



Trump's National Security Strategy "Justifies" Foreign Intervention

The Trump administration's recently released [National Security Strategy](#) provides a window into how the president and his team think about domestic and foreign policy. On an encouraging note, this administration rightly diagnoses Europe's self-destructive trajectory. However, it appears to have fallen into the neoconservative foreign policy trap. The strategy also provides further insight into President Donald Trump's mediation efforts in Ukraine.

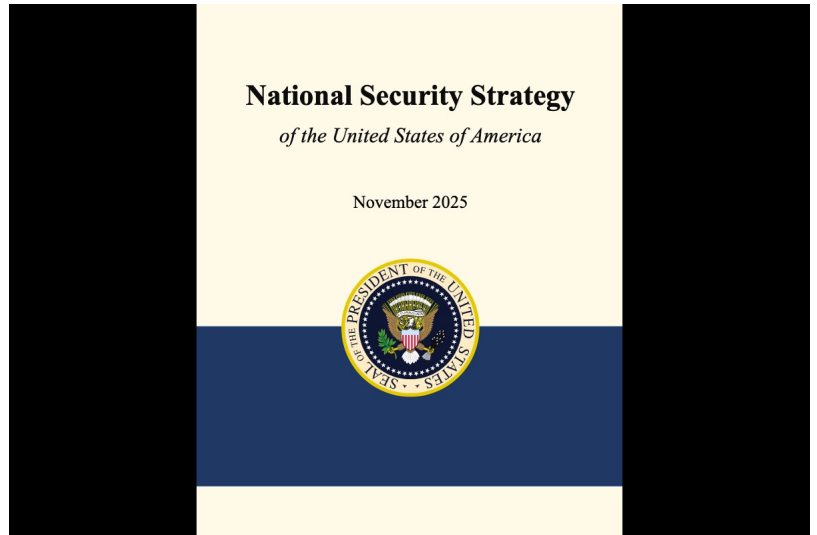
When it comes to America's foreign policy, the administration recognizes that it's been a disaster. Unfortunately, they see it as a disaster that unintentionally went awry, as opposed to one that was deliberately designed to be self-destructive. "Our elites ... overestimated America's ability to fund, simultaneously, a massive welfare regulatory-administrative state alongside a massive military, diplomatic, intelligence, and foreign aid complex," the document says.

And while the administration admits that America's Framers were noninterventionists, it doesn't believe that approach is practical today. "For a country whose interests are as numerous and diverse as ours, rigid adherence to non-interventionism is not possible," the document explains. Nevertheless, the Framers' nonintervention prescription "should set a high bar for what constitutes a justified intervention."

America First Intervention?

The administration sees its foreign policy as an America First *interventionist* approach. It is described as "pragmatic without being 'pragmatist,' realistic without being 'realist,' principled without being 'idealistic,' muscular without being 'hawkish,' and restrained without being 'dovish.'"

Trump and his team justify their interventionist approach the same way neocons of past decades have defended theirs. "A world on fire, where wars come to our shores, is bad for American interests," the documents says. The government plans "to maintain the United States' unrivaled 'soft power' through which we exercise positive influence throughout the world that furthers our interests." It makes clear it would intervene to prevent another superpower from becoming dominant:



White House



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The United States cannot allow any nation to become so dominant that it could threaten our interests. We will work with allies and partners to maintain global and regional balances of power to prevent the emergence of dominant adversaries.

The administration says it doesn't oppose global domination only for other powers, but also for itself: "As the United States rejects the ill-fated concept of global domination for itself, we must prevent the global, and in some cases even regional, domination of others."

The Middle East

Regarding the Middle East, the U.S. will be watching the region closely. And it intends to oppose "an adversarial power from dominating the Middle East, its oil and gas supplies, and the chokepoints through which they pass while avoiding the 'forever wars' that bogged us down in that region at great cost." This view may help explain America's summer bombing of Iran. It may also be of consolation to allies like Israel.

But unlike prior administrations, the Trump White House says it has no plans to spread "democracy" across the globe. Instead, "we seek good relations and peaceful commercial relations with the nations of the world without imposing on them democratic or other social change that differs widely from their traditions and histories." This aligns with the administration's strong relationship with sharia law-based authoritarian states such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

The Western Hemisphere

Trump's team is also watching closely what happens in our own hemisphere. It dubs its strategy a "Trump corollary" to the Monroe Doctrine. The goal is to "help create tolerable stability in the region":

The United States will reassert and enforce the Monroe Doctrine to restore American preeminence in the Western Hemisphere, and to protect our homeland and our access to key geographies throughout the region. We will deny non-Hemispheric competitors the ability to position forces or other threatening capabilities, or to own or control strategically vital assets, in our Hemisphere.

The strategy says that military assets will be diverted to our neighborhood. Look out for the "readjustment of our global military presence to address urgent threats in our Hemisphere," including "a more suitable Coast Guard and Navy presence to control sea lanes, to thwart illegal and other unwanted migration, to reduce human and drug trafficking, and to control key transit routes in a crisis."

The document also includes a section that may explain the administration's bellicose position against Venezuela. It points out that "non-Hemispheric competitors have made major inroads into our Hemisphere, both to disadvantage us economically in the present, and in ways that may harm us strategically in the future." This likely refers to Russia and China, which have both forged strong ties with Venezuela. The strategy bolsters this suspicion with the following statement:

The United States must be preeminent in the Western Hemisphere as a condition of our security and prosperity — a condition that allows us to assert ourselves confidently where and when we need to in the region. The terms of our alliances, and the terms upon which we provide any kind of aid, must be contingent on winding down adversarial outside influence



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— from control of military installations, ports, and key infrastructure to the purchase of strategic assets broadly defined.

Part of that plan includes forging stronger commercial ties with Latin American nations:

In the Western Hemisphere — and everywhere in the world — the United States should make clear that American goods, services, and technologies are a far better buy in the long run, because they are higher quality and do not come with the same kind of strings as other countries' assistance. That said, we will reform our own system to expedite approvals and licensing — again, to make ourselves the partner of first choice.

Naturally, this commercial-oriented policy will involve American Big Business:

Successfully protecting our Hemisphere also requires closer collaboration between the U.S. Government and the American private sector. Every U.S. Government official that interacts with these countries should understand that part of their job is to help American companies compete and succeed.

Transnational/Multilateral Organizations

Also unlike previous administrations, this one recognizes the threat that transnational organizations pose:

The United States will unapologetically protect our own sovereignty. This includes preventing its erosion by transnational and international organizations, attempts by foreign powers or entities to censor our discourse or curtail our citizens' free speech rights, lobbying and influence operations that seek to steer our policies or involve us in foreign conflicts, and the cynical manipulation of our immigration system to build up voting blocs loyal to foreign interests within our country.

Trump's people recognize that these bodies are part of the reason for Europe's deterioration:

The larger issues facing Europe include activities of the European Union and other transnational bodies that undermine political liberty and sovereignty, migration policies that are transforming the continent and creating strife, censorship of free speech and suppression of political opposition, cratering birthrates, and loss of national identities and self-confidence.

But it stops short of completely recognizing these subversive and destructive organizations as intentionally so:

We stand for the sovereign rights of nations, against the sovereignty-sapping incursions of the most intrusive transnational organizations, and for reforming those institutions so that they assist rather than hinder individual sovereignty and further American interests.



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Based on these statements, the administration fundamentally misunderstands that organizations like the European Union and the United Nations were intended from their inception to “hinder individual sovereignty.” What the EU has done to Europe is part of a deliberate plan.

European Stability

Nevertheless, the Trump administration plans on curbing Europe’s erosion:

We will oppose elite-driven, anti-democratic restrictions on core liberties in Europe, the Anglosphere, and the rest of the democratic world, especially among our allies. ... We want to support our allies in preserving the freedom and security of Europe, while restoring Europe’s civilizational self-confidence and Western identity.

The section dubbed “Promoting European Greatness” accurately diagnoses Europe’s ongoing “stark prospect of civilizational erasure.” The Trump administration believes Europe should remain European and “regain its civilizational self-confidence.” It bemoans the possibility that, “within a few decades at the latest, certain NATO members will become majority non-European.” Ultimately, the goal is “to help Europe correct its current trajectory.” It wants to work with European nations “to restore their former greatness.” This part is anathema to the self-hate wokeness that has infected Western societies.

The administration says that it plans on standing up for “genuine democracy” and “freedom of expression” in Europe. It encourages “unapologetic celebrations of European nations’ individual character and history.” And it urges Europe “to promote this revival of spirit,” noting that “the growing influence of patriotic European parties indeed gives cause for great optimism.” It has plans to cultivate “resistance to Europe’s current trajectory within European nations,” and plans to help the Continent “stand on its own feet and operate as a group of aligned sovereign nations, including by taking primary responsibility for its own defense.” Plans also include “opening European markets to U.S. goods and services and ensuring fair treatment of U.S. workers and businesses.”

Eastern Europe

The document also explains America’s mediation attempts with regard to the war in Ukraine.

Among the ways it plans to help Europe is by “ending the perception, and preventing the reality, of NATO as a perpetually expanding alliance.” The administration rightly sees a perpetually expanding NATO as a source of instability. The hysterical Russophobes will say the Trump administration is giving in to the Russians, as this view aligns with decades-long Russian complaints. But that doesn’t make it false, and it doesn’t mean that stopping the eastward advancement of an alliance that is inherently hostile to a rival nation won’t foster stability.

Moreover, the document explains that the administration’s mediation strategy in Ukraine is vital to European stability. It says that European leaders have “unrealistic expectations for the war perched in unstable minority governments, many of which trample on basic principles of democracy to suppress opposition.” Most Europeans want peace, but that doesn’t come through in policy. That is partly why the Americans are intervening:

Managing European relations with Russia will require significant U.S. diplomatic engagement, both to reestablish conditions of strategic stability across the Eurasian landmass, and to mitigate the risk of conflict between Russia and European states. It is a



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core interest of the United States to negotiate an expeditious cessation of hostilities in Ukraine, in order to stabilize European economies, prevent unintended escalation or expansion of the war, and reestablish strategic stability with Russia, as well as to enable the post-hostilities reconstruction of Ukraine to enable its survival as a viable state.

Not Perfect, Not Constitutional, Not America First

The strategy, assuming it will be a true determiner of policy, is far from perfect. It's not what constitutionalists want. And, in certain respects, it's not America First, no matter how much Trump declares it so. But it's better than what we saw from Joe Biden's rogue administration — or what would've come out of a Kamala Harris presidency, without a doubt. On foreign policy, it flies in the face of what [George Washington](#) prescribed. But at least it recognizes that a world war between Russia and Europe is in no one's best interest.

The document does well to recognize Europe's suicidal trajectory. Some Eurocrats have already shot back, saying they don't need "outside advice." Maybe not, but they certainly want outside military help while they stoke a war with Russia.

In essence, the strategy confirms what we have seen since February. This is an administration that is part neocon, part America First; an administration that seeks to prevent World War III in Europe yet fails to understand the true nature of the transnational organizations that have brought us to the brink; and an administration that thinks the best way to keep its hemisphere safe is by policing it.



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