

Precis

"An overview of Trump's Second Term"

The author expresses world's concern regarding America's international relations over the increasing probability of Trump's second term. ~~There~~ ~~is~~ America will face internal as well as international challenges as a result of this re-election. Trump's policy of prioritizing America damaged America's stance as a global leader. America's failure in negotiating peace and continuous involvement wars like Ukraine and Gaza has left America alone domestically and internationally. Trump's policy in Gaza war ~~is~~ will definitely not change but he might resolve Ukraine war with negotiations that will benefit Russia. Trump claims to assess the worth of Nato in his second term. He also added a demand of getting paid back from Nato allies for supporting Ukraine. Trump also proclaims change in trade relations with China. Trump's business related approach in politics will be security threat to European security as Trump might refrain from taking part in wars of others. Preference to making deals might make foreign relations ~~unpredictable~~ unpredictable. Trump's focus would be

more on domestic
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more on domestic politics which makes
him a greater threat to American
people than to the world.

Word count: 176

WHAT will US foreign policy look like under Donald Trump 2.0? Governments and people across the world have already started assessing this as the former president appears increasingly likely to return to power even though the election is far too early to call. But irrespective of who wins the [presidential race](#), there is a general perception of the US among the international community that is informing assessments about Washington's future engagement with the world.

This concerns the intensely polarised state of the country, which frequently gridlocks the political system, threatens government shutdowns and paralyzes Congress. So much so that agreement on the budget proves elusive, and even aid to America's closest ally (Israel) fails to pass Congress. Institutional dysfunction and other challenges to its democracy compels administrations to be much more preoccupied with domestic challenges and troubles.

This in turn means Washington's international engagement is neither seen as sustained nor consistent and US reliability also comes into question. This at a time when the US is no longer the sole dominant power in a growing multipolar world, which imposes limits on its power.

The prospect of another Trump presidency only reinforces this perception given both his unpredictability and 'America First' unilateralist approach, which produced so much disruption and discontinuity in foreign policy in his first term and eroded America's international standing. His isolationist approach also made the country retrench from its global role.

As he is now a known quantity, will it be easier for the world to deal with him? Not necessarily. His mercurial and whimsical personality makes it uncertain whether his second term will just mimic the first and offer more of the same in foreign policy. His impulsiveness makes it difficult to gauge his future policies with certainty especially as he is capable of suddenly changing course.

When Joe Biden became president, his defining phrase of how his administration would depart from Trump was 'America is back'. It meant more expansive and energetic US engagement with the world in line with traditional US policy and global role. But in several core areas his approach was not different from that of his predecessor.

In others, his administration's declaratory policy was not matched by operational reality, as for example the aim to 'restore America's global leadership'. On [China](#), his policy differed little from Trump's, except perhaps in tone. On trade their approach was identical. Trump-era tariffs not only remained intact but were supplemented by tech restrictions unleashing an intense tech war.

Biden's aggressive stance towards Beijing and policy to contain China of course reflected the political consensus in the US for a tougher posture towards Beijing. For their part, Chinese officials saw little to distinguish between Trump and Biden's policies. This prompted Chinese leaders to repeatedly warn Washington against engaging in a Cold War and describe the Biden administration's strategy as one of 'confrontational competition'.

The former president will be transactional in his dealings but also unpredictable.

In many respects, Biden's worldview seemed stuck in the past and not in sync with a vastly transformed world. For example, his effort to cast the world into a defining battle between democracy and authoritarian rule was a throwback to a Cold War paradigm and rhetoric. The idea never took off, not least because American democracy itself had regressed.

His chaotic management of the US military [withdrawal](#) from Afghanistan was a major blow to US image and credibility. He failed to mediate peace to bring the costly Ukraine war to an end. His policy on Israel's war in [Gaza](#) isolated the US from the international community, which wanted the conflict to end, but instead, witnessed repeated American vetoes of ceasefire resolutions in the UN Security Council. This and Washington's arming of Israel also eroded support for Biden from within his own party, especially among young and liberal Democrats.

Not that Trump will be any different on this issue given his staunch pro-Israel stance, which also appeals to his supporters among evangelical Christians. He said last week that Israel should continue its military offensive until "complete victory" and "finish the problem". His other utterances during the campaign have a familiar ring. He has repeated the America First rhetoric, talked of imposing new trade restrictions/ tariffs on China and ending its most favoured nation trading status.

He also [chastised](#) Nato allies for not sharing the defence burden. He said in his second term, America would fundamentally rethink "Nato's purpose and its mission" and ask European nations to reimburse the US billions of dollars for military supplies it sent to Ukraine. He even said he would encourage Russia to attack 'delinquent' Nato countries who don't spend what they should on defence.

Much of this is campaign rhetoric. But there is little question that a man who brings business instincts to politics has a strong aversion to supporting wars or getting America embroiled in other people's wars. Which is why European countries should worry most about his return and about the US security guarantee for Europe. Trump will likely force Ukraine into negotiations with Russia to seek a peace deal to end the war and would be unconcerned if the outcome favoured Moscow.

He has often bragged he can end the war in 24 hours. There is also strong opposition among Republicans and party supporters to aid for Ukraine. Trump's stance on Ukraine has implications for the Taiwan issue, which he has seldom referred to. Trump has also never said America would intervene militarily if China 'invaded' Taiwan, as Biden once declared.

Because Trump has a transactional view of foreign relations that would make his policies unpredictable but also open to pragmatic possibilities. His administration would prefer to strike deals with competitors and rivals rather than try to subdue them, especially given his admiration for strongmen at the helm in some of these countries. His resistance to detail in his foreign policy pronouncements gives him room to manoeuvre and adapt.

Trump's more ambitious, if not sweeping, plans are on the domestic front, which aim to downsize the 'administrative state' and revamp the deep state but will also be driven by revenge. That means the American people will have more to fear from Trump's return than the international community.