Forces and the military wing of the Iraqi Kurds, known as the Peshmerga.

The Obama administration is concentrating on a leadership decapitation campaign, employing special forces on the ground in combination with air strikes. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter explained current U.S. strategy: “We are systematically eliminating ISIL’s cabinet,” in order to “hamper the ability for them to conduct operations inside and outside of Iraq and Syria.” This new approach comes after the conspicuous failure of a \$500 million train-and-equip program for Syrian moderates. There is talk of a new training program for Syrian fighters, this one more closely focused on key personnel. President Obama is set to deploy 250 military personnel to Syria, in addition to the 50 already on the ground in the country. As the recapture of Mosul draws nearer, the president has also ordered the deployment of hundreds of additional troops to Iraq.

Candidate Positions



Hillary Clinton's plan to defeat ISIS consists of three overarching goals, representing a continuation of Obama administration strategy. She says she would break up ISIS' strongholds in Iraq and Syria by ramping up the ongoing air campaign and increasing support for local ground forces, including deployment of additional U.S. special operations forces, but excluding deployment of ground troops; she would thwart ISIS' global infrastructure, particularly digital recruitment strategies; and she would employ an "intelligence surge," including increased aerial reconnaissance and electronic surveillance, and the addition of more operations officers and linguists. She calls for greater action from Sunni Arabs and Kurdish forces in defeating ISIS in Syria and Iraq.

Mrs. Clinton has criticized the Obama administration's delay in arming moderate Syrian rebels. She also favors a coalition-backed no-fly zone to shield Syrian refugees, a notable departure from President Obama's position. As secretary of state, she led U.S. diplomatic efforts to end the conflict in Syria and oust President Bashar al-Assad.



Donald Trump says he has a plan to defeat ISIS, but will not divulge its contents. He has also said that, once in office, he will give military leaders 30 days to formulate a plan to defeat the group. Mr. Trump blames the rise of ISIS and other Islamic extremist groups directly on Obama administration policies, notably those executed by Hillary Clinton as secretary of state. He repeatedly claimed that the president and former secretary were the "co-founders" of ISIS. Following public criticism, he said those remarks were sarcastic.

Mr. Trump calls for an end to the "era of [U.S.] nation building" abroad. He invokes the Cold War in framing an ideological battle against radical Islam. His administration would be willing to ally with any country to counter ISIS. He supports U.S.-Russia "joint military operations" against the group, in addition to coalition operations, and favors increased bombing of ISIS' oil resources. He has suggested that he would be willing to deploy 30,000 U.S. troops to Iraq and Syria. He calls for safe zones—to be financed by Germany and the Gulf States—for Syrian refugees. He supports limiting ISIS' digital propaganda and recruiting capabilities by "shutting down" the group's access to the Internet. Mr. Trump favors the use of torture, and has suggested killing the families of terrorists as a deterrence strategy.

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National Security

- ✓ **What is the greatest threat to U.S. national security?**
- ✓ **Which poses the greater challenge to nuclear security: state actors or terrorist actors?**
- ✓ **How can the U.S. find a policy that is balanced toward both privacy and security?**

1. Intelligence Sharing

Facts

United States Intelligence Community.

The Intelligence Community (I.C.) refers to the several agencies and organizations within the Executive Branch that help to gather, analyze and share information pertinent to national security interests. Intelligence is gathered from various source types, including human (documents, photographs, statements), signals (gathered from intercepted foreign communications) and open source (internet and media). The I.C. is headed by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, which manages broad policy and coordination across the 17 agencies that fall under the umbrella of the community.

International Intelligence Sharing.

The U.S. maintains various bilateral and multilateral intelligence sharing arrangements. Notable multilateral cooperation includes the UKUSA Agreement between five close allies (the “Five Eyes”), those being the U.S., the U.K., Australia, Canada and New Zealand. NATO also serves as an important forum for enhanced intelligence sharing between member states. Transnational threats, and international terrorism especially, have led to a significant expansion of U.S. intelligence cooperation internationally, including, for instance, information-sharing efforts within the U.S.-led coalition against ISIS.

Current U.S. Policies

National Strategy for Information Sharing and Safeguarding.

This strategy, developed by the Obama administration and adopted in 2012, builds on existing U.S. policy for intelligence gathering and sharing. It focuses on improving communication between all levels of government, the private sector and for-

eign allies, in order to manage intelligence for national security purposes. It seeks improved safeguards against intelligence intrusions. The strategy further identifies the protection of privacy, and civil rights and liberties, as one of five primary goals.

Candidate Positions



Hillary Clinton calls for a regional “intelligence surge” to defeat ISIS in the Middle East. This would involve heightened electronic surveillance and aerial reconnaissance, and additional operations officers and linguists. Mrs. Clinton appeals for more effective information sharing between countries to dam the flow of Western recruits into Syria, and to impede terrorist financing and infrastructure. She notes that Europe should improve intelligence sharing systems to prevent attacks on its soil, and calls on the U.S. to provide assistance in this area.

“We must deny [terrorists] virtual territory, just as we deny them actual territory,” she said in an address to the Council on Foreign Relations. Mrs. Clinton favors cooperation between federal actors and private sector technology companies to monitor the online activity of potential terrorists. As a private citizen, she supported the Freedom Act in 2015, which dismantled the NSA’s controversial bulk data collection program. As a senator, she co-sponsored the Intelligence Reform and Prevention Act of 2004.



Donald Trump calls for expanded intelligence sharing to combat ISIS. His administration would place “new emphasis on human intelligence,” including the “capture of high value targets.” He supports monitoring mosques and Muslim communities domestically as a security measure against radical Islamic terrorism, and he favors bulk data collection by organizations like the NSA, both domestically and abroad. Mr. Trump has been ill-received by many in the intelligence community, and fifty of the nation’s top Republican national security officials recently signed a letter denouncing the candidate.

2. Cybersecurity and Terrorism

Facts

The Internet as a Terrorist Tool.

Terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda and ISIS utilize the Internet to advance their respective causes. These groups steal digital information—bank records, for instance—and use the resultant income to finance operations. They also employ the Internet for global recruitment purposes. Groups can use social media, email, web-

sites and computer viruses to launch attacks, disseminate propaganda, and recruit and organize followers, including Westerners. There is further concern that terrorist groups will become more adept at hacking into websites and mainframes. From here, they might launch cyberattacks against U.S. industries like financial services, or energy and utilities.

State and Commercial Actors.

Foreign companies and governments also launch cyberattacks in pursuit of information. A recent hack of Democratic National Committee emails provides a prominent example. The theft is widely believed to have been perpetrated by Russian intelligence services. The stolen information was released to the public through the website WikiLeaks, resulting in the resignation of top DNC officials.

Current U.S. Policies

Cybersecurity National Action Plan.

In his last State of the Union address, President Obama touched upon the need for Congress to devise a comprehensive cybersecurity bill that would help the U.S. combat a growing threat. Shortly thereafter, he announced a new Cybersecurity National Action Plan, which includes a substantial increase in the budget directed toward national cybersecurity. It also creates a commission dedicated to combating cyberthreats, and fosters partnerships among the various levels of government and with the private sector.

Candidate Positions



Hillary Clinton's cybersecurity policy exists within a broader Initiative on Technology and Innovation. She plans to expand President Obama's Cybersecurity National Action Plan, emphasizing the modernization of federal IT and government cybersecurity, and the empowerment of a federal Chief Information Security Officer. She would further invest in cybersecurity technologies; encourage information sharing and innovative strategies to counter cyberthreats; and preempt attacks by enforcing known standards and strengthening government red teams that find and address vulnerabilities. She favors public-private sector collaboration in matters of national security, and supports the idea of a national commission on encryption to balance security and privacy concerns.

Recently, Mrs. Clinton accused Russia of leaking stolen Democratic National Committee emails to the public in an effort to assist the Trump campaign. Experts widely believe that Russian intelligence services were behind the hack, but no official accusations have been levelled.



Donald Trump says that the U.S. government should “close” sections of the Internet in order to defend national security interests. His intention, apparently, would be to deal blows to infrastructure such as fiber-optic cables and cellular towers in areas perceived to pose a threat, like Syria or Iraq. “I sure as hell don’t want to let people that want to kill us and kill our nation use our Internet,” he explained during a primary debate.

Mr. Trump favors strengthened U.S. cyber capabilities for defensive purposes. He accuses the Chinese government of allowing and supporting “rampant cybercrime” against the U.S., an issue he frames in relation to trade. He appeared to invite Russia to hack into Mrs. Clinton’s email in the wake of the Democratic National Committee leak. He later called those remarks sarcastic.

3. Nuclear Security and Terrorism

Facts

Number of Nuclear Weapons by Country.

Russia: 7,300. U.S.: 7,000. France: 300. China: 260. UK: 215. India: 120. Pakistan: 130. Israel: 80. North Korea: <10.

Nuclear Terrorism.

While many still fear the prospect of nuclear war between two or more state powers, there is also a real concern that groups like ISIS might threaten the West with “dirty bombs” or small-scale explosives capable of releasing nuclear radiation. Officials believe that ISIS, which has already employed chemical weapons, is attempting to gain nuclear materials from areas in Libya and Syria.

Current U.S. Policies

Nuclear Security Summit.

President Obama hosted the first Nuclear Security Summit in 2010 as part of an effort to combat the threat of nuclear terrorism. Meetings have since been held biennially. The summits are intended to enable development of effective security measures against potential threats from nuclear terrorism. President Obama has made nuclear security and disarmament main priorities as he looks to combat not only the possibility of nuclear-armed terrorist groups, but also threats posed by Iran and North Korea.

Candidate Positions



Hillary Clinton is a vocal supporter of President Obama’s nuclear non-proliferation agenda. In a statement outlining her global counterterrorism policy, she said, “Let’s not lose sight of the global cooperation needed to lock down loose nuclear material, and chemical and biological weapons—and keep them out of the hands of terrorists.” Mrs. Clinton claims credit for advancing the New START treaty as secretary of state. This agreement between the U.S. and Russia limits, among other things, the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads. Her tenure also saw the implementation of multi-lateral sanctions regimes against Iran and North Korea.



Donald Trump does not rule out the “nuclear option” in matters of national defense. Mr. Trump indicates that he would be open to employing nuclear weapons in a hypothetical military conflict in Europe. He maintains that nuclear proliferation may be acceptable in some cases. He has suggested that South Korea and Japan should be allowed to acquire nuclear weapons to relieve U.S. regional defense burdens related to the North Korean nuclear threat, and has also indicated that acquisition of nuclear weapons by Saudi Arabia could be tolerated.

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Trade

- ✓ **Would entering more free trade agreements help cut the U.S. trade deficit?**
- ✓ **Why are a majority of Americans averse to the idea of free trade agreements?**
- ✓ **Does President Obama’s “fast-track” policy for congressional approval of trade legislation result in agreements that are more or less favorable for U.S. citizens?**

Facts

Trade.

The United States is the world’s second largest export economy and its largest importer of goods. U.S. exports of goods totaled \$1.6 trillion in 2015, while imports totaled nearly \$2.3 trillion. This equates to a negative trade balance of \$700 billion.

Trade Partners.

The U.S.’ largest trading partners are Canada, China, Mexico, Japan and Germany. In 2015, these five countries made up about 55% of total U.S. trade in goods, or nearly 50% of exports and 60% of imports.

Bipartisan Disapproval of Free Trade.

While the U.S. has several free trade agreements in place with countries like Canada and Mexico (via the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA), there has been a recent bipartisan movement within Congress and among U.S. citizens against new FTAs. A June 2015 *New York Times* poll showed that 63% of Americans believed that the U.S. needed more trade restrictions in order to protect American industries. Only 30% believed that free trade should take precedence over protecting American industries from foreign competitors. This coincides with Congress’ decision to up-or-down vote the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which faces significant opposition from both Democrats and Republicans.

Current U.S. Policies

Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

The TPP is a proposed free trade agreement involving the U.S., Japan, Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, Brunei, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Mexico, Chile and Peru. The agreement has been in negotiation since 2008. It envisions the aforementioned countries united in an economic system with most trade tariffs dropped. The countries in the TPP make up nearly 40% of global GDP and almost 11% of the world's population. The deal could challenge China's growing influence in Asia. Though all 12 parties signed the TPP in February, the agreement has yet to be ratified and faces an uphill battle in the U.S. Congress.

Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

A companion agreement to TPP, TTIP is a proposed free trade agreement between the U.S. and the EU. If completed, TTIP would make up 50% of the world GDP. It would also bolster NATO by bringing member countries economically closer. Combining TTIP with TPP would result in U.S. involvement in FTAs with countries constituting 60% of the global economy. However, negotiations are fraught, and have been further complicated by Britain's recent vote to leave the EU.

Candidate Positions



Hillary Clinton says that TPP does not “meet the high bar I have set” for free trade agreements, and as such she opposes the deal. Her “high bar” demands that FTAs create American jobs, help raise wages and advance national security.

While Mrs. Clinton now challenges President Obama on TPP, as secretary of state, she supported the partnership, calling it “the gold standard of trade agreements.” As first lady, she publicly favored NAFTA—a deal she now says she would renegotiate if elected. As a senator, her voting record on FTAs was mixed, with a notable vote against the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). She called for a “trade timeout” during her 2008 presidential bid, but expresses a general belief in free trade.



Donald Trump supports free trade in theory, but calls for an overhaul of U.S. trade policy. He says that his experience as a businessman would enable him to “fix” deals negotiated by politicians. He expresses strong opposition to TPP and other FTAs, including NAFTA. He describes both of these agreements as “disasters,” and says he would either pull out of NAFTA, or renegotiate its terms and impose a 35% tariff on Mexican imports.

Mr. Trump proposes other tariff increases on imports, especially on those from China. He says he would penalize companies that shift manufacturing jobs overseas, a position which conflicts with his own business practices: many Trump brand products are manufactured abroad. His “America First” policy on U.S.-China trade relations states: “Our goal is not protectionism but accountability.”

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Immigration

- ✓ *Does the United States do an adequate job integrating immigrants and refugees?*
- ✓ *Does the U.S. benefit from having immigration policy set only at the level of the federal government?*
- ✓ *Would accepting more political refugees significantly improve the U.S.' global image?*

Facts

Important Dates.

1876: The Supreme Court decides the *Chy Lung v. Freeman* case.

1892: Ellis Island opens as the largest gateway for immigrants entering the U.S.

1900–1920: Nearly 14.5 million immigrants from Europe arrive in the U.S., representing the largest influx in U.S. history.

2002: The Department of Homeland Security is established and takes over the responsibility of implementing immigration and refugee policy.

Immigrant Population.

The immigrant population in the United States stood at 42.4 million people according to census data in 2014. The majority originated from India and China. Between 2013 and 2014, nearly 1 million immigrants entered the country. Legalized citizens comprised 47% of the immigrant population in 2014.

Negative Migrations.

In 2014, 28% of the immigrant population came from Mexico. However, since 2009, the net number of immigrants returning to Mexico surpassed the number arriving in the U.S. Between 2009 and 2014, the net loss from return migration totaled nearly 140,000 people.

Unaccompanied Minors.

The number of unaccompanied minors attempting to enter the U.S. from Mexico and Central America surged to nearly 70,000 in 2014. Many of these children came from areas suffering extreme violence, such as Honduras and El Salvador.

Current U.S. Policies

Immigration.

Chy Lung v. Freeman.

The Supreme Court decision of *Chy Lung v. Freeman* (1876) set the precedent that the power to establish immigration policy lies on the federal level. The decision has been referenced in subsequent cases, most recently in *Arizona v. United States* in 2012.

Homeland Security Act.

The 2002 act established the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which assumed authority over all actions previously handled by the Immigration and Nationalization Service (INS). The responsibilities assumed were divided across three new departments: Customs and Border Protection (CBP) secures U.S. borders against drugs, weapons and human trafficking; Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) enforces customs and trade law at the border; and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) governs the naturalization process for immigrants to the U.S.

Children Migrants.

Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act.

The first iteration of this act, passed in 2000, establishes protections for undocumented immigrants in the U.S. who are victims of human trafficking. A 2008 reauthorization further stipulates that in instances of unaccompanied children migrants, each case be immediately examined to determine whether the child may be a victim of human trafficking. The act amends the “one year rule” for unaccompanied minors filing for asylum in the U.S. It has been attached to the Violence Against Women Act since 2013.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

This act was passed by an Obama administration executive order in 2012. It states that any person between the ages of 15 and 30, having entered the U.S. illegally as a child before June 2012 and resided in the country for at least five years, can apply for deportation relief and a two-year work permit.

Refugees.

Refugee Act.

This 1980 act created a U.S. refugee acceptance policy predicated on the United Nations’ definition of refugee status. The act separates refugees from the normal immigration system. It sets a cap on the number of refugees accepted in a single

fiscal year at 50,000, but grants power to the U.S. attorney general to raise the cap in “emergency situations.” The act also created government positions tasked with developing strategies for refugee naturalization and resettlement, and capable of responding to refugee crises.

Syrian/Iraqi Refugees.

In late August, the Obama administration announced that it had reached its goal of accepting 10,000 Syrian refugees before the end of the 2016 fiscal year. The goal was originally set amid rising international pressure, especially from Europe.

Candidate Positions



Hillary Clinton promises to pass comprehensive immigration reform with a path to “full and equal citizenship” within her first 100 days in office. She strongly supports President Obama’s executive actions on immigration, which she says she will defend and expand. She frames immigration partially as a family issue, and calls for the closure of family and private detention centers. She proposes the creation of a Federal Office of Immigrant Affairs to coordinate policies and facilitate integration into communities. Mrs. Clinton calls for a substantial increase in the number of Syrian refugees resettled to the U.S., although she also emphasizes the importance of strict screening.

As secretary of state during the height of the Central American migrant crisis in 2014, Mrs. Clinton favored the deportation of child migrants. As a senator, she co-sponsored the DREAM Act three times. The Act sought to establish a path to citizenship for young people who immigrated as children. Mrs. Clinton supported the Secure Fence Act of 2006, which set out to build a 700-mile fence along the southern border.



Donald Trump has made immigration reform the focus of his campaign. His three-pronged plan is formulated around decreasing crime, and protecting wages and employment for American citizens. It proposes building a 1,000-mile wall along the southern border, to be financed by Mexico under threat of penalties like visa fees and the seizure of remittances. It calls for tripling the number of ICE officers patrolling the U.S.-Mexico border, implementing nationwide e-verify, defunding sanctuary cities, mandatory detention for apprehended immigrants and the end of birthright citizenship. It would require companies to hire from the domestic pool of workers before looking abroad. Mr. Trump would repeal Obama administration executive actions on immigration, and end the practice of catch and release for undocumented immigrants. He had previously maintained that he would create a “deportation force” to remove the 11 million illegal immigrants living in the U.S., as well as Syrian refugees. In an August speech on immigration, he revised this position, vowing instead to focus on the deportation of illegal immigrants who have committed crimes.

Mr. Trump accuses the Mexican government of using illegal immigration to “export crime and poverty” to the U.S. In his campaign announcement, he said undocumented Mexican immigrants were “bringing drugs, they’re bringing crime, they’re rapists.” He says he would temporarily suspend immigration from “volatile nations” — a position that refines his earlier call for a ban on all Muslims migrants. He would also institute a Cold War-style ideological screening test for immigrants.

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Energy & the Environment

- ✓ **Would environmental policy that is strict on emission and pollution standards force industries to move abroad?**
- ✓ **How can the U.S. better enforce international climate agreements?**
- ✓ **During times of economic crisis, should the economy or the environment come first?**

Facts

Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

In 2014, 6,870 million metric tons of greenhouse gases were produced in the U.S. (81% carbon dioxide, 11% methane, 6% nitrous oxide, 3% fluorinated gases). Electricity and industry are two of the most significant sources of greenhouse gas emissions at 30% and 21%, respectively. Emissions in 2014 were 9% lower than they were in 2005, but 1% higher than 2013 levels.

Hydraulic Fracturing.

Also known as “fracking,” hydraulic fracturing is the process of obtaining natural gas by producing fissures in shale rock formations underground. There are over 1 million active fracking wells throughout the U.S., and the process is responsible for approximately half of both oil and natural gas production.

Energy Sources.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, in 2015, 13% of the electricity that was generated in the U.S. came from renewable sources. These sources include hydropower (46%), wind (35%), biomass wood (8%), solar (5%), biomass waste (3%) and geothermal energy (3%). The remaining electricity generation came from non-renewable sources such as petroleum (1%), natural gas (33%), nuclear (20%) and coal (33%).

Current U.S. Policies

Climate Action Plan.

President Obama announced his Climate Action Plan in June 2013. It has three overarching goals that the president hopes can be achieved within the next two decades. The first is the reduction of carbon pollution, including a plan to cut emissions by

3 billion metric tons by 2030 through energy efficiency measures. The second objective involves anticipating and preparing for the environmental consequences of climate change, to be achieved through federal allocation of information and resources to vulnerable areas. Finally, the plan seeks to establish a global leadership role for the U.S. in addressing climate change. The signing of the Paris Climate Agreement was a victory for the Obama administration in this last respect.

Paris Agreement.

The Paris Agreement was signed by many of the world's countries following the COP21 meeting in Paris, and the U.S. agreed to ratify it in the lead up to the G20 Summit in China. The agreement attempts to limit greenhouse gas emissions starting in 2020. The central goal is the limitation of global average temperature increases to less than 2° Celsius (36° Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels, the year for which is set at 1880.

Governments also agreed to be transparent and accountable in setting and meeting emissions targets. Developed countries aimed to extend a \$100 billion annual pledge goal through 2025. This funding helps developing nations cope with the environmental impacts of climate change, and provides them with information and technology to aid in emissions reduction.

Hydraulic Fracturing.

The Obama administration began setting up federal regulations on fracking in early 2015. These regulations will only cover 100,000 oil and gas wells, and many fracking sites will remain under the jurisdiction of state legislatures. The hope is that these federal rules will set an example for state regulators to follow. The plan also calls for regular federal inspections of fracking sites to ensure that water sources are not being contaminated by chemicals involved in the extraction process.

Keystone XL Pipeline.

President Obama rejected the Keystone XL Pipeline, a proposed extension to the existing Keystone Pipeline. The original plan was approved by presidential permit under George W. Bush, and allowed Keystone to run over the U.S.-Canadian border. In this first phase, Keystone enabled more than 550,000 barrels of oil collected from the Canadian oil sands in Alberta to be sent down to the U.S. Gulf States each day, and shipped from there. Subsequent extensions have increased capacity, and, if approved, XL would have the capacity to carry 830,000 barrels daily. President Obama rejected the plan on the grounds that it did not meet his environmental standards and undermined a U.S. global leadership role in the fight against climate change.

Candidate Positions



Hillary Clinton has made climate change policy a central issue in her campaign. She was quick to praise the Paris Climate Agreement, reached under the Obama administration, saying, “The Paris Agreement is testament to America’s ability to lead the world in building a clean energy future where no one is left out or left behind.” Mrs. Clinton’s plan, much like the Obama Climate Action Plan, involves cutting emissions and increasing energy production from renewable sources. She aspires to an accelerated trajectory that would see 33% of U.S. electricity produced from renewables by 2027, as opposed to the Obama administration goal of 20% by 2030. Mrs. Clinton is opposed to the Keystone XL Pipeline expansion. She is in favor of higher regulations on fracking, but sees natural gas as an intermediate stage on the road to emissions reduction.



Donald Trump denies manmade climate change, a position largely consistent with the GOP platform, which calls climate change policy “the triumph of extremism over common sense.” Mr. Trump frames the Obama administration’s Climate Action Plan as actively destroying American jobs. He says he would rescind all of President Obama’s climate-related executive actions, pull the U.S. out of the Paris Climate Agreement and stop all payments to UN global warming programs. He also calls for the elimination of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Of President Obama’s policies, Mr. Trump says, “These actions have denied millions of Americans access to the energy wealth sitting under our feet. . . . This is your treasure, and you—the American people—are entitled to share in the riches.” Trump is a vocal supporter of the Keystone XL Pipeline. He is in favor of fracking and vows to revitalize the coal industry, including reopening coalmines in Appalachia.

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