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Pearson Institute/AP-NORC Poll: Public Outlook on U.S. Foreign Policy Differs Significantly from Views under the Trump Administration

Three-quarters say the U.S. and the U.N. have a responsibility to protect the rights of women and minority groups around the world.

CHICAGO, October 11, 2022 – Two years into the Biden administration, majorities believe the U.S. relationship with allies and its standing in the world will remain stable or improve in the next year, but expect relationships with traditionally hostile nations to deteriorate.

These are among the results of a new study from the [Pearson Institute for the Study and Resolution of Global Conflicts at the University of Chicago](#) and [The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research](#) released today ahead of the [2022 Pearson Global Forum](#). The Forum on October 14th will bring together researchers and policymakers to address these issues and develop strategies to prevent and resolve international conflicts.

The results stand in stark contrast to those from an AP-NORC survey¹ conducted two years into the Trump administration that found about half of the public expected the U.S. relationship with allies to worsen. At that time, just a quarter expected worsening relationships with traditionally hostile nations such as Russia and North Korea.

Four years ago, 75% of Democrats thought the U.S. standing would get worse; now, 75% expect it to stay the same or improve. Today, 57% of Republicans expect U.S. standing to worsen; in 2018, 57% thought it would improve.

“The survey highlights a large shift in public beliefs about the United States’ relationships with traditional allies and adversaries in the last four years that is driven by the partisan divide,” says Sheila Kohanteb, Forum Executive Director at the Pearson Institute for Study and Resolution of Global Conflict. “At the same time, there is broad support across the political spectrum for foreign policy goals such as preventing discrimination around the world.”

Majorities of adults across party lines are largely supportive of several foreign policy goals, including the protection of women and minority groups, the protection of the environment internationally, the promotion of economic growth worldwide, and the maintenance of a strong national defense.

¹The June 2018 AP-NORC Center Poll, June 2018, https://apnorc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/June-2018-AP-NORC-Poll-Topline_Release2.pdf

Three-quarters of people say that the U.S. government has a similar degree of responsibility as the United Nations for protecting the rights of women and minority groups around the world. But even as most see the United States as responsible for human rights abroad, only about 1 in 5 say the United States stands above all other countries in the world when it comes to protecting the rights of women, racial and ethnic minorities, religious minorities, or LGBTQ people.

Most believe that countries that regularly fail to protect the rights of women and minority groups should not receive financial support from the U.S. (78%) or international organizations like the World Bank (72%), not be allowed to join the U.N. (62%), nor be allowed to participate in the Olympics (62%).

“The findings provide evidence of broad support for international actors to pursue policies designed to improve the lives of women and minority groups around the world,” said David Sterrett, senior research scientist with The AP-NORC Center. “The study also highlights significant and important differences in attitudes toward American foreign policy.”

About the Study

This study was funded by the Pearson Institute for the Study and Resolution of Global Conflicts at the University of Chicago and conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. Staff from the Pearson Institute, at Harris Public Policy, and The AP-NORC Center collaborated on all aspects of the study. Interviews for this survey were conducted between September 9 and September 12, 2022, with adults age 18 and older representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,003 completed the survey. Interviews were conducted in English. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 4.0 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect.

A full description of the study methodology for the survey can be found at the end of the report on www.apnorc.org

About the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research taps into the power of social science research and the highest-quality journalism to bring key information to people across the nation and throughout the world.

- The Associated Press (AP) is an independent global news organization dedicated to factual reporting. Founded in 1846, AP today remains the most trusted source of fast, accurate, unbiased news in all formats and the essential provider of the technology and

services vital to the news business. More than half the world's population sees AP journalism every day. www.ap.org

- NORC at the University of Chicago is one of the oldest objective and nonpartisan research institutions in the world. www.norc.org

The two organizations have established The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research to conduct, analyze, and distribute social science research in the public interest on newsworthy topics, and to use the power of journalism to tell the stories that research reveals. In its 10 years, The AP-NORC Center has conducted more than 250 studies exploring the critical issues facing the public, covering topics like health care, the economy, COVID-19, trust in media, and more.

Learn more at www.apnorc.org.

About the Pearson Institute

The Pearson Institute for the Study and Resolution of Global Conflicts at the University of Chicago promotes the ongoing discussion, understanding and resolution of global conflicts, and contributes to the advancement of a global society more at peace. Established through a grant from The Thomas L. Pearson and The Pearson Family Members Foundation, and led by Institute Director James Robinson, co-author of *Why Nations Fail* and *The Narrow Corridor*, the Institute achieves this by employing an analytically rigorous, data-driven approach and global perspective to understanding violent conflict. It is global in its scope, activities and footprint. Attracting students and scholars from around the world, its faculty is in the field studying conflicts – and approaches to conflict resolution – in Nigeria, Colombia and Afghanistan, to name just a few.

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