



Joint Regional Strategy

East Asia and the Pacific

**State Department – Bureau of East Asian and
Pacific Affairs
USAID – Bureau for Asia**

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1. Executive Statement

President Trump identified advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific as a priority. The prosperity and security of the United States are inextricably linked to the development and future progress of the region. The region is home to a third of the world's population and many of its fastest-growing economies. Opportunities created by a growing middle class in the Indo-Pacific region have expanded trade and driven reciprocal growth around the world, including in the United States. In the next decade, trade volume in Asia is expected to double, and by 2050, Asia's economies are projected to account for more than half of the world's gross domestic product.

During the Indo-Pacific Business Forum, the Secretary put his stamp on the Indo-Pacific Strategy by announcing three major interagency economic initiatives. The National Security Council is now leading an interagency process to implement the strategy along security, economic, and governance lines of effort. EAP is a critical executive agent and stakeholder on initiatives under these lines of efforts.

Advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific means ensuring the freedom of the seas and skies; insulating sovereign nations from external coercion and the threat of weapons of mass destruction; promoting market-based economics, open investment environments, and fair and reciprocal trade; and supporting good governance and respect for individual rights. As the region grows in population and economic weight, our strategy must adapt to ensure that it is increasingly one of peace, stability, and growing prosperity — and not one of disorder, conflict, and predatory mercantilist economics. Our objective is to align U.S. policies and programs toward strengthening the free and open international order that the United States has championed in the Indo-Pacific for over 70 years.

Consistent with the National Security Strategy, the Indo-Pacific Strategy, and the State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan, our top three priorities are: addressing with regional partners the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's unlawful nuclear and ballistic missile program; addressing China's direct challenge to an international order by reinforcing rules-based norms, emphasizing sovereignty, human rights, and non-threatening interaction; and assisting partner countries on their journey to self-reliance.

Nations should be able to pursue their own paths in a sovereign manner. In implementing this strategy, we will pursue policies that ensure countries in the region become progressively more free—free in terms of good governance; in terms of fundamental freedoms and respect for rule of law, protecting human rights, and strengthening civil society; and in terms of increasing transparency, countering corruption, and reducing violent extremism. We will expand open connectivity through secure and sustainable energy, promote a digital economy that allows for

the free flow of data across borders while protecting privacy, and ensure an environment that enables, not impedes, high quality and best-value infrastructure. We will encourage responsible natural resource management. A priority will be to accelerate efforts to improve the investment climate in the region and seek free, fair, and reciprocal trade. Finally, we will invest in improving people's access to health and education to improve productivity and facilitate sustainable and inclusive growth.

Embedding these principles will require efforts across the spectrum of our capabilities: diplomatic initiatives, governance capacity building, economic cooperation and commercial advocacy, development assistance and military cooperation. To aid these efforts, the United States will build upon longstanding programs that support the free and open order and promote greater self-reliance, and we will continue this approach as outlined in the 2018-2021 Joint Regional Strategy for East Asia and the Pacific and the Bureau for Asia.

2. Bureau Strategic Framework

Goal 1: DPRK: Increased political and economic pressure on North Korea to persuade it to abandon its nuclear-weapons and ballistic-missile programs.

- Objective 1.1: The global maximum pressure campaign continues and intensifies.
- Objective 1.2: Progress is made toward denuclearizing North Korea, and its procurement and proliferation activities are halted.

Goal 2: CHINA: A constructive results-oriented relationship with China that counters Beijing's revisionist ambitions and coercive actions that threaten continued stability of a rules-based order in the region.

- Objective 2.1: Offset Chinese influence with, among other things, stronger alliances and partnerships through enhanced security arrangements.
- Objective 2.2: Expand cooperation with China only if it promotes our interests.
- Objective 2.3: Take strong counteraction to deter and shape China's problematic behavior.

Goal 3: SECURITY: Enhanced security at home and abroad through strengthened U.S. ties with allies and partners.

- Objective 3.1: Increase security capabilities and interoperability of regional partners to support and promote a free, open, and rules-based order in the region, including in the maritime and cyber domains.
- Objective 3.2: Strengthen the capacity of partners and allies to defeat ISIS and al-Qaeda and address the threats of terrorism and transnational crime, bolstering countries' civilian-led law enforcement efforts where appropriate.
- Objective 3.3: Increase capacity and resilience of partners and allies to address natural disasters and non-traditional threats, like pandemics.

Goal 4: SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROWTH: Sustained and inclusive growth and prosperity that is driven by open market economic policies; high-standard investment; increased connectivity; inclusive health and education systems; improved natural resource management; and free, fair, and reciprocal trading relationships.

- Objective 4.1: Generate commercial opportunities for U.S. businesses through free, fair, and reciprocal trade and investment.
- Objective 4.2: Promote governance practices that use market competition, development finance standards, environmental and social sustainability safeguards, and open and fair market access to develop high-standard infrastructure.
- Objective 4.3: Encourage economic integration and connectivity – including through regional multilateral organizations – to reinforce high standards and create business opportunities for U.S. companies and level the playing field for all partners.
- Objective 4.4: Promote healthy, educated, and resilient populations through sustainable economic and social systems that conserve natural resources and contribute to regional stability and prosperity.

Goal 5: GOVERNANCE AND A RULES BASED ORDER: A rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific, supported by transparent and accountable governments, advances long-term democratic development and resolves disputes peacefully through international law and respect for national sovereignty.

- Objective 5.1: Ensure that the Indo-Pacific’s political and security architecture reinforces ASEAN-centrality, is inclusive of the United States, and is committed to respect for national sovereignty, fundamental freedoms, and shared interests.
- Objective 5.2: Assist governments in the region to adopt and promote strong governance practices and democratic institutions that are resilient, transparent, accountable, and responsive to their people and safeguard democratic values across the region.
- Objective 5.3: Support the emergence of informed, participating, and tolerant people in Indo-Pacific countries served by a strong civil society that has space to advance democratic development, human rights, and civic participation.
- Objective 5.4: Enable democratic states connected by shared values and commitment to cooperate closely to prevent unfavorable shifts in norms and values and to resist authoritarian trends and coercive practices.

MANAGEMENT Goal: Management of resources that ensures effectiveness and accountability to the American taxpayer.

- Objective M.1: Build a resilient workforce through effective compensation, professional development, and employee engagement.
- Objective M.2: Contain costs region-wide.

3. Goals and Objectives

Bureau Goal 1: DPRK: Increased political and economic pressure on North Korea to persuade it to abandon its nuclear-weapons and ballistic-missile programs.

Description and Linkages

Consistent with the National Security Strategy (Pillar I: Protect the American People, the Homeland, and the American Way of Life) and the Department of State and United States Agency for International Development Joint Strategic Plan (Goal 1: Protect America's Security at Home and Abroad), the goal of the President's maximum pressure campaign is to increase diplomatic, economic, and military pressure on North Korea to persuade it to return to the negotiating table. The USG is working towards a negotiated settlement leading to the final, fully verified denuclearization of the DPRK.

Bureau Objective 1.1 : The global maximum pressure campaign continues and intensifies. (EAP/USAID Office Lead: EAP/K)

Justification

In the past two years, the DPRK regime channeled the majority of the proceeds of trade, illicit activities, and incomes of overseas workers into supporting its unlawful nuclear and ballistic missile programs. Economic and diplomatic pressure was important in creating a diplomatic opening in 2018, beginning with inter-Korean engagement and leading to the U.S.-DPRK summit. Even as diplomacy gets underway, pressure remains an essential point of leverage and will not be lifted until the DPRK denuclearizes.

Bureau Objective 1.2 : Progress is made toward denuclearizing North Korea, and its procurement and proliferation activities are halted. (Office Lead: EAP/K)

Justification

North Korea's pursuit of nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities and its continued proliferation activities threaten peace and security. The long-term U.S. goal is the final, fully verified denuclearization of North Korea. In the short-term, we should focus on freezing DPRK nuclear development, halting nuclear and ballistic missile tests and production of fissile material, and obtaining initial steps toward denuclearization. Broadening international condemnation of the DPRK's continued development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programs should politically isolate the DPRK and compel the DPRK to take steps toward fulfilling its denuclearization obligations and commitments. Strengthening the international community's enforcement of

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sanctions also inhibits DPRK efforts to further develop its nuclear and missile programs and spread the technology to other actors.

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Bureau Goal 2: CHINA: A constructive results-oriented relationship with China that counters Beijing's revisionist ambitions and coercive actions that threaten continued stability of a rules-based order in the region.

Description and Linkages

Consistent with the National Security Strategy (Pillar I and Pillar II: Promote American Prosperity) and the Department of State and United States Agency for International Development Joint Strategic Plan (Goal 1 and Goal 2: Protect America's Security at Home and Abroad and Renew America's Competitive Advantage for Sustained Economic Growth and Job Creation), the United States seeks a constructive and results-oriented relationship with China; however, we are clear-eyed on the need to compete directly with China, call out and respond to Chinese behavior when it impinges on our interests and violates the rules-based international system. We prefer to work with like-minded partners, but will also pursue unilateral measures and help other states stand up for their interests whenever necessary. The United States wants a fair and reciprocal economic relationship with China that does not disadvantage Americans, and is not marred by the unfair practices China has pursued in recent years. The United States will stand up for freedom and human dignity, and will continue to push China to respect universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of religion. We will speak out against predatory debt diplomacy and encourage other countries to make informed choices about working with China on infrastructure financing and economic development. When appropriate, we also seek to broaden practical cooperation with China and achieve results on issues of shared concern.

Bureau Objective 2.1 : Offset Chinese influence with, among other things, stronger alliances and partnerships through enhanced security arrangements. (Office Leads: EAP/RSP, J, K, EP and MLA)

Justification

China is using economic inducements and penalties, influence operations, and implied military threats to persuade other states to heed its political and security agenda. To balance Chinese influence, we will reinforce existing regional alliances, including those with Japan, Australia, Thailand, the Philippines, and the Republic of Korea, and strengthen other security partnerships, including with India.

Bureau Objective 2.2: Expand cooperation with China only if it promotes our interests. (Office Lead: EAP/CM)

Justification

When appropriate, cooperation with China can strengthen U.S. national security, promote trade and economic growth, and produce solutions to transnational challenges. China's cooperation will be critical on issues ranging from North Korea to energy, climate change, counter-narcotics, global health security, and poverty alleviation around the world.

Bureau Objective 2.3: Take strong counteraction to deter and shape China's problematic behavior. (Office Lead: EAP/CM)

Justification

We are increasingly concerned about China's actions to undermine the international rules-based order. This includes the continued militarization of the South China Sea, promotion of discriminatory trade practices, and Beijing's disregard for human rights.

Bureau Goal 3: Security: Enhanced security at home and abroad through strengthened U.S. ties with allies and partners.

Description and Linkages

Consistent with the National Security Strategy (Pillar III: Peace through Strength) and the Department of State and United States Agency for International Development Joint Strategic Plan (Goal 1: Protect America's Security at Home and Abroad), the United States will build ally and partner capacity to promote security in the EAP region. The United States will work with its allies and partners to enhance their ability to protect their sovereignty, be free from coercion, and contribute to efforts to uphold a rules-based order and address regional and transnational security challenges. The United States will work with partner countries to advance counter terrorism efforts, prevent violent extremism, combat transnational crime, reduce cyber threats, and address non-traditional security challenges.

Bureau Objective 3.1 : Increase security capabilities and interoperability of regional partners to support and promote a free, open, and rules-based order in the region, including in the maritime and cyber domains. (Office Leads: EAP/RSP and EAP/MLA)

Justification

The region faces a number of common threats and challenges that require us to strengthen longstanding relationships and encourage the development of strong defense and law enforcement networks in the region. Building the capabilities of partners in Asia demonstrates the United States' commitment to regional security, provides access, and protects the homeland. Cyber capacity building activities will increase partners' ability to recognize, deter, and respond to cyber threats in a whole-of-government manner consistent with international law and norms. Increasing U.S. security cooperation, including exercises and training, will bolster interoperability, reconnaissance, patrol, and interdiction capabilities of partner nations and will improve maritime domain awareness.

Bureau Objective 3.2: Strengthen the capacity of partners and allies to defeat ISIS and Al-Qaeda and address the threats of terrorism and transnational crime, bolstering countries' civilian-led law enforcement efforts where appropriate. (Office Leads: EAP/RSP and USAID/Asia)

Justification

Terrorism, armed conflict, destabilizing political violence, and transnational organized crime, including trafficking in persons, wildlife, and natural resources, continue to present a threat to EAP countries and U.S. interests in the region. The United States will work with our partners in the region to mitigate terrorist radicalization and recruitment and counter the destabilizing

effect of returning foreign fighters. The United States will continue to encourage effective multilateral cooperation by promoting EAP countries and our allies to actively participate in information sharing networks. The expeditious, robust sharing of information by regional partners is a prerequisite for effective multilateral cooperation. To this end, regional partners must understand the benefits of active participation in information sharing networks.

Bureau Objective 3.3: Increase capacity and resilience of partners and allies to address natural disasters and non-traditional threats, like pandemics. (Office Lead: USAID/Asia)

Justification

The United States and EAP countries increasingly face a range of non-traditional security challenges, including the increasing severity and regularity of natural disasters and growing threat of forced migration, pandemics, and drug-resistant diseases. These threats are transnational and potentially global in scope, requiring significant international cooperation across sectors. In particular, forced migration worldwide is a destabilizing threat that can hamper achievement of other objectives. To this end, the United States will promote capacity and resilience of partners and allies. Core objectives include deepening and leveraging traditional alliances and emerging partnerships that are interested in stability and a rules-based order.

Bureau Goal 4: Socio-Economic Growth: Sustained and inclusive growth and prosperity that is driven by open market economic policies; high-standard investment; increased connectivity; inclusive health and education systems; improved natural resource management; and free, fair, and reciprocal trading relationships.

Description and Linkages

Consistent with the National Security Strategy (Pillar II: Promote American Prosperity) and the Department of State and United States Agency for International Development Joint Strategic Plan (Goal 2: Renew America's Competitive Advantage for Sustained Economic Growth and Job Creation), we will aggressively advocate economic rules that enhance free, fair, and reciprocal economic relationships. We will develop capacity and institutions to improve economic governance and level the playing field for legitimate investors. We will leverage our membership in APEC and engagement with ASEAN to support the economic reforms that will open markets and promote high-standard investments in the region. We will promote healthy, educated, and productive populations in partner countries to drive inclusive economic growth and will improve management of natural resources, confronting environmental challenges with U.S. environmental goods and services. We will emphasize reforms and advocate for high standards that catalyze private sector involvement that promote economic growth and benefit U.S. businesses.

Bureau Objective 4.1: Generate commercial opportunities for U.S. businesses through free, fair, and reciprocal trade and investment. (Office Leads: USAID/Asia and EAP/EP)

Justification

Strong U.S. trade and investment ties with the dynamic Indo-Pacific will continue to be critical to our long-term economic strength. Unfair trade and investment policies and practices weaken our economy, however, disadvantaging U.S. workers and industries. As a strategic imperative, we will ensure the adoption of a bilateral and regional rules-based order that encourages free, fair, and reciprocal trade and investment and levels the playing field for U.S. companies.

Bureau Objective 4.2: Promote governance practices that use market competition, development finance standards, environmental and social sustainability safeguards, and open and fair market access to develop high-standard infrastructure. (Leads: USAID/Asia and EAP/EP)

Justification

New infrastructure projects should knit the region together, generate wealth, and lead to sustainable growth. High-quality infrastructure projects make economic sense, attract private

sector capital, and ensure that infrastructure projects lift nations up rather than weigh them down in unsustainable debt.

Bureau Objective 4.3: Encourage economic integration and connectivity – including through regional multilateral organizations – to reinforce high standards and create business opportunities for U.S. companies and level the playing field for all partners. (Leads: EAP/EP, EAP/MLA and USAID/Asia)

Justification

Multilateral institutions, such as ASEAN, APEC, PIF, and our trilateral and quadrilateral mechanisms, promote regional unity and advance the region’s rule-based order, encouraging harmonization, standardization, and connectivity that reduce barriers to trade, investment, and free movement of goods, services, and human capital. Regional integration will also increase member states’ ability to resist negative influence and choose partners based on the merits in a free-market environment.

Bureau Objective 4.4 Promote healthy, educated, and resilient populations through sustainable economic and social systems that conserve natural resources and contribute to regional stability and prosperity (Office Leads: USAID/Asia and EAP/EP)

Justification

Robust growth in EAP countries has been accompanied by significant reductions in poverty, but the benefits have not been shared across all members of society. Our investments will encourage countries’ self-reliance, supporting systems and policies that provide inclusive services and conserve natural resources. Our investments in health and education are essential to stem lost productivity that is so necessary to encouraging countries’ self-reliance. These investments in sustainable economic and social services will increase resilience to conflict, reduce the need for U.S. assistance, and expand markets for U.S. companies.

Bureau Goal 5: Governance And A Rules-Based Order: A rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific, supported by transparent and accountable governments, advances long-term democratic development and resolves disputes peacefully through international law and respect for national sovereignty.

Description and Linkages

Consistent with the National Security Strategy (Pillar IV: Advance American Influence and the Indo-Pacific Strategy) and Department of State and USAID Joint Strategic Plan (Goal 3: Promote American Leadership through Balanced Engagement), the United States will work with partners who seek to advance good governance, peaceful dispute resolution through international law, increase governmental transparency, and encourage greater investment and opportunity. The United States will protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, protect independence of media and information integrity, and foster free and fair elections, by strengthening democratic institutions, where they exist, to be resilient, stable, participatory, and accountable to their citizenry. In areas where democratic governance is lacking or developing, the United States will partner with willing governments to support engagement with civil society and promote rules-based order and strengthen regional architecture to maintain a level playing field for all. We will use our longstanding alliances and security partnerships to reinforce the centrality of democratic principles in our foreign policy.

Bureau Objective 5.1: Ensure that the Indo-Pacific's political and security architecture reinforces ASEAN-centrality, is inclusive of the United States, and is committed to respect for national sovereignty, fundamental freedoms, and shared interests. (Office Leads: EAP/MLA and USAID/Asia)

Justification

ASEAN, APEC, and other regional institutions are centerpieces of our Indo-Pacific vision as platforms for promoting a free and open order. U.S. efforts will reinforce ASEAN-centric approaches and solutions to regional problems. High-level U.S. participation in regional and bilateral diplomatic, development, and security-related info-sharing fora will raise awareness of the U.S. commitment. We will continue to work with these institutions to advance market economics and peacefully resolve territorial and maritime disputes in accordance with international law.

Bureau Objective 5.2: Assist governments in the region to adopt and promote strong governance practices and democratic institutions that are resilient, transparent, accountable, and responsive to their people and safeguard democratic values across the region. (Office Leads: EAP/MLS, EAP/MTS, EAP/ANP and USAID/Asia)

Justification

While elections are held and strong democratic institutions exist in some countries in the EAP region, overall the quality of democracy and the rule of law is uneven. Fixing this creates the framework for peaceful, stable, and prosperous societies.

Bureau Objective 5.3: Support the emergence of informed, participating and tolerant people in Indo-Pacific countries served by a strong civil society that has space to advance democratic development, human rights, and civic participation. (Lead: EAP/MLS, EAP/MTS, EAP/ANP, EAP/PD and USAID/ASIA)

Justification

Governments provide the space within which civil society organizations operate. A strong civil society strengthens democracies by exposing corruption, advocating for good governance, encouraging participation in political processes, educating the population, protecting human rights, and shaping the principals of democratic life.

Bureau Objective 5.4: Enable democratic states connected by shared values and commitment to cooperate closely to prevent unfavorable shifts in norms and values and to resist authoritarian trends and coercive practices. (Office Leads: EAP/MLS, EAP/MTS, EAP/ANP and USAID/Asia)

Justification

Well-functioning democratic institutions and civic participation prevent authoritarian regimes from coming to power. An open internet, freedom of speech, and low levels of corruption are required to promote an informed and unrestricted citizenry who are able to hold their governments accountable.

4. Cross-cutting Management Objectives or Management Goal

Management Goal: Management of resources that ensures effectiveness and accountability to the American taxpayer.

Description and Linkages

This goal reflects various priorities outlined in the State and USAID Joint Strategic Plan and M family Functional Bureau Strategies including the bureaus of Human Resources, Information Resource Management, Overseas Building Operations, and Administration.

Management Objective: Build a resilient workforce through effective compensation, professional development, and employee engagement. (Office Lead: EAP/EX)

Justification

Our dispersed locally employed staff supports interagency operations at 46 overseas posts. We need to recruit and retain the best employees and share their skills across the region for maximum impact. The Department's fiscal environment requires innovative approaches to cost containment. EAP's leadership in implementing global initiatives is key to their demonstrated success. The Department's fiscal environment requires data-driven approaches. In response to fiscal constraints, EAP's leadership will implement global initiatives and monitor key data points to demonstrated success.

Management Objective: Contain costs region-wide. (Office Lead: EAP/EX)

Justification

The Department's fiscal environment requires innovative, data-driven approaches to cost containment. EAP's leadership in implementing global initiatives is key to their demonstrated success.