

Foreign Policy: Asia Pacific



Discussion Guide

Let's review

At the start of each discussion, review the conversation ground rules for returning and new members alike to set the stage for active participation by all. You may want to use a timer as you go around the room.

And don't forget to decide who will take notes and post a discussion recap.

- **Be open and curious:** Everyone has a unique perspective, so listen and be prepared to hear a different point of view. Remember, you do not need to share your political affiliation; this is a discussion and exchange of ideas, not politics.
- **Be respectful and engaged:** Be sure that everyone has a chance to speak before adding a second comment or perspective. Encourage each other's participation.
- **Be focused and concise:** Keep the conversation centered on the issue and the brief.

The "Table-it" Rule: If the group has gone off-topic but the area is of interest, the group can table the conversation and save it for another time to be addressed in a different manner.

Let's begin

*Each member is invited to answer the following questions in a **two-three minute reaction** to the brief.*

- Introduce yourself, and share what "lens of care" did you wear when reviewing this brief (e.g. personal, professional, community, state, nation, global)?
- What did you find most interesting or surprising from reading the brief? What matters?

Let's discuss

Pick 2 or 3 questions that resonate with the group and discuss, or choose your own.

- Were there some points with which you strongly agreed or disagreed? Was there a perspective that was missing?
- In your opinion, what is the priority in regards to foreign policy in the Asia Pacific region?
- How can the US continue to lead in the world and remain engaged abroad?
- How should the U.S. respond to North Korea's nuclear provocations?
- How can the U.S. compete economically with countries like China but also cooperate strategically on mutual security interests?

Let's act

Spread the Word: Some Facts to Share

- Asia makes up about 35% of the [world's GDP](#).
- The U.S. has important economic ties in Asia, which is home to our 3rd (China), 4th (Japan), and 6th (South Korea) [largest trading partners](#).
- Due to trade negotiations and imposed tariffs, China fell from being the U.S.'s largest trading partner [in 2018](#) to the third largest [in 2019](#).
- [Chinese hackers' breaches](#) of U.S. government databases compromised 22.1 million people in recent years.
- About 50,000 U.S. troops are [stationed in Japan](#). The U.S. has over 28,000 troops [stationed in South Korea](#), and the two countries hold joint military exercises and training.
- The U.S., India, and Japan have signed infrastructure deals to attempt to counter China's growing geopolitical and economic influence with its [Belt and Road Initiative](#).
- Along with Britain, Canada, and the U.S., **Australia** and **New Zealand** are also two members of the [Five Eyes Alliance](#), an intelligence-sharing network focusing on "exchanging classified information on China's foreign activities."
- The Kim Regime has launched 23 missiles during 16 tests since February 2017 and in September 2017 conducted its [largest nuclear test](#) yet.

Engage Locally

- *Learn more:*
 - **Research your elected representatives' positions** on foreign policy, and their vision for how to tackle foreign policy challenges facing Americans and your community.
 - Your legislators, state comptroller, attorney general and other local elected officials want to know their constituents. Write to them about your interest in foreign policy.
 - You can find contact information for federal, state, and local government officials [here](#). Your state or municipality's websites will also have information to contact leaders. Try looking at the drop-down menu for a *Government* tab.
 - Are your legislators on a committee that handles foreign policy? Find out at [Govtrack](#).
 - **Explore the impact of foreign policy in your community.**
 - Does your city or community have a large immigrant population? Search on your state or municipality's website for a community or human services, or search for terms such as "*immigration*," or in the search bar.
 - Search on your state or municipality's website for the business portal using keywords such as "trade," or look for a tab labelled "business" in a dropdown menu. Look for options such as "access to world markets," "importing and exporting," or "[your state] + international trade," or search for any of these terms in the search bar.
 - [The Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs](#) is the point of contact for state and local governments at the International Trade Administration. See if your city or state has companies that engage internationally.
- *Reach out:*

- Explore what organizations, legislators, and journalists you could contact to ask questions, learn more and get engaged.
- If you have trouble finding the information you are looking for on your municipality's website, consider contacting agency or department heads. You can find the contact information for federal, state, and local government officials [here](#).
- The Policy Circle offers a number of resources for engaging on the local level. Learn how to write a letter to the editor on [The Policy Circle website](#).
- It's easy to establish a relationship with your legislators. Start by introducing yourself. You can also learn to write to your representatives or set up a meeting with a legislator on [The Policy Circle website](#).

Post a Recap/Dive Deeper

- Summarize your discussion to share thoughts with members not present. Designate who will post a meeting recap on your circle page.
- Decide your next meeting topic. Want to discuss a related brief at your next meeting? This brief is part of the Five for a World View [Conversation Series](#). Others in the series include:
 - [Foreign Policy: Middle East](#)
 - [Immigration](#)
 - [Digital Landscape](#)
- Dive Deeper into this area. If this is an area you would like to pursue further consider taking possible steps to influence policy. The Policy Circle offers resources for [developing a message about your issue](#) and [organizing a petition](#) to amplify your voice and raise awareness.