

# SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FROM PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS (morning session)

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## I. The Bush administration's worldview and foreign policy priorities

- The Bush administration is essentially committed to maintaining US primacy and flexibility; however, it is not isolationist or unilateralist. It will pursue a "policy of the free hand" to minimize constraints on American freedom to act. (See the Cain report at [www.npi.org](http://www.npi.org)) The administration does not reject multilateralism. It believes that the post cold war world cannot be governed by "feel good treaties." In its view, multilateralism needs strong leadership (unilateralism?) for others to follow.
- The Bush administration does not have a fully developed conception of how the world has changed in the past decade or what it wants the international community to look like. However, it does share Dick Cheney's view that the international landscape is "infested with weeds, rodents and insects and the last (Clinton) administration did not do a good job of maintaining the grounds." In general there appears to be a deep-rooted hatred of the Clinton administration and anything he stands for.
- Foreign policy was an important issue in the presidential primaries or election and Bush did not say much about it in his campaign. His early priorities revolved around tax cuts. We have not yet seen how much "political blood" Bush is willing to spend for foreign policy. There is generally no domestic political reward for action in foreign policy. Intensely motivated foreign policy interest groups will make Bush pay for pursuing policies they oppose. Bush's administration is currently sorting out which foreign policy issues and interests to accommodate, and on which to take a harder line. Early indications suggest two categories of foreign policy issues:
  1. Issues where the administration is willing to spend "political blood" - for example, National Missile Defense (NMD) and the Kyoto Protocol,
  2. Issues where the administration is "softening" and less willing to spill "political blood", such as the Balkans, the IMF and whether or not to bail out Turkey.