

## 2017 National Security Strategy – Talking Points

### Background

- The National Security Strategy is a statutorily mandated document that explains the President’s strategy to the American people, our allies and partners, and the executive departments and agencies that will implement it.
- President Trump has outlined many of the key tenets in his remarks to the American people and in his major addresses in Riyadh, Warsaw, at the United Nations, and at APEC.
- Over the past 11 months, the United States has demonstrated the strategy’s principles in action.
- This NSS will serve as the foundation for subsequent strategies, such as the upcoming National Defense Strategy, National Counterterrorism Strategy, the National Biodefense Strategy, the Nuclear Posture Review, and the Ballistic Missile Defense Review.

### Top line messages

- This NSS is, first and foremost, an expression of President Trump’s insistence that our national security policy prioritize America First.
- The NSS identifies four vital, national interests – organized as the strategy’s four “pillars”:
  - **Protect the Homeland**, the American People, and American Way of Life;
  - **Promote American Prosperity**;
  - **Preserve Peace through Strength**; and
  - **Advance American Influence**.
- This NSS advances principled realism, based on a CLEAR-EYED view of the strategic environment. We live in a competitive world.
- In some ways, the global balance of power has shifted in ways unfavorable to American interests. The President’s new strategy presents a plan for how America can regain momentum to reverse these trends.
- We must compete using all elements of national power to protect the American people and advance American interests.
- This strategy prioritizes American interests and acknowledges that America must COMPETE, while emphasizing fairness and reciprocity and our desire to find areas of cooperation, even with competitors.
- The strategy reflects the President’s vision of a world of free, sovereign nations with diverse cultures and different aspirations that respect the interests of their own people and the rights of every other sovereign nation – all thriving in freedom and in peace.

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- This strategy affirms the belief that America's economic security IS national security.
  - We will compete economically for the benefit of American workers and American companies; we demand fair and reciprocal economic relationships.
- This strategy restores strategic CONFIDENCE. An America that is safe, prosperous, and free at home is an America with the strength, confidence, and will to lead abroad.
- This strategy addresses three major groups of challengers:
  1. **Revisionist powers** that seek to shape a world antithetical to our interests and values;
  2. **Rogue regimes** that spread terror, threaten their neighbors, and pursue weapons of mass destruction, destabilizing critical regions; and
  3. **Transnational threat organizations** that foment hatred to incite violence against innocents in the name of their wicked ideologies.
- One of America's greatest strengths is our numerous allies and partners around the world who share our interests and our values.
  - We COOPERATE closely with allies and partners to advance common goals.
- We must continue to advance America's influence abroad to protect our security and advance our prosperity.
  - We will CATALYZE action to achieve better outcomes in multilateral forums and to reform international institutions.
- America first does not mean America alone.

### **Pillar I: Protect the Homeland**

- Government's fundamental responsibility is to protect the American people, the Homeland, and the American way of life.
- We must strengthen control of our borders and reform our immigration system to protect the homeland and restore our sovereignty.
- Among the greatest transnational threats to the homeland, the American people, and the American way of life are jihadist terrorists who threaten us with destruction and the transnational criminal organizations tearing our communities apart.
- We must pursue threats to their sources so that we confront threats before they ever reach our borders and people.
- We must prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to state or non-state actors that would use them against the United States or our interests.
  - We will work with our global partners to ensure that all understand the grievous consequences for using these heinous weapons.

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- We must contain bio-threats at their sources before they become epidemics.
- We must protect our critical infrastructure and digital networks.
  - New technology and new adversaries create new vulnerabilities in the cyber era.
  - We will strengthen our defenses and go after malicious cyber actors.
  - We will remain steadfast and resilient against threats against the critical infrastructure that underpins modern life.
- We are deploying layered missile defense systems to protect our homeland from emerging missile threats.
- We will safeguard the American way of life: We are committed to protecting more than our physical security.
  - We will protect the rights and liberties enshrined in our founding documents.

### **Pillar II: Promote American Prosperity**

- Economic security IS national security. Economic prosperity is the foundation of our national strength and allows the United States to field the world's most powerful military and protect our homeland.
- We will rejuvenate the American economy for the benefit of the American worker and American companies.
  - This is a requirement for restoring our power.
- We will promote free, fair and reciprocal economic relationships. We must address unfair trade imbalances to put Americans first. We can no longer tolerate chronic trade abuses.
- We will protect and modernize the free, fair economic system, preserve a stable world economic environment with like-minded partners, and contest those who undermine it with predatory economic practices.
- We must lead in research, technology, invention, and innovation – the key areas of 21<sup>st</sup> century geopolitical competition.
  - We must defend our innovation economy- including our intellectual property against competitors that unfairly tap into the innovation of free societies.
- We embrace energy dominance and will use our central position in the global energy system to ensure markets are open and that benefits of diversification and access to energy promote economic and national security.

### **Pillar III: Preserve Peace through Strength**

- We will compete to ensure that the global balance of power tilts decisively in America's favor.
- We are rebuilding our military strength through expanded capacity, modernized capabilities, and increased resources, to ensure it remains second to none.

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- We are strengthening our competitive capabilities – including in space and cyberspace – and revitalizing capabilities that have been neglected, to include our nuclear triad.
- We must work with our allies and partners to ensure that no adversarial power dominates Europe, the Indo-Pacific, or the Middle East.
- Our allies and partners magnify our power and protect our shared interests.
  - We will continue to meet our global commitments.
  - We also expect our allies to shoulder their fair share of our common defense burden and to do more in areas that most affect them.
- We must use all of our tools of statecraft in a new era of strategic competition – diplomatic, information, military, and economic – to protect our interests.

### **Pillar IV: Advance American Influence**

- America has been a force for good in the world throughout its history. We must continue to advance our influence overseas to protect the American people and promote our prosperity.
- We will champion our principles.
  - Realistically encouraging others to move toward democracy, the rule of law, and individual rights contributes to more stable, prosperous, and healthy states.
- We do not seek to impose our way of life on anyone.
- We respect the sovereignty of nations and the international system of independent states.
- We seek partnerships with like-minded states and aspiring partners to promote free market economies, private sector growth, political stability, and peace.
- We remain committed to reducing human suffering, while always expecting those closest to a given problem to take the lead.
  - We will continue to catalyze international response to man-made and natural disasters and provide expertise and capabilities to those in need.
  - We will partner with our allies to alleviate the worst poverty and suffering, which fuel instability.
- We will support displaced people and refugees close to their homes to help meet their needs until they can safely and voluntarily return home.
- The United States is committed to reforming our development assistance so that it better incentivizes private sector investment and provides strong alternatives to state-directed initiatives.
- Our diplomatic and development efforts will compete to achieve better outcomes in all arenas – bilateral, multilateral, and the information realms. We will pursue these efforts to protect our interests, find new economic opportunities for Americans, and compete to further our interests.