

A PROJECT OF DEFENDING DEMOCRACY TOGETHER
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We are profoundly concerned about our nation's security and standing in the world under the leadership of Donald Trump. The President has demonstrated that he is dangerously unfit to serve another term.

READ THE STATEMENT

A STATEMENT BY FORMER REPUBLICAN NATIONAL SECURITY OFFICIALS

We are former national security officials who served during the administrations of Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush, and/or Donald Trump, or as Republican Members of Congress. We are profoundly concerned about the course of our nation under the leadership of Donald Trump. Through his actions and his rhetoric, Trump has demonstrated that he lacks the character and competence to lead this nation and has engaged in corrupt behavior that renders him unfit to serve as President.

For the following reasons, we have concluded that Donald Trump has failed our country and that Vice President Joe Biden should be elected the next President of the United States.

1. **Donald Trump has gravely damaged America's role as a world leader.** Trump has disgraced America's global reputation and undermined our nation's moral and diplomatic influence. He has called NATO "obsolete," branded Europe a "foe," mocked the leaders of America's closest friends, and threatened to terminate longstanding US alliances. Other global leaders, friends and foes alike, view him as unreliable, unstable, and unworthy of respect.
2. **Donald Trump has shown that he is unfit to lead during a national crisis.** Instead of rallying the American people and the world to confront the coronavirus, Trump has spent the past half year spreading misinformation, undermining public health experts, attacking state and local officials, and wallowing in self-pity. He

has demonstrated far greater concern about the fate of his reelection than the health of the American people.

3. **Donald Trump has solicited foreign influence and undermined confidence in our presidential elections.** Trump publicly asked Russian president Vladimir Putin to assist his 2016 campaign, called on Chinese president Xi Jinping to “start an investigation” into his current political opponent, and pressured the president of Ukraine to act against his opponent. Citing exaggerated claims of voter fraud, he has challenged the integrity of this year’s election, even suggesting that it be postponed.
4. **Donald Trump has aligned himself with dictators and failed to stand up for American values.** Trump has regularly praised the actions of dictators and human rights abusers. He proclaimed his “love” and “great respect” for North Korean strongman Kim Jong Un, endorsed “brilliant leader” Xi Jinping’s move to serve as China’s president for life, repeatedly sided with Vladimir Putin against our own intelligence community, and pronounced himself a “big fan” of Turkish president Recep Erdogan despite his crackdown on democracy.
5. **Donald Trump has disparaged our armed forces, intelligence agencies, and diplomats.** Trump has attacked Gold Star families, scoffed at American prisoners of war, interfered in the military justice system, and embroiled our military in domestic politics. He has ridiculed US intelligence agencies and falsely branded our nation’s diplomats as the “deep state.”
6. **Donald Trump has undermined the rule of law.** Trump has compromised the independence of the Department of Justice, repeatedly attacked federal judges, and punished government officials who have sought to uphold the law. To protect himself from accountability, he has fired officials who launched

investigations or testified against him, threatened whistleblowers, dangled pardons as incentives to stay silent, and blocked prison time for a political crony convicted of lying on his behalf. He has impugned journalists investigating his misconduct and has repeatedly denounced the press as the “enemy of the people.”

7. **Donald Trump has dishonored the office of the presidency.** Trump engages in childish name-calling, mocks the disabled, belittles women, persistently lies, peddles baseless conspiracy theories, and continually embarrasses Americans in the eyes of the world.
8. **Donald Trump has divided our nation and preached a dark and pessimistic view of America.** Trump consistently seeks to incite political, racial, and ethnic divisions, weakening our nation and delighting our adversaries. In contrast to Reagan’s vision of America as a “shining city on a hill,” Trump speaks of “American carnage,” pits Americans against each other, and stokes fears that “angry mobs” and “anarchists” are destroying our country.
9. **Donald Trump has attacked and vilified immigrants to our country.** Trump routinely denigrates immigrants and inflames prejudices as he seeks support for his reelection. Despite America’s legacy as a nation of immigrants, he has demonized Americans who come from other countries, even telling members of Congress whose families immigrated to the United States to “go back” to the “crime-infested places” from which they came.
10. **Donald Trump has imperiled America’s security by mismanaging his national security team.** Trump has dismissed or replaced — often by tweet — the secretaries of State, Defense, and Homeland Security, the Attorney General, the Directors of National Intelligence and the FBI, three National Security Advisors, and other senior officials in critical national security positions, many because they refused to cover for his misdeeds or demonstrate

sufficient personal loyalty.

While we – like all Americans – had hoped that Donald Trump would govern wisely, he has disappointed millions of voters who put their faith in him and has demonstrated that he is dangerously unfit to serve another term.

In contrast, we believe Joe Biden has the character, experience, and temperament to lead this nation. We believe he will restore the dignity of the presidency, bring Americans together, reassert America's role as a global leader, and inspire our nation to live up to its ideals.

While some of us hold policy positions that differ from those of Joe Biden and his party, the time to debate those policy differences will come later. For now, it is imperative that we stop Trump's assault on our nation's values and institutions and reinstate the moral foundations of our democracy.

To that end, we are firmly convinced that it is in the best interest of our nation that Vice President Joe Biden be elected as the next President of the United States, and we will vote for him.

Adm. Steve Abbot

Fmr Dep Homeland Security Advisor

Mary Catherine Andrews

Fmr Special Asst to the President

Richard Armitage

Fmr Deputy Secretary of State

Christopher Barton

Fmr Director, NSC Staff

John Bellinger

Fmr Legal Adviser, Dept of State

Adm. Kenneth Bernard

Fmr Special Asst to the President

Amb. Robert Blackwill

Fmr Deputy National Security Advisor

Linton Brooks

Fmr Under Secretary of Energy

Kara Bue

Fmr Dep Asst Secretary of State

Amb. Richard Burt

Fmr US Ambassador to Germany

Victor Cha

Fmr Director, NSC Staff

Thomas Christensen

Fmr Dep Asst Secretary of State

Eliot Cohen

Fmr Counselor of the Dept of State

Joseph Collins

Fmr Dep Asst Secretary of Defense

Heather Conley

Fmr Dep Asst Secretary of State

Chester Crocker

Gregory E. Brown
Fmr Asst Secretary of State

Patrick Cronin
Fmr Asst Administrator, USAID

Amb. Sada Cumber
Fmr US Special Envoy to the OIC

Mike Donley
Fmr Secretary of the Air Force

Raymond DuBois
Fmr Acting Under Secretary of the Army

Amb. Eric Edelman
Fmr Under Secretary of Defense

Gary Edson
Fmr Deputy National Security Advisor

Richard Falkenrath
Fmr Dep Asst to the President

Aaron Friedberg
Fmr Dep Asst to the Vice President

Janice Gardner
Fmr Asst Secretary of the Treasury

Amb. James Glassman
Fmr Under Secretary of State

David Gordon
Fmr Director, State Dept, Policy Planning

Colleen Graffy

Fmr Dep Asst Secretary of State

Michael Green

Fmr Senior Director, NSC Staff

Sen. Chuck Hagel

Fmr Secretary of Defense and US Senator

Gen. Michael Hayden

Fmr Director of the CIA and the NSA

Amb. Carla Hills

Fmr US Trade Representative

Ash Jain

Fmr Member, State Dept Policy Planning

James Kelly

Fmr Asst Secretary of State

Rep. Jim Kolbe

Fmr Member of Congress

David Kramer

Fmr Asst Secretary of State

Stephen Krasner

Fmr Director, State Dept Policy Planning

Ken Krieg

Fmr Under Secretary of Defense

Amb. Frank Lavin

Fmr Under Secretary of Commerce

Rep. Jim Leach

Fmr Member of Congress

Bruce Lemkin

Fmr Dep Under Secretary of the Air Force

Michael Leiter

Fmr Director, National Counterterrorism Ctr

Peter Lichtenbaum

Fmr Asst Secretary of Commerce

James Loy

Fmr Dep Secretary of Homeland Security

Peter Madigan

Fmr Dep Asst Secretary State

Bryan McGrath

Former US Navy Officer

David Merkel

Fmr Dep Asst Secretary of State

John Mitnick

Fmr General Counsel, Department of Homeland Security

Holly Morrow

Fmr Director, NSC Staff

Amb. John Negroponte

Fmr Director of National Intelligence, and Fmr Deputy Secretary of State

Fmr Director of National Intelligence, and Fmr Deputy Secretary of State

Elizabeth Neumann

Fmr Asst Secretary of Homeland Security

Sean O’Keefe

Fmr Secretary of the Navy and NASA Administrator

Daniel Price

Fmr Dep National Security Advisor

Paul Rosenzweig

Fmr Dep Asst Secretary of Homeland Security

Nicholas Rostow

Fmr NSC Legal Adviser

Kori Schake

Fmr Prin Dep Director, State Dept Policy Planning

Wayne Schroeder

Fmr Dep Under Secretary of Defense

Robert Shanks

Fmr Dep Asst Attorney General

Rep. Christopher Shays

Fmr Member of Congress

John Simon

Fmr Senior Director, NSC Staff

Stephen Slick

Fmr Senior Director, NSC Staff

Amb. William Taft

Fmr Deputy Secretary of Defense

Shirin Tahir-Kheli

Fmr Special Asst to the President

Miles Taylor

Fmr Chief of Staff, Dept of Homeland Security

William Tobey

Fmr Dep Administrator, Nat Nuclear Security Admin

Amb. Robert Tuttle

Fmr US Ambassador to the United Kingdom

John Veroneau

Fmr Dep US Trade Representative

Michael Vickers

Fmr Under Secretary of Defense

Ken Wainstein

Fmr Homeland Security Advisor

Sen. John Warner

Fmr US Senator

Matthew Waxman

Fmr Prin Dep Director, State Dept Policy Planning

William Webster

Fmr Director of the CIA and FBI

Dov Zakheim

Fmr Under Secretary of Defense

Philip Zelikow

Fmr Counselor of the Dept of State

If you are a national security official who worked for a Republican administration and are supporting Vice President Biden in November, we urge you to join us. Please get in touch at natsec@defendingdemocracytogether.org (<mailto:natsec@defendingdemocracytogether.org>)