

**US PRESIDENT-ELECT DONALD J TRUMP'S
ASIA POLICY: A VERY PRELIMINARY
ASSESSMENT**

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Executive Summary

1. On 8 November 2016 Donald John Trump was elected president of the United States. He defeated the Democratic Party's nominee, former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, by a significant margin.
2. Most pollsters, the gamblers' odds, the media and most pundits predicted Hillary Clinton to win. The Democratic Party was America's largest political party and Clinton boasted of broad experience in government (Donald Trump has none); her pedigree (her husband being a former president and her having been a US Senator) is well known.
3. The Democratic Party has a well-oiled organisation and is rich; Hillary had the support of the sitting president, Barack Obama (who had high favourability ratings in most opinion polls and campaigned for her), while the Republican Party seemed split (with many Republicans opposed to Trump's candidacy).
4. Trump's win is explained by voters' rancour over the establishment's presumptions about their ability (and right) to lead while ignoring workers and the middle class, woeful corruption in Washington, DC (linked to globalism, faulty US trade deals and illegal immigrants) and that America was in decline and this needed to change.
5. Trump's election victory was very unwelcomed by the establishment and the political left. The media, which had very much supported (many felt slavishly so) Clinton, was stunned.
6. Trump had built his campaign primarily on domestic issues. He did not talk much about foreign policy. When he did much of what he said was provocative and/or controversial, or what may be called campaign rhetoric.

7. Following Trump's victory the mainstream media in the United States, joined by the Western media elsewhere, launched a concerted and one-sided campaign to discredit him and his election victory.
8. Trump's Asia policy was a special target.
9. However, president-elect Trump's early Asia policy moves looked positive in spite of the criticism of him in the press.