



Introduction

Fresh off a midterm victory, the Biden administration is looking abroad and seeing multiple areas of crisis that demand the urgent attention of this cabinet. First and foremost is the situation in Ukraine, the need to uphold NATO principles, and the desire to be a counterweight against Russian aggression in Eastern Europe. The U.S. is one of the biggest, if not the biggest, voices upholding NATO solidarity and unity in the face of a Russia that is probing and seeking to recreate its old USSR glory. The NATO alliance has held true for 70 years, even in light of recent isolationist trends domestically. Last year, Russia invaded its neighbor Ukraine, and though many expected Kyiv to fall quickly, Ukrainian forces have managed to hold their own and defend their country. Even though Ukraine is not a part of NATO, for both the U.S. and its NATO allies, the country's recent invasion from Russia can be considered another test of its commitment to NATO and undoubtedly will continue to be hugely significant for American foreign policy. In August 2022, the White House announced an additional \$2.98 billion in aid and military aid to top off the over \$13 billion sent to Ukraine, but some still argue it is far from enough.¹

Outside of Ukraine, the Biden administration has sought to lead an international coalition against the PRC's growing imperialism. PRC, as a rising hegemony keen on promoting authoritarianism, poses potentially the biggest threat to the U.S.-led world order. The PRC has focused on economic diplomacy via its BRI/OBOR initiative to win over key allies in Africa and South America while building its military capacity to defend Chinese interests in the South China Sea. Particularly troubling is the recent hawkish language by PRC officials regarding Taiwan or the ROC. While the PRC has always maintained that it intends to reunite the island of Taiwan with the PRC, that language has sharply increased in both tone and urgency over the past year. Military analysts warn that President Xi Jinping could use a potential ROC hostility to distract from protests in Beijing and throughout the country.

Domestically, for the Biden administration, some of the biggest complaints echoing through public opinion have emerged from rising gas prices and inflation. The recent invasion has created shocks in the supply chain, especially leading to food and energy shortages. However, how the U.S. deals with Russia and China will change the course of history and set a precedent for the watchful allies of other foreign states. Will the United States protect its reputation as a beacon of democracy and leader on the world stage, or choke in this pivotal moment?

¹ [U.S. Announces \\$2.98 Billion in Aid to Ukraine](#)

State of the World

The current state of the world is one of turmoil and constant upheaval. Growing conflicts continue to disrupt any sense of normalcy as the U.S. upholds our mission to protect democracy and liberalism worldwide. The information required to be fully up to date is far too comprehensive to list in its entirety here. Cabinet members interested in fulfilling their due diligence should refer to the State of the World brief for material related to the overarching themes and conflicts. Notable sections include information regarding the main key states intervening in U.S. geopolitical interests, multinational organizations, various media organizations, and the world's main international touchpoints.

Domestic Issues Facing this Cabinet

With Reverend Raphael Warnock (D) taking the U.S. Senate Seat for Georgia in a runoff election from the 2022 midterms against Herschel Walker (R), America's 2022 midterm elections have concluded with interesting and unknown consequences for domestic and foreign policy. The Senate is 49 Republican seats to 49 Democratic seats, requiring a tiebreaker vote for legislation to pass in a highly polarized era of American politics.

The GOP underperformed in the midterms contrary to polling and commentators' expectations. Many local Republican officials have expressed discontent with candidates endorsed by former President Donald Trump, who experienced losses in key swing primaries around the country, such as Walker, Mehmet Oz in Pennsylvania, and Blake Masters in Arizona². Over half of all Republican midterm candidates raised doubts about the integrity of the results of the 2020 election, and of the 49 Republican seats, 5 senators who deny the 2020 election will take office to join 4 incumbents with similar opinions³. The presence of legislators, even as a minority bloc, who deny the strength and security of vital American institutions represents a serious obstacle to this Cabinet in protecting and furthering American interests.

Ultimately, these next two years under the Biden Administration and party performance for both the Democrats and the GOP will have significant impacts on the American quality of life nationwide. These two factors will also be key indicators for the outcome of the 2024 presidential election.

A foundational domestic issue that will affect all other issues resolved by this Cabinet and the rest of the Biden Administration is climate change. Hurricanes in Florida, droughts, and fires in California, and the decay of energy grid infrastructure nationwide illustrate the precarious situation many Americans find themselves in as they are less able to account for their basic

² [2022 Georgia election results: Warnock beats Walker in Georgia, padding Dems' Senate edge - POLITICO](#)

³ [2022 midterm elections: Election deniers who won and lost - CBS News](#)

needs. Runaway inflation and the increasing real costs of goods after COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine further compound the effects of climate change.

The U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) submits annual reports, named “Our Changing Planet” to Congress, aiding policymakers in understanding and acting on the issues behind climate change⁴. For example, the USGCRP evaluates interagency activities, such as the cooperation of the Department of Defense with other partners to produce actionable research on climate change. Such activities have informed agricultural policy to maintain crop yields amidst the effects of climate change as well as lead to more sustainable farming.

The most recent Climate Change Impacts report at the regional level indicates several key takeaways⁵. The average temperature has increased to 1.9°F in the United States since 1970. The frequency of extreme weather events has increased nationwide. The intensity, frequency, and duration of hurricanes in the North Atlantic Ocean have increased considerably, including the number of Category 4 and 5 hurricanes. The frost-free season is increasing, particularly in the western United States, ice volume and surface are reducing, the global sea level has risen by nearly 8 inches since 1880, and ocean acidification is impacting marine ecosystems.

To respond to these growing environmental hazards, the Biden Administration created the National Climate Task Force, with leaders across agencies working to achieve the following goals⁶:

- Reducing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions to at least 50% below 2005 levels in 2030;
- Reaching 100% carbon pollution-free electricity by 2035;
- Achieving a net-zero emissions economy by 2050;
- Delivering 40% of the benefits from federal investments in climate and clean energy to disadvantaged communities.

To maintain these goals and continue efforts against the climate change crisis that will benefit all Americans, the Cabinet must consider long-term solutions and how to navigate the upcoming 2024 elections to maintain policy consistency and vital support for Americans, including workers and marginalized groups, amidst these pressing issues.

⁴ [Highlights | GlobalChange.gov](#)

⁵ [Climate Change Impacts in the United States](#)

⁶ [National Climate Task Force | The White House](#)

Appendices

Bloc Positions

- The impact of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine may lead to substantial changes in the liberal world order and bloc alliances. As it stands, international support for Ukraine is closely linked to pre-existing economic relationships with Russia.
- International responses to climate change heavily impact the ability of the U.S. to respond effectively. As one of the world’s top carbon emissions producers, the U.S. has an international obligation to commit fully to climate change initiatives while still maintaining priority for U.S. interests. This includes balancing green energy development with the role of the energy industry in both the domestic and global economy.

Key Terms











- “Election deniers”: a colloquial term for U.S. officials that question the integrity of the 2020 elections;
- The U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP): a government agency that researches the impacts of climate change;
- DoD: The Department of Defense.

Additional Resources

- More on the USGCRP: <https://www.globalchange.gov/explore>
- More on the National Climate Task Force: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/climate/>

Appendix A: Selected Observed & Projected Climate Change Impacts (USGCRP)

Selected Observed and Projected Climate Change Impacts

	Northeast	Communities are affected by heat waves, more extreme precipitation events, and coastal flooding due to sea level rise and storm surge.
	Southeast and Caribbean	Decreased water availability, exacerbated by population growth and land-use change, causes increased competition for water. There are increased risks associated with extreme events such as hurricanes.
	Midwest	Longer growing seasons and rising carbon dioxide levels increase yields of some crops, although these benefits have already been offset in some instances by occurrence of extreme events such as heat waves, droughts, and floods.
	Great Plains	Rising temperatures lead to increased demand for water and energy and impacts on agricultural practices.
	Southwest	Drought and increased warming foster wildfires and increased competition for scarce water resources for people and ecosystems.
	Northwest	Changes in the timing of streamflow related to earlier snowmelt reduce the supply of water in summer, causing far-reaching ecological and socioeconomic consequences.
	Alaska	Rapidly receding summer sea ice, shrinking glaciers, and thawing permafrost cause damage to infrastructure and major changes to ecosystems. Impacts to Alaska Native communities increase.
	Hawai'i and Pacific Islands	Increasingly constrained freshwater supplies, coupled with increased temperatures, stress both people and ecosystems and decrease food and water security.
	Coasts	Coastal lifelines, such as water supply infrastructure and evacuation routes, are increasingly vulnerable to higher sea levels and storm surges, inland flooding, and other climate-related changes.
	Oceans	The oceans are currently absorbing about a quarter of human-caused carbon dioxide emissions to the atmosphere and over 90% of the heat associated with global warming, leading to ocean acidification and the alteration of marine ecosystems.