



# Foreign Policy



**Briefing Materials**

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## Background

Over the past decade, differences over American foreign policy have sharpened. Some argue that active international engagement, through military alliances, trade, aid, diplomacy, and even occasional humanitarian interventions, makes America stronger and better able to prevent or manage dangerous situations. Some favor a global leadership role for the US economically and diplomatically, but not militarily. Other critics argue that global trade and development aid to the poorest countries do not sufficiently serve American interests. At issue also is whether America should mainly work with allies and international organizations to promote its interests, or use its power alone, however it sees fits, to protect narrower national interests. The candidate who wins the 2020 presidential election will have to navigate a challenging and changing landscape in foreign policy. Moreover, the global COVID-19 pandemic serves a reminder of how interconnected the world is, and the heart of the debate is what America's relationship with the rest of the world should be.

This briefing paper weighs these issues in light of COVID-19 and with particular focus on the global war on terror, our country's alliances and our country's relationships with China, Russia, and Iran.

## Alliances and Trade

### *Alliances*

During and after the Cold War, the US led its partners through alliances and free trade agreements that focused on strategic areas of the globe. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), an alliance of the US, Canada, and over twenty European countries, requires members to defend any member attacked by an outside power. Originally, it was part of the US strategy for protecting Western Europe from invasion by the Soviet Union.

After the Cold War, NATO expanded to several former Soviet satellites bordering Russia thus antagonizing that country. At the same time, many Western European members significantly reduced their defense spending. In 2014, NATO members all committed to spend 2% of their gross domestic product on defense by 2024, a goal first set in 2002. In Asia, America maintains defensive alliances with five nations and works closely with several other states. Throughout the world in more than 130 countries, hundreds of thousands of American troops are deployed.

In 2018, the US defense budget was \$650 billion.<sup>1</sup> This is roughly 3.25% of our national economy, and represents 32% of global spending on defense. We spent roughly the same amount in current dollars at the end of the Cold War, before reducing defense budgets to around \$450 billion in the 1990s. Amid the post 9/11-wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and counter-terrorism missions around the world, the defense budget rose dramatically to almost \$800 billion in 2010. In 2011, a dispute in Congress between the two parties produced a series of automatic cuts of about \$150 million from the annual defense budget (the "sequester").<sup>2</sup> America's substantial defense spending is reflected in how well it provides for its soldiers and invests in them as an effective and well-equipped fighting force.

## ***Trade***

Between 1944 and 2016, the US was clearly committed to lowering tariffs (“taxes” on imports) and other barriers to international trade, such as subsidies for exports and quotas on imports. In theory, free trade should increase prosperity for all by lowering the cost of goods and services everywhere, as countries specialize in producing particular goods and services. Most economists believe the US benefits from free international trade. However, the gains from trade are not equally shared. Lowering trade barriers costs American jobs in some sectors (where other countries are more competitive than the US), while it creates jobs in other sectors where the US can export more competitively.

National governments negotiate trade deals, but companies and public interest groups can lobby for or against specific provisions.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is made up of most countries in the world, including the US. The countries in the WTO promise to lower tariffs for all WTO members in accordance with the organization’s rules. Countries can only raise tariffs above WTO levels in response to “dumping,” – when a country exports a good for a lower price than is charged in its own domestic market – or for national security concerns.

Countries targeted with tariffs can raise tariffs in retaliation while an international court judges the dispute. The WTO has not been able to agree on further tariff reductions in over a decade. China joined the WTO in 2001, which gave its companies better access to the US market. This was marketed as a win-win that would help provide cheaper goods for Americans and spark political reforms in China. In the last couple years, a trade dispute with China has resulted in tariffs that have been placed on many imported goods from China, but the United States has lifted tariffs on products “relevant to the medical response of the coronavirus” from China due to the pandemic.<sup>3</sup> Some medical companies still feel the impact of the tariffs, hindering the fight against the outbreak. Furthermore, the pandemic is taking a toll on both countries’ economies, resulting in insufficient supplies on both sides to meet the purchase commitments promised in the US-China Phase One Trade Agreement.<sup>4</sup>

Critics of global free trade say American manufacturing jobs have been lost in these deals. Wages are lower in places like Mexico, China, India, and Vietnam, and these countries also have weaker labor and environmental standards than the US. American consumers gain, as they can purchase many foreign-made goods at much lower prices than they could if these goods were produced in the US. Some say, pointing to America’s growing trade deficits, that trade has cost millions of jobs in the US.<sup>5</sup> However, others say that automation better explains America’s steady or increasing manufacturing output despite fewer manufacturing jobs.<sup>6</sup> In other words, the US actually manufactures more now, but does so despite employing people. During the pandemic, the manufacturing industry, especially the automotive and aerospace sectors, have been hit the hardest due to decreased consumer demand and factory shutdowns.<sup>7</sup>

## ***Supporting Democracy and Human Rights***

One key American foreign policy issue is whether the US should defend human rights and support democratic institutions and groups in other countries. “Realists” say that our foreign policy and military deployments should serve our national interests in making America more secure and prosperous. Therefore, we should ignore human rights abuses in authoritarian countries like Russia, China, North Korea, Saudi Arabia and Egypt,

and instead advance our economic welfare, control weapons proliferation, help allies like Israel, and find ways to work with other countries on issues such as terrorism.

On the other hand, “idealist” critics point out that America’s greatest rivals are dictatorships; that no two democracies have ever gone to war with one another; and that the democracies of the world have been our most reliable allies and trading partners. In this view, America’s national interests are best served through the peaceful spread and defense of democracy and its ideals and practices.

In fact, strong bipartisan support exists in Congress for peaceful assistance programs to help other countries develop democracy’s core institutions. Currently the US spends about \$2 billion per year on these efforts, which is less than one-tenth of one percent of the total federal budget. The current question is how much should the US emphasize democracy and human rights in its diplomacy – and should democracy be a prerequisite for US economic and military assistance to other countries, which now totals nearly \$50 billion?

Realists counter that larger priorities exist when dealing with adversaries like China and Russia, and that criticizing partners for poor human rights records could make them less cooperative in the War on Terror or American efforts to counter Iran, Russia, or China.

However, idealists argue that many global issues would benefit from US recognition and/or intervention. For example, in China, at least over a million people in Muslim minority groups including the Uighurs have been detained, tortured, and indoctrinated in concentration camps in Xinjiang. Investigations have discovered hundreds of high security facilities and leaked reports of cruel treatment in the past few years. The Chinese government denies such claims and defend the camps as a fight against extremism. Many more injustices include increasing femicide in Turkey, political protests in Belarus and Hong Kong, and the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

Human rights advocates say that the US should use its voice in world affairs to defend the freedoms of speech, organization, religion, and other principles that have made America a great nation. But, how should the US use its voice during a health pandemic? The current health pandemic is highlighting the great differences between more and less developed countries around the world. Globally, as of September 2020, the number of total documented cases is close to 34 million, with over 1 million deaths.<sup>8</sup> As the world is getting in line for Covid vaccines, less developed countries have less resources and influence to garner enough vaccines for their citizens. Therefore, some argue that the US should not only condemn violations of these human rights, even among friendly governments or powerful adversaries, but also consider how well countries adhere to democracy and the rule of law, especially when allocating foreign aid.

## The Global War on Terror

In the wake of 9/11, the US and its allies have waged a Global War on Terror involving extensive military operations in the Middle East and Africa. In late 2001, the US and its NATO allies invaded Afghanistan and overthrew the Taliban government to deny al Qaeda, the group behind the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, a safe haven to plan more attacks against the US. In 2003, the US invaded Iraq and overthrew its dictator, Saddam Hussein, in

part to prevent him from developing weapons of mass destruction, which the Bush administration feared could be given to terrorists.

Under the Obama administration, the US along with its NATO allies intervened militarily in Libya in 2011, with the support of the UN Security Council, to prevent an imminent humanitarian catastrophe in the civil war. The military operations enabled the rebels to overthrow Muammar Qaddafi's government. In 2014, the Obama Administration also returned troops to Iraq and deployed some in Syria starting to fight the Islamic State. Finally, as terrorist groups have relocated or emerged in other areas of the Middle East and Africa, the US has deployed troops and drones to attack these groups in cooperation with local governments.

As of 2019, the US is, according to some accounts, conducting counter-terror operations – which include combat and drone/air strikes, supporting and training local forces, and bases – in over 75 countries.<sup>9</sup>

The Bush, Obama, and Trump administrations have justified these actions under the “Authorization for Use of Military Force” (AUMF), which Congress passed after 9/11 and which allows the president to use military force against any organization or country involved in 9/11. However, this interpretation has been seriously questioned because the AUMF is now being used to justify military operations against terrorist groups that did not exist in 2001.

Having won initially in Afghanistan and Iraq, the US sought to rebuild these countries as modern democracies by providing them with political, military, and economic assistance. However, in both countries, insurgencies soon emerged even after the US installed friendly governments there. Today, there are 14,000 American soldiers in Afghanistan and roughly 5,000 in Iraq. In each country, they mostly train local forces rather than fight on the front lines.

Supporters say that these two interventions were necessary to ensure that these countries never again become threats to America. Some say that only the Afghanistan intervention was necessary. The total long-term cost of these interventions is estimated to be several trillion dollars, which includes military operations, the medical costs of caring for injured veterans, aid to Afghanistan and Iraq, and interest on the debt that paid for the wars. Roughly 14,000 US soldiers and contractors have been killed and an unknown number injured in the two conflicts. The conflicts have killed hundreds of thousands of local combatants and civilians and have generated millions of refugees.<sup>10</sup>

These interventions have resulted in much debate and analysis.

On one hand, terrorist groups have been unable to carry out another major attack like 9/11 on the US. However, drone strikes and military operations have not completely defeated these Islamist terrorist groups.

For example, while the Islamic State has lost all the territory it gained in 2014-5, it continues through cells and branches scattered around the world. These cells have carried out smaller attacks in the US and Europe, often through radicalized American and European citizens.

Compared to the Taliban and Saddam Hussein, Afghanistan's and Iraq's governments today are much more democratic. But they remain plagued by violence and corruption, with weak and ineffective leadership, and political freedom is still limited in those countries.

In contrast to Iraq and Afghanistan, the US did not attempt a “nation building” project in Libya after the 2011 fall of the Qaddafi government. For the past eight years, a civil war has engulfed that country. In each of these cases, terrorist and rebels have taken advantage of weak or failed governments to plan, train, and conquer land.

## Great Power Conflict

### *China*

China’s meteoric rise since 2000 has produced a historic shift in geopolitics, presenting the US with choices and challenges. To what extent does China’s rise threaten US security interests? Should the US take measures to protect its economy from Chinese competition? Should we aid Asian allies increasingly pressured by China?

China was the world’s richest country until the 1800s. European and Japanese imperialists then carved up China until after World War II, when the Chinese Communist Party came to power. In the 1980s, the Chinese Communists began developing a model of state-led capitalism. Today, China is the world’s second largest economy with a growing middle class. However, that economic growth has not produced greater political freedom and openness. Today, the Communist Party remains in power and continues to deny basic freedoms, control the Internet, and suppress dissidents and ethnic minorities with ruthless efficiency.

China’s entry into the WTO helped make it a global manufacturing hub, thanks to its large, low-wage work force. Recently, however, wages have risen, and China’s workforce will soon begin shrinking as the population ages. China’s economic rise contributed to but did not alone cause the decline in American manufacturing, which has been a longer phenomenon driven by technological innovation and the integration of more economies into the global trading system.

China’s government and military, and its state-owned companies, have been accused of stealing the intellectual property of US firms, which allows them to use American inventions to undermine this country’s economic competitiveness. Most of these technologies – such as robotics, drones, artificial intelligence, hypersonic weapons, and gene editing – are “dual-use,” meaning that they have both commercial and military applications.

As a result, China’s thirty-year campaign of technology transfer poses a serious threat to American military superiority, as the Chinese government incorporates this into its ambitious military modernization and expansion programs. China is developing weapons to counter the US Navy, and is building artificial islands for military bases in disputed territory in the South China Sea – a crucial maritime zone through which one-third of all global shipping passes.<sup>11</sup>

As China’s wealth and technological prowess grow, its government is making major investments in research and development in areas such as artificial intelligence. As a percentage of GDP, China’s spending on research and development now vastly exceeds that of the US federal government.<sup>12</sup>

Members of Congress and foreign policy experts from both parties broadly agree on the need for more vigorous US policies to limit how China acquires high technology, shapes

global public opinion, and exercises geopolitical power. Still, foreign policy experts differ on how exactly to respond.

Critics of the Trump Administration are concerned about a possible withdrawal of US international leadership since 2017. Such a power vacuum, they say, would likely be filled by China, which positions itself as the global leader of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Trump Administration and its supporters reply that Trump is the first American president to stand up to China with regard to unfair trade practices, including theft and coercive transfer of American high technology, as well as China's efforts to influence politics, media, and universities in the US and other countries.

The most notable event of 2020 was the spread of COVID-19, which originated in Wuhan, China. After the outbreak reached other countries in the beginning of the year, repercussions of the pandemic include economic recession and public health crises around the globe. According to some estimates, the "automobile sales sank a record 80 percent, and China's exports fell 17.2 percent in January and February."<sup>13</sup> Although the Chinese government enforced strict quarantine and other measures, the economy was deeply impacted. As the second largest economy, the effects rippled to other countries which suffered from major losses as well, especially in the travel, tourism, and energy industries.

Much as the US has used its central role in the global economy for political leverage, China uses investment and threats to pressure other governments. Moreover, China's rapid but slowing economic growth still gives it enormous resources to spend on international development projects, making it by some accounts the largest provider of foreign aid in the world, surpassing the US. China recently unveiled an ambitious global investment strategy called "One Belt One Road," which is aimed at cultivating the resources and infrastructure to support and promote its model of "authoritarian capitalism." This investment in countries in Asia, Africa and Europe may dwarf America's celebrated Marshall Plan of Post-WW II Europe.

## ***Russia***

America's old rivalry with Russia has reemerged in the past decade. Between 1948 and 1989, the US and the Soviet Union competed globally in the Cold War. In 1991, the Soviet Union fell apart, and eventually the Russian Republic inherited most of its military and strategic assets, helping it to rise again as a great power.

However, in the first decade after the Soviet Union's collapse, Russia suffered economic turmoil and political weakness. During Bill Clinton's administration, the US supported the expansion of NATO to countries formerly part of the Soviet Union's orbit. Since Vladimir Putin came to power in 1999, he has stabilized Russia's economy, modernized its military, militarily intervened in neighboring countries, and sought to re-assert Russian power and influence in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and the world.

Still, Russia remains far weaker than the former Soviet Union ever was. Russia's economy is the world's 11th largest, only about 8% the size of the US economy, and is dominated by oligarchs close to Putin.

In 2014, Russia began a war in neighboring Ukraine to destabilize that former Soviet Republic and keep it from joining the EU and NATO. Russian soldiers then invaded and seized Crimea, a strategic Ukrainian peninsula on the Black Sea that Russia annexed despite global condemnation. Russia continues to support Russian-speaking rebels in the civil war raging in eastern Ukraine. Russia also has sent troops to prop up Syria, its ally.

In recent years, Putin's government has tried to influence elections in the US and Europe, including the 2016 presidential election in the US and the referendum in the UK on leaving the EU. Russia has openly supported some European parties, hacked sensitive information from campaigns, and sponsored misinformation through news and social media.

The effects of this activity on election results are unclear. In response to Russian actions in Ukraine and against American elections, the US has placed sanctions on individuals and firms close to Putin. Russia has responded with sanctions against European trade. Finally, Russia also has as many nuclear weapons as the US, and agreements that helped limit the nuclear arms race are collapsing.

### ***Iran***

Iran has long tried to develop nuclear weapons. Israel and the US view this prospect as unacceptable and even have carried out covert actions against Iran's nuclear program and considered military strikes. In 2015, the US, the European Union, Russia, and China convinced a relatively moderate Iranian government to agree to the Iran nuclear agreement. The terms were designed to restrict Iran's nuclear research so that it would not be able to produce a nuclear weapon for at least ten years. In exchange, Iran would be able to trade with the rest of the world. The agreement did not aim to change the conservative, Islamic regime in Iran or to prevent Iran from supporting allied countries and groups in the Middle East.

President Trump withdrew from the deal in 2018, citing Iranian non-nuclear missile testing and military operations in the Middle East, particularly in Syria and Yemen. He reintroduced sanctions and cut Iran off from US markets and banks. In early 2019, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the international organization charged with monitoring Iran's compliance, certified that Iran was still complying with the nuclear part of the agreement. In May 2019, Iran's president announced that Iran would re-launch its nuclear program in response to America's withdrawal and sanctions.

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These foreign policy issues derive in part from conflicting values.

Some Americans think the US should affirm human rights and democratic freedoms around the world, insisting that these are universal, not just American, values. For many, this includes not only a commitment to NATO allies, but also a willingness to act, sometimes militarily, in the interests of those who may be oppressed by autocratic regimes.

Others favor only more limited ways of spreading democratic values globally, such as using diplomacy to cooperate with other countries that share our beliefs and to help them develop democratic freedoms. However, critics think we need to focus more on our needs at home. For some, fighting for justice abroad when there is still injustice at home is wrong. Others reject the possibility of promoting democracy in countries and cultures vastly different than ours. Under this view, we cannot change the world, and, if we try to, we will simply put the lives of our soldiers and diplomats at risk.

Here are some proposals:

Proposal	Argument For	Argument Against
<p><b>The US should tighten sanctions on Russia.</b></p>	<p>Tighter sanctions could deter Vladimir Putin from meddling in American and European democracy. They also punish Russia for its seizure of a part of Ukraine (Crimea) and its ongoing military efforts to undermine independent government in Ukraine.</p>	<p>Tighter sanctions risk worsening relations between Russia and the US, which could increase the chances of military conflict between our two countries. Existing sanctions have not changed Russian behavior, and increasing their severity will hurt our European allies, who are more dependent on Russian trading relationships.</p>
<p><b>The US should reaffirm its commitment to defend any NATO ally attacked by a hostile force.</b></p>	<p>President Trump has repeatedly called this commitment in question, demoralizing our allies and increasing the chances of Russian military intervention. Our European allies have never in fact called upon the US to repel attacks. Only the US has used NATO this way, in response to 9/11. NATO members honored our call for war against Afghanistan.</p>	<p>The NATO commitment increases the chances of war with Russia. President Trump should require large increases in European defense spending before reaffirming our commitment.</p>
<p><b>The US should enhance its military presence in the Asia Pacific region to prevent aggression by China.</b></p>	<p>Containment policies worked against the Soviet Union and will work against Communist China. Military cooperation with countries like Japan and India, as well as Australia and New Zealand, is essential in resisting Chinese demands. If the US does not support freedom of navigation and the security of democracies in the Asia Pacific region, China could impose authoritarian control over the entire region, threatening our economic security as well as the future of freedom in the world.</p>	<p>In contrast to the Soviet Union, Communist China does not want to take over the world. Rather it seeks to be the dominant power in Asia. As a consequence, it does not pose a direct threat to the US, and American military alliances with other Asian nations will only increase the risk of US-China conflict. If China wants to control the South China Sea or be the dominant power in Asia, it's not our business.</p>

**The US should re-commit to the Iran Nuclear Agreement.**

The Iran agreement represents the best chance of preventing that country from developing a serious nuclear threat over the next five to ten years. There is no evidence that Iran has cheated on its commitments under the agreement to forego activities that could enable it to produce a nuclear bomb.

Iran is the principal threat to stability in the Middle East, and the deal will not prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons in the long run. The deal gives Iran economic resources and international credibility at a time when it is supporting terrorist groups and other allies who endanger both Israel and American troops in the Middle East.

**Presidents should be required to obtain explicit congressional approval for sending US troops into combat situations.**

The Constitution gives Congress, not the president, the power “to declare war.” Our leaders should engage in a full public debate before making war in the name of the American People.

Military threats from terrorists and rogue states require rapid responses. Presidents need the authority and flexibility to strike quickly with armed forces. Congressional approval takes too long and puts American lives and security at risk.

**The US should intervene abroad with its military when it is necessary to prevent genocide.**

America has a moral obligation to prevent mass atrocities by authoritarian governments or extremist groups. History shows that it is necessary to act early and decisively, with force, to prevent genocide, and if the US does not lead, other democratic countries are unlikely to take action on their own.

The US should respect the sovereignty of other countries, even when their governments pursue policies that deeply offend us. There is a lot of evil in the world, and assuming an obligation to prevent genocide is a recipe for endless war. We can condemn mass violence, but it’s not our job to save the world.

**The US should use diplomacy and financial support to promote democracy and human rights throughout the world.**

Democracies share values and interests with the US, and democracies do not fight one another. All of the countries threatening our security are non-democracies. Promoting democracy and human rights abroad will produce more democracies, new allies, and fewer threats. This will serve America’s national interests.

The US should not interfere in the domestic politics of other countries, just as they should not intervene in American politics. This should be true even when foreign governments pursue policies that offend us. We should focus on building alliances with any country that can help advance US national interests, including dictatorships.

**The U.S. should provide medical aid to countries struggling with the coronavirus.**

The US plays a major role in the economic well-being of the world and should provide support to those who are dependent on the US. Less developed countries in South America, Asia, and Africa face many public health challenges such as lack of hospitals, doctors, and medical supplies. Areas with high levels of poverty already face limited access to quality health care and economic stagnation, which are exacerbated by the coronavirus. Everyone is suffering through the outbreak of the pandemic, and cooperation will allow every country to survive.

Currently, the US has the highest number of cases and deaths, nearly reaching 2 million and 200,000 respectively. Since the country is unable to meet its own needs in terms of ICU units, face masks, and COVID tests, the US should focus on controlling the pandemic within its own borders first.

**The U.S. should lift tariffs on medical supplies and other necessary item related to COVID-19.**

In the current state of the pandemic, accessible medical equipment is crucial for patients, doctors, and leaders. Political tensions aside, the US and China have significant responsibilities in leading the battle against COVID. The medical industry has to face the cost of tariffs or pass it onto customers, resulting in expensive supplies that neglect many who are poor and most affected by the pandemic.

There are some exclusions to the Phase One agreement between the US and China that medical companies can apply for. Additionally, it is important to tighten tariffs against China in order to protect US agriculture, financial services, and intellectual property. Lifting tariffs would return the US to depending heavily on imports rather than manufacturing its own goods.

## Glossary

**NATO:** The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is an alliance of the US, Canada, and over twenty European countries that requires members to defend any member attacked by an outside power. Originally, it was part of the US strategy for protecting Western Europe from invasion by the Soviet Union. During the Clinton administration, NATO began expanding to include former Soviet states.

**WTO:** The World Trade Organization (WTO) is made up of most countries in the world, including the US and China. The countries in the WTO promise to lower tariffs for all WTO members in accordance with the organization's rules. Countries can only raise tariffs above WTO levels in response to "dumping," – when a country exports a good for a lower price than is charged in its own domestic market – or for national security concerns.

**NAFTA:** The 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is an agreement that dramatically cut tariffs on trade between the US, Mexico, and Canada. This had the effect of encouraging companies to build supply chains to assemble manufactured goods across the three countries, especially in industries like auto manufacturing. In 2018, negotiators agreed to an updated deal, the United States-Mexico-Canada (USMCA) trade agreement, which would make producing cars in Mexico more expensive (although still cheaper than in the US) and improve access to Canada for American dairy products. Congress has yet to ratify this draft agreement.

**"Realists":** Those who believe that foreign policy and military deployments should serve our national interests in making America more secure and prosperous. Therefore, we should ignore human rights abuses in authoritarian countries like Russia, China, North Korea, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, and instead advance our economic welfare, control weapons proliferation, help allies, and find ways to work with other countries on issues such as terrorism.

**"Idealists":** Those who believe foreign policy should promote the peaceful spread and defense of democracy and its ideals and practices abroad, including by addressing human rights abuses in authoritarian countries.

**Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF):** The "Authorization for Use of Military Force" is a bill that Congress passed after 9/11. It allows the president to use military force against any organization or country involved in 9/11. It has been used by various presidents to justify military operations abroad, including in Afghanistan in 2001, Iraq in 2003, Libya in 2011 and, as of 2019, 75 other countries. However, this interpretation has been questioned because the AUMF is now being used to justify military operations against terrorist groups that did not exist in 2001.

**Iran Nuclear Agreement:** Formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Iran Nuclear Agreement was reached when the US, the European Union, Russia, and China convinced the Iranian government to restrict Iran's nuclear research so

that it would not be able to produce a nuclear weapon for at least ten years. In exchange, Iran would be able to trade with the rest of the world. Trump withdrew from the deal in 2018, citing Iranian non-nuclear missile testing and military operations in the Middle East, particularly in Syria and Yemen. He reintroduced sanctions and cut Iran off from US markets and banks. In May 2019, Iran's president announced that Iran would re-launch its nuclear program in response to America's withdrawal.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2017 dollars

<sup>2</sup> Spending data drawn from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. "Military Expenditure | SIPRI." Accessed June 5, 2019. <https://sipri.org/research/armament-and-disarmament/arms-transfers-and-military-spending/military-expenditure>. "SIPRI Military Expenditure Database | SIPRI." Accessed June 5, 2019. <https://sipri.org/databases/milex>.

<sup>3</sup> Eric C. Emerson, David O'Sullivan, Simon Hirsbrunner, James H. Searles, Jeffrey G. Weiss, Henry Cao, Yongqing Bao, Jacob Nelson, "What You Need to Know About the Impact of COVID-19 on International Trade," March 25, 2020, <https://www.steptoe.com/en/news-publications/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-international-trade.html>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> "Heading South: U.S.-Mexico Trade and Job Displacement after NAFTA," *Economic Policy Institute* (blog), Accessed June 5, 2019, <https://www.epi.org/publication/heading-south-u-s-mexico-trade-and-job-displacement-after-nafta/>. "The China Toll Deepens: Growth in the Bilateral Trade Deficit between 2001 and 2017 Cost 3.4 Million U.S. Jobs, with Losses in Every State and Congressional District | Economic Policy Institute," Accessed June 5, 2019, <https://www.epi.org/publication/the-china-toll-deepens-growth-in-the-bilateral-trade-deficit-between-2001-and-2017-cost-3-4-million-u-s-jobs-with-losses-in-every-state-and-congressional-district/>.

<sup>6</sup> For a non-technical description of the argument see Cocco, Federica, "Most US Manufacturing Jobs Lost to Technology, Not Trade," *Financial Times*, December 2, 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/dec677c0-b7e6-11e6-ba85-95d1533d9a62>.

<sup>7</sup> Laura Oliver, "It could take three years for the US economy to recover from COVID-19," March 30, 2020, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/03/economic-impact-covid-19/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/> Last retrieved: September 29, 2020.

<sup>9</sup> For a graphic representation, see Stephanie Savell. "This Map Shows Where in the World the U.S. Military Is Combating Terrorism." *Smithsonian*, January 2019. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/map-shows-places-world-where-us-military-operates-180970997/>. Data drawn from the Costs of War project at Brown University.

<sup>10</sup> Data drawn from the Costs of War Project at Brown University. For an overview, "Summary of Findings | Costs of War," <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/papers/summary>.

<sup>11</sup> <https://chinapower.csis.org/much-trade-transits-south-china-sea/>.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Brown and Pavneet Singh, *China's Technology Transfer Strategy*, Defense Innovation Unit Experimental, January 2018.

<sup>13</sup> Dylan Gerstel and Stephanie Segal, "The Global Economic Impacts of COVID-19," March 10, 2020, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/global-economic-impacts-covid-19>