

The inauguration of the Bush administration is arguably the defining element for this year's Summit. The Bush administration has set out new international policy directions in many areas, driven in part by ideology and in part by a concern about the slowing US economy. Some of those policies have been starkly different from those of the Clinton administration: climate change and energy, Russia and China being the most notable departures. But there is continuity in other areas - like on HIV/AIDs.

This seems to be an administration made up of large and influential personalities with very strong views on policy - Cheney, O'Neil, Rumsfield, Powell. It is certainly clear that the policy approaches of the US will, as always, have a major influence on pretty well every issue on every table.