

WIN WITHOUT WAR



Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief

Intel for Advocacy

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SL: 5 Things You Might Have Missed In Foreign Policy

Five Things You Might Have Missed in This Week's Foreign Policy News

This was a full week in foreign policy news but we wouldn't be surprised if you missed it amidst Super Tuesday and Coronavirus headlines. So this week, we decided against the usual deep-dive, and to instead take a look into five things that you might have missed: what's happening, why it's important, and what it means for progressive foreign policy.

1. Trump's Visit to India Sparks Pogroms

Over forty people were killed, and dozens more injured, in [anti-Muslim riots](#) that erupted in Delhi early last week. Windows were broken, houses stormed, and mosques burned — all under the watchful eye of a complicit police force and with the tacit support of the ruling BJP government. The riots came on the heels of weeks of protests against a blatantly Islamophobic law that createa a fast-track to citizenship for refugees of a number of specified faiths, pointedly excluding Islam, as well as a repressive [crackdown](#) on the Muslim-majority state of Kashmir.

It is no coincidence that the violence broke out at the same time Donald Trump was visiting. Trump has made little effort to hide that he sees a common cause with authoritarians, right-wing nationalists, and Islamophobes around the world, from [Jair Bolsanaro](#) in Brazil to Narendra Modi in India — he refused to condemn the anti-Muslim violence that ocured during his visit, has openly praised the Modi government, and even [promised](#) billions of dollars worth in arms sales.

This is unacceptable. That's why this week, we [joined](#) a coalition of organizations to call on Congress and the Trump administration to hold the government of India accountable for its grave, anti-Muslim acts.

2. War Powers Belong to the People

The system of checks and balances is broken. For too long, the powers of national security, vested in Congress by Article I of the Constitution, have been overridden by an increasingly powerful presidency. Nowhere is this more apparent than in matters of war powers, arms sales,

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and national emergencies. In administration after administration, both Democratic and Republican, we've seen these powers abused to [send](#) billions of dollars worth of weapons to Saudi Arabia and continue U.S. support for the Saudi and Emirati-led intervention in Yemen despite Congress's bipartisan opposition; [expand](#) our endless wars without Congress's approval; and declare thirty-three separate 'national emergencies,' providing extraordinary powers to the president, with no congressional action to remove them from the books.

This week, the House Rules Committee held a [hearing](#) on these very issues, the first step in a new bipartisan [movement](#) working toward restoring the balance of national security powers. Together with our partners in this coalition, Win Without War is fighting to rein in the imperial presidency, reassert the authorities of congress, and bring U.S. foreign policy power back to the people. Amplify our [tweet thread](#) to thank Reps. Jim McGovern and Tom Cole for shedding a light on these important issues!

3. Maximum Pressure Has Failed

This week, the International Atomic Energy Agency announced that Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium has [exceeded](#) the limits defined by the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), or Iran nuclear deal. Make no mistake, this is a clear sign that Trump administration's "maximum pressure" policy has failed. Prior to Trump's decision to unilaterally abandon the JCPOA, the multilateral, diplomatic route was succeeding. Now, under Pompeo and Trump's leadership, years of progress have been lost.

The maximum pressure policy has also made itself felt in other ways as well; blanket economic sanctions have played a role in [undermining](#) Iran's ability to effectively respond to the coronavirus outbreak. This means that not only will more Iranians [suffer and die](#) under a brutal sanctions regime, but that the U.S. obsession with counterproductive antagonism toward Iran is, once again, endangering American lives too. Let this be a lesson: in the face of threats like the climate crisis and global pandemics, human security is tied across borders.

We expect that next week the House will take up the Senate-passed War Power Resolution, ([S.J.Res.68](#)), legislation to block the ability of Donald Trump to unilaterally launch an illegal war on Iran without Congressional authorization. Though this alone won't normalize relations between the United States and Iran, or end the devastating sanctions, it's a clear signal that Congress will not allow the failed policy of maximum pressure to become a new war.

4. \$44 Billion Closer to Armageddon

We don't have enough money to provide healthcare, strengthen our education system, or combat the impending, existentially-threatening global climate crisis, but for weapons of mass destruction that recklessly endanger all of life on earth? For that, we have tens of billions of more dollars to spare.

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This week, the House Armed Services Committee began [hearings](#) on the nuclear weapons allocations in Trump's Fiscal Year 2021 budget request. As just one outrage among many in this [reckless budget](#), the Trump administration has requested an eye-popping \$44 billion toward the U.S. nuclear arsenal — almost exactly what was [requested](#) for the State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, and all other international programs combined.

This nuclear weapons spending spree is an obscene imbalance of priorities. Diplomacy, peace-building, and development are the most important tools that the U.S. has at its disposal for promoting a more secure, prosperous world. Nuclear weapons, on the other hand, make the world less safe. This \$44 billion is not only money better spent elsewhere — on meeting critical human needs — it is money spent increasing the risk of nuclear catastrophe. It's time to change our priorities.

5. A Humanitarian Emergency in Idlib and a Xenophobic Riot in Greece

Turkey and Russia have [agreed](#) to a ceasefire in Idlib. This positive step comes after clashes between the Turkish military and Russian-backed Syrian government forces risked widening into a direct confrontation between the two countries. If the deal holds, it will be a welcome respite. But the overall war rages on. For the people of Idlib, who have been caught in the crossfire, it's not enough.

In a catastrophic nine-year civil war, the recent Syrian government offensive into the last rebel-held province in the country has been particularly devastating. In a three month period, over 800,000 people have been [displaced](#). Without adequate humanitarian aid, and lacking access to proper housing in the harsh winter conditions, some have even [frozen to death](#). The mass displacement has had resounding consequences. Responding to the record number of refugees on its border, the Turkish government recently [renege](#)d on a 2016 deal with the European Union to prevent Syrian refugees from passing through to Europe. Now, as the displaced make their way to Greece, Greek authorities and xenophobic nationalists have begun a violent [offensive](#) to [force](#) them back. In a particularly perverse twist, the language of solidarity was then appropriated by anti-migrant forces, as #StandWithGreece trended across Europe to express support for violent anti-migrant rioters.

After years of normalizing anti-migrant policies, including the banning of Syrians from its borders, the U.S. is not innocent in this crisis. The U.S. must act, not only to use its diplomatic influence to encourage a peaceful resolution to the war in Syria, but to provide humanitarian relief to its victims, open its borders to those seeking refuge, and pressure the European Union to do the same. You can help too: click [here](#) to donate to help the people of Idlib.

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The International Criminal Court is opening an [inquiry](#) into alleged war crimes committed by the U.S. in Afghanistan. Despite what the Washington establishment and Trump administration may think, no one should be able to commit war crimes with [impunity](#).

Why is it politicians are [always asked](#) how they'll pay for life-saving social programs but they're never asked how they'll pay for war?

As the Trump administration [makes up lies](#) to justify using landmines again after a 28-year moratorium, civilians around the world suffer, with landmines killing almost 2,500 children in 2017 alone.

Trump's not the only one enabling Modi's fascism. **Joe Biden's director of Asian American Pacific Islander outreach was recently [revealed](#) to be a fervent supporter of the BJP's extremist anti-Muslim policies.** So far, no action has been taken.

The future of Afghanistan must include [women's voices](#) to ensure lasting and just peace.

As if 2020 hasn't been stressful enough, **the Supreme Court is hearing a case that may fundamentally challenge [a woman's right to choose](#).** That means that the right to abortion is now, partially, in the hands of none other than Brett Kavanaugh!

While Latin American countries have taken steps to mitigate [gender-based violence](#), **femicide rates are still unconscionably high. The international community must stand in solidarity with Latinx feminist activists** to enact real change.

A Trump [administration appointee](#) thinks civil society advocating for nuclear disarmament is weakening our democracy, but we know that it's the exact opposite. **Nuclear nonproliferation demanded by the people is not only democratic but makes us, and the world, safer.**

Nineteen states are [suing](#) Trump for diverting funds to his racist, xenophobic border wall, arguing that it violates Congress's constitutional power of appropriation.

And finally, **Bailey Warren may not be hitting the campaign trail with his human anymore but he is still making waves, [stealing a burrito](#) in the cutest act of rebellion.**