



# Shanghai Forum 2018 Perspective Highlights

---

**Trump and Asia: Changing US Policy and Role**

**ROUNDTABLE 01**

**13:30-17:00, May 26**

**Chair:**

**Wu Xinbo: Dean, Director, Institute of International Studies and Center for American Studies, Fudan University**

**Moderator:**

**Wu Xinbo: Dean, Director, Institute of International Studies and Center for American Studies, Fudan University**

**Li Shaoxian: Provost, Dean, School of Arabic Studies, Ningxia University**

**Session One: Trump and Northeast Asia**

**Time: 13:30-15:00**

**Chair: Wu Xinbo**

**Eiichi KATAHARA  
Director,  
International  
Exchange and  
Libraries, The  
National Institute  
for Defense Studies,  
Japanese Ministry  
of Defense**

**The Trump Administration's Security Policy and Its Implications for the US-Japan Alliance**

1. North Korea's denuclearisation situation does not seem positive. Historically, North Korea's credibility is low and it is illogical to engage in nuclear disarmament under the strategic goal of unifying the Korean peninsula. Standardising the definition of the concept "denuclearization" is difficult; the possibility of a soft landing for North Korea's nuclear issue is low. Japan hopes to test the reliability of the US-Japan security treaty using this issue, so as to understand America's resolve in maintaining the security and stability of the Asia-Pacific region. Sino-US cooperation is of utmost importance; crises caused by nuclear incidents should be avoided and exit mechanisms established.
2. The Trump government has brought uncertainty to the alliance, abolishing Obama's policies, ignoring traditional values and principles, and alienating multilateral cooperation. Besides emerging powers, the Trump government has destabilised the foundations of the post-WWII international order established by the US. The Trump government has brought great instability and increased the risk of war.
3. Strategic competition between China and the US contains unpredictability.
4. The Japan-US alliance is the foundation of Trump's security policy and is the cornerstone of regional peace and stability. Strengthening the Japan-South Korea-US alliance requires this relationship. Japan is concerned about the sustainable

# Shanghai Forum 2018 Perspective Highlights

---

development of Japan-US relations and hopes to reduce the likelihood of Sino-US conflict.

5. China and India's rise has changed the global and regional security situation; the Indo-Pacific region has become the new focus of international relations.

6. For the Japan-US alliance, Trump's biggest challenge is maintaining his deterrence capabilities.

**Da Wei**  
**Assistant President,**  
**University of**  
**International**  
**Relations**

## **Does Trump Administration Have an Asian Strategy Now?**

1. Trump's strategy of "Building a free and open Indo-Pacific" may not receive his administration's support.

2. Trump's strategy is fundamentally wrong. Withdrawing from multilateral agreements like the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) ignores economic factors.

3. Divergence of opinions within the US: (1) the mainstream view supported by the bureaucracy is of competition among great powers; (2) the traditional institutionalist view, such as Obama's, values multilateral relations; (3) Trump's view.

4. The Trump administration lacks credibility and policy changes are too frequent.

5. Geopolitical competition between China and the US exists, but attention should be paid to the environment of competition, which is an open system.

6. China and the US need to define each other's "bottom line", thereby creating a favorable environment for further cooperation.

7. Current conflict between China and the US is the result of structural pressures, not Trump's personal style.

# Shanghai Forum 2018 Perspective Highlights

---

**Geunwook Lee**  
**Professor,**  
**Department of**  
**Political Science**  
**Sogang University**

## **Between Summits and Fire-and-Fury: Trump Factors in the Korean Peninsula**

1. The present North Korean nuclear issue is very serious. Trump's government has added uncertainty to the current situation. However, the transparency of modern communications can avoid failures in crisis management during WWI.
2. Reaching a consensus on the key issue of "denuclearization" between North and South Korea is difficult. North Korea has stressed the denuclearization of the entire peninsula, including South Korea's existing nuclear facilities and the US nuclear security umbrella for South Korea. US and South Korea believe that "denuclearization" should only be limited to North Korea and is unrelated to South Korea.
3. North Korea and the US have different understandings of the "peace agenda". North Korea believes that only a peace agreement involving the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Korean peninsula is effective, unlike the South Korean view of a simple signed document. If the US partially withdraws its troops, North Korea should also disarm to maintain power parity with South Korea.
4. Are North Korea's assurances reliable? Trust is not the prerequisite for national cooperation, the key is how to rebuild trust over the course of interactions.
5. Traditional security concerns besides nuclear issues should also be highly valued. US can accept a partial troop withdrawal, but a full withdrawal is unlikely.

**Graham Allison**  
**Former Director,**  
**Professor, Belfer**  
**Center for Science**  
**and International**  
**Affairs, Harvard**  
**Kennedy School**

## **Discussion**

1. Both Trump and Kim Jong-un are unpredictable. The Trump-Kim meeting may be held this summer. Both sides could reach an agreement about the Korean peninsula, but North Korea's human rights issues may witness minimal progress.
2. Trump's philosophy: disregard the rules, dare to innovate, and "America First".
3. Denuclearising the Korean peninsula is a "six-wins" result, which requires a long process. Additionally, there are two possible directions of development. First, North Korea continues developing nuclear weapons till it has the ability to reach US soil, increasing its bargaining chips. Second, the US deploys military force, (possibly) inciting a second Korean war.

# Shanghai Forum 2018 Perspective Highlights

---

## DISCUSSION

1. All states act based on their national interests; there are no exceptions.
2. Japan is not neutral regarding Sino-US relations but still tries to reduce Sino-US conflicts. Japan supports the existing global system and expresses worry about Trump's international trade policy. Japan wishes to work with China in persuading the US to change its international trade policy, while establishing multilateral crisis management mechanisms in the security domain.
3. American leadership is not indispensable. The TPP, Paris Climate Accord and Iran nuclear deal are moving forward despite the US's withdrawal. The international system can try hard to develop a new model of self-governance.
4. US mid-term elections in November will have a significant impact on Trump's government. The view of great power competition is likely to prevail. If the Democratic Party wins, it may initiate impeachment procedures, bringing about dramatic change.
5. There is a close relationship between Trump assuming office and changes in the social structure of the US. Faced with changes to the power balance externally and social classes internally, including changes to the socio-economy, Trump pays more attention to public opinion.
6. US-India relations: the US needs India to balance China while the Indian government's attitude toward the US's free and open policy of the Indo-Pacific matters too.
7. The Korean peninsula could become a flashpoint for Sino-US conflict; all parties should work hard to prevent the occurrence of conflict.

(Editor: Xinwei ZHANG, LEE Han Ker David)

# Shanghai Forum 2018 Perspective Highlights

---

## Session Two: Trump and South Asia /West Asia

**Time: 15:30-17:00**

**Chair: Li Shaoxian**

**Li Shaoxian**

**Dean, School of  
Arabic Studies,  
Ningxia University**

### **Discussion**

1. Trump's policies are detrimental to the Middle East, which easily ruins the existing order and poses great risk to the region.
2. Examples include the US's unilateral withdrawal from the Iran nuclear agreement, which may lead to Iran's withdrawal, thereby leading to Israeli involvement and eventually military conflict. Intensifying the Palestinian conflict with the relocation of the US embassy to Jerusalem and forcing Palestine to accept the US proposal might led to disastrous consequences. Encouraging Israel to take active measures in the region facilitates fragmentation in the Middle East.

**Shamshad**

**A. Khan**

**Formal Foreign  
Secretary of  
Pakistan,  
Ambassador to UN,  
South Korea, and  
Iran**

### **Trump Administration's South Asian Policy**

1. National policies are rooted in national interests. The key of US foreign policy lies with its superpower status, American interests and US responsibility. However, since the 1950s, the US has been facing a lack of responsibility.
2. Regional conditions are an extension of the global situation. America's global objectives and ambitions determine whether it would withdraw from South Asia. Under the backdrop of China's rise and America's need to balance it, demands by the US on Afghanistan, India and Pakistan have increased.
3. Trump does not have a new policy for South Asia; his diplomatic activities have been subordinated under US interests.

**Zhang Li**

**Professor, Institute  
of South Asian  
Studies, Sichuan  
University**

### **Trump's South Asian Policy and Implications for the Regional Security Landscape: A Chinese Perspective**

1. Trump's South Asian policy concerns: political and military objectives in Afghanistan; Iranian nuclear disarmament, balancing India-Pakistan relations and combating terrorism.
2. Multi-level interaction between the US and Pakistan occurs, but it is still unstable, involving anti-terrorism efforts and Afghanistan-related issues. The US hopes to initiate strategic cooperation with India, but there are many uncertainties to their bilateral relations.
3. Belt and Road Initiative is a response to Trump's South Asian policy.

# Shanghai Forum 2018 Perspective Highlights

---

**Rustu Salim Savas**  
**BICER**  
**Professor, Turkey**  
**War College**

## **What Trump's US National Security Strategy Will Bring to the World?**

1. Trump trap: Regardless of whether the present situation arises from structural factors or Trump's personal influence, it will be an opportunity for structural change in America.
2. America's national interests have changed. Competition among major powers (Russia, China) and important countries (North Korea, Iran) has become the focus while terrorism is not the core issue.
3. America's selective support of terrorist organisations in Syria is contrary to its traditional principles of freedom, security and democracy. The US has become a threat to security in the Middle East, bringing about adverse effects to regional security.

## **DISCUSSION**

1. Turkey should not launch any attacks against Iran to avoid being caught in a proxy war.
2. The Middle East lacks the presence of great powers, enabling regional actors to be more active than before under the guise of self-defense. Trump hopes to achieve his desired results by committing less resources, which requires local actors to contribute more. Relaxing the constraints on Israel and even displaying a supportive stance is very dangerous. China and Europe should unite and exercise the responsibilities of major powers, contributing to the region's stability.
3. In contrast to US policy of discernment, China's attitude towards India and Pakistan is that of equality. Pakistan hopes to establish an equal and peaceful relationship with all countries, and hopes for win-win cooperation with India. It will not be dissatisfied with the Sino-Indian summits.
4. The US has adopted an "engagement" strategy in South Asia, not a concrete policy. US foreign policymaking for South Asia is highly difficult and sensitive, easily provoking resentment by India or Pakistan. India-US relations are delicate and India will not be partisan.
5. The Taliban is an American-created tool to realise US control over Middle East countries
6. The Syrian issue is part of the Middle East's complex situation. Geopolitics and natural resource problems are part of the mix; reaching a consensus among the region's countries is difficult too. The US has developed partners in the region (even including terrorist organisations and other non-state actors) to ensure its national interests, shape its control over the region and balance against Iran.

(Editor: Xinwei ZHANG, LEE Han Ker David)