

Operation Wildfire: Good Things Happen When YOU Vote

September 30, 2024

On the Issues: Foreign Policy

A country's foreign policy consists of the strategies it uses to protect its international and domestic interests and determines the way it interacts with others. The primary purpose of foreign policy is to defend a nation's national interests, which can be in nonviolent or violent ways. In this issue, Operation Wildfire reviews where the candidates stand on foreign policy. We'll begin with the political party platforms.

	Vice President Kamala Harris¹	Former President Donald Trump²
The Commitment	The world is at an inflection point between those who argue that autocracy – rule by dictators or single leaders – is the answer to facing today's challenges and those who understand that democracy – rule by the people – is essential to moving our world forward and uplifting people everywhere. We must demonstrate that democracy can still deliver for our people. We must rally the world to address the challenges that impact all of us, from climate change and global health to human rights, technology, food security, and inclusive economic growth.	Keeping the American people safe requires a strong America. Our full commitment is to protecting America and ensuring a safe and prosperous future for all.
The National Interest	The United States is strongest when we lead not only with the example of our power but with the power of our example. Military force should be a tool of last resort, not the first.	Promote a foreign policy centered on the most essential American interests, starting with protecting the American Homeland, our people, our borders, our great American Flag and our rights under God.
Modernize the Military	Invest in cutting-edge capabilities across all services and domains and maintain a commitment to modernize and recapitalize the nuclear triad as the bedrock of deterrence.	Ensure our military is the most modern, lethal and powerful force in the world. Invest in cutting-edge research and advanced technologies, including an Iron Dome Missile Defense Shield and support our troops with higher pay.
Strengthen Alliances	Understand that American foreign policy our domestic challenges are connected with global ones. The United States is strongest when our partners are strong too. President Biden met those challenges by leading coalitions of nations who share our values to stand together.	Ensure that our allies meet their obligations to invest in our common defense and restore peace to Europe. Stand with Israel and seek peace in the Middle East. Rebuild our alliance network in the region to ensure a future of peace, stability and prosperity. Champion strong, sovereign and independent nations in the Indo-Pacific, thriving in peace and commerce with others.
Strengthen Economic, Military and Diplomatic Capabilities	Work alongside our allies and use every diplomatic tool available to advance American interests.	Strengthen economic, military and diplomatic capabilities to protect our way of life from the malign influences of countries that stand against us around the world.

¹ Final Master Platform, Democratic National Committee 2024

² Republican National Committee Platform 2024

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Defend America's Borders	The President has already taken steps to increase border resources. He has increased the number of agents and officers on the southwest border to over 24,000, added thousands of additional support personnel, surged thousands of law enforcement and other personnel from across the Department of Homeland Security, and secured the first significant increase of Border Patrol agents in more than a decade. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law modernized border stations and land border ports of entry. The Administration is providing support to cities and states, on the border and across the country, that are sheltering migrants. He has also taken executive actions, including launching expedited immigration court dockets, to more quickly resolve immigration cases for those crossing the Southern border and remove those who do not establish a legal basis to remain.	Against all odds, President Trump completed hundreds of miles of wall, and he will quickly finish the job. He will mobilize military personnel and assets as necessary to crack down hard on the cartels that traffic drugs and people into our country.
Revive our Industrial Base	Democrats are also taking historic steps to bring home critical supply chains, and to reaffirm our nation's leadership in cutting-edge industries that America in fact often pioneered. And we've made sure that lower-income counties see a larger share of investment. Today, instead of exporting American jobs for cheaper labor, we're creating American jobs and exporting products, leaving no one behind	Our industrial base is critical to ensuring good jobs for our people but also the reliable production of vital defense platforms and supplies. Our policy must be to revive our industrial base, with priority on defense-critical industries. Equipment and parts critical to American security must be made in the USA.
Protect Critical Infrastructure	We can't have the best economy in the world if we don't have the best infrastructure. The Biden-Harris Administration is rebuilding our roads, bridges, ports, airports, water systems, electric grids, broadband, and more, paving the way for a great American "Infrastructure Decade" that will create hundreds of thousands of good-paying union jobs.	Use all tools of national power to protect our nation's critical infrastructure and industrial base from malicious cyber actors. This will be a national priority, and will both raise the security standards for our critical systems and networks and defend them against bad actors.

U.S. News and World Report also compared the candidates on foreign policy. To read the full article, visit <https://www.usnews.com/news/elections/articles/2024-08-26/decision-guide-foreign-policy-under-trump-vs-harris>

	Vice President Kamala Harris	Former President Donald Trump
Israel	Harris made waves for her comments forcefully decrying Gazan suffering,	Trump has emphasized his unflinching support for Israel in its war in Gaza – in the

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	signaling an emerging public stance that would be more sympathetic to the views of many younger Democrats, especially who tend to see Israel as an oppressor. The most likely Harris policy toward Israel may be one that largely resembles that of Biden, who has maintained strong support for the country even as he's increasingly criticized Netanyahu and the Gaza campaign.	June debate against Biden, Trump declared that the U.S. should allow Israel to "finish the job" – and, as president, he would be likely to remain in lockstep with a Netanyahu administration.
Russia	Harris – who has met on her own with Zelenskyy and declared in a speech last year that Russia had committed crimes against humanity – is expected to largely continue with the same approach. She also emphasized the importance of principles like national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Support has added up to \$175 billion by this spring, making Ukraine the largest recipient of American aid.	<p>Trump has spoken by phone with Zelenskyy; the call, according to the Ukrainian president's team, went "exceedingly well." Trump has repeatedly bragged that he could end the war in one day, and has an idea for how to impose a peace in 24 hours. What that suggests is he's not willing to let Putin do anything, and that he has sort of a natural compromise in mind.</p> <p>(Note: Trump met with Zelenskyy for the first time in five years, and said he will negotiate a Ukraine-Russia deal "good for both sides.")</p>
China	<p>Trump's earlier China Tariffs did prove politically popular. After once condemning the taxes, Biden ended up keeping and even increasing some of the duties, and it's unclear if Harris would break from a trade policy that's become generally accepted among both Democrats and Republicans.</p> <p>Harris has blasted China for human rights violations and stealing American products and intellectual property, and she's also pushed for collaboration on issues like climate change. It's a Biden-style approach toward America's greatest economic rival – combining competition and cooperation – that Harris would likely continue.</p>	<p>Trump began imposing a series of heavy tariffs on Chinese goods in 2018 as part of an effort to bolster American businesses that were suffering from restrictive Chinese economic policies. The import taxes did help boost certain niches of American manufacturing, like Computer equipment, but the trade war also took a broad economic toll: economists estimated that it was costing the U.S. 300,000 jobs and over \$300 billion.</p> <p>Now Trump is doubling down, lately promising to impose a 60% tariff on all Chinese imports – the biggest part of a sweeping new plan that economists say may cause prices to spike and "could easily cause a recession."</p>
NATO and Western Allies	Harris, like Biden, is a staunch NATO defender who would be expected to reiterate America's international commitments.	Trump has repeatedly sowed doubt about America's commitment to NATO, both by suggesting that he might pull the U.S. out of the alliance and by threatening to abandon support for allies if they fail to meet spending requirements. Trump claimed the threats are a negotiating tactic, but they've caused anxiety of both sides of the Atlantic.