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Greetings Colleagues,

The Consortium is pleased to share its latest newsletter for the Indo-Pacific.
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US National Security Strategy (NSS 2025) and the Indo-Pacific



Figure 1 White House released the National Security Strategy 2025, Nov. 2025 /Image /Whitehouse.gov

The [White House released its National Security Strategy 2025](#), outlining the three questions: 1) What should the United States want? 2) What are the available means to get it? and 3) How can the US connect ends and means into a viable National Security Strategy?

The National Security Strategy document consists of 29 pages that put its worldview of "America First." However, the new US NSS hardly cares about the form of governing systems of any country, whether democracy or tyranny, unless it harms American interests. Additionally, the document states that the United States doesn't seek global domination. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to call it a "common-sense" based strategy.

The NSS demonstrates China as a primary adversary of the US. However, it doesn't use harsh language against China; rather, it explains, in a softer tone, how China cheated America through the "so-called rule-based order." It is noted that President Trump met with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the sidelines of the APEC summit in October and achieved some success in trade deals. As outlined in the NSS, America is focused on its sphere of influence and its status as a preeminent power in the Western Hemisphere, combining the "Trump Corollary" to the Monroe Doctrine. The Strategy that prevents China from its backyard.

In the NSS, the Indo-Pacific remains America's priority, given the region's economic growth that currently accounts for half of the world's purchasing

power parity (PPP) and one-third of the world's GDP. Hence, the continuity of Indo-Pacific engagement is a crucial element in the Trump administration's NSS, poising the region as the "next century's key economic and geopolitical battlegrounds." While engaging in the Indo-Pacific, Trump demands more defense spending and enhanced capabilities from Japan and South Korea to step up for the protection of the First Island Chain.

Southeast Asia is narrowly covered in the Strategy, given President Trump's visit to Malaysia and the signing of the trade deals with Malaysia, Cambodia, and Thailand. The Philippines, a US treaty ally, where the US has been investing in ports and military-industrial development, is a significant actor in the shipping lane in the South China Sea.

India's mention in the Quad, AI & technology grouping, shows that despite the ups and downs in US-India relations since the second incoming Trump administration, India is a strategic and major defense partner of the US. However, Trump has been putting tremendous pressure on India not to purchase Russian oil. India has been hit hard by Trump's 50% tariff. Recently, Modi hosted Putin in New Delhi, which shows there is still a long way for Modi and Trump to negotiate.

Taiwan is crucial for America First. The Strategy remains the same for Taiwan and opposes any unilateral change to the status quo in the Taiwan Strait. Trump recently signed the Taiwan Assurance Implementation Act—the first Taiwan-friendly bill of his second term. The US wants the First Island Chain allies and partners to spend more on their own defense. Trump urged

Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Australia, and the Philippines to share the burden and strengthen capabilities.

Surprisingly, the Pacific Island countries (PICs) are missing from the strategy document. It is yet to be uncovered how the PICs will read their absence from the prime document of the United States.

While the Strategy focuses on remaining America "the greatest nation in human history," without global dominance, the allies and partners would grasp it bite by bite, as uncertainty still surrounds understanding the US's future role. [Some analysts](#) interpret that Trump's security strategy divides the world to run by the Core five group of countries (C5)-US, China, India, Russia, and Japan.

Taiwan Seeks Cooperation with Israel

Taiwan's Deputy Foreign Minister Francois Wu made a secret visit to Israel recently, mentioning that Taipei is looking for deepen the defense cooperation with Jerusalem. As per media reports, Beijing strongly criticize Taiwanese Deputy FM visit as China views Taiwan an inalienable part of China.

It is noted that earlier in October, Taiwan President Li-Cheng-te announced Taiwan's new multi-layered air defense system called T-Dome, partly modeled on Israel's air defense system. Li said, "Israel's determination and capacity to defend its territory provides a valuable model for Taiwan. I have

always believed that Taiwan needs to channel the spirit of David against Goliath in standing up to authoritarian coercion."

Taiwan has its diplomatic relations with a few countries in the world due to pressure from China. [Read More](#)

China Strengthens Ties with Saudi Arabia, Causing Concern for US

Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Yi is on a three-nation tour in Middle East. He met with his counterpart and sought close cooperation on regional and global matters. Both leaders signed a joint statement. As per reports, China appreciated Riyadh's effort in achieving regional and international security and stability, including Palestine issue.

China also supports Saudi and Iran for improving their relations. It is worth mentioning that China brokered peace between Saudi and Iran and normalized their relations in 2023. China views Saudi Arabia as a "priority" for the Middle East Diplomacy.

The affinity between China and Saudi can cause concern for the United States as Saudi is an important ally of the US in the middle east. President Trump lavishly hosted Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud (MBS) at White House and have been trying to patch up between Saudi and Israel by including Saudi in Abraham Accords. [Read More](#)

Pax Silica: US Alliance to Edge China over Compute & Rare Earths

The US President Trump introduces Pax Silica- a coalition of countries to enhance the competitiveness in high-technology and rare earth materials with China. Mr. Trump has enlisted five countries- Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Australia, and Israel as partner countries to sign the Pax Silica Declaration. Pax Silica alliance seeks to unite the US allies' countries that host advanced technology firms to harness the power of innovation and economic security in the age of artificial intelligence (AI) to counter China's dominance in the field. Referring to 'American AI diplomacy,' this is the first time countries are forming an alliance around quantum computing, semiconductors, and minerals as shared strategic assets to prevent coercive practices.

The Pax Silica summit was held in Washington, where participant countries endorsed a declaration emphasizing the connectedness of economic security and national security. The summit focuses on a new geopolitical consensus that economic security is integral to national security, and vice versa. President Trump calls for a "new era of economic statecraft that produces peace and security for America and its allies through the power of private investment, free enterprise, and economics."

At the summit, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom, alongside guest contributions from Taiwan, the European Union, Canada, and the OECD, also joined. [Read More](#)

Indo-Pacific Quiz

How many countries have diplomatic relations with Taiwan?

- a. 10
- b. 12
- c. 11
- d. 13

Which Southeast Asian nation has been facing ongoing civil conflict since 2021?

- a. Thailand
 - b. Cambodia
 - c. Vietnam
 - d. Myanmar
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Consortium Highlights

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Indo-Pacific Quiz Key

Here are the **Answers** for December 7 Newsletter Quiz

Q. What is the Nanking Massacre associated with?

c. WW2

Q. Where is Dujiangyan City located?

a. China

Contributions: Indu Saxena