

## What to Expect from the Trump Presidency

### News:

Much of the world continues to digest the victory of Donald Trump over veteran Hilary Clinton for the President of the USA. Trump overwhelmingly defeated Clinton winning a number of states that were for long considered democrat heartlands (Hilary Clinton won the popular vote). Many analysts have been falling over themselves to determine what this means for US foreign policy and the position of the US globally. A closer examination of the US system and the issues the US is engaged in reveals it's unlikely Trump, like his predecessors will be able to change much.

### Comment:

What made Trump's victory so shocking was the fact he is not a politician, he has never held office and as the presidential debates showed he possessed nothing in terms of policy aside from a few sound bites that were at best entertaining but almost impossible to implement. The US public fed up with seasoned politicians saying one thing but looking after their own pockets and friends in the corporate world. So disillusioned by the democracy in the US the public were looking for an anti-establishment figure that would go against the grain. This election offered the worst of all possibilities and many voted for the lesser of two evils.

But Donald Trump is no alternative and skilfully utilised every prejudice, myth and lie to reach the White House. Trump is no ideologue; in fact Trump throughout his life has only pursued what benefited him from his dealings with women and his many bankruptcies, leaving many languishing in poverty. Trump throughout his life proved he was pragmatic and willing to do whatever it took to achieve his goals, including having no principles or values. Like his predecessor who used the slogan of 'its time for change,' it is likely Trump's mantra of 'make America great again,' will end with maintaining the status quo and more of the same. The electoral success of Trump really shows the US public have lost confidence in its politics as well as democracy – 45% of the electorate did not even bother vote.

Trump's main foreign policy position has been working with Russia. But he will be inheriting this from Obama who was already following this direction. In Syria, the US and Russia have been in sync in maintaining the al-Assad regime and Russia played a central role in saving the regime in Damascus back in September 2015 when it was on the verge of collapse. Russia carpet bombed the rebel groups fighting al-Assad which forced many of them to America's negotiating table and its political solution of a transitional government with the existing regime.

Whatever Trump believes in or plans to do, the reality the US president has many limitations. Power in the US is dispersed over various institutions which act as a barrier to any president thinking of radical policies through. The US president is a transitional position, in the sense that the specific president deals with the same underlying issues, rather than a different set of issues. Successive US presidents have to deal with maintaining US global interests, dealing with both global and regional threats and maintaining the country's dominant position. Considering Trump has no political experience he will have to gather numerous advisors around him which will effectively make him redundant.

Whilst Many America will be celebrating the election of a complete outsider to the White House they have in reality elected billionaire businessman who actually represents everything that is wrong with the US. Whilst the US public can sense there is something seriously wrong, they are yet to work out the institutions and systems that produce such corrupt people in what needs to be addressed. The US establishment will have their work cut out to ensure the Trump presidency doesn't lead to that.

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