



Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Bachelor in Global Communication
Final dissertation

“Twitter diplomacy”, US foreign policy and
American soft power during the Trump
Administration.

Author: **Angélica Rodríguez Peña**

Supervisor: **Prof. Manuel Romero González-Llanos**

Universidad Pontificia de Comillas

Madrid, Abril de 2023.

Executive summary

This study analyzes former president Donald J. Trump's use of Twitter as both a political communication and a foreign policy-making tool. It identifies some of the key concepts in the field of twitterdiplomacy, attempting to identify the challenges and opportunities in this new way of communicating with the public. It additionally dives into the ideas of soft power and of the liberal international order as a framework to understand Trump's twitterdiplomacy. The study analyzes the key characteristics of Trump's use of this social media platform, and how it impacted the way some of his 'illiberal' policies were received, as well as the overall image of the United States. Moreover, a case study on the withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement is used to exemplify this impact. In this sense, it provides a discussion on the limits and key variables of new political communication channels and on the role that policy decisions play in the equation. Finally, it concludes with an overview of the impact on American soft power during the Trump administration, as seen by the favorability or perceived legitimacy of the country and its leader.

Key words: Donald J. Trump, twitterdiplomacy, political communication, foreign policy, liberal international order, soft power.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	6
PURPOSE AND MOTIVATIONS	8
STATE OF THE ART	9
A. Twiplomacy or twitterdiplomacy: the evolution of an idea	9
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	19
A. Soft power	19
B. The liberal international order (LIO) and Trump’s “America First”	22
RESEARCH GOALS, QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS	26
METHODOLOGY	28
1. Data recollection techniques	28
2. Data analysis techniques	28
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	30
Part I: Donald Trump, Twitterdiplomacy and Foreign Policy	30
Number one: Twitter is not just another political communication tool for Trump	30
Number two: Trump’s use of Twitter is strategic	34
Trump’s communication style/tone in Twitter is his tone in real life	39
PART II: CASE STUDY	43
Foreign policy context: America First and the Liberal International Order	43
Reactions by foreign and domestic leaders	52
PART III: IMPLICATIONS FOR AMERICAN SOFT POWER	59
1. U.S. image deteriorates as doubts are cast on Trump’s leadership	59
2. Around the globe, there is widespread resistance to Trump’s “illiberal” policy stances.	60
3. Trump is considered to be arrogant, intolerant, dangerous, but also a strong leader.....	62
4. Mixed ratings about American soft power and relations with the U.S.....	63
5. Final insights and important caveats: Trump’s twitterdiplomacy, Trump’s foreign policy or Trump	64
CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS	67

REFERENCES 69

Figure 1 - Countries in 2012 12

Figure 2 - Countries in 2020 12

Figure 3 - Twitter diplomacy vs. Traditional diplomacy 18

Figure 4 - The spectrum of hard and soft power 22

Figure 5 - The Liberal International Order 24

Figure 6 - Tweet: nuclear button 33

Figure 7 - Total tweets with attacks 36

Figure 8 - Total tweets with praise 36

Figure 9 - Total 'other tweets' 37

Figure 10 - Tweet: spoiling diplomatic negotiations. 40

Figure 11 - Letter to Erdogan 42

Figure 12 - Timeline of Trump’s Foreign Policy in 2017 43

Figure 13 - Tweet: anticipating the Paris decision 48

Figure 14 - Tweet: Discrediting and building support post-decision. 52

Figure 15 - Tweet: UNFCCC Joint Statement 54

Figure 16 - Tweet: Canada "deeply disappointed" 54

Figure 17 - Tweet: Mexico [Translation] "maintain our support" 54

Figure 18 - Tweet: France "Make our planet great again" 55

Figure 19 - Tweet: France "reaffirm our support" 55

Figure 20 - Tweet: Germany "disappointed" 55

Figure 21 - Tweet: Sweden "humanity's last chance" 55

Figure 22 - Tweet: EU "it doesn't work like that" 56

Figure 23 - Tweet: EU "a sad day for the global community" 56

Figure 24 - Tweet: Marshall Islands "disappointing and confusing" 57

Figure 25 - Tweet: Greenpeace International " US from climate leader to climate deadbeat" 57

Figure 26 - Confidence and views 60

Figure 27 - Favorability down accross the globe 60

Figure 28 - Disapproval of illiberal policies 61

Figure 29 - Disapproval from climate withdrawal 61

Figure 30 - Views on Trump.....	62
Figure 31 - Relations with the U.S.....	64
Figure 32 - Mixed impact on American soft power.....	64

INTRODUCTION

Donald J. Trump, the 45th president of the United States was known for many unprecedented practices in American history. He seemed to inaugurate an era of “firsts” in the U.S. presidency – first president ever with no previous political or military experience (Crockett, 2017), first president to be impeached twice by the House of Representatives (Pramuk, 2021), and now more recently, first former president to be indicted on criminal charges (Baker, 2023). Beyond these facts, along with many other “firsts” that could be mentioned, Trump also seemed to stand out for inaugurating a new era of political communication – he was the first president to really carry out a *280-character approach* to diplomacy.

Much has been written about the link between Donald Trump and Twitter. This symbiotic relationship seems to encapsulate many of the complex phenomena of the modern world – the ability of leaders to communicate directly and instantaneously with the public, the rise of populist discourse in many western democracies, or the omnipresent role of social media in contemporary political life. Although there have been several studies aimed at measuring and analyzing Donald Trump’s use of Twitter both before and during his presidency, there has been relatively little research on the impact that his ‘twitter diplomacy’ has had specifically on foreign policy and on American ‘soft power’.

In keeping with the list of “firsts” inaugurated by Trump, this former president marked the first time since World War II that the United States has been led by an “isolationist” leader – Trump’s line of policy stood for what has been called by some experts as a new kind of isolationism, an era of ‘abdicating’ global leadership and choosing to walk away from important institutions and alliances. (Haass, 2018 as cited in Wright, 2018). His leadership style, as illustrated in his use of Twitter, combined with certain unpopular foreign policy decisions, joined to create the perfect conditions for the erosion of America’s image in the international arena. The goal of this research paper will be to precisely analyze in-depth the characteristics of Trump’s twitterdiplomacy, the role it played in the projection of his foreign policy, and how this impacted the way the United States was perceived by the rest of the world.

This study first reviews some of the most important works dealing with the subject of twitterdiplomacy, identifying the key trends and ideas in this field. It then provides an extensive description of the concepts of “soft power” and of the “liberal international order” as important

theoretical frameworks to analyze the impact of Donald Trump's political communication and foreign policy. It subsequently offers an account of the most important features of Trump's use of the social media platform, then exemplified by a specific foreign policy decision. Foreign reactions to this decision are considered, as well as some of the most important indicators of changes in America's soft power – as measured by international public opinion. Finally, some conclusions and important lessons are extracted from the analysis. The overarching mission at the end will be to have understood a little bit better why the former president's case might be considered so unique or unprecedented – and we will see there is more than one reason.

PURPOSE AND MOTIVATIONS

On one hand this study will assess the impact of Trump’s “twitterdiplomacy” regarding certain policies, on the ‘soft power’¹ of the United States in the world and analyze the international response to a specific foreign policy decision under his administration. On the other hand, it will attempt to determine whether the use of this particular social media platform by the former U.S. president as a political communication tool had an impact on additional variables such as the general practice of twitter diplomacy and the foreign policy decision-making process.

Thus, from a **theoretical point of view**, the study will seek to explore the relationships between twitter diplomacy, foreign policy, and American soft power during the Trump Administration. Given that foreign policy is a complex and broad field of analysis, this paper will focus specifically on decisions that could be considered at odds with the “liberal international order” of which the United States has been a chief defender and architect since 1945. Although this concept will be extensively defined further in the study, the essential ideas it stands for are those of multilateralism, political and economic liberalism, and respect for a rules-based system in international relations (Kundnani, 2017).

From an **empirical perspective**, it will consider not only tweets, but also public opinion polls, academic research papers, diplomatic actions and official responses by foreign leaders. After exploring the main features of Trump’s twitter diplomacy, it will consider the withdrawal from the Paris international agreement and assess the impact this decision, among others, had on American soft power. In other words, how this decision, the way it was communicated, and the broader foreign policy context impacted the manner in which the United States was perceived by the rest of the world, specially by long-time allies and partners.

Finally, the main **practical motivation** for this research is to further the knowledge on how ‘twitterdiplomacy’ can have a real-world impact on how political decisions are perceived, and perhaps even how they are made. This study may thus be useful in assessing how diplomatic codes can better adapt to new communication tools, or likewise how these tools are best used to reach

¹ The significance and evolution of concept of ‘soft power’ will be explored in the theoretical framework.

their full diplomatic potential. Consequently, it could be of value for political communication experts, guiding future design of official diplomatic guidelines. More generally, by better understanding how Donald Trump’s communication of certain foreign policy decisions influenced the opinions and perceptions of millions of people outside the U.S., one can further comprehend the implications the new technological trends and media have on a changing 21st century political communication.

STATE OF THE ART

A. Twiplomacy or twitterdiplomacy: the evolution of an idea

“Twitter really wasn’t created for diplomacy. Twitters not even created to have a conversation.”

James Carafano.²

Although James Carafano might have a point, the reality about twitterdiplomacy or *twiplomacy* might be more complicated than that. The term “*twiplomacy*” was first coined in a 2012 study by the U.S. public relations firm Burson-Marsteller (BCW)³, which at the time described it as the “first-ever global study of world leaders on Twitter” and constituted the first significant attempt to track and analyze the use of this social media platform by these leaders (Heilprin, 2012). The study has been renewed almost every year since 2012 and could be considered one of the most thorough and relevant sources on the matter of twitterdiplomacy, identifying various trends each year. To this moment it considers over 32 variables, including followers, retweets, mentions, languages, mutual connections, probability of first-person or third person-editing, and other relevant data about the overall activity of leaders in the platform (*Twiplomacy Study*, 2012).

The study provides crucial data and serves as an important point of reference for most of the research that has been developed in the field. In fact, contrasting some of the key aspects between the original 2012 study and the latest one in 2020 might be enlightening when starting to analyze the state of twitterdiplomacy⁴. There are some revealing statistics. For example, in 2012, two thirds of all world leaders - about 125 countries - had a presence on twitter (*Twiplomacy Study*,

² As cited in Schwarzenbach, 2015.

³ Since 2018 it is known as Burson Cohn & Wolfe (BCW).

⁴ The terms “twitterdiplomacy” and “twiplomacy” will be used interchangeably throughout this paper.

2012), while in 2020 official institutional accounts represented 98% of 193 of UN member states (*Twiplomacy Study*, 2020). In other words, the use of Twitter by heads of governments and states has exponentially grown, making it an arguably more relevant means of political communication in recent years.⁵ Some significant qualitative changes can be observed as well. For instance, the variable “most followed leaders” on Twitter could arguably illustrate how the relative weight and importance of certain countries has grown, decreased or remain the same⁶ (see Figure 1 and Figure 2).

Table 1 - Most followed leaders in 2012

(Source: author's own elaboration based on BCW, 2012)

Most followed leaders (accounts)	Twitter handle	Number of followers
Barack Obama (U.S.)	@BarackObama	17,115,077
Hugo Chávez (Venezuela)	@chavezchandanga	3,152,608
The White House (U.S.)	@WhiteHouse	2,951,928
Queen Rania (Jordan)	@QueenRania	2,174,187
David Cameron (United Kingdom)	@Number10gov	2,022,685
Abdullah Gül (Turkey)	@cabadullahgul	1,973,639
Felipe Calderón (Mexico)	@FelipeCalderon	1,890,136
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Turkey)	@RT_Erdogan	1,569,377
Dilma Rousseff (Brazil)	@dilmabr	1,492,552
Dimitry Medvedev (Russia)	@MedvedevRussia	1,300,809
Cristina Fernández (Argentina)	@CFKArgentina	1,140,078
Juan Manuel Santos (Colombia)	@JuanManSantos	1,074,038

⁵ BCW researchers have even expanded the research areas throughout the years to include other social media and have actually determined **Twitter as the primary channel of choice for foreign ministries and governments**, with Facebook, Youtube and Instagram in second, third and fourth places respectively (BCW, 2016). In her study on the empirical factors determining the adoption of Twitter by world governments, Pavon-Guinea (2017) explains the rapid increase in the use of this social medium using Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory, explaining how factors such as time, number of users in a given country and regime-type influence the decision to join the network.

⁶ This would go in accordance with the conclusions reached by Hayes (2018) in his study on the impact of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) on the practice of diplomacy. While technologies themselves are very influential on diplomatic practice, he also recognized the existence of latent variables such as wealth or power of the state. This could partly explain why while El Salvador’s Nayib Bukele seems to be one of the most active leaders on Twitter (with more than 60 tweets a day), he is not the most followed or influential leader on the platform (BCW, 2020). In fact, the most followed leader has coincided in almost all the years since the first study with the president of the United States, regardless of the differences there might be between Barack Obama and Donald J. Trump. This might be more reflective of the United States’ position in the world than of the appeal of a specific leader.

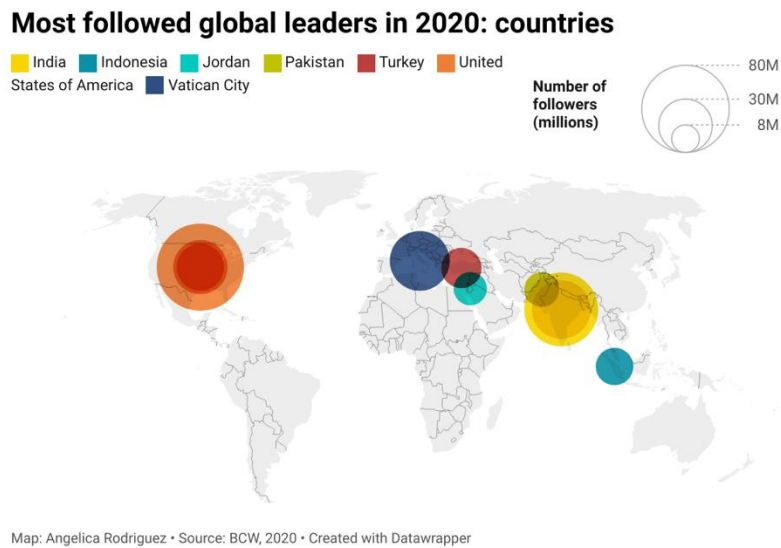
Table 2 – Most followed leaders in 2020
 (Source: author's own elaboration based on BCW, 2020)

Most followed leaders (accounts)	Twitter handle	Number of followers
Donald J. Trump (U.S.)	@realDonaldTrump	79,260,627
Narendra Modi (India)	@NarendraModi	56,183,519
Pope Francis (Vatican)	@Pontifex	36,357,040
PMO India (India)	@PMOIndia	34,806,517
President Trump (U.S.)	@POTUS	29,761,227
The White House (U.S.)	@WhiteHouse	22,067,049
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Turkey)	@RT_Erdogan	15,811,059
Joko Widodo (Indonesia)	@Jokowi	13,560,184
Imran Khan (Pakistan)	@ImranKhanOfficial	11,607,101
Rania Al Abdullah	@QueenRania	10,435,132

Figure 1 - Countries in 2012
 (Source: Author's own elaboration based on BCW, 2012)



Figure 2 - Countries in 2020
 (Source: Author's own elaboration based on BCW, 2020)



There are countless ways in which the practice of twitterdiplomacy has changed in the last decade. Perhaps one of the most pertinent contributions of the *Twiplomacy* studies developed by BCW, beyond the openly available databases, has been to spark a considerable amount of research

and discussion around twitterdiplomacy and digital diplomacy or *e-diplomacy* more broadly⁷. And within this debate, a significant portion of the academic analysis of twitterdiplomacy has focused on the distinctions between this new form of diplomacy and the ‘traditional’ diplomacy, and the relative advantages and disadvantages each might present.

To better understand this focus, the typical characteristics of diplomatic language should be pointed out. Among the authors that have articulated them, Simunjak and Caliandro (2019) stand out. In their research on Trump’s diplomatic exchanges through Twitter, they gather the different features identified by scholars and conclude that there are mainly **four characteristics of diplomatic language**. First, it should be courteous, respectful and considerate, which means there should be no insulting, naming or uncivil words; secondly, diplomatic language is supposed to be constructive and positive with no place for superiority or offensive behavior; thirdly, far from being dramatic, it ought to be informed by balance and moderation, particularly in times of high tensions; and finally, it should be ambiguous, making it open to different interpretations, allowing for flexibility in negotiations, and reaching diverse publics, among other things. Simunjak and Calindro (2019) also point out that most scholars and practitioners have emphasized that, in diplomacy, what is left unsaid is almost as important as what is said. In their words: “(...) Omission of information in a diplomatic dialog is an action of itself, which sends messages to other actors in the same way as information that has been communicated” (p.2).

It is partly because of these characteristics that several researchers have attempted to discover the implications that the use of social media, and Twitter in particular, have for diplomatic relations and decision-making. New digital platforms have greatly transformed the way societies communicate in general, and each one of them has built-in features that determine every aspect of that communication process. It follows that researchers would want to analyze not only how well social media, and Twitter in particular, actually pairs up with traditional diplomatic language, but

⁷ There is an ongoing academic debate around the precise definition of digital diplomacy, given that several have been proposed, but the overall concept is that it involves the utilization of web and ICT for the achievement of diplomatic goals (Hanson, 2010). One of the most interesting aspects of the 2020 Twiplomacy study is that it is framed around the idea that the pandemic upended diplomacy, a profession characterized by travel, meetings, and personal interaction, which greatly accelerated the use of digital media by leaders, who were forced to stay in their homes, and conduct an important part of their work via online meetings. Summits and multilateral encounters were carried out online, and in this sense “diplomacy became truly digital” (BCW, 2020).

also whether the ‘marriage’ between them is beneficial, harmful, both, or just transformative. There are divergent opinions, as one might expect.

For instance, Chhabra (2020) argues that this specific platform has served as a tool to amplify archetypically diplomatic behaviors, such as negotiation and deliberation. In her analysis of twitterdiplomacy she states that Twitter grants officials with the opportunity to communicate in a more direct and informal way with the public, detaching them of the decorum and formality of traditional diplomacy, and allowing for more participation in foreign policy discussions, all of which are arguably positive changes.

In her point of view, twiplomacy offers certain advantages over traditional diplomacy: ease of communication, adequate crisis response, and image enhancement. Providing different cases from various countries, Chhabra (2020) then argues that twiplomacy not only serves as a way for states to work towards their foreign policy objectives, by setting the mood or tone prior to an international meeting for example. She also thinks it serves as a way for them to communicate with their citizens in an unexpected crisis, and even to enhance their image in the international arena. This last point is related to the ideas of soft power and nation branding as well, both of which are generally important goals desired by states when using new communication technologies to conduct diplomacy. This means that an ever-increasing number of countries are attempting to generate a positive perception in the minds of foreign audiences through social media.⁸

However, Chhabra (2020) recognizes that just as the practice of twitterdiplomacy contributes to the legitimization of ‘informal’ channels of communication, it might simultaneously mean that the value of formal channels gets undermined. The most impactful consequence of the delegitimization of formal means of communication is the *uncertainty* around the official policy of a country, given that tweets can sometimes be at odds with official statements, or can even be interpreted as “official” by other countries and by citizens⁹. In the worst-case scenario, she argues, this confusion could even lead to a serious escalation of conflict.

⁸ This is why some studies regarding twitterdiplomacy have focused on the relationship between this tool and “public diplomacy”, which is understood as the type of diplomacy that is developed to influence the public opinion in other nations (Juhanda Dinata, 2014.). Also, it should be mentioned that the importance of ‘branding’ and image enhancement is not limited to countries. The same applies to individual politicians, who have recognized the significance of using social media in order to alter public perception (Chhabra, 2020).

⁹ So extensive is the confusion around the official or unofficial nature of tweets by global leaders that it has even prompted research on the potential of tweets as the “raw material” in the formation of current customary international

Twitter's potential to increase tensions between states, whether it mean real-world hostile actions or just a deterioration of relations, is one of the most frequent points made by most researchers and commentators on the subject. In his article "*Twitterdiplomacy: Preventing Twitter Wars from Escalating into Real Wars*", Chu Wang (2019) argues that diplomatic relations can easily become more fragile as a direct consequence of this new practice. Firstly, the author recognizes that features such as increased accessibility, message control, and accelerated network effects are strong reasons for leaders to use Twitter as a diplomatic tool. By using these terms, the author makes the point that Twitter hands leaders with the opportunity to easily transmit "unfiltered" messages, over which they have complete control (including the tone, wording, and framing, and therefore, broader domestic narrative), and obtain feedback within minutes to evaluate their publics' reactions. This point resonates with Chhabra's idea on Twitter's "ease of communication" (2020) and reflects the recognition by different scholars of Twitter's advantages and its potential.

However, by the same token, Wang (2019) equally moves on to recognize that some of the features that make twitterdiplomacy an asset for states are precisely the same ones that potentially make it a liability. For instance, the possibility of posting "with no filter" means that leaders can quickly discard the traditional bureaucratic mechanism designed to stimulate a rational decision-making process regarding policy communication. By controlling the messages almost completely, leaders can often see twitterdiplomacy as an opportunity to unilaterally dictate foreign policy decisions, putting other agencies in an uncomfortable and complicated position.¹⁰ Additionally, as so often happens with words, this message control can easily translate into a public manifestation of the leader's personal preferences and opinions, potentially sending certain signals to both allies and adversaries. In other words, just as in diplomacy what is said is as important as what is left unsaid, one could say that what a leader tweets about is as important as what he or she avoids

law (Green, 2022). The fact that Trump's tweets are stored as part of his official presidential archive, even when his account no longer exists, arguably supports the idea that leaders' messages through social media have a true impact and are intrinsically linked to their official policies (Bradley, 2021).

¹⁰ One of the most notable and most cited examples is Trump's announcement of the withdrawal of US troops from northern Syria with a video in a tweet, which briefly became the official national policy and instantly generated clarifications by government officials (Wang, 2019), as well as several resignations, including the Secretary of Defense James Mattis and the U.S. envoy to the coalition fighting the Islamic State, Brett McGurk (Van Sant, 2018).

tweeting about. All of these elements can ultimately ignite or spark the question of how to mitigate the risks posed by the practice of twitterdiplomacy.¹¹

Some of these risks are also addressed by Ducombe (2019) in her analysis on the subject. She argues that the importance of this practice has been overlooked by International Relations scholars, partly because of representations of Twitter as a platform that induces problematic communication. The association of the platform with negativity, aggressiveness, or posturing makes it easy to consider it “*the online version of ‘cheap talk’ in diplomacy studies parlance*” (p.92). Yet, Ducombe (2019) also argues that in order to really understand the political consequences of social media, both online and offline, the subject needs to be addressed in all of its complexity. Just as most researchers, she starts her assessment by exploring some of the established advantages of Twitter, introducing some important nuances and considering more deeply the role of GIFs and images.

When addressing the common “ease of communication” benefit, for example, she also mentions the possibility of simultaneous engagement with foreign and domestic audiences, and the potential for shaping views or perspectives on specific policy issues¹². This feature can potentially allow them to enhance the scope of their ‘**soft power**’, since leaders can reach a much broader audience directly, bypassing the traditional gatekeepers of information, and attempt to influence the opinions of their followers when they communicate a decision. Communication, she believes, is deeply connected to power, in one way or another.¹³ Although she mentions some other advantages, such as the potential for Twitter to complement traditional diplomatic efforts and reduce tensions, or even its use as a crisis-response mechanism, Duncombe (2019) also recognizes the significant potential of Twitter to elicit negative interactions between states and the dangers of

¹¹ Wang (2019) actually addresses this question by providing some recommendations, such as updating governments’ social media guidelines, providing mandatory training for leaders and encouraging certain changes intrinsic to the platforms.

¹² Another study by D. Collins et Al (2019) found that Twitter can be used as a tool of **promoting foreign policy** as well. The authors find that during the Obama Administration, Twitter diplomacy was largely “rational”, reflecting the rational actor model, given that the focus of tweets proportionally reflected U.S. Foreign Policy objectives.

¹³ In this sense, Ducombe (2019) emphasizes once again a recurrent point in the discussion around social media in general, which is the “democratization” aspects of platforms such as Twitter, that allow every individual to freely express their opinions with virtually little or no limits. Within the broader discussion about power, the capacity of these platforms to be weaponized by authoritarian regimes (such as China), goes against the idea of democratization. The very platforms that were supposed to grant people a new kind of powerful means to express themselves, are subject to not only censorship but also overwhelming control by some regimes, who seek to monitor, track, or silence their populations (Schwarzenbach, 2015)

disinformation. In any case, she emphasizes the importance of addressing the subject, and she is ultimately inclined to carefully express the tricky balance between the opportunities and the challenges of Twitter.

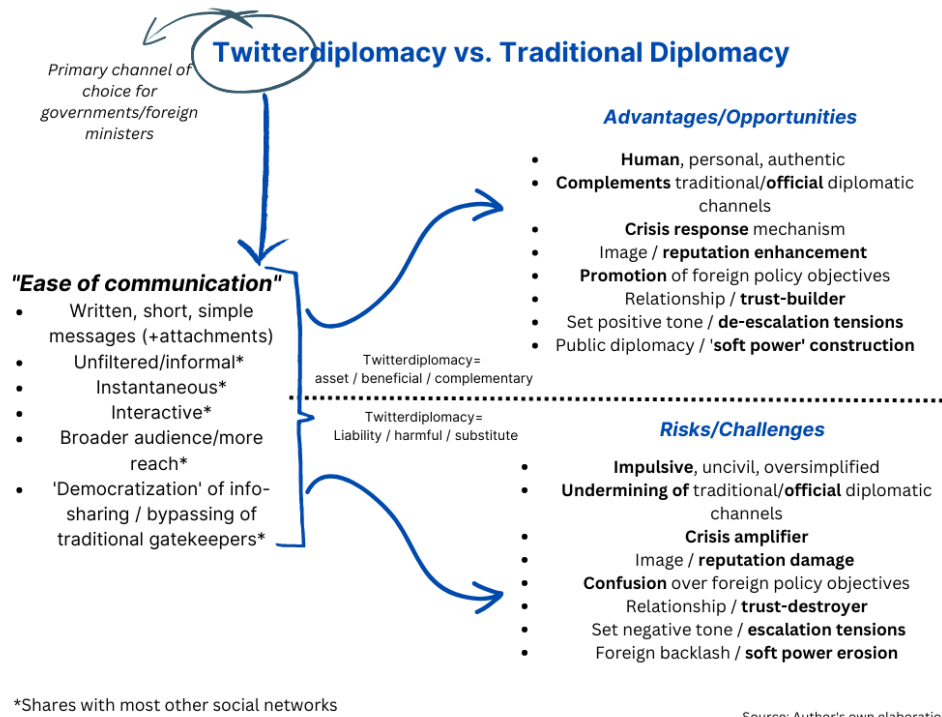
Before exploring the case of Donald Trump in the discussion, some of the shortcomings of the existence literature on twitterdiplomacy must be considered. Most authors and publications on the subject fail to distinguish between advantages of “twitterdiplomacy” and advantages of Twitter as a platform more generally, or even its most neutral characteristics. For example, “ease of communication” and “effective crisis response mechanism” are established by some authors as separate advantages of twitterdiplomacy, while the latter could be seen as a consequence of the former. In fact, it could be argued most of the both the opportunities and challenges of this new form of practicing stem from the relative “ease of communication”, which is arguably an all-encompassing characteristic that covers the rest of features (in other words, communication is relatively easy precisely because it is fast, instantaneous, interactive, more informal, etc).

The reason why both opportunities and risks derive from this feature is that the relative ease of communication is responsible for the potential transparency or authenticity of the message, yet also for its potential impulsivity or oversimplification. The fact that it is so easy, fast, effortless or practical to just pick up a phone and tweet whatever is on your mind, makes it possible for leaders to connect directly with citizens for example, but it also makes possible for them to respond aggressively to provocations in just 240 characters. Diplomatic negotiations and talks go through more “complicated” channels of direct or indirect communication precisely to allow space for interpretation, deliberation and reflection. Ease of communication is therefore arguably a double-edged sword.

There also seems to be confusion around which characteristics are intrinsic to Twitter as a platform and which are arguably shared with social media, such as Facebook or Instagram. These would include, for example, the instantaneous or interactive nature of platforms, or even the broader reach in terms of audience, relative to traditional means. As it is shown in **Figure 3**, practically the only characteristic that seems to be unique to Twitter is its specific format of short, simple, written messages (with the possibility of attaching pictures, videos, gifs, hyperlinks, etc). Perhaps a better way to conceptualize the common debate in the literature would be then to decompose all the characteristics of Twitter as a platform, identify which are unique to it and which

are shared with other social media, and then explore the advantages and risks of twitterdiplomacy that naturally stem from the “ease of communication” feature.

Figure 3 - Twitter diplomacy vs. Traditional diplomacy
(Source: author's own elaboration)



The careful dance between the positive and negative potential of Twitter is precisely one of the most frequent themes in most of the assessments regarding this tool. One point that could be inferred from many of the authors' contributions regarding twitter-diplomacy is that Twitter is a tool. It is instrumental. Its potential for conducting diplomacy depends on how it is used. Its advantages or risks are, in principle, dependent upon its utilization. Nonetheless, this more neutral or balanced perspective might be hard to maintain when faced with hyperactive users that shed more light on the negative than on the positive aspects of the platform. Donald Trump is arguably one of those users.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Soft power

“Smart political leaders have long understood that values can create power. If I can attract you and persuade you to want what I want, then I do not have to force you or pay you to do what I want.”

Joseph Nye (2021).

The idea of soft power, much like the idea of power itself, is a widely contested one. There is great debate about how power should be defined, what types of power exist and how they differ from each other. Among the different conceptualizations of power, we find the concept of ‘soft power’, which was originally coined by Joseph Nye, a prominent International Relations scholar. The concept was originally developed in Nye’s book “Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power” (1990), in which he professed how the United States was able to get the outcomes it desired in the global arena because of “attraction” rather than just threats or coercion (Nye, 2021).

This **power of attraction** was the core defining element of what he would call “soft power”. Before marking the distinction between soft and hard power, it is important to understand that Nye’s definition of power in general is more based on outcomes than on resources. He understands power as “*the ability to affect others to get the outcomes one wants*” (Nye, 2021, p. 197). This does not mean that resources are not important or valuable in themselves, but that true power comes from the effective use of resources to achieve the results one desires. For instance, while the US’ militarily superior tanks might have been appropriate for desert warfare in Iraq, they were less useful in the swamps and jungles of Vietnam, preventing the attainment of desired goals in the latter case. In other words, Nye subscribes to the idea proposed by Nagel (1975) that one cannot really state that an actor has power without specifying power “*to do what*” (Nye, 2021, p.197).

Again, resources matter. Power is displayed through tangible and intangible resources, which can determine the possibilities an actor has in a specific situation. Elements such as population, economy, and military resources, have often been used as direct synonyms of national power, and they are often associated with “hard” definitions of power. In this sense “soft power” tends to be more related to intangible resources, such as culture, ideology or institutions. However,

the utility of resources, whether tangible or intangible, varies depending on the circumstances and on the way in which they are utilized. Power conversion, meaning the translation of resources into behavioral outcomes, is a crucial variable. Just like knowing the mileage or the horsepower of a car does not tell us whether it will get to its desired destination, holding a strong poker game is useless if one plays it poorly. It is also useless if the game is bridge (Nye, 2021).

This is important because it means that the distinction between hard and soft power is less about resources themselves and more about their potential for achieving desired goals. Resources traditionally associated with hard power can constitute sources for soft power in other circumstances, and sometimes some resources can produce both types of power simultaneously.¹⁴ For example, when US naval ships were used for emergency relief in Indonesia after the tsunami in 2004, polls showed an increase of positive feelings and attraction towards the country (Nye, 2021).

The difference between hard and soft power is not a black and white matter, but rather a matter of degree between the “hard end” of command and the “soft end” of co-option. The soft power game is **to a greater extent played in the minds of target audiences and rests on the voluntary nature of attraction**. The same behavior can qualify as hard or soft power depending on the perspective one takes (Nye, 2021). Nye’s explains it the following way:

“The use of force, payment, and some agenda-setting based on them I call hard power. Agenda-setting that is **regarded as legitimate** by the target, positive attraction, and persuasion are the parts of the spectrum of behaviors I include in soft power. Hard power is push; soft power is pull.’ Or to extend a common metaphor, hard power is like brandishing carrots or sticks; soft power is more like a magnet.” (Nye, 2021 p. 201).

The image of a magnet serves to capture the essence of soft power, which can be either direct, when there is no active role of the deliberate action to attract (the “city upon a hill” effect) or indirect, when action is mediated by communication in order to persuade the target. From Nye’s perspective, an important part of the soft power of a nation tends to be ‘direct’, in the sense that it

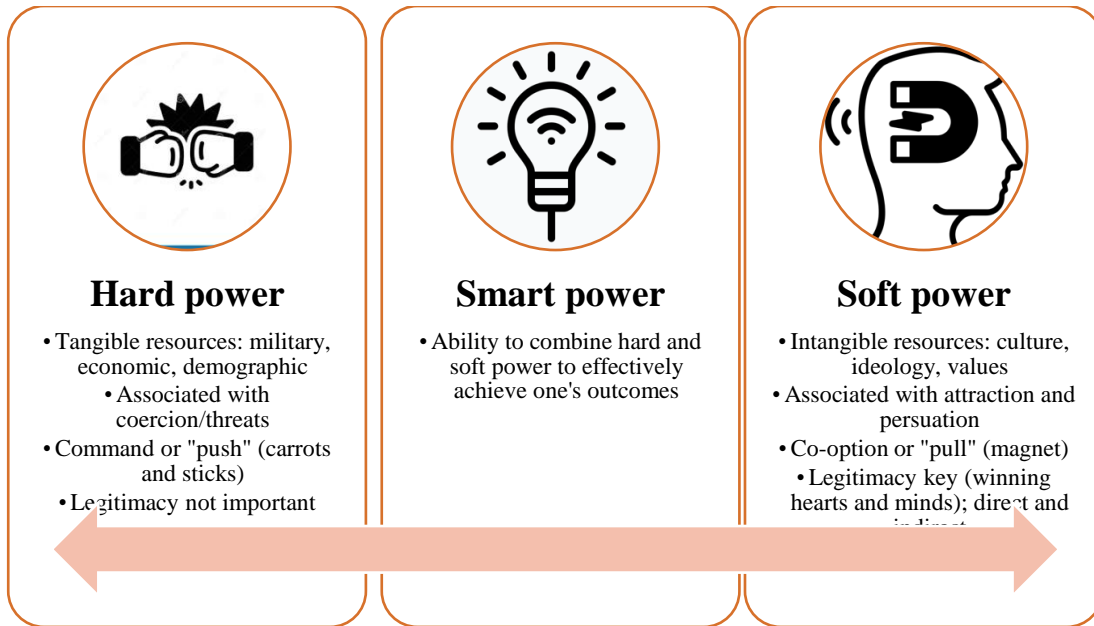
¹⁴ Nye (2021) also makes reference to two additional concepts of power that are interesting in their own way. One is smart power, which is the ability to combine both hard power and soft power effectively to achieve one’s desired outcomes. The other is “sharp power” which is that which penetrates, pierces, and perforates the political and information environment in targeted countries (developed in reference to the insertion of misinformation campaigns in democratic countries by foreign powers).

comes directly from its civil society rather than from active public efforts. This means that in the case of the US, a great deal of the soft power comes from Hollywood, universities and foundations rather than from the government. Regardless of where it comes from, soft power harnesses the power of culture and values to enhance a country's strength (Nye, 2021).

In sum, the central definition of soft power is "*the ability to affect others and obtain preferred outcomes by attraction and persuasion rather than coercion or payment*" (Nye, 2021, p. 205). Three essential elements characterize this concept: it functions through directly or indirectly changing the attitudes of target audiences in foreign nations; it has a longer operational time frame than hard power and it is more apt for general than specific goals, and it is not within the exclusive control of a government but is rather shared with civil society (Bakalov, 2019 as referenced by Nye, 2021, p. 206).

Why is all of this important? Well, because understanding soft power, and the determinants of attitudes towards the US and its leader can have significant policy relevance. American policy makers have historically recognized the importance of "winning over hearts and minds" across the globe to achieve foreign policy goals more effectively. Popular support for policies contributes to effective leadership, both domestically and globally. In this sense, if foreign policy choices are systematically incoherent from one administration to another, the trust in US global leadership might decrease (Kim and O Knuckey, 2021). Likewise, Anti-American sentiments because of unpopular policies can increase the probability that governments critical to the United States obtain power (Remmer, 2012 as cited in Kim and O Knuckey, 2021). Soft power can therefore be crucial for the relative position, image and the perceived legitimacy of a country's policies around the world, which can in turn impact the ability of that country to achieve its foreign policy objectives "legitimately" and turn its resources into outcomes. Figure 4 illustrates this discussion.

Figure 4 - The spectrum of hard and soft power
 (Source: author's own elaboration, based on Nye, 2021)



The New York Times stated in 2003, as a result of anti-Iraq war protests that there may still have been two superpowers on the planet: “*The United States and world public opinion*” (as cited in Adagjanian and Horiuchi, 2018. p.1). In a synthesized manner, soft power must therefore be understood as the image or perception of the United States as defined by the other superpower, that is, world public opinion. In a few words, it must be regarded as the power of attraction of the United States in the “eyes” of the world, which can arguably have a very real influence on whether it is able to “achieve its preferred outcomes” with persuasion rather than coercion.

B. The liberal international order (LIO) and Trump’s “America First”

The “liberal international order” (LIO) is a term widely used among International Relations scholars to signify and “*open and rules-based international order, enshrined in institutions such as the United Nations and norms such as multilateralism*” (Kundnani, 2017, para. 2). This order has been primarily constructed after the end of World War II, mainly by the initiative and drive of the United States. (Ikenberry, 2018).

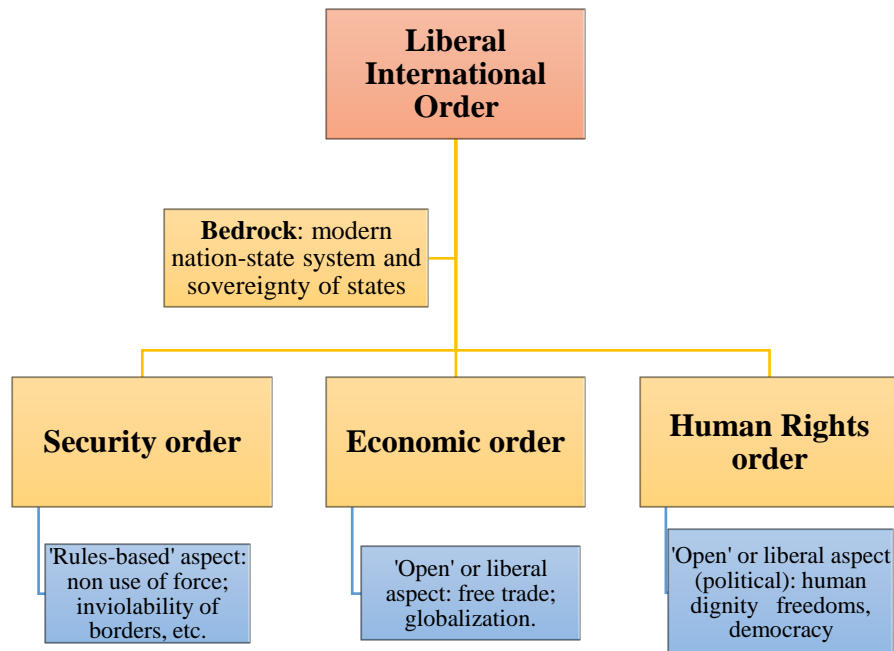
There are certain tensions or inconsistencies within the term, since it is often used with a lack of precision by analysts or scholars. There are questions around the nature of the “rules”, the exact meaning of words such as “open” and the theoretically Western-centric philosophical foundations of the order (Kundnani, 2017). The current international order could be thought of as a fusion between the modern state system, born out of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, and the “liberal” post-World War II order. The Westphalian order, based on the concept of the sovereignty of states, could be considered the bedrock of the system, on top of which the LIO has developed over time (Ikenberry, 2018).

The LIO, in turn, could be disaggregated into the security order, the economic order, and the human rights order. The security order would roughly correspond to the “rules-based” feature of the system and translates into the idea that power and force should not be the main determinants of state behavior.¹⁵ The economic order would mostly fit within the “open” part of the definition, broadly referring the economic openness as seen from the preference towards international trade and exchange based on mutual gain. This second order is closely related to the concept of globalization¹⁶. Finally, the human rights order refers to the ideals and principles expressed in the United Nations (UN) Charter, regarding the dignity and worth of the human being, and the commitment of all states to promote universal human rights and fundamental freedoms (Kundnani, 2017). And all of them are related to some extent to the idea of international cooperation and multilateralism. This conception of the LIO can be seen in **Figure 5**.

¹⁵ This layer would be closely interlinked with the principles found in documents such as the United Nations Charter (1945), such as the prohibition on the use or threat of force as a legitimate conflict-resolution method, the non-interference in domestic matters, or the inviolability of borders (Kundnani, 2017).

¹⁶ Although this concept is also a widely debated one, one definition could be “*the breaking down of artificial barriers to the flow of goods, services, capital, knowledge, and (to a lesser extent), people across borders*” (Stiglitz, 2002 as cited in Kundnani, 2017, par. 16)

Figure 5 - The Liberal International Order
 (Source: author's own elaboration, based on Kundani, 2017)



Beyond the different ways to characterize the liberal order though, the crucial factor to consider at the moment to do with the role of the United States in its construction. The US is historically considered to be the main leader in the promotion of this multifaceted order, built around economic openness, multilateralism, security cooperation, and democratic values. This leadership has even been characterized as “hegemonic”, given the efforts throughout the decades made by the US to build long-lasting alliances, stabilize the economy, and foster cooperation. Western Europe and Japan emerged as key partners in this order first, and then some countries in Eastern Europe, Latin America and East Asia subscribed to it as well after making democratic transitions (Ikenberry, 2018).

Then came Trump. And with him, an “America First” approach to foreign policy, and way of thinking about the world. Although the implications of this approach will be further explained in the discussion, the rationale behind the concept is a general **feeling of disdain** for the system the US has led throughout the last decades. In concrete terms, this has translated into a retreat from the international arena: renegotiating trade deals or backing away from new ones, withdrawing from several international agreements and organizations, erecting border walls, and communicating with an inflammatory rhetoric towards both foreign adversaries and allies. He seems to think the US

was being taken advantage of by the liberal global order, which was detrimental to the primarily economic interest of the American people (Lacatus, 2020).

He thus showed opposition or disregard to migration, multilateralism, trade, alliances, international law, security partnerships the environment, and human rights, among many other important elements in US foreign policy (Ikenberry, 2018). This does not mean Trump was the first president who expressed discomfort or discontent with international commitments, since the US has had a long-held tradition of isolationism in the global arena. However, Trump was the first president in contemporary history to express a very particular trend of isolationism, one mixed with an explicit reject for the spirit behind the liberal order. In his eyes, America needed to reclaim its sovereignty, and restore its long-lost international respect. (Lacatus, 2020). In other words, America needed to come first.

Both the concepts of the “Liberal International Order” and of “America First” are key to the current theoretical framework for they place the focus on specific policies during the Trump administration. They enable a more selective and specific pool of decisions to be analyzed, since some of the most exemplary or emblematic policies of Trump’s “America First” approach will constitute case studies of this study. In sum, these elements allow us to better concentrate on the impact of Trump’s twitter diplomacy on America’s soft power. It provides the broader framework that inspired a great part of Trump’s foreign policy, and allows for a coherent interpretation of foreign publics’ reactions to Trump’s decision. In other words, the impact US soft power during the Trump administration has to be understood next to the former president’s radical shift in US foreign policy, and his line of thought that above all, America came first, and the rest of the world – with all of its commitments, organizations, agreements, partnerships or values, came later.

RESEARCH GOALS, QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

The **general goal** of this research paper is to analyze Donald Trump's use of Twitter to carry out diplomacy during his Administration. The **specific goals** are as follows: *first*, to discover how the former US president used this social media platform to communicate 'illiberal' foreign policy positions, and the reactions this generated in the international community; *second*, to examine the impact this type of political communication, together with the decisions themselves, had on American 'soft power'. *Thirdly*, to evaluate the additional impact of Trump's twitter-diplomatic practices on other variables, such as the use of twitter to conduct diplomacy in general and the decision-making process of foreign policy in the US.

The **research questions** that will therefore be explored are:

First, did the president's use of Twitter to communicate certain policy decisions negatively impact the soft power or reputation of the United States in the world? Is it a consequence of the decision itself, the communication style, or both?

Second, did Trump's use of Twitter as a political communication tool have an impact on the broader practice of Twitterdiplomacy, and on the way foreign policy decisions are made in the US?

The manner to address these questions will be by (1) analyzing in-depth Trump's twitterdiplomacy patterns, and by (2) further illustrating them through the decision to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement. This was among the most controversial and impactful illiberal foreign policy decision during the Trump years. It represented not only the withdrawal from a major international treaty, but also, it seemed to symbolize a general movement away from the core principles espoused by the LIO. Other decisions as well as some of the most frequent themes of illiberal political rhetoric employed by Trump will be mentioned; however, focusing on this decision as case study will hopefully serve to exemplify a broader tendency of both policy-making and political communication during the Trump Administration.

The **departure hypothesis** of this research paper is two-fold:

During his presidency, Donald Trump's use of Twitter to communicate certain foreign policy decisions:

(1) damaged the image, or eroded the soft power, of the United States in the world, and

(2) impacted the practice of twitter-diplomacy more broadly and process of foreign policy decision-making, making it more erratic and less predictable.

METHODOLOGY

1. Data recollection techniques

Given the different goals and questions at hand, the recollection of data has been made through several mechanisms. First, a handful of the some of the most extensive and significant research studies that have been done on Donald Trump's use of Twitter were also considered as relevant data. In the case of these sources, the recollection of information was also done based on the importance or adequacy for the current questions. Combining the original tweets by Donald Trump with some of the trends and results that have already been identified by academics and researchers provides an ideal and holistic combination for the first set of data needed.

Secondly, the recollection of Donald Trump's tweets regarding the specific decision at hand was done through a simple extraction of the Twitter data using Twitter's advanced search. The account that will be mainly considered is @realDonaldTrump, since it is considered the most actively and directly used account by the former president. An additional comparison was made by searching the online database of Trump's tweets "*TheTrumpArchive.com*", in order to ensure deleted tweets could be included as well, in case there were any, and guarantee the integrity of the sample. Then, a selection of the most relevant tweets in each category was made, relevance being measured by the explicit or implicit reference to the international treaty being considered. Finally, tweets were organized to chronological order.

Thirdly, the recollection of the second set of data, the one regarding the international response, was done through a set of different sources including journalistic publications done on the subject, official responses by foreign leaders through different channels, and public opinion polls, especially those developed by the Pew Research Center. All of these sources were accessed through regular online searches.

2. Data analysis techniques

The academic data was analyzed by considering the most relevant studies on Trump's use of Twitter in a comparative manner and extracting the main relevant conclusions for this study. The tweets were analyzed in conjunction with the academic insights, and they were evaluated manually by using simple discourse analysis techniques. The evaluation of the impact on American

soft power was done by the inclusion of the most pertinent findings in the main international public opinion poll being used, which was already mentioned.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Part I: Donald Trump, Twitterdiplomacy and Foreign Policy

“In the Oval Office, an annoyed President Trump ended an argument he was having with his aides. He reached into a drawer, took out his iPhone and threw it on top of the historic Resolute Desk:

“Do you want me to settle this right now?”

There was no missing Mr. Trump’s threat that day in early 2017, the aides recalled. With a tweet, he could fling a directive to the world, and there was nothing they could do about it.” (Shear, Haberman, Confessore, Yourish, Buchanan & Collins, 2019, para. 1-3).

Donald Trump’s use of Twitter as a political communication tool has in fact spurred a great amount of interest. Researchers, journalists, psychologists, and communicators alike have developed extensive studies to try to analyze the former president’s relationship with Twitter. Although it would be impractical to consider every single one of the insights provided by the current literature, there are some basic elements we need to establish to truly grasp this topic. For the purpose of simplification, we could divide them into three key ideas, each one with secondary insights.

Number one: Twitter is not just another political communication tool for Trump

It is difficult to overstate the important of Twitter to Trump’s communication strategy, both in the 2016 presidential election and during his Administration. Twitter was not a mere accessory or preferred type of social media for the former president. It was key to his success in the campaign, and it was an essential part of his government style. He himself admitted this in an interview in 2018: “I think I wouldn’t be here if I didn’t have social media, because the media is fake, and frankly, if I didn’t have social media, I’d have no way of getting out my voice” (Trump, 2018, as cited in 60 Minutes, 2020)

What Trump is describing here is not merely the role that social media has played in his political communication strategy, but rather something more fundamental and profound. Deep

down he is actually referring to perhaps one of the key characteristics of Twitter and of social media in general: the ability to communicate in a direct, instantaneous and unfiltered manner, bypassing traditional journalistic gatekeepers (Gabler, 2016).¹⁷ He is referring to the democratization of information. This feature is what makes the new information and communication landscape so different, blurring the lines between consumers and producers of content, allowing anyone with an internet connection and a phone to share whatever they desire. This is not new or unique to Twitter or to Trump's use of Twitter, it is just the general context we are in right now.

However, when you are the president of the United States, your use of social media might matter a little bit more than that of the common user. In this sense, Trump's use of social media has really revolutionized presidential communication, not because these tools were not available before, but because he was the first to use them in such an intense and peculiar manner (Pelcastre, 2020). In fact, some analysts believe that his use of Twitter is not solely a new way of communicating, but a major development in the way to govern and conduct policy: "When Mr. Trump entered office, Twitter was a political tool that had helped get him elected and a digital howitzer that he relished firing. In the years since, he has fully integrated Twitter into the fabric of his administration, reshaping the nature of presidency and presidential power" (Shear et Al, 2019, para. 4).

Trump frequently used Twitter to **communicate directly with the public** – or rather with his political base -to express his views on topics that presidents have usually refrained from addressing, and even to make policy and personnel decisions, often to the surprise of its own staff. Major domestic and foreign policy decisions were announced directly through Twitter, such as the withdrawal of US troops from Northern Syria, or different tariffs against China in the context of the US-China trade war. And many high-profile administration officials were often fired via tweet (Ouyang and Waterman, 2020). This way of communicating had several cascading consequences, often with a real-world impact. For example, his administration's policy of implementing economic sanctions against Turkey was intrinsically linked with a currency and debt crisis in this country. To kickstart the policy, Trump tweeted the doubling of tariffs on Turkish steel and aluminum, saying that the Turkish Lira slid down rapidly against "*our very strong dollar!*" and that U.S. relations

¹⁷ This relates to the "ease of communication" feature that has been explored.

with Turkey were “*not good at this time!*” (Trump, 2018, as cited in Pelcastre, 2020). From that moment on, the lira lost value every time Trump tweeted. Literally. It lost at least a third of its value that year (Pelcastre, 2020).

Twitter for Trump was then an **instrument of foreign policy**. In the most superficial level, he used it to comment on other countries or leaders, about 100 times for ‘praising’ dictators, about twice as much for complaining about America’s traditional partners (Shear et Al, 2019). He also used it to criticize or discredit international agreements and deals, changing his rhetoric constantly – often in the same tweet -, or to increase or decrease diplomatic tensions, by for example, threatening war with Iran or blaming China for the COVID-19 pandemic (Pelcastre, 2020). All of this is arguably in line with his overall America First approach to foreign policy and to political communication. The disdain for the LIO historically promoted by the U.S. can be seen partly through these exchanges. In a sense, Trump’s way of communicating policy decisions through twitter was at times an unorthodox as decisions themselves.¹⁸

Sometimes his tweets were relatively inconsequential for overall policy and seen perhaps as just words or just ‘another one’ of Trump’s tweets¹⁹. Other times, it was more serious though. When in 2017, for instance, tensions were high with North Korea, Trump tweeted that this country might not “*be around much longer!*” (Trump, 2017 as cited in Shear et Al, 2019), which the North Korean foreign minister called a declaration of war, users on the social media platform were wondering whether Twitter would “allow” the former president to tweet his path into a nuclear escalation (Shear et Al, 2019). Tensions eventually calmed down, until another high point a year later, when Trump provoked strong reactions with his “nuclear button” tweet (Friedman, 2018). The tweet speaks for itself.

¹⁸ Decisions and communication style are in a way incredibly interrelated or inseparable. They are both overall important for the perception and impact of Trump’s twitterdiplomacy, as we will later explore.

¹⁹ Some analysts argue that this vision of Trump’s tweets is problematic within itself. A president’s words could be thought of as a country’s most valuable currency, essential for reassuring both allies and enemies of previously made commitments. And what happens when you spend it the way Trump did? Well, it “devalues the currency” (Haass, 2018).

Figure 6 - Tweet: nuclear button
(Source: Trump, 2018a)



Then, panic over nuclear war followed suit once again. And this kind of more “extreme” examples just illustrate what Trump’s twitter diplomacy felt like in its high stakes or high tensions moment. But in general, it did not take the threat of a nuclear war to make U.S. foreign policy and the presidents’ communicating style seem at times confusing, everchanging and unnecessarily inflammatory. While there are debates over the effectiveness of Trump’s foreign policy strategy on Twitter, there is enough anecdotal evidence to believe foreign governments saw Trump’s tweets as official U.S. policy (Pinkutk et al, 2017 as cited in Ouyang and Waterman, 2020. p 135). In this sense, the outcome of Trump’s unpredictability and policymaking-by-tweets was that “no one was sure of what U.S. policy was” (Guitis, 2019, para. 19), leaving the impression that the United States was “an undisciplined, unreliable, and untrustworthy ally” (Guitis, 2019, para. 6).²⁰ Trump’s twitterdiplomacy left the overall impression that the world and particularly American partners could not assume “anything about the US anymore” (Haass, 2018 para. 14).

²⁰ This impression was mentioned regarding specifically the Syria withdrawal decision, which again, is an often-cited example because of how controversial it was and the chaos that it generated. Beyond several resignations, it really just left the impression that Trump could decide through Twitter a major foreign policy decision, and there was little the administration could do to control it. It also called into question the coherence of US foreign policy decision-making, causing anxiety among US allies about US commitments or positions. Practically all of America’s partners felt “betrayed” in one way or another (Guitis, 2019). There was so much back and forth during those days that even Erdogan, Turkey’s president, said “when we take a look at Mr. Trump’s Twitter posts, we can no longer follow them (...) we cannot keep track” (Shear et Al, 2019).

For Trump, it is not all bad though. He frequently used Twitter to his advantage. And in any case, what seems clear is that Trump managed to turn tweets into a means of political communication as important as an official statement from the White House or the Oval Office (Shear et Al, 2019). Even the White House press secretary admitted that Trump’s tweets should be seen as official statements (Landers, 2017). If there was any doubt about the official nature of his tweets, he managed to dissipate it. When his aides were trying to reassure a group of Republican senators about Trump’s support for a bill, he reminded them that there was only one true sign of his position: “*If I don’t tweet it, don’t listen to my staff*” (Trump, 2018 as cited in Shear et Al, 2019).

So, one more time, Twitter was not just another political communication tool for Trump – it was *the* political communication tool. It provided him a direct line of communication with the world, and this had real repercussions in the way that policy was designed and executed. Perhaps the best way to describe it is a roller coaster ride - a unusual world-impacting roller coaster ride, with his own officials in the front row.²¹ (Shear et Al, 2019). Ultimately, the important thing is that this social media platform was at the center of the former president’s communication strategy, and that his *apparently* unbounded or unrestrained use of Twitter gave the impression that Trump’s tweets were effectively replacing the thought-out, carefully planned US foreign policy (Pelcastre, 2020). The key word being *apparently*. This leads us to the second crucial point about Trump’s twitter diplomacy.

Number two: Trump’s use of Twitter is strategic

A common misconception regarding Trump’s use of Twitter is that it is mainly erratic, random, or spontaneous. As if he just takes out his phone and writes a tweet. And in many cases, this certainly seems to be the case. Trump tweeted during his administration a total of 11.000 times, 2019 being the most active year overall. It seemed as if he was tweeting all the time (Shear et Al, 2020). His impulse or need to tweet bordered on an “obsession”, as admitted by members of his own administration (Ouyang and Waterman, 2020 p.135.). However, the idea that Trump was not intentional and thoughtful about his tweets is just not true. He would actually have printed tweet

²¹ Workers who gathered in the White House said that they were used to their agenda being hijacked in early-morning staff meetings when their phones simultaneously notified them of a tweet from their boss (Shear et Al, 2019).

proposals brought to him; he would consider different options, and he would opt for the tweet that he thought would elicit the most impactful response (Shear et Al, 2019).²²

Most of the researchers who have tried to determine the motives behind Trump’s use of Twitter have emphasized the **agenda-setting function** of his tweets. There seems to be a broad consensus among analysts that Trump used the social media platform to set the domestic and the international agenda – to mark and define the topics that should be talked about and how (Welsh, 2018). He therefore took onto himself the function that has been associated with traditional media - and most traditional channels were left with no choice but to cover his message and amplify it. In the case of conservative media, such as Fox News, the trend is even more pronounced.²³ He seemed to rejoice in his ability to drive the public discussion. Once in a White House conference he said: *“Boom. I press it, and within two seconds, ‘We have breaking news’.”* (Trump, 2019 as cited in Shear et Al, 2019).

Within this agenda-setting function, a useful framework to think about it would be what could be denominated the 3Ds formula: dissembling, distracting, and discrediting. This is: dissembling reality and promoting his own “distorting” worldview; distracting from potentially harmful news stories and discrediting his critics (Ott, 2019 as cited in Ouyang and Waterman, 2020; pg 14).²⁴ A variety of studies support this framework in one way or another. For instance, Shear et Al (2019) offer an extensive and useful analysis of Trump’s tweets. These have been categorized here for simplification purposes. The following tables and graphs show: (1) Trump’s tweets with attacks and the variety of targets; (2) Tweets offering praise – predominantly to himself and (3) tweets that indirectly erode trust in democratic institutions, contribute to misinformation, or show his correlation with conservative media.

²² He would usually have his social media director, Dan Scavino, print out suggested tweets for the president to approve, and also dictate tweets to him (Shear et Al, 2019).

²³ This is also known as the Trump-Fox News feedback loop, meaning there was a strong correlation between Fox News and Trump’s tweets. More than 40% of news stories in this channel mentioned Trump, while his tweets were at least in 10% of them. This loop has a significant influence over agenda-building in the American television landscape. (Morales et Al, 2021).

²⁴ Trump’s use of Twitter as a political diversion tool has been extensively researched and empirically tested. He often attempted to drive away attention from topics potentially damaging to him, and he was quite successful at it. This is seen, for examples in his tweeting patterns during the ‘Mueller’ investigations or the investigations regarding Russian interference in the 2016 election. He managed to turn away harmful media coverage by tweeting (Lewandowsky et Al, 2020).

Table 3 - Number of tweets with attacks
 (Source: own elaboration based on Shear et Al, 2019)

<u>Type of tweet – attack</u>	<u>Number of tweets</u>
Attacks against Democrats, investigations and the news media	4,469
Attacks against minority groups	851
Others	569
<i>Total tweets with attacks</i>	5,889

Figure 7 - Total tweets with attacks

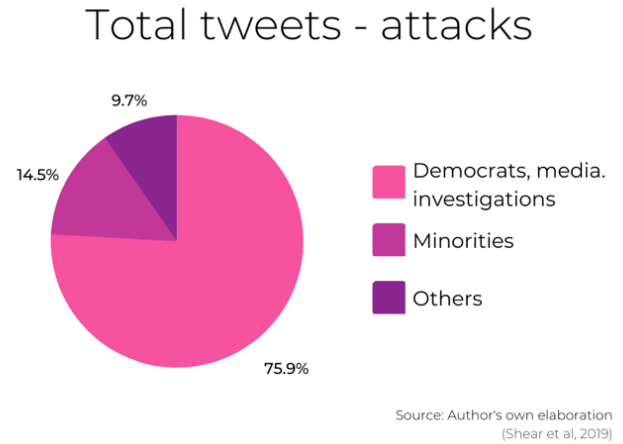


Table 4 - Number of tweets with praise
 (Source: own elaboration based on Shear et Al, 2019)

<u>Type of tweet - praise</u>	<u>Number of tweets</u>
Tweets that both praise and attack	1,612
Tweets praising himself	2,026
Others	1238
<i>Total tweets with praise</i>	4,876

Figure 8 - Total tweets with praise

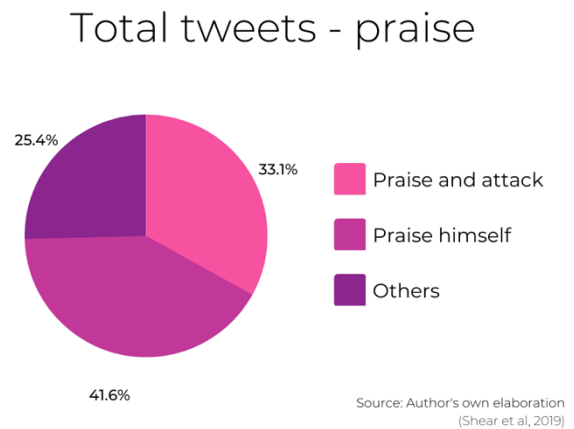
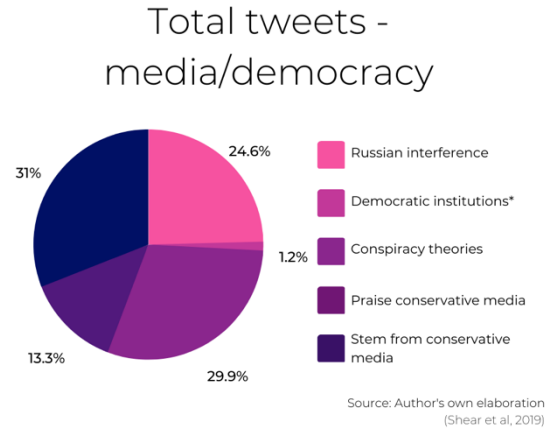


Table 5 - 'Other' tweets: democratic erosion/media/disinformation
 (Source: own elaboration based on Shear et Al, 2019)

<u>Type of tweet – democratic erosion/media</u>	<u>Number of tweets</u>
Tweets questioning Russian interference	1,405
Tweets that indirectly attack democratic institutions ²⁵	71
Tweets that promote conspiracy theories	1,710
Tweets praising conservative media	758
Tweets that stem from conservative media	1,770
<i>Total tweets</i>	<i>5714</i>

Figure 9 - Total 'other tweets'



Part of his agenda-setting efforts also included using tweets as a way to **build and measure support for** policies – even if his followers do not represent more than one-fifth of the American electorate. He would use retweets and likes as a way to measure how popular his decisions were, as if his twitter feed was his own personal polling service (Ouyang and Waterman, 2020, p. 34). He seemed to be unaware that it was not representative of the way the broader American public felt (Shear et Al, 2019). He also seemed to be unaware most Americans considered his tweeting to be damaging and distracting to his policy agenda (Ouyang and Waterman, 2020, p.62).

²⁵ Trump’s attacks on different democratic institutions could also represent a higher number. In this case, the way these indirect attacks are measured is by the inclusion of conspiratorial terms such as “Deep State” (a supposed parallel state secretly controlling everything and undermining his presidency), or “enemy of the people” to refer to media (a phrase actually historically used by autocrats should as Stalin to oppress dissent). That is partly why the percentage seems relatively low (Shear et Al, 2019).

In any case, Trump heavily managed to influence the media and public discussion agenda and attract a great amount of attention to himself via Twitter. And this function was not exclusive to the American media landscape; it also applies internationally. Again, he had more followers and used the platform more heavily than any other U.S. president before him. He therefore often tweeted to anticipate or announce information about foreign policy decisions, and his tweets were frequently caught by international media (Ertekin, 2019).

Some authors disagree about Trump's "strategic" use of Twitter, considering the real reason for his success as a political communicator being able to capitalize and reinforce existing societal trends:

"Trump is not some rhetorical genius who masterminded a clever, new political strategy. All available evidence indicates that Trump's success was not strategic (i.e., carefully planned and thoughtfully executed), and that he has never successfully masterminded anything. Trump's performance of white rage "worked" not because he is a skilled politician or businessman (clearly, he is neither), but because he offered a compelling expression of an already existing cultural sensitivity" (Ott and Dickinson, 2019 as cited in Ouyang and Waterman, 2020, p. 45.)

However, most authors concur that he *was* strategic, in the sense that he seemed to know exactly what kind of language and rhetoric to employ to move emotions and generate important reactions in social media – and in real life. The role of emotion and of negative language as an attention-maximiser in social media has been extensively documented by several researchers. In the case of Twitter, negatively charged or 'angry' tweets tend to be key to popular events and get retweeted both more often and more rapidly than neutral or positive tweets (Mak, 2019).

And in real life, emotions rather than information tend to impact voter perceptions and decisions. In this sense, even if not all of his tweets are "carefully planned" or thoughtfully executed" Trump could be considered as a strategic communicator. In the words of Ouyang and Waterman (2020): "[The] strategic aspect of Trump's tweets is not whether every tweet was planned to achieve maximal effectiveness (...) [or] because he has carefully thought through how his negative, outrageous, or offensive rhetoric will impact him politically; instead, he is strategic because he appears to have learned how to leverage the power of social media to his benefit." (p.47).

Trump's communication style/tone in Twitter is his tone in real life

This is the last important caveat we need to understand in Trump's political communication strategy. In reality, there seems to be no division between "Twitter Trump" and "Trump". He is just Trump – in Twitter, in a conference, meeting, interview, or speech. Clearly there could be specific about Twitter that might maximize the negative aspects of his tweets. It has been characterized as a platform that rewards or privileges discourse that is "simple, impulsive and uncivil", exactly the opposite of what diplomatic language should be (Ott, 2017, p.1). But that does not mean there is a significant difference between Trump's rhetoric on Twitter and his overall communication style and worldview.

In this point it might be useful to briefly explore Trump's twitterdiplomacy specifically and the question on whether his language conforms to traditional diplomatic language. The short answer to this question is no. The long answer is offered by several researchers and analysts, among which Simunjak and Caliandro (2019) stand out. They analyzed Trump's tweets during the first month of his presidency and they got to several conclusions. Taking into account the characteristics of diplomatic language that were previously mentioned, they find that Trump's tweets do not display any of them: courteous, positive and constructive discourse, when it takes place, it is reserved to American allies; non-dramatic language sometimes takes place, yet emotional and dramatic language is very frequent, with use of exclamation points and capital letters; ambiguity is rare, since his style is very direct, and he often displays an implicit belief in the superiority in United States. They summarized **Trump's style** as **simple, personalized, grandiose, negative, emotional, and impulsive** (Simunjak and Caliandro, 2019).²⁶

A second related question that has also been explored by several researchers alike is the one regarding the impact of Twitter and of Trump's twitterdiplomacy on the broader diplomatic

²⁶ They also mention how there was a belief or an expectation that Trump would change his diplomatic style when assuming the presidency, that his particularly direct and spontaneous tone would be somewhat more filtered as he assumed the official role. That was not the case (Simunjak and Caliandro, 2019). It should also be mentioned that there are differences between the different accounts used by Trump. Although they tend to be similar in content, the tone of the official/public one [@POTUS] is more standardized and formal than that of the unofficial/private one [@realDonaldTrump] (Márquez-Domínguez, López-López, & Arias, T., 2017).

practice and language. In other words – whether Trump’s use of the platform, and the existence the platform itself have led to a change in diplomatic codes. The short answer to this question is also no. Most available evidence suggest that even if Trump’s style is unique, not only because it is characterized by **informality, disdain, and dramatic language**, but also because other leaders do not replicate his techniques (Hughes, 2020). What this means is that Trump really is the exception. Most other leaders tended to respond with a relatively more positive and diplomatic tone, or to simply disengage (Simunjak and Caliandro, 2019). And even in cases when certain figures attempted to respond with hostility or a direct tone, they were still relatively formal. In this sense, Trump’s twitterdiplomacy could be characterized as “a reflection of American superpower forcefulness, but also a unique form that the rest choose to ignore” (Hughes, 2020, p.1).

Moreover, there are also several examples that illustrate how Trump’s twitterdiplomacy could be considered an extension of his broader way of conducting diplomacy and communicating in general. A key instance came in 2017, when Trump’s tweets practically spoiled a diplomatic negotiation and undercut his own first Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson (Toosi and Cohen 2017). Tillerson and a team of diplomats were in China attempting to negotiate sanctions on the North Korean leader, Kim Jong Un, when Trump tweeted that he was “wasting his time”:

Figure 10 - Tweet: spoiling diplomatic negotiations.

(Source: Trump, 2017e)



It is difficult to overstate how unprecedented this is. Trump broke one of the most important rules of diplomacy, which is keeping a united front amid diplomatic negotiations (Toosi and Cohen,

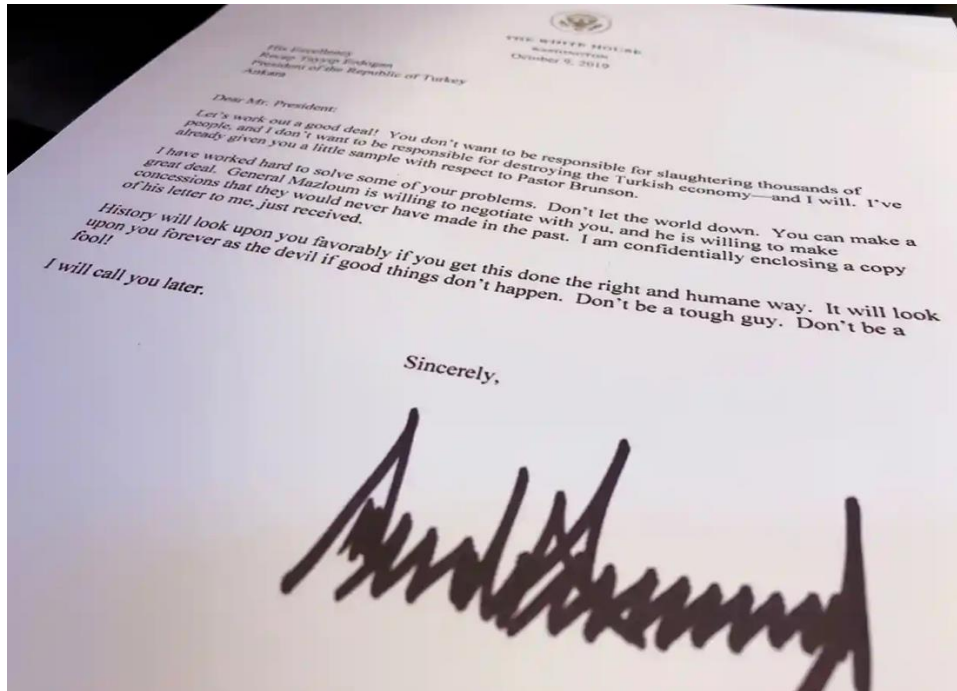
2017). Also, most diplomatic negotiations take time, patience, work and a great deal of trust-building activities. They take personal continuous communication between diplomats, and enough discretion or distance from the public eye to be successful. They are carefully prepared, and thoughtfully communicated afterwards. They often stand on an incredibly fragile thread that can break under the pressure of a single spontaneous event or comment, that can make it impossible to gather support among public or domestic audiences afterwards (Burns, 2019). If Tillerson was managing to get some success in the negotiations, we will never know. A single of Trump's tweets was enough to sabotage the conversations.²⁷

A second example could be an 'official' verbal note-exchange between Trump and Erdogan, Turkey's president, amid the chaos ensued after the decision to withdraw U.S. troops from Syria. In short, there was concern that Turkey would take advantage of this moment to advance militarily on the terrain and put the Syrian Kurdish population – a minority group historically persecuted by Turkey – at risk. Trump then wrote a letter to the Turkish president warning him of the potential consequences of Turkey's planned military policy. The key part of the letter that reverberated through media the most was the end, when Trump concluded by saying "*Don't be a tough guy. Don't be a fool! I will call you later.*" (Trump, 2019 as cited in Gregorian and Alexander, 2019).

A key lesson learned from the exchange is that Trump writes official letters as he speaks, "with a blustery mix of flattery and threats" (Borger, 2019a). The letter is consistent with some of Trump's tweets, in which he promised to "totally destroy and obliterate" the Turkish economy (Trump, 2019 as cited in Gregorian, 2019). See **Figure 11**.

²⁷ A similar scenario took place in 2019, when Trump tweeted about 'secret talks' that were going to take place with the Taliban government – Trump suddenly declared the negotiations "dead" and obviously the talks were canceled (Borger, 2019b).

Figure 11 - Letter to Erdogan
(Source: Bourg, 2019)



The overall lesson however is precisely the consistency of Trump’s style, rhetoric, and way of carrying out diplomacy. Regardless of whether Trump uses Twitter as the main means of communication or complementary one, he seems to be coherent across channels, practices and policies. One could assume that part of the reason he communicates in this way is his personality – it is simply the way he is. But it could also be argued that he also understood the undeniable attractiveness of his language. His style is actually believed to be one of the factors that captivated his followers: “[The] freshness of a president such as Trump who speaks his mind openly, however controversial or inappropriate it may be for some, is frankly attractive” (Ouyang and Waterman 2020, p.133).

He was reinforced in his strategy every passing day of his presidency, as he seemed to be rewarded by his supporters for exactly that kind of language: “How often must a politician (albeit in their wildest of dreams) have wished they could have said what they 'really thought', and for those comments to receive such an immediate, and often uproarious, public response?” (Dee, 2017 as cited by the Warwick Knowledge Centre, 2017.).

PART II: CASE STUDY

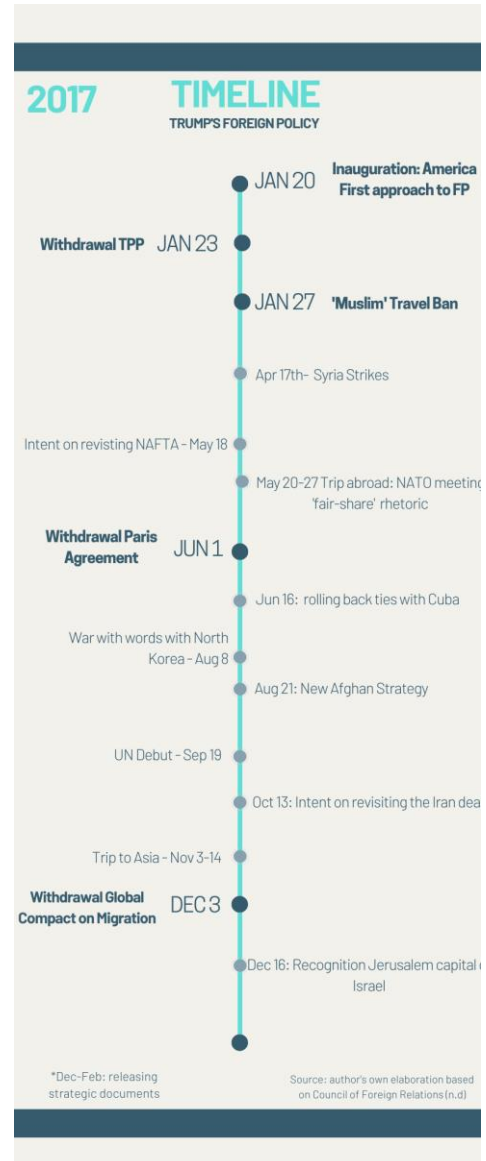
Foreign policy context: America First and the Liberal International Order

Before diving into the Paris Accord case study, we need to establish once more the context in which this decision is taking place. In other words, we need to consider the broader picture of foreign policy during the Trump Administration, especially those decisions at odds with the Liberal International Order historically promoted by the United States. Now, given it would be impractical to provide a thorough account of his entire foreign policy, perhaps it is preferable to visualize major decisions **throughout 2017** – the year where the decision took place- in the timeline format, as shown in the Figure 12.

The first year was really just the start.²⁸ Among the other emblematic examples of this line of policy in 2018 are, for instance: the withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) – also known as the “Iran Nuclear Deal” – in May 2018, which took *years* to negotiate and had passed through the Senate; the withdrawal from the Human Rights Council the following month (Hathaway, 2020); the renegotiation of North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) into a new trade deal called the United States, Mexico and Canada Agreement (USMCA) in September, which most analysts agree is merely symbolic since the new name literally put the U.S. first, but there were no real substantive changes (Gertz, 2018); the withdrawals from the protocol to Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (VCLT), from the Treaty of Amity with Iran, and from the Universal Postal Union (UPU), all in October,; and then the withdrawals from

Figure 12 - Timeline of Trump's Foreign Policy in 2017

(Source: author's own elaboration based on Council of Foreign Relations, n.d.).



²⁸ This is the only year for which a figure with the timeline has been included, given that the specific case being analyzed took place in 2017.

the Global Compact on Refugees on November, and from United Nations Education Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO) in December (Hathaway, 2020). All while conducting a costly and controversial trade war with China from April to December, and a “zero tolerance” policy at the Southern border, that ended up separating at least 3,900 children from their families (Ward, 2021). The controversial decision on Syria was also on December that year (Wang, 2019), as well as the longest government shutdown in US History from December to January because there was an impasse over Trump’s demands of federal funds for the construction of the wall at the Mexican border (Restuccia & Everest, 2018).

Examples in the following years most notably include the withdrawal from the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces treaty (2019), or the withdrawals from the World Health Organization (WHO) and from the Open Skies Treaties, both in 2020 (Hathaway, 2020). He accompanied these policies with further ‘threats’, insinuations or criticisms against other international organizations such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or the World Trade Organization (WTO), and key allies, such as Mexico or Japan (Kim and O Knuckey, 2021).

The point is not to focus on each event, but rather to be able to understand how these decisions take place within a wider story of America retreating for the world. Withdrawing from a treaty is one thing; withdrawing from several treaties and international organizations, while you use unprecedented rhetoric against allies is another thing. Just three days into the presidency, Trump withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a key trade agreement with several Asian nations (Burack, 2020). From then on, it seemed as if the process he had started would only end the day he left office. In his eyes, he was pursuing his America First policy; in the eyes of the rest of the world, he was eroding international cooperation, free-trade values, multilateralism, and overall going against the order the US had worked to build (Stokes, 2018).

The Paris Agreement

Key ideas about the agreement

The Paris Agreement is the “*first-ever universal, legally binding global climate change agreement*” (European Commission, n.d., para. 2). It was adopted at the Paris climate conference in December 2015 and counts with almost 190 parties (states) in the world. It is truly a global agreement and is considered to be a milestone in the global fight against climate change. It is aimed

at reducing global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, increasing transparency and accountability among states regarding climate commitments, adapting and coping with the current impact of climate change, as well as supporting developing countries in their climate efforts (European Commission, n.d.).

Now, the deal is complex and filled with technical details. For current purposes, there are mainly two things that need to be remembered here. First, the actions that each state decides to take in its climate policy is entirely up to them, and it takes place under the name of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). In this sense, it is legally binding, but there is no hard enforcement mechanism; the accountability is mostly symbolic (Tso, 2021)²⁹. Second, an important part of the deal has to do with the distinction between the differentiated responsibilities of developed and developing countries, with the former committing themselves to helping the latter with their climate efforts. The rationale behind it, *grosso modo*, is that developed countries have been historically responsible for most of the emissions, as well as currently being the least exposed and the most prepared to deal with climate change. Many developing countries, however, are not only the least responsible for accumulated or current emissions, but often are also the most vulnerable and least resourceful to cope with this challenge (McDonald, 2018).

Communicating the decision

Timeline:

Pre-decision

- **May 26th, 2016 - Promise of the campaign:** complained against climate rules, said he would “cancel” the Paris agreement and withdraws funds for UN programs related to the subject (Sarlin, 2016)
- **May 27th, 2017 – Tweet (8:17 AM):** “I will make my final decision on the **Paris** Accord next week!” (Trump, 2017a)
- **May 31st, 2017 – Tweet (9:08 AM):** “I will be announcing my decision on the **Paris** Accord over the next few days. MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN! (Trump, 2017b)

²⁹ The flexibility in the accountability mechanisms is thought to be intentional, given that stricter mechanisms would have not allowed for such an internationally accepted agreement (Tso, 2021). It is often the case that agreements or deals need to be watered down in the obligations or responsibilities they give to states in order to achieve a higher level of acceptance or popularity. Quality is therefore somewhat sacrificed in favor of quantity.

- [June 1st, 2017 – Tweet \(9:05 PM\)](#): “I will be announcing by decision on the **Paris** Accord, Thursday at 3:00 P.M. The White House Rose Garden. MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN! (Trump, 2017c)

Decision

- *June 1st, 2017* – Statement/speech from the White House Lawn – officially withdraws from the accord.
- [June 2nd, 2017](#) – Retweeting supporting tweets.

Post-decision

- [Dec 4th, 2018 – Tweet \(5:56 PM\)](#): “I am glad that my friend @EmmanuelMacron and the protestors in Paris have agreed with the conclusion I reached two years ago. The **Paris** Agreement is fatally flawed because it raises the price of energy for responsible countries while whitewashing some of the worst polluters...” (Trump, 2018b)
- [Dec 8th, 2018 – Tweet \(7:34 AM\)](#): “The **Paris** Agreement isn’t working out so well for Paris. Protests and riots all over France. People do not want to pay large sums of money, much to third world countries (that are questionably run), in order to maybe protect the environment. Chanting “We Want Trump!” Love France.” (Trump, 2018c)
- [Dec 8th, 2018 – Tweet \(12:22 PM\)](#): “Very sad day & night in Paris. Maybe it’s time to end the ridiculous and extremely expensive Paris Agreement and return money back to the people in the form of lower taxes? The U.S. was way ahead of the curve on that and the only major country where emissions went down last year!” (Trump, 2018d)
- [Mar 16th, 2019 – Tweet \(5:22 PM\)](#): “How is the Paris Environmental Accord working out for France? After 18 weeks of rioting by the Yellow Vest Protesters, I guess not so well! In the meantime, the United States has gone to the top of all lists on the Environment.” (Trump, 2019a)
- [Sep 4th 2019 – Tweet \(5:08 PM\)](#): “ 7. The badly flawed Paris Climate Agreement protects the polluters, hurts Americans, and cost a fortune. NOT ON MY WATCH! 8. I want crystal clean water and the cleanest and the purest air on the planet – we’ve now got that!” (Trump, 2019b)
- [Dec 31st, 2019 – Tweet \(6:25 PM\)](#): How is the Paris Accord doing? Don’t ask! <https://t.co/9N0yibmDkj> (Trump, 2019c)

There are some key aspects of this timeline that automatically stand out. First of all, regarding the **channels** to communicate the decision, we see that there is a combination or mix between Trump’s tweets and other official channels – between tweets and the official speech in the White House Rose Park. This means that in this case, Twitter was a **complementary** rather than a substitute means to transmit the message. Complementary means complementary, not less important. Trump only gave *one* official speech to communicate, but he tweeted intensively about the agreement before and after the decision. However, in any case, it goes to show how Twitter was not the only channel Trump used to communicate, contrary to a common perception. It was just the preferred one, partly because of how accessible it is.

Another important element is the **timing** of the different messages. The timing is important in two ways. First of all, one needs to consider that this decision takes place in 2017, which is the first official year of the Trump Administration. This is important because decisions taken during the first year tend to carry important symbolic meaning. They set the tone for the rest of the Administration and send a message to the public about what can be furtherly expected. Public perception (whether domestic or international) can be heavily influenced by the context an event takes place in. The fact that this is the *first* year, the *first* taste that the U.S. and the rest of the world have of Trump’s leadership, makes timing a crucial aspect to consider. The decision to leave the deal reaches a different and more profound dimension. Suddenly, withdrawing from a major global climate deal is less about the deal and more about the past, present and future of the U.S. role in the world.

The second way timing is important has to do with the dates of the tweets and the different purposes they seemed to serve: anticipation on one hand, reinforcement/support on the other. Again, Trump tweeted both before and after the decision – even *years* afterwards. The tweets before the decision seem to **anticipate** what was coming, not only logistically (“next week!” or “Thursday at 3:00 PM”) but also substantively (“MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!”). It is as if he wanted to increase suspense yet offer a very clear hint of what his decision was going to be.

Figure 13 - Tweet: anticipating the Paris decision

(Source: Trump, 2017c)



The tweets after the decision are in some way more interesting, given that they confirm one of the typically associated functions of Trump’s use of twitter: building support for his policy decisions – a way of agenda-setting. The fact that Trump took advantage of every opportunity he saw afterwards to discredit the agreement reflects his desire to prove a point, to prove he was right. In other words, he seemed to aim at reinforcing his agenda and continue to generate reactions in favor of his policy even when entire years had passed. Seen from perspective, one notices that the decision fits within a narrative and a pattern that extends itself throughout time. Once again, we witness the consistency of Trump’s thinking, worldview and habits.

Speaking of worldview, Trump’s **rhetoric** throughout the process is equally telling of his communication strategy. Here, the first element we need to consider is the actual speech Trump gave when he announced the decision. The official rationale behind the decision was that the deal undermined U.S. competitiveness and jobs, costed the country billions of dollars, and gave developing countries such as China a “free pass” to increase emissions while the U.S. was forced to cut its own. Trump also insisted that he was ready to renegotiate the deal in terms that were ‘fair’ to the United States (Trump, 2017d)., without specifying exactly what a ‘fair’ deal would look like.

That being said, Trump’s rhetoric is, arguably, incredibly powerful. It is not difficult to see how he manages to strike a chord within a specific stratum of the American public that supports him. He uses speech that is simple, easy to understand, emotional and in line with his overall insistence on putting “America first” and “making America great again”. Some insightful phrases extracted from the speech include:

- “Therefore, in order to fulfill my solemn duty to **protect America and its citizens**, the United States will withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord (...) — (applause) — thank you, thank you — but begin negotiations to reenter either the Paris Accord or a really entirely new transaction on terms that **are fair** to the United States, its businesses, its workers, its people, its taxpayers. So we’re getting out. But we will start to negotiate, and we will see if we can make a deal that’s fair. **And if we can, that’s great. And if we can’t, that’s fine.**” (Trump, 2017d, para. 5)
- “The Paris Climate Accord is simply the latest example of Washington entering into an agreement that **disadvantages the** United States to the exclusive benefit of other countries.” (Trump, 2017d, para. 6)
- As someone who cares deeply about the environment, which I do, I cannot in good conscience support a deal that **punishes** the United States — which is what it does — the world’s leader in environmental protection, while imposing no meaningful obligations on the **world’s leading polluters**. (Trump, 2017d, para. 9)
- But the bottom line is that the **Paris Accord is very unfair, at the highest level, to the United States**. (Trump, 2017d, para. 10)
- This agreement is less about the climate and more about other countries **gaining a financial advantage over the United States**. The rest of the world applauded when we signed the Paris Agreement — **they went wild; they were so happy** — for the simple reason that it put our country, the United States of America, which we all love, at a very, very big economic disadvantage. (Trump, 2017d, para. 14)
- The agreement is a massive redistribution of United States wealth to other countries. (Trump, 2017d, para. 16)
- The fact that the Paris deal **hamstrings** the United States, while empowering some of the world’s **top polluting countries** should dispel any doubt as to the real reason why foreign lobbyists wish to keep our magnificent country **tied up** and **bound down** by this agreement: It’s to give their country an economic edge over the United States. **That’s not going to happen while I’m President. I’m sorry.** (Trump, 2017d, para. 23)
- The Paris Agreement **handicaps** the United States economy in order to win praise from the very foreign capitals and global activists that have long sought to gain wealth at our country’s expense. **They don’t put America first. I do, and I always will.** (Trump, 2017d, para. 25)
- We don’t want other leaders and other countries **laughing at us** anymore. And they won’t be. They won’t be. (Trump, 2017d, para.27)
- **I was elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris.** I promised I would exit or renegotiate any deal which fails to serve America’s interests. (Trump, 2017d, para.28)
- It is time to put Youngstown, Ohio, Detroit, Michigan, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania — along with many, many other locations within our great country — before Paris, France. It is time to make America great again. (Trump, 2017d, para. 36).

It should be noted that in the speech Trump often cites statistics and frames the phrases in a hyperbolic or factually misleading way. For example, in an instance Trump says that “China will be allowed to build hundreds of additional coal plants. So, we can’t build the plants, but they can, according to this agreement.” (Trump, 2017d, para. 12). While building coal plants would not help

the U.S., the second largest emitter of CO₂ in the world, fulfil its climate goals, the agreement does not technically specify who can or cannot build coal plants. The goals of each country, again, are nationally determined, precisely because of the different circumstances each country has (Robertson, 2021).

Another example includes Trump's confusion of the concepts of "pollution" and carbon dioxide emissions. The agreement exclusively deals with reducing mainly CO₂ emissions. Nonetheless, Trump emphasized that: "The United States, under the Trump administration, will continue to be the cleanest and most environmentally friendly country on Earth. We'll be the cleanest. We're going to have the cleanest air. We're going to have the cleanest water. We will be environmentally friendly, but we're not going to put our businesses out of work and we're not going to lose our jobs. We're going to grow; we're going to grow rapidly" (Trump, 2017d, para. 18). The mention of the "cleanest air" or the "cleanest water" fulfills merely rhetorical purposes given that it does not have anything to do with the subject at hand (McDonald, 2018). There are some other examples like this.

In any case, merely from a communications point of view, the speech is arguably very effective, and very revealing of Trump's worldview. A simple discourse analysis allows for a few key lessons worth noting. The use of colloquial expressions that ignite a feeling of pride, of superiority, and reinforce the points he is making, for instance, is frequent. It also makes the ideas very easy to understand, very down-to-earth: "We will see if we can make a deal that's fair. And if we can, that's great and if we can't that's fine" (Trump, 2017d, para 5); or "they went wild; they were so happy" (Trump, 2017d, para 14); or "that's not going to happen while I'm President. I'm sorry (Trump, 2017d, para. 23). This type of expressions tends to elicit emotions very easily and create the impression that the former president was really "standing up" for the America's interests.

The use of certain verbs and expressions reveal Trump's way of understanding not only this concrete accord, but all international commitments in a way ([the agreement] "*hamstrings*" or "*handicaps*"; [our country] "*tied up*" or "*bound down*"). For him, treaties and organizations are not valuable additions or tools for increasing the United States' influence in the world, for advancing its interests, standing up for its values or promoting multilateralism – even if it might

sometimes entail certain sacrifices or investments. For him, all international obligations are merely chains that prevent the country from reaching its full potential. Most other ill-intentioned nations are thus only looking for ways to take advantage of the U.S. and nothing more, and that needs to change: “We don’t want other leaders and other countries laughing at us anymore. And they won’t be. They won’t be. (Trump, 2017d, para 27). An agreement is either good or bad for the country – there is no compromise, no in-between. The U.S. either wins or loses. The world is black and white, and reality is simplified. And all of this while using highly emotional speech: “I was elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris” (Trump, 2017d, para. 28). Again, very effective from a communications standpoint.

It is not therefore difficult to see why many researchers seem to point out Trump’s desire to depict reality in a distorted, or particular way. But it is also not difficult to see the coherence in his overall narrative, given that all of the messages connect in one way or another to the idea of putting America first, regaining some kind of “lost” power or greatness. His particular way of understanding reality and communicating continues on display in the tweets after the decision was taken. His way of discrediting the agreement afterwards was by linking it to the “yellow vests” protests in France and even implying that Macron was against the agreement, forcing this leader to clarify his commitment to the deal in a G20 meeting at the time (McDonald, 2018).

Additionally, even if the yellow vest protests were mostly a result of planned gas tax, aimed partly at reducing gas consumption and thus reducing emissions, it was not directly related to the Paris agreement. Again, under the agreement every country has the faculty to determine its own contributions. France had not even included it in the document it submitted to the UN specifying its goals. It was a domestic policy, not an international obligation (McDonald, 2018). Therefore, Trump’s linking of the two is misleading and serves merely rhetorical purposes. It can be seen as a direct attempt by the President to continue to build support for a decision taken at the beginning of his administration – all while publicly commenting on an ally’s domestic environment in an unfriendly manner. Two birds with one stone. This was not well received by Macron or the French government, we can assume. And neither was the decision in the first place, as we will see now.

Figure 14 - Tweet: Discrediting and building support post-decision.
(Source: Trump, 2018b)



Reactions by foreign and domestic leaders

The decision reverberated throughout the United States and the entire world. Leaders reacted and commented using different channels, formats and rhetorical styles. However, practically all of them expressed disappointment, while reinforcing their commitment to the agreement. A very thorough media analysis was done by Carbon Brief Staff (2017) to analyze and document the reactions, organized by country, category and tone. This last element is overwhelmingly negative, as measured in the sum of all reactions. Here are some examples:

Some statements through official channels

- **UK ‘disappointed’** (Downing Street statement): British prime minister Theresa May ‘disappointed’ with the decision (Watts & Connolly, 2017)
- **Germany, France and Italy ‘regretful’ and ‘cannot be renegotiated’** (joint statement) - Merkel, Macron, Gentiloni“ (...)We firmly believe that the Paris Agreement cannot be

renegotiated since it is a vital instrument for our planet, societies and economies ” (as cited Watts & Connolly, 2017)

- **China “global challenge”** (press conference) - Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying “Climate change is a global challenge, and no country can stay away from it (...) the Paris Agreement is a hard-won outcome ” (as cited in Smith-Spark, 2017).
- **Russia ‘Don’t worry be happy’** (News agency statement) - Russian president Vladimir Putin: “Don’t worry, be happy” adding he “would not judge” Trump over his decision (Walsh, 2017). He also said that “Maybe he didn’t have to exit the Paris agreement, because it was only a framework. Maybe he could have simply changed the responsibilities of the United States within this framework. But what was said cannot be taken back” (as cited in Smith-Spark, 2017).
- **Japan ‘dissapointed’ and ‘angry’**
 - o (Press conference) Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato: “The climate change issue isn’t something of a single country, it should be addressed by the entire international community (...) it’s extremely regrettable that the United States is withdrawing from the Paris Agreement now” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2017)
 - o (Press statement) Environment Minister Koichi Yamamoto: “It’s as if they’ve turned their back on the wisdom of humanity (...) in addition to being disappointed, I’m also angry.” (as cited in Watts & Connolly, 2017)
- **Australia ‘disappointing but not surprising’** (Press statement) Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull: “[Trump’s decision was] *disappointing but not at all surprising,*” since it was “*entirely as expected and as predicted and as promised by him.*” (as cited in Smith-Spark, 2017)
- **New Zealand ‘wrong’** (press statement) Climate change minister Paula Bennett “So much of what [Trump] said is wrong” (as cited in Watts & Connolly, 2017)
- **France ‘make our planet great again’** (televised address): “(...) The Paris agreement remain irreversible and will be implemented not just by France but by all the other nations. We will succeed because we are fully committed, because wherever we live, whoever we are, we all share the same responsibility: make our planet great again (Vonberg, 2017, 00:09).

Some statements through tweets

In Twitter, there were reactions by many different actors, from international organizations to foreign leaders, to domestic politicians and business leaders. The official UN agency charged with coordinating climate change issues tweeted a joint statement with several countries opposing the decision (when it finally came into effect, years later). Immediately afterwards though, Canada expressed deep disappointment, while Mexico emphasized its commitment to the agreement.

Figure 15 - Tweet: UNFCCC Joint Statement
(Source: UNFCCC, 2020)



Figure 16 - Tweet: Canada "deeply disappointed"
(Source: Trudeau, 2017)



Figure 17 - Tweet: Mexico [Translation] "maintain our support"
(Source: Peña Nieto, 2017)



France’s Macron turn the Trump slogan up on its head, tweeting “make our planet great again”, in addition to the televised statement, and Paris’ former mayor Anne Hidalgo reaffirmed the country’s support to the agreement by illuminating the city hall with green lights. Germany and Sweden, for their part, also expressed their disappointment through tweets, with this last country emotionally emphasizing how the Paris deal was “humanity’s last chance”.

Figure 18 - Tweet: France "Make our planet great again"
(Source: Macron, 2017)



Figure 19 - Tweet: France "reaffirm our support"
(Source: Hidalgo, 2017)



Figure 20 - Tweet: Germany "disappointed"
(Source: Seibert, 2017)



Figure 21 - Tweet: Sweden "humanity's last chance"
(Source: Wallström, 2017)



Other comments within the EU included that of former head of the EU Commission who had tweeted days before the decision that “[things didn’t] work like that” (Juncker, 2017 as cited in European Commission, 2017), or that of the former EU climate official who called the day of the announcement “a sad day for the global community” (Arias Cañete, 2017). And outside of the traditional sphere of partners, the tweet of the Marshall Islands, a group of Pacific islands

particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels, stands out. As well as that of Greenpeace International, one of the most important international climate NGO.

Figure 22 - Tweet: EU "it doesn't work like that"
(Source: European Commission, 2017)



Figure 23 - Tweet: EU "a sad day for the global community"
(Source: Arias Cañete, 2017)



Figure 24 - Tweet: Marshall Islands "disappointing and confusing"
 (Source: Heine, 2017)³⁰



Figure 25 - Tweet: Greenpeace International " US from climate leader to climate deadbeat"
 (Source: Greenpeace International, 2017)



As a side note, the domestic reaction was no less negative. The policy was widely rejected as well. The US public was predominantly against the decision, with about 71% of Americans in support of the Paris deal (Carothers, 2017). John Kerry, former Secretary of State and lead Paris negotiator John Kerry called it a “grotesque abdication of leadership” saying Trump had “put America last” (as cited in Helsel and Caldwell, 2017) Bill Clinton, former president of the U.S., tweeted how leaving the Paris treaty was “a mistake” and how “protecting [the] future also creates more jobs” (Clinton, 2017).

The decision was so controversial that it even caused the resignation of several business leaders such as Elon Musk (Tesla’s CEO) or Robert Iger (Disney’s) resigned from the President’s Council (Walsh, 2017). It also led to certain local and state authorities reiterating their commitments to the deal. For example, the mayors of 61 cities joined efforts and wrote a letter in support of the agreement, concluding that the world couldn’t wait and neither would they (D’Angelo, 2017). The governors of Washington state, New York and California, on their part, announced the formation of a coalition committed to upholding the Paris agreement, called the United States Climate Alliance (Andone and Chavez, 2017).

³⁰ The Marshall Islands are a string of Pacific islands particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels (BBC News, 2017)

In sum, the immediate reactions from representatives both inside and outside the U.S. seem to indicate wide rejection for Trump's decision.

Key implications or insights regarding Trump's twitter diplomacy

After viewing these reactions, it is important to establish the insights this case study provides for the subject at hand. It is possible to see how it confirms many of the elements that were mentioned in the general analysis of Trump's twitterdiplomacy at the beginning of the discussion. For one, it shows how Twitter is not a mere accessory but a **key** political communication tool for Trump. It seems crucial to the dissemination of his ideas and policies, even in cases when it is used complementarily. It also exemplifies how Trump's use of the platform is not only **strategic** but **reflective** of his communication style in general. Twitter remained a constant throughout the communication of the decision, serving broadly to set the media/political agenda, anticipating the decision and building support for it afterwards.

The combination of different channels – both on the part of Trump and by other leaders – shows how traditional means of political communication remain important. In the case of Trump, it serves to remark how the rhetoric and narrative behind his policy decisions remains transversal and coherent across channels. Additionally, his rhetoric is simultaneously a way to grasp his worldview and deeper beliefs about reality. In the case of other leaders, particularly foreign leaders, it serves also to see how traditional diplomatic language and manners have not been radically changed by new digital formats. Even when using emotional language, leaders were able to show their disappointment with the decision, without losing diplomatic codes or copying Trump's communication style. Trump was really an exception in this sense.

This all refers back to the idea that Twitter, just as many other social media for that matter, is a **tool**. Its potential for political communication and for diplomacy depends on how it is used. For now, it seems to coexist alongside traditional means and sometimes "traditional" styles of leaders, as well. There seems to be a continuity to it. However, of course, the channel impacts the message, and communicators tend to adapt accordingly – in the number of words, the tone or the purpose it plays. Sometimes that entails replicating official discourse, sometimes it does not. In any case, what seems clear is that the **ease of communication** of social media, together with the more political nature of Twitter, probably gives this platform a unique role to play in the new digital

landscape. It offers great opportunities to communicate policy decisions and drive or frame the political discussion. Trump helped the world see that.

PART III: IMPLICATIONS FOR AMERICAN SOFT POWER

We arrive at the last part of the analysis, which entails looking at how Trump’s twitterdiplomacy or Trump’s use of Twitter to communicate foreign policy decisions impacted American soft power.

Although there have been several studies to consider how Trump’s presidency affected this variable, perhaps the most important one was developed by the Pew Research Center in 2017. This center published a report with the results of an international survey carried out in about 37 nations, comparing them to results from previous years. The results are remarkable and insightful. Once again only some of the key findings will be explored, although the report is worth reading in its entirety.

1. U.S. image deteriorates as doubts are cast on Trump’s leadership

The first key idea that we need to consider is that, in effect, the image of the United States was, in fact, affected by the arrival of Donald Trump. Both Trump and his policies were seen unfavorably by practically all the countries involved in the survey, reflected in changes on “Views of U.S.” and on “confidence in the U.S. president.” This confidence relates also to a specific question regarding the trust in the U.S. president “to do the right thing” in world affairs, a variable in which Obama received much higher ratings. The decline of U.S. image was widespread, around the world, with Russia being the only exception. (Wike, Stokes, Poushter, & Fetterolf, 2020).

Figure 26 - Confidence and views
(Source: Wike et Al, 2020)

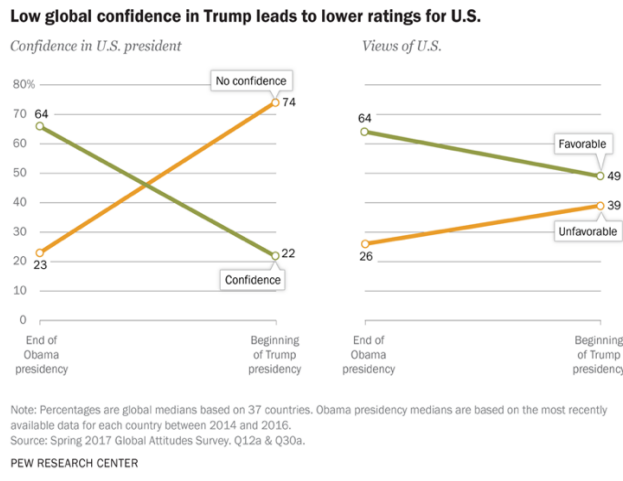
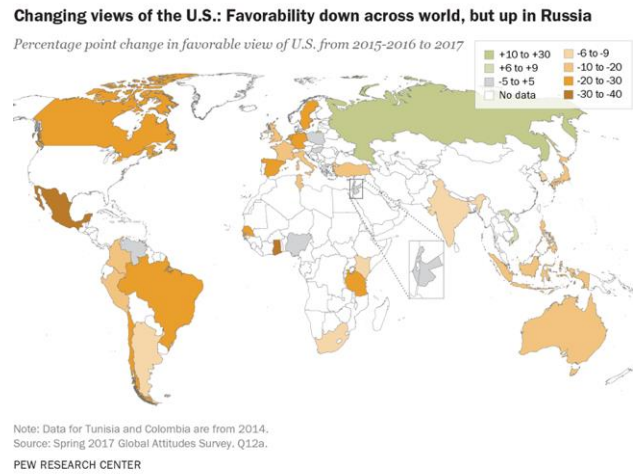


Figure 27 - Favorability down across the globe
(Source: Wike et Al, 2020)



2. Around the globe, there is widespread resistance to Trump’s “illiberal” policy stances.

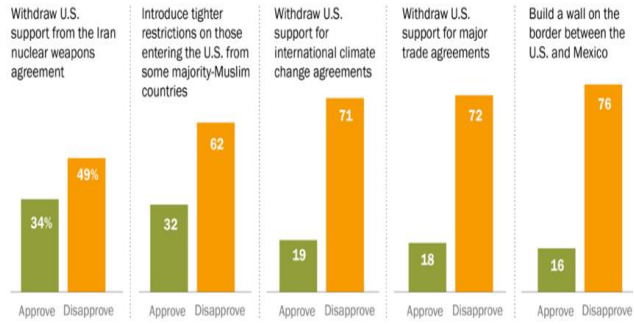
Interestingly enough, publics around the world also showed opposition to Trump’s policies specifically. Most of the policies that are mentioned in the survey are of an illiberal nature, including the withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal, from international climate change agreements, and from other major trade agreements. This is especially relevant because it shows a broad opposition to the U.S. leaving the Paris accord in particular (Wike et Al, 2017).

Other policies that are mentioned in the study include the wall on the border with Mexico or introducing tighter restrictions on immigration. Although these may not seem directly related to the withdrawals, they still fit within the narrative promoted by Trump of putting what he understands to be the interests of America in the first place.

Figure 28 - Disapproval of illiberal policies
(Source: Wike et Al, 2017)

Widespread disapproval of Trump's signature policy proposals

___ of President Donald Trump's proposed policy to ...



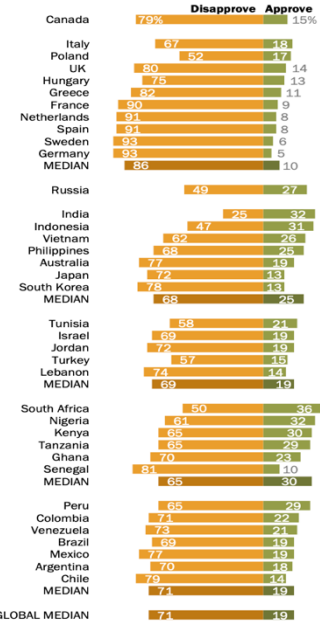
Note: Percentages are global medians based on 37 countries.
Source: Spring 2017 Global Attitudes Survey, Q38a-e.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 29 - Disapproval from climate withdrawal
(Source: Wike et Al, 2017)

Few want U.S. to withdraw from climate agreements

___ of President Donald Trump's proposed policy to withdraw support for international climate change agreements



Source: Spring 2017 Global Attitudes Survey, Q38a.

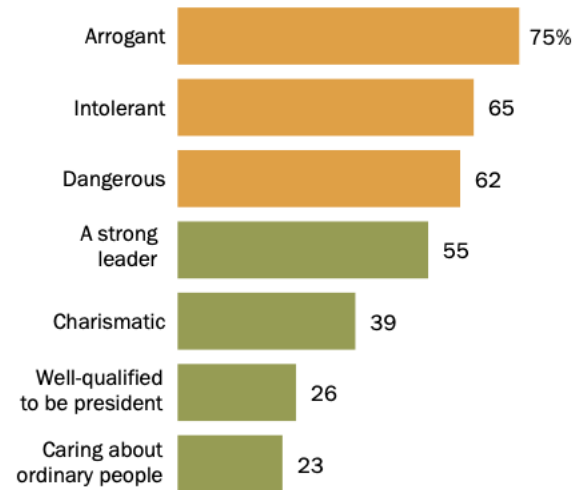
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

3. *Trump is considered to be arrogant, intolerant, dangerous, but also a strong leader*

Figure 30 - Views on Trump
(Source: Wike et Al, 2017)

Global views of Trump's characteristics

% saying they think of President Donald Trump as ...



Note: Percentages are global medians based on 37 countries.
Source: Spring 2017 Global Attitudes Survey, Q37a-g.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Regarding the characterization of Trump, participants were given a set of negative and positive traits and were asked which ones described the leader best. The characteristic that received the most answers was “arrogant”, followed by intolerant and dangerous. After these negative traits, it is interesting note that Trump is also seen by more a significant part of the respondents as a “strong” and charismatic leader, which shows that his personality and communication style was ambiguous enough to produce complex impressions. The least voted characteristics were those that referred to being well-qualified and caring for ordinary people. This shows that the way Trump showed himself to the world – his actions, behavior, and communication style - provoked predominantly negative perceptions (Wike et Al, 2017). And perception is key for soft power, for it can determines the legitimacy of a leader and of a nation directly. It determines to some extent how attractive the country’s values or culture is. Which leads us to the next point.

4. Mixed ratings about American soft power and relations with the U.S.

When it comes to measuring soft power in particular, the survey utilizes a varied range of question around different elements. It is important to remember that the idea is to capture the power of “attraction” and legitimacy of the U.S. – as seen through intangible variables like people, culture or ideas. The results show a mixed record for American soft power, as defined in this particular survey. On the bright side, across the nations polled, a median of 58% has a favorable view of Americans. When it comes to popular culture, such as American music or movies, this number is 65%. Additionally, a majority of respondents (54%) also believe that the U.S. government respects the personal freedoms of its people (Wike et Al, 2017).

On the not-so-bright side, however, “*America’s influence in the world is not always welcome*” (Wike et Al, 2017, p.12). In particular, American ideas about democracy are slightly more rejected than they are embraced, and most respondents regarded the spread of American ideas and customs as a negative thing. It is important to note that most of these trends are broader and go beyond the Trump administration, as has been noted in previous polls by the same institution (Wike et Al, 2020). It goes to show how the soft power of a nation is determined by several variables and intrinsically related to a vibrant civil society – it may be conditioned by the leadership, but it does not depend upon it (for better or for worse). The ratings on American soft power, positive and negative, are therefore expected to be more resilient than the view on specific presidents or policies. Soft power is a construct that extends throughout longer periods of time. Notions around people, culture or ideas take longer to build – and to erode.

This does not mean that leadership does not matter – it does – it just means that it is not the only element that matters. The mixed record on American soft power goes hand in hand with the mixed predictions on the potential changes in relations with the U.S. under Trump. Respondents were asked to predict how relations between their country and the United States were likely to change with the former president. More people predicted that relations were more likely to get worse rather than better. However, most respondent predicted that things “would stay about the same” (Wike et Al, 2020). Pessimistic predictions are not unsurprising given the predominantly negative view around Trump and his policies. Just as ‘continuity’ predictions are not surprising given, for example, the resilience of positive variables within American soft power.

Figure 31 - Relations with the U.S.
(Source: Wike et Al, 2020)

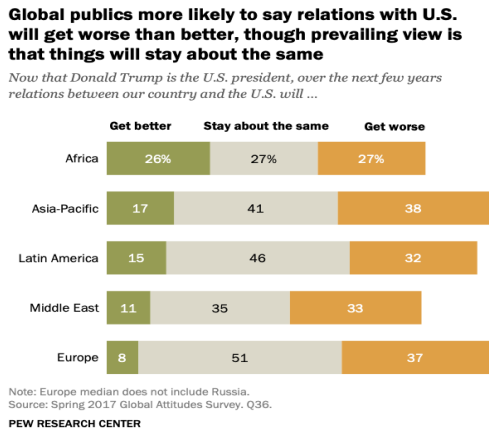
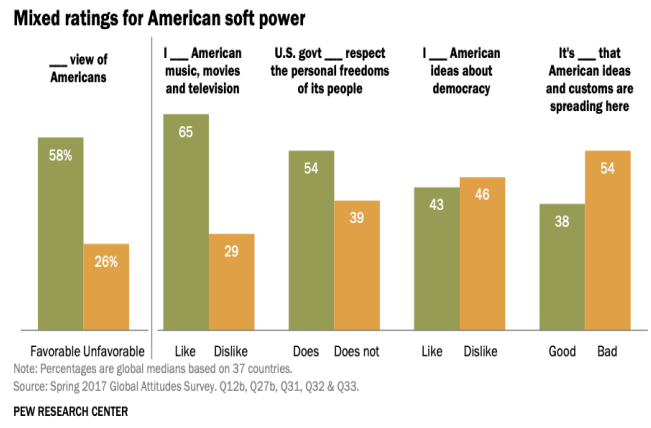


Figure 32 - Mixed impact on American soft power
(Source: Wike et Al, 2020)



5. **Final insights and important caveats: Trump’s twitterdiplomacy, Trump’s foreign policy or Trump?**

After analyzing the general impact on the view of the United States, Trump, his policies, his personality, and American soft power, some final ideas arise. The first is that the changes in global publics’ perceptions are hardly attributable to Trump’s twitterdiplomacy itself. As has been mentioned, his tone in Twitter and his use of Twitter to communicate foreign policy decisions was merely a reflection of his overall style in real life. It is difficult to imagine that his policies and the direction of his Administration would have been perceived radically differently had he used another channel to communicate. This does not mean his use of Twitter did not matter at all – it could have contributed to the wider notion of an impulsive erratic president that made foreign policy through Twitter. It just means that the erosion of American credibility is not merely a consequence of Trump’s twitterdiplomacy. Rather, it seems to be a result of the combination of Trump’s foreign policy, his communication style and rhetoric (or personality) *including or as reflected through* his twitterdiplomacy.

One can assume that his rhetoric had an important influence in the way he himself and his decisions were perceived. The association of Trump with characteristics such as “arrogance” or “intolerance” did not arise out of thin air. It was probably linked to the way he tended to behave and present himself to the world. His personality and worldview are arguably a key part of the

equation when it comes to determining foreign perceptions. The old motto of “it is not only what you say, but how you say it” is cliché for a reason.³¹ From this idea, a second important caveat should be mentioned. The fact that Trump himself was so negatively perceived opens up the question on how big of an impact *he* had on the negative perception of his policies. In other words, it makes one wonder if the relative decline in the image of the U.S. and the lack of popularity of his policies are due to the policies themselves or to the fact that it is Trump announcing them. If it had been another leader, with a different face or communication style, would the impact still be as negative? Was it all a result of the policies or decisions themselves, the way they were communicated or the speaker?

In practice it is difficult to separate all of these elements, and it is likely that the impact is, again, a combination or mix of all of them. There is reason to believe that the policy content does matter – that withdrawing from an international climate deal or building a wall at the border would be itself unpopular regardless of who communicates it. Agadjanian and Horiuchi (2018) explore precisely this question, as they attempt to identify the relative importance of the source, the issue and the content in the formation of foreign public opinion. They find that the policy content in general matters more in shaping opinion of the U.S. than the source (or the speaker). However, there is also reason to believe that the speaker of the messages can greatly influence the public’s perception.

They find that the “Trump attribution” (the fact that Trump was the speaker) does matter and has significantly negative and large effects – but only when the policy content is “uncooperative”³². In other words, a ‘bad’ policy will be negatively perceived, regardless of who communicates it. But, when the speaker is negatively perceived (“arrogant”, intolerant or

³¹ In reality, his decisions were theoretically legitimate – leaders decide what state priorities are and act in consequence. You are perfectly allowed to leave international agreements, or international bodies if you desire so. That is something *you can* do. But that is not the point. The point is that if you do it while yelling “America First! America First!” and waving your flag around, you should not be surprised when it raises eyebrows around your longtime friends and partners, to whom you are just not yourself anymore. You seem to be renouncing to values and interests you have proclaimed for more than seven decades.

³² They used Japan as a case study and conducted a survey experiment, by exposing citizens to U.S. policy messages that varied by factors such as source, issue salience and policy content. Cooperative is defined as strengthening the relations between the countries, and uncooperative is the contrary. (Agadjanian and Horiuchi, 2018).

dangerous) the perception is even worse. This means that Trump was arguably half-right, although not entirely right, when he said in 2017: “Well, you know, my critics are only saying that [my rhetoric is increasing tensions with foreign countries] because it’s me. If someone else uttered the exact same words I uttered, they would say what a great statement, what a wonderful statement” (Trump, 2017, as cited in Agadjanian and Horiuchi, 2018).

The fact that policy content matters is not really a surprise. No amount of good communication can fix a bad policy, just as bad communication can ruin a good one. And the fact that Trump’s personality and communication style – his use of twitter included – has an impact on how foreign policy decisions are perceived is not that much of a surprise either. Leaders can clearly impact the perception of a country.³³ However, these findings also show how the image of the United States is more resilient than one might think. Foreign opinion towards this country is not entirely dependent upon its political leader. Thus, although the reputation of the U.S. did suffer under Trump, he did not manage to irreparably damage it (Agadjanian and Horiuchi, 2018).

In short, Trump incarnates several contradictions. On one hand, his leadership style, foreign policy and twitterdiplomacy were unprecedented. They raised questions regarding the role of Twitter, about the credibility of the United States, or about traditional diplomatic codes. They showed how something seems to have changed in the current media landscape, in the U.S. domestic context and in global assumptions about the current international order. Trump mattered. On the other hand, he also showed his limits. He showed how traditional diplomatic language is not dead; how Twitter and other channels can typically coexist, how rhetoric matters but policy content does too, and how many around the world are still in favor of international institutions, treaties and cooperation. He helped expose the confines but also the resilience of the United States’ reputation and image. In sum, Trump helped visualize seemingly new rules about political communication, foreign policy making and soft power, while in many ways being an exception himself.

³³ They represent the country in the end, as well as a specific policy direction. This is consistent with another Pew Research Survey done after the end of his administration, which showed how the image of the U.S. considerably improved with the transition to the Biden presidency (Wike, Poushter, Silver, Fetterolf & Mordecai, 2021).

CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

Donald J. Trump's particular use of Twitter during his presidency definitely raised questions about the nature of political communication and the way of conducting diplomacy in the 21st century. It seemed to contribute to the impression of a new, more erratic of designing and implementing foreign policy in the U.S. It left an impression on domestic and international publics alike, and incentivized numerous studies regarding the role of this social media platform for the former president. This study has provided an extensive account of the subject of twitterdiplomacy, outlining some of the most important developments in this field. It has attempted to see the impact of this new practice of diplomacy in the presidency of Donald Trump. In this sense it has identified some of the key trends of Trump's use of this social media platform, namely how Twitter was vital to Trump's political communication, not just another tool; how his use of Twitter could be characterized as "strategic" and, finally, how Trump's communication style or tone in the digital sphere is partly a reflection of his style in real life.

By using the concept of "soft power" it has offered a specific theoretical framework to understand the consequences of this practice on the United States' "power of attraction" or perceived legitimacy (Nye, 2021). We have seen how this power was eroded during this previous Administration, with some relevant consequences for America's perception in the world. This research paper has also made use of the concept of "Liberal International Order" to provide a description of how Trump's foreign policy deviated from the historical role of the U.S. in the world since World War II. Trump's "America First" approach – with all the withdrawals from international commitments and the shifts in foreign policy it entailed – was also partly responsible for the erosion of the country's soft power.

We have therefore also found how Trump's use of Twitter cannot be understood in isolation as the sole responsible for this process – the impact on the image of the U.S. was due to a combination of several variables including Trump's display through Twitter, sure, but also his overall leadership style, his personality, worldview, and specific illiberal foreign policy decisions. In this sense, we have also found how the reputation of a country does not hinge uniquely on its leader – even though it is heavily influenced by it. Additionally, we have discovered how Trump's atypical diplomatic style through the platform did not cause a fundamental shift in other leaders'

behaviour. These lessons can have important implications for the way we think about the resilience of soft power and traditional diplomatic practice in general terms.

In any case, Trump shook the world. He raised questions about the U.S.' leadership and credibility in world affairs, about the commitment to the international liberal order and a renewal of US isolationism, About the consequences of populism and the use of social media to communicate politically and diplomatically. His leadership style and policies raised questions about the past, by moving away from previously acquired commitments but also from the order the US had pioneered and benefitted from in the last 70 years. But he also raised questions about the future: the future of social media, of political communication, of populist discourse, of American politics, of US foreign policy decision-making, and of the soft power and the image of the US around the world.

REFERENCES

- 60 Minutes. (2020, October 26). *Asked whether his tweets or name-calling turn people off, President Trump says: "I think I wouldn't be here if I didn't have social media." Moments later, he abruptly ended the interview.* <https://cbsn.ws/2HyaNBo>.
Twitter.com. Retrieved April 29, 2023, from
<https://twitter.com/60Minutes/status/1320516204491087873?s=20>
- Agadjanian, A., & Horiuchi, Y. (2017). Source Cues or Policy Considerations: What Influences Foreign Public Opinion? *Social Science Research Network*.
<https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3039822>
- Andone, D., & Chavez, N. (2017, June 2). US mayors, governors vow to stick with Paris accord. *CNN*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/06/01/us/trump-climate-deal-cities-states-defying/index.html>
- Arias Cañete, M. (2017, June 1). *A sad day for the global community, as the US turns its back on the fight against climate change. EU deeply regrets this unilateral decision.* Twitter.com.
Retrieved April 28, 2023, from
https://twitter.com/MAC_europa/status/870365179040681984?s=20
- Bakalov, I. (2019). Whither soft power? Divisions, milestones, and prospects of a research programme in the making. *Journal of Political Power*, 12(1), 129–151.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2158379x.2019.1573613>
- Baker, P. (2023, April 5). Trump Indictment, a First for a U.S. President, Tests Democracy. *The New York Times*. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from
<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/30/us/politics/trump-indictment-democracy.html>

- BBC News. (2017, June 2). Paris climate deal: Dismay as Trump signals exit from accord. *BBC News*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-40128431>
- BCW. (2012, June 25). *Twiplomacy Study 2012 / Twiplomacy*. Twiplomacy. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://www.twiplomacy.com/copy-of-twiplomacy-study-2013>
- BCW. (2016, May 31). *Twiplomacy Study 2016 / Twiplomacy*. Twiplomacy. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://www.twiplomacy.com/twiplomacy-study-2016>
- BCW. (2020, July 20). *Twiplomacy Study 2020 / Twiplomacy*. Twiplomacy. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://www.twiplomacy.com/twiplomacy-study-2020>
- Borger, J. (2019a, October 17). What his letter to Erdoğan tells us about Donald Trump. *The Guardian*. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/oct/17/unplugged-and-unleashed-what-the-letter-to-recep-tayyip-erdogan-tells-us-about-donald-trump#maincontent>
- Borger, J. (2019b, December 27). 2019: the year US foreign policy fell apart. *The Guardian*. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/dec/27/2019-the-year-us-foreign-policy-fell-apart-donald-trump>
- Bourg, J. (2019, October). *Donald Trump wrote a letter to Erdoğan on 9 October warning him about Turkish military policy in northern Syria*. Reuters. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/oct/17/unplugged-and-unleashed-what-the-letter-to-recep-tayyip-erdogan-tells-us-about-donald-trump#maincontent>
- Bradley, D. (2021). Trump's archived tweets are part of his official presidential record. *WRTV Indianapolis*. <https://www.wrtv.com/news/national-politics/trumps-archived-tweets-are-part-of-his-official-presidential-record>

- Burack, C. (2020, October 24). How Trump has changed global foreign policy. *dw.com*. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.dw.com/en/us-election-how-donald-trump-has-changed-global-foreign-policy/a-55194020>
- Burns, W. J. (2019). *The Back Channel: American Diplomacy in a Disordered World*. Oxford University Press.
- Carbon Brief Staff. (2017). Global reaction: Trump pulls US out of Paris Agreement on climate change. *Carbon Brief*. <https://www.carbonbrief.org/global-reaction-trump-pulls-us-out-paris-agreement-climate-change/>
- Carothers, C. (2017). The Swift & Severe Reactions to Trump's Paris Climate Agreement Decision. *Global Citizen*. <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/leaders-react-trump-paris-agreement/?template=next>
- Chhabra, R. (2020, January 24). Twitter Diplomacy: A Brief Analysis. *ORF*. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://www.orfonline.org/research/twitter-diplomacy-a-brief-analysis-60462/>
- Clinton, B. (2017, June 2). *Walking away from Paris treaty is a mistake. Climate change is real. We owe our children more. Protecting our future also creates more jobs*. Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/billclinton/status/870413077413605376>
- Collins, S. M., DeWitt, J. R., & LeFebvre, R. (2019). Hashtag diplomacy: twitter as a tool for engaging in public diplomacy and promoting US foreign policy. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 15(2), 78–96. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41254-019-00119-5>
- Council on Foreign Relations. (n.d.). Trump's Foreign Policy Moments. *Council on Foreign Relations*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/trumps-foreign-policy-moments>

- Crockett, Z. (2017, January 23). Donald Trump is the only US president ever with no political or military experience. *Vox*. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2016/11/11/13587532/donald-trump-no-experience>
- D'Angelo, C. (2017, June 1). "The World Cannot Wait — And Neither Will We," 61 Mayors Pledge. *HuffPost*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from https://www.huffpost.com/entry/cities-states-climate-leaders-trump-paris_n_593037a9e4b0e9a77a536fa9
- Duncombe, C. (2019, February 27). *Twitter and the Challenges of Digital Diplomacy*. Semantic Scholar. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Twitter-and-the-Challenges-of-Digital-Diplomacy-Duncombe/7aa937ded74c063d3e72d1f25b34529a8f2731cf>
- Ertekin, B. A. (2019). Modification of the Agenda Setting as a Tool for Political Maneuver in International Politics: Twitter Diplomacy and International Politics of Donald John Trump. *International Journal of Scientific and Technological Research*. <https://doi.org/10.7176/jstr/5-8-12>
- European Commission. (n.d.). *Paris Agreement*. Climate Action. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/international-action-climate-change/climate-negotiations/paris-agreement_en
- European Commission. (2017, June 1). *We will keep fighting for the planet. @JunckerEU about the #ParisAgreement. Jean-Claude Juncker "I am a trans-Atlanticist. But if in the coming hours or days, the American president says that he wants to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, it's Europe's duty to say: It doesn't work like that"*. Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from https://twitter.com/EU_Commission/status/870305162660806656?s=20

- Friedman, U. (2018, January 3). The Terrifying Truth of Trump's 'Nuclear Button' Tweet. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/01/trump-nuclear-button-tweet/549551/>
- Gabler, N. (2016, April 29). *Donald Trump, the Emperor of Social Media – BillMoyers.com*. BillMoyers.com. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://billmoyers.com/story/donald-trump-the-emperor-of-social-media/>
- Gertz, G. (2018, October 2). 5 things to know about USMCA, the new NAFTA. *Brookings*. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2018/10/02/5-things-to-know-about-usmca-the-new-nafta/>
- Green, J. (2021, September 2). *The rise of twiplomacy and the making of customary international law on social media*. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://uwe-repository.worktribe.com/output/10492363/the-rise-of-twiplomacy-and-the-making-of-customary-international-law-on-social-media>
- Greenpeace International. (2017, June 1). *By withdrawing from the Paris agreement, Trump has turned the US from a climate leader into a climate deadbeat* <http://act.gp/2qFVpFu>. Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/Greenpeace/status/870364398761725955?s=20>
- Gregorian, D. (2019, October 7). *Trump: “Kurds are natural enemies” with Turkey* [Video]. NBC News. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/trump-threatens-totally-destroy-obliterate-turkey-s-economy-n1063366>
- Gregorian, D., & Alexander, P. (2019, October 16). *This letter Trump sent to Erdogan is “so weird we had to check with the White House to make sure it’s real”* [Video]. NBC News.

Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/don-t-be-tough-guy-trump-s-extraordinary-letter-erdogan-n1067746>

Guitis, F. (2019, January 14). *This Is What Happens When Trump Makes Foreign Policy by Tweet*. POLITICO Magazine. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2019/01/14/donald-trump-foreign-policy-twitter-223975/>

Haass, R. (2018, January 3). Foreign Policy Expert Considers Repercussions Of Trump's Twitter Diplomacy. *NPR*. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.npr.org/2018/01/03/575450211/foreign-policy-expert-considers-repercussions-of-trumps-twitter-diplomacy>

Hanson, F. (2012, October 25). Baked in and Wired: eDiplomacy @ State. *Brookings*. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://www.brookings.edu/research/baked-in-and-wired-ediplomacy-state/>

Hathaway, O. A. (2020, October 2). *Reengaging on Treaties and Other International Agreements (Part I): President Donald Trump's Rejection of International Law*. Just Security. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.justsecurity.org/72656/reengaging-on-treaties-and-other-international-agreements-part-i-president-donald-trumps-rejection-of-international-law/>

Hayes, A. F. (2018). *From Talons to Tweets: Analyzing the Influence of Information and Communication Technology on Diplomacy*. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/From-Talons-to-Tweets%3A-Analyzing-the-Influence-of-Hayes/1859e40af654a217770346a2bdc9f57b21d01552>

- Heilprin, J. (2012, July 26). Tweet this: Study finds limits to new “Twiplomacy.” *Phys.org*. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://phys.org/news/2012-07-tweet-limits-twiplomacy.html>
- Heine, H. C. (2017, June 1). *Today’s decision is disappointing & confusing for those that support US leadership. Our own commitment to #ParisAgreement will never waiver.* Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from https://twitter.com/Senator_Heine/status/870371689737093120?s=20
- Helsel, P., & Caldwell, L. A. (2017, June 2). *US Ditching Paris Climate Agreement, President Trump Declares* [Video]. NBC News. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/obama-musk-other-world-industry-leaders-call-paris-climate-deal-n767296>
- Hidalgo, A. (2017, June 1). *Tonight, at 10:00, #Paris’ city Hall will be illuminated with green to affirm our will to implement the #ParisAgreement. #Climate #Trump.* Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from https://twitter.com/anne_hidalgo/status/870366929399238656
- Hughes, K. (2020). *Trump’s Twiplomacy - A New Diplomatic Norm?* DIVA. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://mau.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1482443&dswid=-9814>
- Ikenberry, G. J. (2018). The end of liberal international order? *International Affairs*, 94(1), 7–23. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iix241>
- Juhanda Dinata, M. S. J. D. (2015). *TWIPLOMACY: How Twitter Affects Contemporary Public Diplomacy.* Paramadina University.

https://www.academia.edu/11282222/TWIPLOMACY_How_Twitter_Affects_Contemporary_Public_Diplomacy

Kim, M., & Knuckey, J. (2021, July 8). *Trump and US soft power*. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Trump-and-US-soft-power-Kim-Knuckey/0669748dda73c2a0d88cbcd5b16049a5a29f4d2f>

Kundnani, H. (2017). What is the Liberal International Order? *German Marshall Fund of the United States*. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep18909>

Lacatus, C. (2020). Populism and President Trump's approach to foreign policy: An analysis of tweets and rally speeches. *Politics*, 41(1), 31–47. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395720935380>

Landers, E. (2017, June 6). White House: Trump's tweets are 'official statements.' *CNN*. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/06/06/politics/trump-tweets-official-statements/index.html>

Macron, E. (2017, June 2). *We all share the same responsibility: make our planet great again*. Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/EmmanuelMacron/status/870404913062449152?s=20>

Mak, T. (2019, April 11). How President Trump's Angry Tweets Can Ripple Across Social Media. *NPR*. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.npr.org/2019/04/11/712116702/how-trumps-angry-tweets-can-ripple-across-social-media>

Márquez-Domínguez, C., López-López, P. C., & Arias, T. (2017). Social networking and political agenda: Donald trump's Twitter accounts. In *Iberian Conference on Information Systems and Technologies*. <https://doi.org/10.23919/cisti.2017.7976052>

- McDonald, J. (2018, December 6). *Trump's Misleading Paris Agreement Tweets - FactCheck.org*. FactCheck.org. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.factcheck.org/2018/12/trumps-misleading-paris-agreement-tweets/>
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. (2017, June 2). *Japan's statement regarding the US announcement of its withdrawal from the Paris Agreement (Japan's firm commitment in implementing the Paris Agreement)* [Press release]. https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e_001610.html
- Morales, E. M. Q., Schultz, C. J. P., & Landreville, K. D. (2021). The Impact of 280 Characters: An Analysis of Trump's Tweets and Television News Through the Lens of Agenda Building. *Electronic News*, 15(1–2), 21–37. <https://doi.org/10.1177/19312431211028610>
- Nye, J. S. (2021). Soft power: the evolution of a concept. *Journal of Political Power*, 14(1), 196–208. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2158379x.2021.1879572>
- Others. (2022). Twitter Diplomacy: A Brief Analysis. *vdocuments.mx*. <https://vdocuments.mx/twitter-diplomacy-a-brief-analysis.html?page=1>
- Ott, B. R. (2017). The age of Twitter: Donald J. Trump and the politics of debasement. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 34(1), 59–68. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15295036.2016.1266686>
- Ouyang, Y., & Waterman, R. W. (2020). *Trump, Twitter, and the American Democracy: Political Communication in the Digital Age*. Springer Nature.
- Pavón-Guinea, A. (2018). The empirical factors of Twitter adoption by world governments: the impact of regime type and time on diffusion. *The Journal of International Communication*, 24(1), 138–161. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13216597.2017.1405833>

- Pearce, R. (2017). Global reaction: Trump pulls US out of Paris Agreement on climate change. *Carbon Brief*. <https://www.carbonbrief.org/global-reaction-trump-pulls-us-out-paris-agreement-climate-change/>
- Pelcastre, I. F. (2020, May 25). The Successes and Failures of Trump's Twitter Diplomacy. *Fair Observer*. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from https://www.fairobserver.com/region/north_america/ivan-farias-pelcastre-donald-trump-twitter-diplomacy-us-foreign-policy-news-14771/
- Peña Nieto, E. (2017, June 2). *México mantiene su respaldo y compromiso con el Acuerdo de París para detener los efectos del cambio climático global*. Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/EPN/status/870414478625521664?s=20>
- Pramuk, J. (2021, January 14). Trump becomes first president to be impeached twice, as bipartisan majority charges him with inciting Capitol riot. *CNBC*. <https://www.cNBC.com/2021/01/13/house-to-impeach-trump-for-inciting-capitol-riot.html>
- Restuccia, A., & Everest, B. (2019, January 25). *Longest shutdown in history ends after Trump relents on wall*. POLITICO. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.politico.com/story/2019/01/25/trump-shutdown-announcement-1125529>
- Robertson, L. (2017, June 2). *Trump on China, India and Coal - FactCheck.org*. FactCheck.org. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.factcheck.org/2017/06/trump-china-india-coal/>
- Sarlin, B. (2016, May 26). *Donald Trump Pledges to Rip Up Paris Climate Agreement in Energy Speech* [Video]. NBC News. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2016-election/donald-trump-pledges-rip-paris-climate-agreement-energy-speech-n581236>

- Schwarzenbach, B. (2015, October 12). *Twitter and Diplomacy: How Social Media Revolutionizes Interaction With Foreign Policy – The Diplomatic Envoy*. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://blogs.shu.edu/thediplomaticenvoy/2015/10/12/twitter-and-diplomacy-how-social-media-revolutionizes-our-interaction-with-foreign-policy/>
- Seibert, S. (2017, June 1). *Chancellor Merkel disappointed w/ Pres. Trump's decision. Now more than ever we will work for global climate policies that save our planet*. Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/RegSprecherStS/status/870380145663774720?s=20>
- Shear, M. D., Haberman, M., Confessore, N., Yourish, K., Buchanan, L., & Collins, K. (2019, November 2). How Trump Reshaped the Presidency in Over 11,000 Tweets. *The New York Times*. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/11/02/us/politics/trump-twitter-presidency.html>
- Šimunjak, M., & Caliandro, A. (2019). Twiplomacy in the age of Donald Trump: Is the diplomatic code changing? *The Information Society*, 35(1), 13–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01972243.2018.1542646>
- Smith-Spark, L. (2017, June 3). World leaders condemn Trump's decision to quit Paris climate deal. *CNN*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/06/02/world/us-climate-world-reacts/index.html>
- Statement by President Trump on the Paris Climate Accord – The White House*. (2017, June 1). The White House. <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/statement-president-trump-paris-climate-accord/>

- Stokes, D. (2018). Trump, American hegemony and the future of the liberal international order. *International Affairs*, 94(1), 133–150. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iix238>
- Toosi, N., & Cohen, D. (2017, October 1). *Trump undercuts Tillerson's efforts on North Korea*. POLITICO. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/10/01/trump-tillerson-korea-twitter-243339>
- Trudeau, J. (2017, June 1). *We are deeply disappointed that the United States federal government has decided to withdraw from the Paris Agreement*. Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/JustinTrudeau/status/870386250762645504>
- Trump, D. (2017a, May 27). *I will make my final decision on the Paris Accord next week!* Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/868441116726710272>
- Trump, D. (2017b, May 31). *I will be announcing my decision on the Paris Accord over the next few days. MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!* Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/869903459511918592>
- Trump, D. (2017c, June 1). *I will be announcing by decision on the Paris Accord, Thursday at 3:00 P.M. The White House Rose Garden. MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!* Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/realdonaldtrump/status/870083798981111808>
- Trump, D. (2017d, June 1). *Statement by President Trump on the Paris Climate Accord – The White House*. The White House. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/statement-president-trump-paris-climate-accord/>

Trump, D. (2017e, October 1). *I told Rex Tillerson, our wonderful Secretary of State, that he is wasting his time trying to negotiate with Little Rocket Man. . .* Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/914497877543735296?lang=es>

Trump, D. (2018a, January 3). *North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un just stated that the “Nuclear Button is on his desk at all times.” Will someone from his depleted and food starved regime please inform him that I too have a Nuclear Button, but it is a much bigger & more powerful one than his, and my Button works!* Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/948355557022420992>

Trump, D. (2018b, December 4). *I am glad that my friend @EmmanuelMacron and the protestors in Paris have agreed with the conclusion I reached two years ago. The Paris Agreement is fatally flawed because it raises the price of energy for responsible countries while whitewashing some of the worst polluters. . . .* Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1070089365995642881>

Trump, D. (2018c, December 8). *The Paris Agreement isn't working out so well for Paris. Protests and riots all over France. People do not want to pay large sums of money, much to third world countries (that are questionably run), in order to maybe protect the environment. Chanting “We Want Trump!” Love France.* Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1071382401954267136>

Trump, D. (2018d, December 8). *Very sad day &, night in Paris. Maybe it's time to end the ridiculous and extremely expensive Paris Agreement and return money back to the people in the form of lower taxes? The U.S. was way ahead of the curve on that and the only*

major country where emissions went down last year! Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/realdonaldtrump/status/1071454998414921728>

Trump, D. (2019a, March 16). *How is the Paris Environmental Accord working out for France?*

After 18 weeks of rioting by the Yellow Vest Protesters, I guess not so well! In the meantime, the United States has gone to the top of all lists on the Environment.

Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from

<https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1107029377123057664?lang=bg>

Trump, D. (2019b, September 4). *7. The badly flawed Paris Climate Agreement protects the polluters, hurts Americans, and cost a fortune. NOT ON MY WATCH! 8. I want crystal clean water and the cleanest and the purest air on the planet – we’ve now got that!*

Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from

<https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1169356705857187840?lang=es>

Trump, D. (2019c, December 31). *How is the Paris Accord doing? Don’t ask!*

<https://t.co/9N0yibmDkj>. Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from

<https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1212152711753453573>

Tso, K. (2021, March 8). *How are countries held accountable under the Paris Agreement? | MIT*

Climate Portal. MIT Climate Portal. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from

<https://climate.mit.edu/ask-mit/how-are-countries-held-accountable-under-paris-agreement>

UNFCCC. (2020, November 2). *“There is no greater responsibility than protecting our planet and people from the threat of climate change.” Read the joint statement on the US withdrawal from the #ParisAgreement by Chile, France, Italy, UK and UN Climate*

- Change* >> <https://bit.ly/32cCc2J>. Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/UNFCCC/status/1324030326797225986?s=20>
- Van Sant, S. (2018, December 22). U.S. Envoy To The Coalition Against ISIS Resigns Over Trump's Syria Policy. *NPR*. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://www.npr.org/2018/12/22/679535003/u-s-envoy-to-the-coalition-against-isis-resigns-over-trumps-syria-policy>
- Vonberg, J. (2017, June 2). Macron trolls Trump over Paris pullout: 'Make our planet great again.' *CNN*. <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/06/02/world/macron-trump-paris-agreement/index.html>
- Wallström, M. (2017, June 1). *The US decision to leave the #ParisAgreement is a decision to leave humanity's last chance of securing our childrens future on this planet*. Twitter.com. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from https://twitter.com/margotwallstrom/status/870371193865609216?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw
- Walsh, A. (2017, June 2). World reacts to US withdrawal from Paris pact. *dw.com*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from <https://www.dw.com/en/world-reacts-to-us-withdrawal-from-paris-agreement/a-39088295>
- Wang, C. (2019, May 20). *Twitter Diplomacy: Preventing Twitter Wars from Escalating into Real Wars* | Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/twitter-diplomacy-preventing-twitter-wars-escalating-real-wars>
- Ward, M. (2021, August 6). *At least 3,900 children separated from families under Trump 'zero tolerance' policy, task force finds*. POLITICO. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from

<https://www.politico.com/news/2021/06/08/trump-zero-tolerance-policy-child-separations-492099>

Warwick Knowledge Centre. (2017, January 31). *Trump, Twitter and diplomacy*. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from

<https://warwick.ac.uk/newsandevents/knowledgecentre/society/politics/twitter-diplomacy/>

Watts, J., & Connolly, K. (2017, June 2). World leaders react after Trump rejects Paris climate deal. *The Guardian*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jun/01/trump-withdraw-paris-climate-deal-world-leaders-react>

Welsh, M. K. (2018). *Tweeting while leading : President Trump's Twitter habits from a Washington media perspective*. Retrieved April 27, 2023, from

<https://mospace.umsystem.edu/xmlui/handle/10355/67631>

Wike, R., Poushter, J., Silver, L., Fetterolf, J., Mordecai, M., & Nadeem, R. (2022, June 10).

America's Image Abroad Rebounds With Transition From Trump to Biden. *Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from

<https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2021/06/10/americas-image-abroad-rebounds-with-transition-from-trump-to-biden/>

Wike, R., Stokes, B., Poushter, J., & Fetterolf, J. (2017, June 10). U.S. Image Suffers as Publics Around World Question Trump's Leadership. *Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from

<https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2017/06/26/u-s-image-suffers-as-publics-around-world-question-trumps-leadership/>

<https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2017/06/26/u-s-image-suffers-as-publics-around-world-question-trumps-leadership/>

Wright, D. (2018, January 3). Haass says US engaged in ‘abdication’ of global leadership. *CNN*.

Retrieved April 29, 2023, from <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/01/03/politics/richard-haass-trump-leadership-cnntv/index.html>