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This week, our Councillors have selected pieces on the US election, and both China and the US' relationships with China.  Disclaimer: The views expressed below by Councillors are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A person wearing a suit and tie  Description automatically generated |  |  | | --- | | [**What Will History Make of This?**](https://www.talkingpoliticspodcast.com/blog/2020/283-what-trump-means-to-us)  As we are preparing this newsletter the result of the US presidential election [**hangs in the balance**](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/03/us/trump-biden-election?action=click&module=Spotlight&pgtype=Homepage). With key results outstanding in the mid-west and sunbelt it may be a while before we know who will govern the US for the next four years. Elections are often seen as defining events in the history of nations, moments where things change dramatically. But they are not always inflection points. Often they are more indicators of the path a nation is on than are catalysts in and of themselves. One of the big questions coming out of today will be how does this election fit into the broad story of American history? Will it be a critical juncture, when the US chose a different path? Or is it just a symptom of the changes underway in America today? This is the question David Runciman poses to cohost Helen Thompson at the start of last week’s episode of the Talking Politics podcast. [**Throughout the episode**](https://www.talkingpoliticspodcast.com/blog/2020/283-what-trump-means-to-us) reflect on what the Trump years have meant to them, and consider how they fit into broader political narratives. It is an ideal way to step back and consider the broader context of this election. Image credit: [**Gage Skidmore**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/gageskidmore/48573429366/in/photolist-2h1gwh7-dd9jfU-2ivs1e8-2ivqLWC-2ivs18G-2ivoerp-2ivqLNw-2ivoe5s-2igL1an-2igHwn4-2gv9ADn-2ivoeR7-2ivoeU3-2ivqLuA-2ivoe88-2igHB4d-2igHACD-2ivs1he-2ivqLHr-2gYyG88-2igL2HH-2igM2ge-2iv1W1h-2iuYoaj-2h1gsrX-2gYyFvG-2igHAec-2gYyHT2-2ex2TTN-2h1gvSz-2iv39Rb-2gYxXx7-2iotDwz-2igL48S-2h1gtNu-2gv9owf-2gYyEsQ-2h1hgTB-2gYxQXJ-2igL8ik-2h1hfyc-dd9pnb-dSvayE-2igL9ud-2iv3a5H-2iuYopn-2iuYokj-2iuYohi-2ioq7wW-2igMctZ) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Alex McManis. Alex holds a Bachelor of Arts with First Class Honours in Government and International Relations from the University of Sydney. He is currently the Climate and Energy Security Fellow at Young Australians in International Affairs. Alex has served on the Council since 2019. | | | | | | | | | | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**Rebuilding Trust with China**](https://johnmenadue.com/geoff-miller-the-american-presidential-election-a-milestone-on-the-road-to-decoupling-or-a-chance-to-avert-it/)  In an [**article**](https://johnmenadue.com/geoff-miller-the-american-presidential-election-a-milestone-on-the-road-to-decoupling-or-a-chance-to-avert-it/) in John Menadue's Pearls and Irritations, former ambassador and intelligence chief Geoff Miller makes an eloquent case for less confrontational attitudes to China. He recommends that Australia seek to put relations between the US and China on to a better and more sustainable footing; Australia’s interests lie in a state of affairs in our region under which we and other countries can live peacefully and prosper. He suggests that Australia’s concerns about the South China Sea and the human rights of the Tibetans and the Uighurs may be tolerable in China’s view but that we have singled ourselves out by leading the push against Huawei and initiating the call for an inquiry into the origins of COVID 19. We should try to include China in joint efforts to re-build trust, rather than join alliances against it. Image Credit: [**United Nations Photos**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/un_photo/21766728656/in/photolist-zasb67-i2bNEA-29pV3qa-26CNXx1-zRGkkZ-z56isR-SMHYv5-zfVSz5-pgRFLJ-NX5DmY-Pvx1UZ-q7oao7-q5Fped-Q3YpCf-XB2z3c-2aHEZrv-2gkNV6M-NBnjGs-AR1f8e-27cW3pt-24yKKyi-bvcSnR-5uyGbP-AhifvN-bvcSDz-bvcStg-eX8bzc-zgYCex-yjVgbf-zQa6yU-i2bsSk-RaCHNc-dchc2u-yZmZUC-nV4eyP-B7Q1e4-A5cgqX-zJsR1r-2gmdAh6-A8MhiE-RMvVdg-hktXCU-LSa4UD-fLJtVp-R7VpoG-KL43hZ-KL43vp-2gkNW5W-KL438v-26FTRQ1) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Ian Lincoln, President of AIIA NSW since 2017. Ian was in the Department of Foreign Affairs for 33 years including postings in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Pacific. He was later an appellate member of the Refugee Review Tribunal and has worked in a number of community organisations. | | | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A person wearing a suit and tie  Description automatically generated |  |  | | --- | | [**Trump's China Policy is Here to Stay**](https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/The-Big-Story/US-election-Trump-s-China-policy-is-here-to-stay-no-matter-who-wins)  Richard McGregor [**argues**](https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/The-Big-Story/US-election-Trump-s-China-policy-is-here-to-stay-no-matter-who-wins) that, when Trump first took office, Beijing either feared or admired the new U.S. president, seeing in his arrival a new form of US strategic calculation and tactical genius. Today, however, Trump has become widely viewed in Beijing as an accelerant of American decline, with his four-year term leaving behind a weaker U.S. and stronger China. In Washington, however, getting tough on China has become one of the few bipartisan positions in an otherwise deeply divided polity. Should Joe Biden win the presidency, the contest between the U.S. and China is set to endure, and probably intensify. Image credit: [**Gage Skidmore**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/gageskidmore/30354768350/in/photolist-Nfm861-Nww1xh-NfmeVd-MJQzua-NDDmcA-MK39tW-MJQMLe-NGQqxi-NGQCYF-Nz4f8P-MJQCVD-NfkJ13-NGQDVF-NfmfoC-NDDv5L-MJQ4D8-MJQ73M-NfmbhS-NfksU1-NGQpBF-NfkEkC-Nz4cyv-Nz4p8c-Nz3N82-NwvYaw-NfkBPf-Nww7us-NDDajo-NGQzxT-MK3rBo-MJQdMt-NDDu7U-MJQ7PX-LjV16A-LjUuUj-LLk6Bc-LAM6bs-KPqZ98-LLk8UD-LLk7QV-Nz4kGp-NDD8Fd-LHj5Ed-KPpEFt-LALZK7-KPpVdp-KPc6eU-KPpYwD-LjV7eh-LWvCB7) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **From the Interns** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | In addition to our Councillors, we invite one of our interns to share with you what they have found insightful or interesting in the world of international affairs over the past week. This week, Evangeline Larsen picks apart Oman's tricky diplomatic position, and what war and peace will look like in a world post-COVID 19.  Disclaimer: The views expressed below by interns are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**Oman is Stuck Between a Rock and a Hard Place**](https://www.foreignbrief.com/middle-east/small-state-diplomacy-omans-abrahamic-test-of-faith/)  Oman has long been the Gulf states’ mediator, using its [**small-state diplomacy**](https://www.foreignbrief.com/middle-east/small-state-diplomacy-omans-abrahamic-test-of-faith/) to facilitate interactions between the US, Iran and Saudi Arabia. This important position may be under threat if Oman becomes the fifth Arab state to normalise relations with Israel, following the Abraham Accords. Since the death of Sultan Qaboos in January this year, Oman’s new leader Sultan Haitham is yet to make his vision for the nation clear. The country’s relations with Iran, particularly due to their co-operation over the Straits of Hormuz, likely mean that even if Oman did sign the accords Iran would probably not react strongly. Indeed, the US benefits more from Oman's credibility with Iran as an interlocutor than as a signatory to its controversial recognition deal.  Image credit: [**naschi86**](https://pixabay.com/photos/muscat-oman-islam-mosque-5377066/) | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | [**Peace and Conflict in the COVID-19 Era**](https://theglobalobservatory.org/2020/10/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-peace-conflict/)  Political violence has unfortunately continued, rather than abated, during the pandemic. Despite the global ceasefire initiative headed by UN Secretary-General Guterres and some initial support from armed parties, months later and violence has not reduced. Katariina Mustasilta [**warns**](https://theglobalobservatory.org/2020/10/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-peace-conflict/) that the economic crisis that has accompanied COVID-19 will likely result in budget cuts for UN peacekeeping, further diminishing on the ground efforts. Additionally, the state and non-state actors have been able to tighten control over territory and military resources in places such as Yemen and Libya. Globally political opposition has been quashed, undermining human rights and democratic principles. With exacerbating grievances, these factors culminate as a worrying trend that needs investigation and swift action to support peacebuilding.  Image credit: [**Official US Navy Page**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/usnavy/50172567253/) | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | These articles were selected by Evangeline Larsen. Evangeline is a Dual BA graduate with degrees from the University of Sydney and Science Po, France, majoring in French and International Relations. Having also studied in Lebanon, she is particularly interested in Middle Eastern politics and is an accredited mediator. | | | | | | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **What else we're reading** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | * If Joe Biden wins the US election, there could be a significant shift in Ameircan climate policies. AIIA NSW Councillor Alex McManis [**analyses**](https://www.youngausint.org.au/post/a-president-biden-could-take-big-risks-to-reshape-global-climate-politics) what some of the changes could be in INSIGHTS. * As Angela Merkel nears the end of her Chancellorship, the Economist [**discusses**](https://www.economist.com/leaders/2020/10/31/germanys-ruling-party-is-making-a-hash-of-choosing-its-next-leader) what is happening in the search for her successor. * In Lowy Institute's The Interpreter, Ben Scott [**questions**](https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/what-does-rules-based-order-mean) what a "rules based order" means and how Australia helps support it. * On the Reasons to be Cheerful podcast, Ed Milliband and and Geoff Lloyd are joined by guests to [**discuss**](https://podfollow.com/cheerfulpodcast/episode/1cef307efeffbeb70a9074c89d7fe7fb547d6c4b/view?utm_source=Cheerful&utm_campaign=1ef3768ece-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_8_19_2019_17_26_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_138bf8d667-1ef3768ece-411929453) how 'Big Tech' is using our data, and how we can take greater ownership of it. * Słowomir Sierakowski, writing for Project Syndicate, [**explores**](https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/poland-protests-against-pis-abortion-ban-by-slawomir-sierakowski-2020-11) how women are pushing back against Poland's illiberal government. * An unprecedented [**travel advisory**](https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/destinations/americas/united-states-america) from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade warns about conditions in the US surrounding the Presidential election. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Letters to the Editor** | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Get involved!**  We're committed to keeping conversations about international affairs going, so get involved in our Letters to the Editor section!  Each week, we publish letters from our subscribers about what they think of the issues we’re discussing.  You can take part in the conversation by emailing us with your comments on each week’s articles. There are just a few simple guidelines: letters should be no more than 100 words in length, and should only be about the previous week’s articles. Please include your name and affiliation, and a mobile number (which won't be published). If you are a university student, please include your university and current degree.  Send all letters to the editors at [**aiianswletters@gmail.com**](mailto:aiianswletters@gmail.com) by Wednesday at 5pm Sydney time for the chance to be published in the following week's newsletter. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | | | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | |  | | --- | |  | | |  | | --- | |  | | | | |  | |
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