

NSC Principals Committee (Lite) Meeting on Grand Strategy

Section 9/23/21

Secretary of Defense

Skim Secretary Austin's remarks for the US INDOPACOM Change of Command for his publicly stated views on US grand strategy: <https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Speeches/Speech/Article/2592093/secretary-of-defense-remarks-for-the-us-indopacom-change-of-command/>. (Start at “*And I really am so proud to be here with you,*” and end at “*That brings me to the leadership of this great command.*”)

- Identify the type of grand strategy Austin supports, and why he supports it.
- What tools strengthen US national security? (*Hint: define internal and external balancing.*)

Secretary of State

Skim Secretary Blinken's speech, “A Foreign Policy for the American People,” for his publicly stated views on US grand strategy: <https://www.state.gov/a-foreign-policy-for-the-american-people/>.

- Identify the type of grand strategy Blinken supports, and why he supports it.
- Why does the secretary think the US is in a unique position to lead in the world? Where does American exceptionalism come from? (*Hint: social fact.*)

Director of National Intelligence

Skim Director Avril Haines' statement to Congress on the 2021 Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Committee: <https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Newsroom/Testimonies/2021-04-14-ATA-Opening-Statement-FINAL.pdf>.

- What are the greatest national security threats today?
- Advocates of restraint in grand strategy suggest that the US cut back forward deployments in Germany, Japan, South Korea, and elsewhere. Speculate what happens if we cut back on these. (*Hint: opportunity costs.*)

- Advocates of engagement argue disengagement might invite regional conflicts to erupt. Speculate about the counterfactual: might regional conflict still emerge? (*Hint: define reckless driving.*)

US Trade Representative

Skim Ambassador Katherine Tai's remarks on "Worker-Centered Trade Policy" for some of her positions on US grand strategy: <https://ustr.gov/about-us/policy-offices/press-office/speeches-and-remarks/2021/june/remarks-ambassador-katherine-tai-outlining-biden-harris-administrations-worker-centered-trade-policy>.

- Identify the type of grand strategy (at least the economic dimension) that Tai supports, and why she supports it.
- Identify the foreign policy tools Tai advocates using. Why do IR theorists say that those tools promote cooperation? (*Hint: Kantian tripod.*)

USAID Administrator

Skim Administrator Samantha Power's welcome ceremony remarks about her vision of and for USAID: <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/speeches/may-3-2021-usaid-administrator-samantha-power-remarks-at-usaid-welcome-ceremony>.

- Identify the type of grand strategy that Power supports, and why she supports it.
- Identify the foreign policy tools Power advocates using.

Special Assistant to the President

This is an *ad hoc* position created for this simulation. Sometimes presidents permit outside experts to weigh in on major policy issues. Pretend you are an international relations expert that shares the same views as Barry Posen.

- Advocate for restraint in grand strategy. (*Hint: cheap riders and reckless drivers.*)
- Since you are an expert on IR, please provide some historical examples in support of your argument. (*Hint: draw on Posen reading.*)
- How do you respond to advocates of engagement that may critique your argument as being quick to accuse without providing alternatives? Regarding alternatives, do you advise offshore balancing or disengagement?