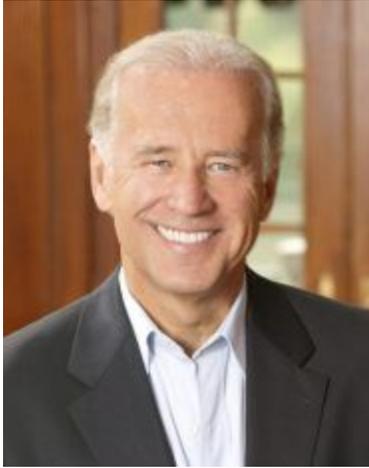


Joe Biden



“No army on earth can match the electric idea of liberty. We must once more harness that power and rally the free world to meet the challenges we face today.” — Vice President Joseph Biden

At a Glance

Vice President. Thirty-six years on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 12 as Chairman or ranking member. During his time in office, Biden has met with hundreds of world leaders and traveled to dozens of trouble spots across the globe. No candidate can compete with Joe Biden’s depth of experience. But for pro-peace voters concerned about endless U.S. military interventions, Biden’s experience — backing some of the most harmful foreign policies of the last half century — is as much a liability as an asset.

Biden first ran for Senate in 1972 as a dove, calling for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam. Since then, he’s mixed pro-peace votes such as his opposition to the 1991 Gulf War, with supporting U.S. military interventions in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. Biden’s track record reflects the foreign policy establishment’s faith in U.S. military interventions while periodically working to trim the sails of some of the excesses of that approach. In fact, Biden, alongside the Clintons and former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, are key architects of “liberal internationalism.” The “liberal internationalists” support international cooperation and institutions while still grounding their policies in American exceptionalism and U.S. military might. Much of the foreign policy problems facing the U.S. today can be traced to these policies: [the eastward expansion of NATO](#), the Iraq war, a outsized Pentagon budget, and a morphing war on terrorism.

Biden played a unique and critical role in the fateful decision to go to war in Iraq, the decision that most embodies the period of endless wars the country is in. As chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he held hearings that [only heard from witnesses](#) that supported the false narratives about Iraq’s WMDs or ties to al Qaeda. Biden himself at the time said that [weapons of mass destruction](#) “must be dislodged from Saddam, or Saddam must be

dislodged from power,” and that “if we wait for the danger from Saddam to become clear, it could be too late.” He also went on major talk shows to point to the hearings as proof of WMDs and to proclaim on Meet the Press, “We have no choice but to eliminate the threat. This is a guy who’s an extreme danger to the world.”

In the White House, Biden sometimes took up Obama’s left flank opposite more hawkish voices like Hillary Clinton. He opposed a troop surge in Afghanistan while promoting a “counterterrorism plus” approach based on drone strikes and special forces, he opposed the Libya intervention, and he opposed arming the Syrian rebels. Other times, Biden took the more hawkish position. He encouraged Obama to bomb Syria after Assad was accused of using chemical weapons there, and encouraging Obama to send lethal aid to Ukraine after the Russian annexation of Crimea. In both cases Obama said no. You can find his thoughts, comments, and plans on issues of war and peace below.

Ending Endless Wars

- In July Biden [gave a speech](#) pledging to “end the forever wars” and “bring the vast majority of troops home” from the middle east wars.
- Bringing most of the troops home obviously leaves the door open to a residual force that would as Biden put it “narrowly focus our mission to defeat al Qaeda and ISIS” in the region. This seems like a new articulation of the approach Biden has long supported in Afghanistan based on drone strikes, special forces and airpower, an approach he advocated as Vice President calling it “[counterterrorism plus](#)”.
- Biden says he will not “hesitate to protect the American people, including when necessary, by using force.” He praises “the strongest military in the world” and commits to ensure “it stays that way”.
- Biden has said he will end the U.S. support for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen’s tragic war.
- About Venezuela, Biden has said “I was among the first Democratic foreign policy voices to recognize Juan Guaidó as Venezuela’s

legitimate leader and to call for Maduro to resign. Maduro has used dialogue in the past as a tactic to delay action and concentrate power, so the U.S. should maintain sanctions pressure until negotiations produce results.”

Nuclear Weapons

- In a [speech in January 2017](#), Biden said “In a world possessed of nuclear technology, the effective minimum number of bombs is small. Even one can cause hideous damage. With that knowledge—over the course of decades—we negotiated agreements to reduce and control the world’s supply of nuclear weapons.”
 - At the same speech at the end of the Obama administration, Biden signaled support for a No First Use (NFU) policy for nuclear weapons saying: “Given our non-nuclear capabilities and the nature of today’s threats—it’s hard to envision a plausible scenario in which the first use of nuclear weapons by the United States would be necessary. Or make sense. President Obama and I are confident we can deter—and defend ourselves and our Allies against—non-nuclear threats through other means.”
 - Biden told a [voter at a campaign event](#), that he opposed the Trump administration’s plans to develop low-yield, “more usable” nuclear weapons.
-

Iran

- In 2007, amidst talk of war with Iran during the George W. Bush administration, Biden warned the administration about going to war with Iran without Congressional approval: “I want it on the record, and I want to make it clear,” [Biden said](#). “If he does, I will move to impeach him.”
- Biden supports returning to the Iran deal “if Iran comes back into compliance”. He goes on to say [he would](#) “work with our allies to strengthen and extend it while more effectively pushing back

against Iran's destabilizing activities which we are allowed to do and we had partners to do with us.

- Biden was one of the Obama administration's most important advocates for the Iran nuclear deal. He was responsible for selling the deal to [wary Democrats in Congress](#) as well as more [hawkish members of the Jewish community](#).
-

Pentagon Spending & Diplomatic Funding

- Biden has [called for rebuilding](#) the State Department noting the vacancies in the state department during the Trump administration.
-

Korean Peninsula

- When President Trump met with Kim in June, [Biden blasted the move in a campaign statement](#), "Diplomacy is important, but diplomacy requires a strategy, a process and competent leadership to develop. We still don't have a single commitment from North Korea. Not one missile or nuclear weapon has been destroyed, not one inspector is on the ground. If anything, the situation has gotten worse. North Korea has continued to churn out fissile material and is no longer an isolated pariah on the world stage."
 - After Biden accused president Trump of embracing "tyrants like [Vladimir] [Putin](#) and Kim Jong-un", the [Korean Central News Agency](#) went off in a statement the way only the North Korean government can: "What he uttered is just sophism of an imbecile bereft of elementary quality as a human being, let alone a politician. He has been accused even within the Democratic Party,... for his vulgar acts and words about women. [H]e is self-praising himself as being the most popular presidential candidate. This is enough to make a cat laugh." These statements reveal resentment over the Obama administration's sanctions policies as well as perhaps an attempt to curry favor with Trump.
-

Israel/Palestine

- Biden's campaign [has said that he](#) "would not move the American embassy back to Tel Aviv" But that he would "re-open our consulate in East Jerusalem to engage the Palestinians.. and also return the United States to the effort of encouraging a two-state solution — the only way to truly guarantee Israel's long-term security as a Jewish and democratic state and meet the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinians for a state of their own."
- Biden has [criticized the notion](#) of being "even-handed" with Israel and the Palestinians saying: "In my 34-year career, I have never wavered from the notion that the only time progress has ever been made in the Middle East is when the Arab nations have known that there is no daylight between us and Israel. So the idea of being an 'honest broker' is not, as some of my Democratic colleagues call for, the answer. It is being the smart broker, it is being the smart partner."
- In July, [Biden said](#) "sustaining our iron-clad commitment to Israel's security regardless of how much you may disagree with this present leader. It is essential."
- Biden has opposed settlements and [raised concerns about the occupation](#), "I think occupation is a real problem, a significant problem. I think the settlements are unnecessary. The only answer is a two-state solution, number one. Number two: the Palestinians have to step up to stop the hate. So, it's a two-way street."