

مركز البيدر للدراسات والتخطيط

Al-Baidar Center For Studies And Planning



The New Trump Administration and Iraq

Haider Karim Mahdi

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Introduction - Trump 2.0: New Features of an Old Leadership

Donald Trump's return to the presidency at the beginning of 2025 is an important political turning point in the American and international arena, as personal, political, and historical factors intertwine to shape years of rule that raise profound questions about the future of the United States and its global role for the next four years. From the legacy of his first presidency (2017-2020), which witnessed unprecedented fluctuations in domestic and foreign policies, to his 2024 election campaign, Trump's personality and his innovative and controversial methods highlight the importance of studying the impact of these factors on the changing international order, while recognizing at the same time that Donald Trump's return to the forefront of the political arena is linked to a broader global context, such as the rise of populism, the challenges facing democracy in the West, or the global trend towards multipolarity and a major change in the global balance of power.

This paper aims to explore the features of Trump's second presidency (2025-2028) and its potential impact on the United States and beyond, starting with his personal characteristics, and analysing his policies towards China, Ukraine, Europe, and NATO, passing through his positions on international organizations, multilateralism and the Palestinian issue. The paper will also include an in-depth analysis of the challenges and opportunities that may characterize Donald Trump's second presidential term, with a focus on the dynamics of decision-making. Finally, this paper will examine the potential repercussions of this presidency on Iraq, presenting possible scenarios for its approach to Iraq.

Trump between legacy and personality: the elements of unconventional leadership

Donald Trump's first presidency (2017-2020) was distinguished from previous American administrations by a series of characteristics. It was very exciting, unconventional and different, whether in terms of domestic or foreign policy, as Trump's personality is considered an outlier figure in politics (despite his previous affiliation or donation to the US Republican and Democratic parties). There is a general perception that Trump lacks the full understanding and appreciation and knowledge of politics and does not have a clear political philosophy or doctrine. Rather, his intervention in the political role came as a result of desires and convictions that he had, as a businessman specializing in real estate affairs and concluding commercial deals, that the traditional party system in America undermined its national interests at the expense of its relations with the outside world. Accordingly, Trump moved to be considered as a public figure who rebelled against the traditional political establishment. Below are some of the characteristics of this previous presidency:

1. Populist and nationalist discourse: Trump's central political philosophy was his agenda and slogan "America First", and he positioned himself as a champion of ordinary Americans over the political elite or the "establishment" or anti-globalization or immigration and border security, and accordingly a lot of deep polarization occurred and increasing the populist support base while enhancing internal cultural divisions with US society.
2. Confrontational and unconventional leadership style: Combative approach and disruptive leadership and what he called "draining the swamp of corruption in Washington DC", which is considered a translation of his populist agenda that centred around his main slogan.
3. Economic policies: Reducing taxes and trade, tax reform, deregulation, trade policy and tariffs, i.e. consolidating the capitalist businessman's view of the United States as the ideal embodiment of capitalism and caring for the wealthy class and companies that he considers the main source of American power.

4. The controversial handling of the Covid-19 pandemic: The Trump administration's handling of the pandemic has raised a lot of controversy and comments, and perhaps the most important comments are: downplaying the severity of the pandemic, describing it at the time as being under control and "like the flu", as well as the administration's contradictory statements that affected the public's understanding of preventive measures. There were also disagreements and great tension with scientists and experts such as Dr. Fauci, which weakened the public's confidence in official public information. Perhaps the United States' withdrawal from the World Health Organization during the pandemic sent negative signals about American leadership in the global response. In general, this issue contributed to shaping a negative public perception of the management of the pandemic, which affected political and public trends inside and outside the United States.
5. Judicial appointments: Three very important nominations to the Supreme Court, and the appointment of more than 200 federal judges to lifetime positions, and here Trump's conservative tendencies in adjudicating social issues and human rights consistent with religious values against calls for gender transformation, homosexuality, abortion, and attempts to redefine family values and others that caused controversy and strengthened the division with leftist Democrats.
6. His multiple problems with the judiciary: accountability, legal and ethical issues and challenges that accompanied his career since he entered politics.
7. Confronting the media sector and its ramifications: The fierce confrontation with most of the major media platforms and outlets and what he called "fake news", with the intensive and direct use of social media.
8. Capital unrest: The end of his term with the riots and unrest that followed the 2020 elections, such as the uprising of January 6, 2021, on Capitol Hill and the rejection of the election results.

9. Foreign Policy: Donald Trump's foreign policy was based on the principle or doctrine of 'America First', which focused on the economic and military priorities of the United States, while reducing commitments to international issues and strengthening or focusing on bilateral relations. This doctrine was translated, for example, through:
 - a. Isolationist tendencies: Questioning international agreements and alliances such as NATO. His term witnessed the United States withdrawing from many international agreements, such as the Paris Climate Agreement, the Iranian nuclear agreement (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)), and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).
 - b. Trade wars and tariffs: Trump started a trade war with China – renegotiation on trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (renamed USMCA).
 - c. Middle East peace deals: The Trump administration brokered the so-called "Abraham Accords", which encouraged the normalization of relations between Israel and several Arab countries (the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco), and Trump considered these events as a major diplomatic achievement.
 - d. Tensions with allies: While Trump focused on reducing American military involvement abroad, his "America First" policy sometimes alienated traditional allies such as the Europeans, especially the leftists among them who share the international political, economic, and social orientations of the American Democrats, as his Republican administration often prioritized bilateral relations over multilateral diplomacy.
 - e. The assassination of General Qassem Soleimani: On January 3, 2020, in a US drone strike near Baghdad International Airport, it represented one of the most significant escalations between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran in recent years and had far-reaching repercussions on Iraq and the entire Middle East.

Donald Trump's personality is characterized by the inability to predict - even by his supporters - his actions/deeds/behavior, etc., which he considers as apart of his strategy to confuse his political opponents, and this behavior is reflected in his policies, as he mixes strictness in making decisions with unexpected surprises. He said a lot of strange things during his campaign, but how much of it was a threat and deception, and how much of it was honest, depends on what we will see in the coming months and years.

It is also unclear how much attention Trump intends to give to foreign affairs in his next term. Will he focus primarily on his Democratic competitors and pursue an extremist or fierce domestic agenda, or will he try to change American policy around the world? We also need to remember that Trump is also a man whose energy and focus will not increase due to age, the pressures of the job, and the complex nature of running a large and important country like the United States. His appointees may therefore enjoy a great deal of freedom until something goes wrong and they must bear the consequences. In short, President Trump's actions remain unpredictable in his next administration.

Some may wonder what Trump's preferred means of getting what he wants in world politics are. The former (and future) president is a firm believer in using excessive pressure, such as economic sanctions, to pressure other actors. He also embraces the "madman theory," threatening massive tariff increases or a "fire and fury" approach against other countries in the firm belief that such threats will force them to make greater concessions than they would otherwise. During his first term, we saw the credibility of applying the madman theory in his efforts to withdraw US troops from Syria or his dealings with China in his economic policies. But at the same time, Trump also practices a transactional view of foreign policy, demonstrating his willingness during his first term to link disparate issues to secure economic concessions. For example, Trump has repeatedly shown a willingness to compromise on other issues—such as the Chinese portfolio, in what Americans call the crackdown in Hong Kong, or the repression in Xinjiang, and the arrest of a senior executive at the Chinese technology company Huawei—in exchange for a better bilateral trade deal.

The transition from Democrats to Republicans would probably be less significant if the Trump team did not follow through on its plans to abandon FBI background checks and instead have the president-in-waiting grant security clearances to new candidates for key positions only on the basis of vetting by private security firms rather than the current approach of traditional state security agencies, allowing President Trump to prevent any blocking of his personal preferences. This radical step may be within the law, but it can only be implemented after Trump is inaugurated. In the meantime, the outgoing Biden administration will be limited in its ability to coordinate with the incoming Trump team in the traditional way because some of Trump's staff will not have security clearances beforehand. But we can also say that the Trump team is more than confident and will learn what to do soon, however the question will be whether it also has the wisdom to face the legacy and daily challenges of any administration.

If he does, he will return to office perhaps no wiser, but certainly more experienced and more convinced than ever. Indeed, Trump has an extraordinary genius for getting what he wants, and he is highly determined. Most exciting of all, he will be determined to correct what he insists was the failure of his first term: that his advisers and Washington officials stood in his way. It is useful not to forget that he now has only one last chance.

Donald Trump the Destructive Innovator

In the context of political leadership, the term destructive innovator is defined as a person who changes existing systems or norms in unconventional ways, which leads to the disruption of existing structures or political institutions and their reshaping in controversial ways. When examining Trump's approach to politics, you find that others - Americans and foreigners - identify President Trump's personality as closer to the personality of a destructive innovator than a classic one. Accordingly, the parties that reject or are hostile to Trump fear for the democratic system in America because they consider him a threat to it and to everything that has been established during the previous decades, and that his presence and return mean the following:

1. Disrupting political norms and institutions: Giving senior governmental posts to people from outside traditional institutions, Trump's presidency sought to disrupt traditional political norms, especially with regard to communication with others, partners and opponents, governance, and the relationship between the President and the public.
2. Dismantling political partisanship and adapting to populism: Populist appeal, polarization, and redefining political division. Trump disrupted the traditional party system by using populism to dismantle established political loyalties and create a new dynamic between the Republican Party and its base. Here, it can be said that classical statesmen from both parties will find it difficult to deal with the new reality, which is characterized by a social and psychological change in the American voter towards the characteristics of the administration and the personality of the President. We have an important populist model in what Trump's son Barron did to win the votes of Generation Z and push Trump himself towards podcasts that young people are more interested in due to the change in the pattern of American political culture and its transition from elitist and active through knowledge to listening and directing.

3. Economic turmoil: Trade and tariffs, deregulation and tax reform, and economic nationalism. Trump's economic policies can be classified as disruptive because they challenged established global economic standards, trade agreements, and the role of the United States in the international economic system.
4. Media and Information Landscape: "Fake News" and Media Disruption, and social media as a Tool for Political Change Trump's use of social media to bypass traditional media outlets, coupled with his attacks on "fake news," has served as a disruption to the established media landscape and political discourse.
5. Global Geopolitics and Foreign Policy Disruption: America First, Unilateralism, Trade Wars, and Relations with China Regarding the Middle East, Trump's actions in this region, including the Abraham Accords (normalizing relations between Israel and several Arab states), have had positive outcomes for Americans and their allies, but his overall approach, from the perspective of others, has often been counterproductive in the sense that he has moved away from the traditional role of the United States as an international peacekeeper, opting instead for a more transactional diplomacy (buying and selling) rather than a sustainable strategy. Trump's foreign policy can thus be seen as counterproductive because of its focus on American interests alone, withdrawal from international agreements, and scepticism on long-standing alliances and global institutions.
6. Electoral System and Rule of Law: Trump's victory in 2016 was itself a disruption of the existing political order. He ran against the establishment's favourite candidate, former First Lady and Senator and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and won by rallying a populist movement that felt alienated by both parties. Seeing the same thing in his 2020 and 2024 campaigns, which represents a clear disruption of traditional democratic norms, especially in how to challenge election results and the limits of presidential power.

Current US situation and the characteristic of Trump 2.0 (2025-2028)

There is no doubt that President-elect Trump sees that his election in late 2024 will be a confirmation of his worldview, and that populism in dealing with social issues, trade, and foreign policy “America First” is the only way forward for the country, and that this accurately reflects the desires of American voters. Although Trump’s focus is primarily on the domestic; ending wars, returning jobs to America, and securing the borders, all of this is interconnected for him, noting that the slogan of the election campaign was “Make America Great Again” (MAGA), which is complementary to the slogan “America First”, and in his speeches and meetings he also focused on implementing the concept of “peace through strength”.

American elites, especially Washington DC experts, still underestimate the extent of the voters’ extreme anger and fear of the established American political entities, and there will be a huge amount of subsequent analysis explaining what went wrong for the Democrats and why the experts got it wrong again, but these same “experts” have had eight years since 2016 to figure this out and are still at a loss.

Understanding American politics on election issues is a puzzle that is not easy to solve, and if it was not already clear, it is now clear that only a few observers understand how American electoral politics works and that much of the conventional wisdom on the subject is wrong. Polls are unreliable, clichés about the importance of the “ground game” do not apply, and most “experts” who thought they knew what was going to happen were not only wrong, but they were very wrong. Understanding the US presidential election system is complicated by several factors related to the structure and mechanisms of the electoral system:

- The indirect electoral system and the winner takes all with an imbalance in the distribution of votes,
- There are also the complexities of understanding the importance of swing states like Florida and Pennsylvania, as well as the dual role of the media and new

technologies and the possibility of legal challenges and recounts. The combination of these factors, combined with the concentration of power in a few states and a long and complicated electoral process, makes the system seem opaque and difficult to understand even for the elite.

The Senate will also confirm judicial appointments if President Trump chooses to do so and will have full support for enacting his stated policies on immigration, taxes and spending, energy, and the like. Moderates in the Senate will continue to demand compromise on key legislation, so it is not as if the gridlock has suddenly left the system (and Senate Republicans are reluctant to back down from the filibuster, so that will not change), for the next two years, at least until the next House elections, Trump will be able to do almost anything he wants.

The question is whether one can now say that liberal hegemony is dead or is experiencing a clinical death? Outgoing US President Joe Biden, his Secretary of State Antony Blinken, his National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, Vice President Kamala Harris and the rest of their Democratic Party team and some opinion makers have tried to revive and modify the liberal hegemony strategy that has guided US foreign policy since the end of the Cold War, but their attempt has been no more successful than previous administrations. Now, this time, US voters have delivered a strong rejection. Many of the people who voted for Trump are not interested in spreading democracy, do not care much about human rights, are deeply suspicious of free trade, want to keep foreigners out of the country, and are wary of global institutions and organizations.

Biden's basic worldview comes from his Cold War upbringing—simply the premise that there are good guys and bad guys, democracies versus authoritarian regimes, and that unless there is a good reason to make exceptions, US administrations should favour the former and punish the latter. On the other hand, President Trump's perspective could not be more different. He is not interested in the domestic political system of other countries – all he cares about is whether it is possible to strike preferential deals with them. In principle, this makes Trump willing to meet with any world leader, no

matter how controversial, and engage fully with him, regardless of his orientation – preferably bilaterally, where, from his point of view, the United States has a power advantage in most areas (defense, economy, natural resources, technology) and can therefore dictate terms more effectively.

What we have now with the new Trump administration is a unifying force in managing a divided American society. Some observers may see Trump's victory as a sign of national unity, an indication that most Americans fully support him. This view is deeply misleading. Democrats will not embrace Trump's MAGA agenda—especially at home—and the measures outlined, for example, in the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025, a policy document, manifesto, and right-wing programs for the next government, will sow even greater divisions in the American body politic. President Trump's policy of persecuting his political opponents, making abortion largely impossible by banning certain drugs and medications such as mifepristone, placing a vaccine opponent at the head of a critical public health institution, attempting to deport millions of people, and attacking other independent institutions of civil society will not unite Americans, especially in the long run.

At the same time, the Republican Party's long-running campaign to create a unified executive branch is now nearing completion, with full control of the White House, the Supreme Court, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. History has taught us that there is a big problem with unfettered unchecked power. Mistakes are harder to spot and correct in a timely manner. The mechanisms of accountability are already weaker than they should be in the United States, and this election and its outcome promise to undermine them further.

Aside from the national consequences for public health and safety, women's rights, central bank independence, and so on, growing polarization also threatens the government's ability to conduct an effective foreign policy. When the pendulum continues to swing violently, no other country, friend or foe, can count on the United States to do anything it has promised for more than one term. In the view of many, when

the government is busy waging a campaign against its domestic enemies, displacing millions of people who might otherwise work for wages and replacing traditional public servants with people loyal to Trump or his views, its ability to deal with the outside world is inevitably weakened. A deeply divided United States is exactly what its opponents want to see, and there is no reason to believe that the Trump administration will be able to address this anytime soon.

The question is how to prepare for the return of “Make America Great Again” populism to the seat of global power? At home? Trump’s frustrated opponents will have to fight it out in the courts, and through the judiciary, especially if he tries to impose what they see as his most extreme policies. The two most egregious policies, by Democrats and President Trump’s opponents, are the threat of mass deportation of illegal immigrants and the “purge” of government agencies. It is worth remembering that traditional American institutions barely survived Trump’s first term, which ended at the end of 2020, and this time they will be tested more severely.

For America’s allies, there are tough days ahead, as it has long been clear that American voters are tired of the role their governments have been in the business of monitoring or managing the world since 1945, but it will now be very difficult for America’s allies to anticipate the position of their traditional US security guarantor. Trump promises to be imaginative and transactional in his approach to other countries. In fact, the alliance networks that Joe Biden has continued to nurture are less important to Trump than bilateral relations. Recognizing this, allies in East Asia and Europe will have to court him individually, but regional alliances, especially NATO, will need to be shored up, or countries like Russia and China will see a benefit in a second Trump term. The decline of US-led alliance networks could also lead to nuclear proliferation, as countries like Germany or Japan, long under the US nuclear umbrella, may see it wiser to look at their own long-term defense capabilities.

But unlike his first term, when Trump took office without a clear plan and was surrounded by seasoned public servants, this time he knows exactly what he wants

to do, and he will also be surrounded by true believers. For the global economy, America's allies, and the post-1945 international order, this poses enormous risks—and perhaps catastrophic ones. In other words, they will need to reevaluate their long-held assumptions.

As Donald Trump begins his return to the presidency, his experience from his first term, as well as the time he has spent since leaving office, will likely shape his approach to governance. While we can only speculate based on his past actions and statements, there are several key lessons he may carry with him when he takes office again in 2025.

In terms of his domestic policies, we are very likely to see:

1. The importance of communication and messaging: He may work to improve his approach to public communication and seek to win over a broader audience than before.
2. Public perception and the media: Trump may be more aggressive in confronting critical media outlets and may take legal action or create alternative media channels to bypass what he sees as biased reporting that targets him.
3. Dealing with the judiciary: He will likely focus more on promoting a conservative shift in the courts, and Trump's future judicial appointments may focus on securing long-term conservative rulings, especially on issues such as abortion, religious freedom, and executive power.
4. Dealing with the “swamp/deep state” and bureaucracy: Trump may lean more heavily on populist rhetoric and take a tougher stance against the so-called “deep state.” He may push for more government reforms and attempt to bypass vested interests using executive orders, regulatory changes, and transforming the federal workforce to be more in line with his political vision.
5. Economic policy and fiscal conservatism: Trump may double down on tax cuts, especially for corporations and high-income individuals, while potentially pushing

for bolder cuts in government spending. He may also continue to focus on reducing dependence on China and bringing manufacturing jobs back to the United States.

6. Polarization: He will likely continue to cater to his loyal supporters and may push the idea of “victorious America” while leaving the task of healing divisions to others. We may not be surprised if he applies the principle of “peace through strength” internally and not only in foreign policies. This will lead to polarization versus marginalization within American society itself, which is one of the seeds of potential conflict within the American domestic arena.

The Trump Administration’s General Approach to US Foreign Policy

With foreign policies, it is very likely that we will see a foreign policy that continues the “America First” and “Make America Great Again” approach. Recently, we have begun to hear about the concept of implementing “peace through strength”: In his first term, he emphasized a national and transactional approach to international relations, which focused on giving priority to American interests, limiting America’s participation in multilateral agreements and organizations, and rethinking long-term alliances. His foreign policy is likely to continue in his second term in contrast to this global view, but with some adjustments based on the evolving global scene and his experiences from his first term and the term of President Joe Biden. Let us now look in some detail at some of these foreign files:

A - Trump’s 2nd term strategies towards China, Europe, and NATO

The current Joe Biden administration inherited much of the Trump administration’s approach in his first term, which was the most stringent towards China, and Trump’s second term is likely to continue to identify China as the most prominent national security challenge to the United States.

At the same time, China policy will be the most important challenge for the United States, and here the complexity of the situation, and Trump’s advisers may not agree on

how to deal with China, which makes it impossible to know exactly how Trump himself will deal with China. He is certain to manoeuvre strongly on trade issues, and thus find it difficult to believe that he will back down from restrictions on microchips and other forms of technology transfer to Chinese companies, and hostility to China may be the biggest strategic challenge, but is it possible that Trump has abandoned this issue? I don't think so, but at the same time we know that the relationship with China and the new hostility are a matter of bipartisan agreement in Washington DC, and hence this will make it difficult for Trump to reach a grand bargain between Washington and Beijing.

Regarding the coming trade war between the United States and many other countries, which has become almost certain, it is possible that the Trump campaign's talk of imposing tariffs dating back to the 1930s on everyone is just talk or a bluff, and that people more knowledgeable and close to him will convince him to back down from such a hasty and self-destructive move and others (whether they are current allies or enemies). Again, it's hard to know, and much depends on whether he delegates this issue to hawks like Robert Lighthizer or whether he listens to his new tech friends like Elon Musk, who rely on relatively open markets and global supply chains. Trump has not previously demonstrated a very sophisticated understanding of how modern economies work, especially in interconnectedness or in sectors he has not traded on, such as energy, so we should expect a lot of negative unintended consequences if he launches a serious trade war with China: rising deficits, bond market pressures, inflation, and so on.

In an October interview with the Wall Street Journal, Trump said that "tariffs" are "the most beautiful word in the dictionary," and his most obvious priority when it comes to China is to restart the trade war he started in 2018. Beyond trade, Trump's biggest departure point for a Biden administration may be Taiwan. During his campaign, he repeatedly cast doubt on the extent of future U.S. support, applying the same transactional approach he has taken with many countries to the small island. "Taiwan should pay us for defense," he said in a July 2024 interview. "You know, we're no different than an

insurance company. ... Taiwan doesn't give us anything.”

Trump is also likely to pick fights, or not be very friendly, with traditional U.S. Asian allies, and he has already sown doubts about whether he would support Taiwan if it were directly threatened or attacked. Because standing up to China for him depends on Asian partners—for the obvious reason that the United States is an ocean away—Trump's approach here may not be consistent. Chinese officials may be somewhat hesitant about Trump's re-election, no doubt fearing new, tough tariffs. But they also perceive, according to the public narrative, that Trump is impetuous and impatient, and that his approach to Asia during his first term was ineffective. A second-term policy would likely reverse the gains that Biden and Blinken made in Asia during their tenures, a development that Beijing would welcome.

While Trump may drive a hard bargain, he is unlikely to actually abandon support for Taiwan. Among his potential top advisers is former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, a staunch Taiwan supporter who has called for formal recognition of Taiwan's independence. In interviews, Trump has stuck to the longstanding US policy of strategic ambiguity, when asked whether the US military would defend Taiwan in the event of a Chinese attack or blockade. Trump's personal unpredictability provides its own layer of ambiguity, whether strategic or not. Asked about this in an October interview with the Wall Street Journal, Trump replied, “I wouldn't have to, because [Chinese President Xi Jinping] respects me and knows I'm crazy.”

Europe, however, will face a very big problem with a new Trump presidency. Trump does not see the US's European allies as a strategic asset and has long been openly hostile to the European Union and perhaps to Germany, the EU's most important player. Trump has referred to the EU as an enemy in the past, and he has believed that the UK's exit from the EU would be a great idea because he realized that the EU could speak with one voice on economic issues, and thus it would be difficult for the US to impose it, and the Republican Party opposes many, if not all, EU policies, and influential figures like Elon Musk oppose Europe's stricter rules on digital privacy.

We expect Trump to ignore Brussels and focus on bilateral relations with the US. In Europe, where the US has a much stronger position, Trump will do everything he can to weaken or divide the EU itself. This risk could unite Europeans in opposition (as French President Emmanuel Macron continues to advocate), but each country is also likely to look out for its own interests.

As for NATO, Trump may decide to withdraw entirely, although the organization remains popular with most Americans. A formal withdrawal would face a lot of resistance from the Défense Department and some Republicans in Congress. He would likely stay within the alliance while constantly rebuke the Europeans for not doing enough and pushing them to spend more defense money on American weapons. He would not be the first US president to adopt this approach. After the warm relationship in the Biden years, European partners will feel that the second Trump was a cold storm coming from the United States towards them.

B - Trump's policy towards Ukraine and the Palestinian issue

Ukraine will be adversely affected by Trump's second term, and if candidate Kamala Harris had been president, she would have also pushed hard to end the fighting in Ukraine, and it may have been an unfavourable deal for the Ukrainian capital, Kiev, but she would have tried to use the possibility of continued American support to obtain somewhat better terms for Ukraine from Russia and would have provided some security assistance remaining after the deal with Russia was concluded. Trump is more inclined to cut off U.S. aid and tell the Europeans that Ukraine is their problem. He certainly won't spend any of his political capital trying to persuade Congress to vote for another big aid package. Public opinion will support him. He may be concerned that Russia will sweep through the rest of Ukraine and not stop in the areas it currently controls, making him look helpless, weak, and naive to his American audience. But if Russian President Vladimir Putin accepts a permanent partition and what remains is a damaged Ukraine that is ostensibly independent but no longer moving toward NATO membership, most Americans will turn the page and move on. Trump will take full credit for ending the war.

Turning to the Middle East, Trump's strongest international relationships are with Israel and the Gulf states. These were the first destinations he travelled to as President in his first term (first to Saudi Arabia in 2017, then to Israel), a trip widely seen as a success, and one that represents his greatest diplomatic breakthrough—the Abraham Accords—which remain in place despite devastating wars in Gaza and Lebanon. Regional leaders have maintained close personal and business ties with Trump and his family throughout his four years out of office, and Trump will attempt to extend the Abraham Accords to Saudi Arabia.

The conflict in the Middle East will continue. Biden and Secretary Blinken's mishandling of the Middle East hurt candidate Kamala Harris in the election, as did her unwillingness to distance herself from an inhumane and ineffective policy on Gaza and Lebanon. Among other things, this stance undermined her attempts to portray Trump as a dangerous extremist who cares little for human rights, democracy, or the rule of law. But no one should be under any illusions that the Palestinian issue will be addressed and resolved while Trump is in the White House again. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has given Israel everything it wanted during his first term, pulling out of the deal that prevented Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. On the other hand, he may hesitate to help Israel attack Iran if, for example, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman advises him not to, but otherwise Israel will continue to get the green light to eliminate or expel the Palestinians.

In Gaza, Trump has urged Netanyahu to “finish the job” and destroy Hamas, yet Netanyahu's lack of strategic vision for accomplishing that mission suggests that Israel will continue to wage a continuous war that has alienated it on the international stage. In fact, withdrawing the United States from these conflicts will be more difficult than he claimed during his election campaign. One might imagine Trump portraying himself as a great peacemaker and seeking some kind of grand, high-profile Abraham Accords-style deal. It would be no surprise if he declared that he would be happy to meet with Iran's new president, Masoud Pezeshkian, or even its supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali

Khamenei, in the same way that he met with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un during his first term. But since Trump has neither the patience nor the capacity for lengthy negotiations, it is very likely that nothing will come of this except a lot of propaganda—full of noise and fury.

C. Multilateral Relations and International Organizations

Trump finds multilateral international organizations such as the United Nations and others restrictive, requiring such an approach to alliance building and risking Americans falling into the trap of factionalism and cliques. Trump distrusts alliances based on shared values, believing that the United States tends to be “cheated” by countries that exploit American largesse.

Moreover, the rules of the global game have changed since 2017, when American initiatives, alliances, and institutions still had plenty of power or influence, and in the meantime, other great powers have become more active in creating and strengthening their own structures independent of the United States, ranging from BRICS+ to OPEC+ to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Informally, one can see a “sanctions alliance,” in which China, North Korea, and Iran are happy to help Russia challenge the Western world order. Trump may want to join some of these groups rather than create convincing alternatives to them, and his stated efforts to divide them are likely to fail. These countries may not trust each other, but they will feel even more distrustful of Donald Trump.

On the climate crisis, Trump remains sceptical about climate policy change, believing that the right energy policy is “drill, baby, drill,” as he put it when asked about fossil fuels. He is not concerned about the consequences because by then he will be out of the political arena, and global progress on the issue will be slower, efforts to accelerate the green transition in the United States will be reversed, and long-term efforts to secure the future of humanity will give way to short-term gains. This approach may also cede the high status of green technologies to China and others, as well as weaken the economic

position of the United States in the long run, but President Trump may not care.

D - The various effects of the new American policies

As for the Trump administration's policies on other global issues, the picture should be clear: Trump's "Make America Great Again" movement will determine American foreign policy for the next four years, and any close observer of Trump's first term should be aware of his foreign policy preferences as well as his foreign policy-making process. However, there are likely to be three major differences between Trump's foreign policies 1st vs 2nd terms:

- Trump will enter office with a more cohesive national security team than he had in 2017.
- The state of the world in 2025 will be vastly different than it was in 2017.
- Foreign actors will have a much better understanding of Donald Trump.

But the era of American exceptionalism is certainly over. Under Trump, American foreign policy will no longer promote long-standing American ideals. Trump's foreign policy outlook has been clear since he entered politics. He believes that the liberal international order that the United States created has, over time, degraded and weakened the United States. To change this imbalance, Trump wants to restrict incoming economic flows such as imports and immigrants (though he loves incoming foreign direct investment). He wants allies to bear more of the burden of defending themselves. He believes he can make deals with autocrats (from an American perspective), such as Vladimir Putin in Russia or Kim Jong-un in North Korea, that will reduce tensions in global hotspots and allow the United States to focus inward.

The appointment of Marco Rubio as secretary of state would make him the first latino to hold a high-level Cabinet position in the country, and Rubio ticks almost all the boxes for Trump's future foreign policy: he is tough on all the usual suspects, suspicious of China, if not hostile toward it, hostile to Iran, uninterested in Venezuela,

mournful of the Cuba his parents left behind, and indifferent to Gaza, Palestine, and Ukraine. The only problem with Rubio, from Trump's perspective, is that Rubio may be too hawkish.

Trump campaigned on a promise to end wars, and he did so "chaotically" in Afghanistan and has vowed to do so in Ukraine. He called off a major attack on Iran during his first term and alternated between rebuke China and selling it soybeans. The big question is whether Trump's vision of "America First" foreign policy has enough room for the small diplomatic wars—such as a renewed resort to sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran, a doubling down on Venezuela, or an overhaul of U.S. policy toward Cuba—that Rubio's worldview might include, or whether Rubio will have to set his sights exclusively on China.

The incoming Trump administration presents an opportunity for a wide range of non-core U.S. allies—some friendly, like the Gulf monarchies, an increasingly isolated Israel, and a new global India; and for rogue U.S. adversaries like Russia and North Korea, all of which now have interlocutors willing to dramatically upgrade relations if the price is right. The Europeans, on the other hand, face the biggest existential problem with the Trump presidency, and must decide whether they can stick together regardless of his policies.

Foreign leaders who need to do business with Trump should be able to do so, but they will need to engage him directly and convince him that their proposal is a good deal for him. The emotional stuff about alliances and friendships should be left to press conferences, and Trump's constant question is, "What's in it for me?" His calculations are political and commercial, but they are very focused. This should come as no surprise—"America First" is his unequivocal motto.

Overall, US soft power globally will take a major hit here, significantly undermining the United States across the Global South—a region where the United States has underperformed during both the Trump and Biden administrations. Given the United

States' outsized global role, US and the rest of the world are about to participate in a new and vast social experiment. An experiment conducted completely free of human controls, taking into account that the United States is in fact an early warning system for the world, and here comes an important question about how the United States was able to abandon the soft power approach? Does this indicate the possibility of various conflicts, especially with the great reliance on the person of the president as a direct and sole negotiator and giving his team a purely functional side role and not being able to make policies and directions as is the case, as if we are facing a new phenomenon which previously did not exist in the United States and is being formed, this is an unprecedented way in terms of its style and behavior.

Finally, let us ask about how to link, on the one hand, the isolationism in President Trump's policies and the focus on the economic aspect and financial gain on the other hand? We notice there is a kind of contradiction, as isolationism is a kind of distancing from structuring agreements and alliances, and on the other hand, economic and financial investment requires winning more deals and strengthening and consolidating relations.

Donald Trump's return to power represents an exceptional political experience in the history of the United States, characterized by sharp contradictions between domestic populism and pragmatic dealing with international issues. By analyzing the legacy of his first term, we can anticipate the features of an approach – represented by the unexpected complemented by the focus on the economy and money – that will be more rigid and isolationist in his second term, which will put American society before a difficult internal test of polarization and division, while providing an opportunity for some global powers to reshape the international balance of power.

On the international level, Trump's second policy appears to be an extension of his focus on purely American interests, with a gradual withdrawal from the collective commitments that characterized American leadership after World War II. These trends, despite their ability to achieve immediate gains, leave a dangerous vacuum in the global

system, which may be filled by competing powers in unexpected ways.

Ultimately, Trump's rise again raises profound questions about the sustainability of the American democratic system as a leading force on the international stage. As the world continues to watch this experience, the answer remains dependent on the ability of national institutions and international relations to adapt to this new era in American history.

Iraq between regional challenges and Trump's vision

With President Donald Trump returning to the White House, Iraqi-American relations are entering a new and galvanizing phase that requires exceptional readiness to deal with the challenges and opportunities that the new administration's policies may impose. Trump is known for his pragmatic approach that relies on deals and focuses on direct American interests, which may lead to redrawing the priorities of American foreign policy towards Iraq and the region.

Trump is a man who thinks in terms of making deals, but on American terms. He is not a pragmatic person as rumoured, and Trump in his second term may be completely different from his first term, and it is very likely that Iraq will face immediate and difficult choices, and that the Iraqi government needs to prepare contingency plans for the worst-case scenario in order to manage the relationship and contain its repercussions in the worst case. Accordingly, preserving Iraq's sovereignty and stability, while strengthening bilateral relations in a way that serves Iraqi national interests, requires a comprehensive vision that combines diplomacy, economics, security, and regional cooperation.

Trump's return to the presidency will have many implications across Iraq's diplomatic, economic, and security spheres, and will likely require Iraqi actors to be sensitive to the situation. The key aspects of how "Trump-proofing" or "Trump taking power" will likely resonate and impact Iraq are as follows:

1. Reciprocal diplomacy and sovereignty concerns: Trump is likely to take a reciprocal

approach, expecting Iraq to provide tangible benefits for continued U.S. support, whether through security cooperation, economic facilitation, or alignment with U.S. regional policies. This means increasing the demands on Iraq to clearly support American interests, such as taking a firmer stance on the Islamic Republic's interventions in Iran. We now see the development of the internal political scene in Iraq to prioritize sovereignty by ending the mission of UNITAD and UNAMI and the exit of foreign advisors (against their will and conviction), which is a very sensitive issue and has external effects. Trump's diplomatic style based on transactional diplomacy and immediate buying and selling, which focuses on achieving goals focused on the United States, may put Iraqi leaders in difficult positions, especially if they are pressured to align more closely with American policy in ways that may risk local reactions or affect Iraq's regional position. Here, it is useful to mention that Trump has a perception that the previous role of the United States in Iraq was a failure, and therefore we will either see him impose force in demanding and obtaining it or abandon his government's adoption of Iraq's international issues and consider Iraq a country hostile to the United States. Accordingly, Iraq, with its government and various political parties, is at a crossroads.

2. Security and Military Presence: The US military presence in Iraq has historically been a point of contention and strategic importance. Trump has previously emphasized reducing the presence of US forces abroad, which has included calls for withdrawal from Iraq. The new Trump administration may reassess US military support, which could impact internal security dynamics in Iraq, especially in light of ongoing regional tensions, concerns about the resurgence of ISIS/Daesh, and the influence of factions linked to internal and external actors. He may work to reduce the US military presence abroad unless there is a clear benefit to US interests. In Iraq, this may translate into maintaining a smaller, more policing military presence focused on protecting US assets and countering specific threats rather than supporting broader regional stability efforts. On the other hand, it is very likely that he will forcefully demand that his forces remain at Ain al-Asad base and elsewhere.

3. Strategy to counter the Islamic Republic of Iran: Trump has pursued a policy of “maximum pressure” on Iran, which has indirectly affected Iraq given the close economic and political ties between Iraq and Iran. A return to a similarly aggressive US stance toward Iran could strain Iraq, which is trying to balance its relations with both countries and could pressure the Iraqi government to adopt a more explicit position, potentially exacerbating internal divisions within Iraqi stakeholders that support close US relations and those allied with the Islamic Republic of Iran.
4. Economic pressures and sanctions: The Trump administration’s previous approach included using economic sanctions as a tool of influence, which indirectly affected Iraq, particularly through sanctions on Iranian trade, a key component of Iraq’s economy. Iraq could face renewed challenges if Trump reimposes or intensifies sanctions that impact cross-border trade, leading to inflation and shortages of basic commodities such as energy and electricity, and may encourage Iraq to diversify its economy away from Iranian imports and build stronger ties with US companies, which could lead to mixed reactions from political, economic, and security circles in Iraq. We will see a similar approach of strong pressure on the issue of energy exemptions (reducing or cutting them) from US sanctions, or tightening scrutiny of US dollar smuggling, or applying sanctions on transport companies or banks, or those who may deal with Iran or parties loyal to Iran.
5. Energy and oil markets: Iraq’s economy depends on oil and shifts in US energy policy under Trump may indirectly affect global oil prices. For example, a renewed focus on US energy independence may lead to lower global oil prices, which directly affects Iraq’s revenues and financial stability, making its economy more vulnerable to external price fluctuations, and may push Iraq towards new oil deals.
6. Impact on Iraqi domestic politics: A second Trump administration could exacerbate divisions within the Iraqi political system, particularly between parties that support different foreign policy orientations. Pro-US parties may call for a stronger alliance with Trump’s policies, while groups allied with the Islamic Republic of Iran, such

as militia factions, may resist, potentially destabilizing Iraq's fragile coalition government and increasing political deadlock.

7. Increased focus on counterterrorism: Trump may renew his hardline stance on counterterrorism in Iraq, especially in light of ongoing regional instability. This could lead to increased US demands for Iraq to crack down on terrorist groups, even as Iraq manages to reform its internal security. If Trump pressures Iraq to confront groups with Iranian ties, this could lead to tensions, especially if the United States imposes unilateral measures or sanctions targeting these groups within Iraq.
8. Pressure for economic reforms and trade agreements: Trump's "America First" approach may push Iraq to enter into more favourable trade deals with the United States. Iraq may be pressured to open up sectors of its economy, reduce dependence on Iran, or privatize resources in ways that may not be consistent with its economic goals or the interests of its constituency. Such pressures could affect Iraq's economic direction, especially if linked to U.S. military or financial support.
9. Decreased diplomatic engagement on domestic issues: The Trump administration may prioritize prominent security and counterterrorism goals over deeper engagement in Iraq's internal political, social, and developmental issues. This may limit the U.S. role in supporting internal governance and institutional reforms in Iraq, placing more responsibility on Iraq to resolve its internal challenges independently. On the other hand, it is useful to point out that most of the nominations and names put forward to be on Trump's team are "veterans" who have deep experience and history with the Iraqi experience after 2003. Accordingly, it is necessary for the Iraqi political system to realize that the new U.S. administration has clear and explicit programs and goals regarding their reading of the Iraqi arena.
10. The new approach towards Iraq: The new US administration will include three important mechanisms in its policy towards Iraq:
 - The first is to re-evaluate the impact of the sanctions imposed on the Islamic

Republic of Iran in its various forms through the Iraqi lens or portal.

- The second is to use the financial intelligence mechanism, especially through the US Treasury Department, to impose and implement its various programs towards Iraq.
- Finally, the effort to dry up the sources of money, wealth and influence of the Iraqi stakeholders, political figures and weapons loyal to Iran. That is, we will see high-level coordination between the US stakeholders within the new administration in changing the US narrative towards Iraq and transforming the internal balance of power, from a narrative of failure, containment, balance management, political chaos and loss of Iraq to a narrative of cooperation and participation of Iraq in isolating the Islamic Republic, reducing the influence of the enemies of the United States and bringing Iraq closer to the Western axis.

The Iraqi Narrative within the US mindset (General and Governmental)

Many previous American administrations, especially after 2003, had a complex and contradictory vision towards Iraq. This narrative stems from a combination of strategic interests, historical perceptions, and personal positions of previous presidents, including Donald Trump and his team in his first term. With President Trump's second term, we can say that Iraq is no longer a priority in US foreign policy, and perhaps their interest increases when they link it to their policies towards Iran, especially when they consider many Iraqi stakeholders to be extensions of Tehran's interests. Iraq is no longer an "essential partner" in the war on terrorism, but more dangerously, many Americans now view Iraq as a source of anti-US threat. Here is an analysis of how the expected administration views Iraq, in general, and the Iraqi government in particular:

- Americans see Iraq as one of the most complex dossiers in American foreign policy, as the American intervention in 2003 reflects painful lessons about military interventions and rebuilding countries. For the Trump administration, Iraq is not a strong strategic ally, but rather a "necessary partner if it responds" in the fight

against terrorism and an arena for conflict and containing Iranian influence, as Tehran, according to their understanding, is working to consolidate its influence through armed factions and political relations.

- This perception makes Iraq a focus of interest for the American administration not because of its strength, but because of Iraq's relative weakness and its influence on regional dynamics, not forgetting that they also view Iraq as a rich source of energy and a strategic location, but with the absence of stability, weak governance and the corruption of many of its leaders, this hinders the Americans from benefiting from it.
- The Trump administration sees the Iraqi government as an entity suffering from sectarian and political divisions, and unable to make decisions independently of regional powers, especially neighboring Iran. Perhaps this vision prompts Washington to deal with Iraqi governments with caution, while seeking and pressuring them to distance them from Iranian influence and direct them in a direction that serves American interests.
- Decision-makers in Washington believe that Iraqi political elites are more preoccupied with internal conflicts and personal interests than focusing on building a stable state, and that they are more inclined to please the capital, Tehran, at the expense of Washington. This deepens the feeling of suspicion towards Iraqi governments.
- The Iraqi government is often described as unable to fulfil its commitments to partnership with the United States, whether in combating terrorism or controlling armed factions. However, despite this, Washington continues to support Iraq because a complete withdrawal may leave a vacuum that Iran or terrorist organizations such as the remnants of ISIS/Daesh gangs could fill.
- Trump will deal with Iraq in a pragmatic manner, as a turf for deals, and will focus on what Iraq can offer the United States (such as energy, isolating/neutralizing

Iran, or support in combating terrorism) rather than adopting a long-term view of rebuilding Iraq, and Trump's previous statements, such as his demand that Iraq pay "compensation" for American intervention, reflect his utilitarian approach towards Iraq.

The American vision towards Iraq can be summarized as follows:

1. Priority of American interests: The principle of "America First" means that Washington will put its economic and military interests before any international obligations.
2. Reducing military interventions: There is a desire to reduce the military presence in the Middle East, with a focus on imposing economic and political influence.
3. Pressure on Iran and isolate it from Iraq: Iraq is in a sensitive position due to its political and geographical proximity to Iran, and therefore it will remain a target or area of concern for American maximum pressure policies against Tehran, and this will have a direct and negative impact on Iraq due to the close economic and political relations between them.

The required strategic objectives for Iraq

1. Strengthening the strategic partnership with the United States in the security, economic, and political fields.
2. Protecting Iraqi sovereignty and avoiding Iraq turning into an arena for regional or international conflicts.
3. Reducing dependence on regional and international parties in the economic, energy, and security fields.
4. Achieving regional balance through neutral diplomacy that serves Iraq's interests first.

5. Maximizing the benefit from the relationship with Washington to stimulate internal development and enhance Iraq's international status.
6. Investing in economic and political relations to enhance Iraq's regional and international status.
7. Reducing the negative impact of the Iranian-American conflict while maintaining internal balance.
8. Developing the national economy, governance, and reform programs through sustainable strategic partnerships.

Proposed action plan for the Iraqi government

A - Political and diplomatic communication

1. Forming a joint Iraqi-American committee: Coordinating joint dossiers with the American administration, including representatives from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Finance.
2. Organizing a high-level visit to Washington: A visit by the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence to discuss bilateral issues and enhance direct dialogue with Trump and his administration.
3. Strengthening communication with the Congress: Building relationships with the Foreign Relations and Defense Committees in Congress to ensure continued support for Iraq in legislation and policies.
4. Cooperation with American think tanks: Working with research and think tanks to promote the vision of Iraq as a strategic partner.

B - Strengthening security and military cooperation

1. Continuing cooperation in combating terrorism: Presenting Iraq as a major partner in combating terrorism with a focus on benefiting from American expertise in training and security technology.

2. Institutionalizing the Popular Mobilization Forces: Reforming the Popular Mobilization Forces and the rest of the security establishment to ensure state control over security decisions and to reduce the influence of non-governmental groups.
3. Developing the security infrastructure: Requesting American support to develop border surveillance systems and modern technologies to combat arms smuggling, with a focus on intelligence and technical training rather than direct military presence.
4. Strengthening Iraqi decision-making sovereignty: By activating the role of institutions and focusing on strengthening government institutions to be the sole reference in decision-making, including controlling the activity of all armed factions under the umbrella of the state.
5. Purchasing defense equipment: Focusing on strategic arms deals that benefit Iraq in terms of security, which enhances American reliance on Iraq as a strategic partner.
6. Managing the US military presence file: Trump may seek to reduce the direct US military presence while maintaining influence through advisors or small bases, and accordingly the Iraqi position needs to focus on managing the military presence clearly by defining a clear legal framework for the presence of US forces in Iraq, and by clarifying that any foreign military presence must focus on training Iraqi forces and combating terrorism.

C - Strengthening economic relations

1. Establishing an Iraqi-American economic platform: to display and stimulate investment opportunities in energy, infrastructure, and technology, with a focus on signing contracts with major US companies to develop the oil, gas, and alternative energy sectors.
2. Diversifying trade partners in the region: by developing and strengthening economic relations with countries such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

3. Stimulating local production: Investing in local agriculture and industry sectors to reduce dependence on foreign markets in general.
4. Engaging American oil and gas companies: and creating new opportunities for them, as Trump does not care much about alternative energy issues, so capturing gas and processing it to generate energy may be a major and beneficial area for him as this will reduce Iranian imports.
5. Enhancing self-sufficiency: Developing the Iraqi refinery sector to reduce the import of petroleum derivatives from abroad.
6. Diversifying trade relations: Signing new trade agreements with the United States, with a focus on exporting agricultural and industrial products.
7. Implementing strategic projects: Establishing a US-backed free economic zone in southern Iraq.
8. Enhancing Iraq's image internationally: by marketing Iraq as a pivotal geopolitical location that can contribute to regional stability and global energy flow.
9. Supporting tripartite cooperation: between Iraq, Jordan and Egypt in strategic projects.

D - Managing Regional Relations

1. Adopting a "positive neighbourhood" policy with Iran while ensuring respect for the Iraqi decision.
2. Focusing on controlling borders and preventing illegal activities such as smuggling weapons, goods or US dollars.
3. Presenting Iraq as a mediator in resolving regional conflicts, not part of them, especially between the United States and Iran.
4. Bringing Iran and the United States closer together: Using Iraq's relations with both

parties to launch dialogue initiatives, with a focus on calming regional conflicts and reducing tensions in the Iraqi arena.

5. **Hosting regional forums:** Hosting regional peace forums in Baghdad to discuss regional cooperation issues, which enhances Iraq's role as a mediator rather than an arena of conflict.
6. **Agreements of common interests:** Agreeing with Iran to reduce political interference in Iraq in exchange for facilitating trade and economic cooperation in a way that achieves the interests of both parties.
7. **Cooperation on the water sector:** Pressuring Iran on vital issues such as water, to transform cooperation into a relationship based on clear interests rather than political influence.
8. **Diversifying international partnerships:** Working to strengthen relations with other international powers (the European Union, China, Russia, and economic blocs in Asia) to reduce over-reliance on the United States.
9. **Cooperation with emerging countries:** Strengthening relations with countries such as India, Brazil, and South Africa to reduce reliance on the United States.
10. **Engaging in international organizations:** Increasing presence in international forums to support Iraqi positions in the face of American pressure.

E - Employing cultural and media diplomacy

1. **Launching community campaigns:** Focusing on strengthening the Iraqi national identity through media and education and reducing the impact of regional and external loyalties.
2. **Media balance:** Combating extremist media trends supported externally by supporting independent national media.

3. Media and diplomatic campaigns: Investing in media campaigns to promote Iraq as a stable and internationally cooperative country, which may influence Trump's decisions that often depend on the media orientation.
4. Scholarship programs: Increasing the number of study missions to the United States in the fields of technology, security, and economics.

F - A proposed strategy for the Iraqi Embassy in Washington DC

To enhance the role of the Iraqi Embassy in Washington DC and its work in representing and protecting Iraq's interests in the United States under the new Trump administration for 2025, it needs to define and implement a clear strategy that protects Iraq's national interests and adapts to the political priorities of the Trump administration. The following is a brief proposal for the required steps and strategy:

1. Restructuring the Embassy team to include specialists in sensitive sectors such as security, economy, public relations, and Iranian-US relations. The focus should be on building communication channels with Trump's key advisors and influential think tanks.
2. Organizing regular visits by Iraqi leaders to Washington DC to highlight Iraq's commitment to its partnership with the United States and focusing on points of convergence such as combating terrorism and investment.
3. Appointing advisors in Washington who have deep experience in dealing with the Trump administration.
4. Launching media campaigns directed at inside US through well-known and influential platforms to present a positive image of Iraq.
5. Supporting cultural, educational, and academic scholarship programs with US universities.
6. Preparing Iraqi diplomats in Washington to understand the dynamics of American

policy and the working style of the new administration.

Required Executive steps

- Forming a central government working cell: A specialized team that includes experts to manage the relationship with the United States, including representatives from the sectors: Foreign affairs, defense, economy, finance, and the Prime Minister's Office to follow up on developments in the relationship with the Trump administration on a daily basis. The cell needs to have powers to be able to focus, be effective, and speed up its work; otherwise, its establishment without that means increasing bureaucracy without any useful return.
- Direct coordination with the Iraqi Embassy in Washington DC: Strengthening the role of the Embassy as an effective hub of communication between Iraq and the US administration.
- Inviting the Iraqi private sector to participate in economic and investment initiatives with the United States.
- Understanding the priorities of the new administration: Analyzing the new administration's foreign policy orientations, especially towards the Middle East, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and energy, and diagnosing the extent of the influence of some Gulf countries on its decisions in the region, as these relations may be an important back door for Iraq with the administration.
- Monitoring media trends: Following up on the opinions of think tanks and media close to the administration to anticipate their positions towards Iraq.
- Communicating with the administration: Establishing direct channels of communication with the US State Department, DOD, and the White House, with a focus on those responsible for Middle Eastern affairs.
- Digital diplomacy: Launching initiatives via social media to highlight the importance

of Iraq as a reliable American partner.

- Communicating with American think tanks: Enhancing dialogue with research and intellectual influence centres close to the American administration to convey the Iraqi point of view.
- Communicating with the international media: Using major media outlets to present a positive image of Iraq and its constructive partnership with America.

These proposals aim at enabling Iraq to invest in opportunities and mitigate the risks that may result from the new Trump administration's policies, while achieving stability and development internally and externally. It is expected that containing Iranian influence in Iraq will be one of the most prominent priorities of the Trump administration in 2025, if the policy of "maximum pressure" on Iran continues, to ensure the preservation of Iraqi sovereignty while managing this file effectively, and the Iraqi government can follow various strategies, classic and unconventional, to achieve internal and regional balance without clashing with any party.

Conclusion

Dealing with the incoming Trump administration requires a clear Iraqi vision that is ready to invest in opportunities and address challenges. The relationship with the United States is a fundamental pillar for ensuring Iraq's stability and development. Iraq must deal with the new Trump administration with a strategic approach that focuses on independence, diverse partnerships, and enhancing internal stability. This approach will ensure a balance between American requirements and regional challenges, while preserving Iraq's sovereign interests.

Given its geographic and political location, Iraq faces complex challenges as a result of US pressure to isolate Iran, which requires strategies that focus on enhancing economic and diplomatic independence and avoiding entering into regional conflicts that affect its stability. Here lies the need to redefine Iraq's role in international politics, while benefiting from the lessons of the past and employing its strengths as a hub for internal and regional stability. That is, decision-makers in Iraq and the region must prepare for major US changes, understand their repercussions, and seek to create new regional alliances or reduce dependence on the United States by strengthening the internal fabric and building an Iraqi state with the ability to control its full national sovereignty. Accordingly, to deal with US challenges and aspirations under the Donald Trump administration, Iraq needs a comprehensive and balanced strategy based on understanding the dynamics of US policy and its interests, while enhancing its internal capabilities and improving its regional and international relations.

The Iraqi government needs a dual strategy based on enhancing national sovereignty on the one hand and engaging in regional and international balances on the other hand. This approach can enable Iraq to reduce external influence without slipping into direct confrontation or falling under the pressure of the expected Trump administration. In Trump's eyes, there is a direct link between politics and economics (and economics generally means trade - such as buying American equipment - more than investment, due to his desire to reap its benefits faster and more clearly), and therefore there is a

need to look at the axes of this paper through a single, integrated strategy.

In light of the regional and international changes, dealing with the Trump administration requires a proactive approach characterized by flexibility and realism. The primary goal must be to protect Iraq's interests, while ensuring that it does not slip into the policies of the axes or dependency. His early appointments indicate his focus on loyalty and extremism and turmoil, and therefore it is very likely that we will see sudden changes in people or policies, and this will require Iraq to be able to absorb their repercussions. The Trump administration will not have one colour or one consistent approach, but it will be a more serious focused administration than the first era.

This paper seeks to provide a comprehensive vision for achieving Iraq's interests, based on a direct reading and deep knowledge of American policy, and that the Iraqi government is capable of implementing this vision with strong political will and institutional cooperation, which enhances Iraq's position as a sovereign state and a reliable partner on the international scene, as the success of this plan depends on the extent of Iraq's readiness to engage seriously and communicate effectively with various parties in Washington, DC. The time is now ripe to work boldly and with a strategic vision to fortify Iraq and ensure its stability and growth.

The Iraqi Embassy in Washington DC, for its part, needs to be dynamic and follow a comprehensive, multi-dimensional and proactive strategy in dealing with the upcoming Trump administration, and by implementing this strategy, Iraq can strengthen its position, in Washington, DC, as a sovereign state capable of achieving its national interests and protecting its independence in the face of international challenges.

This paper and other detailed papers on the new American variable can update our readings (and translate them on the ground later) into practical steps for Iraq's foreign policy. By understanding the growth of the conflict and contradiction between the traditional ruling establishment and the rising social forces in America - consisting of businessmen, company owners and new politicians such as Trump - we can anticipate

and then realize the pattern of internal American variables and their subsequent translation into US foreign policies.

With the return of Donald Trump to power, can we say that we are seeing a new process for the emergence of a republic or a new essence for the United States of America, similar to the emergence of a new essence for the role and influence of the United States of America after its entry into World War II, 85 years ago? The coming months and years will answer this question, but what we can say with confidence is that the journey of Donald Trump's second and final administration will be closer to riding a roller-coaster train for its political players.