



## Trump's Trade and Tariff Policy Benefits America's Nuclear Deterrent

By

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Recently, President Donald Trump established a new Trade and Tariff Reciprocity Policy. In his [signed memo](#), he stated, "It is the policy of the United States to reduce our large and persistent annual trade deficit in goods and to address other unfair and unbalanced aspects of our trade with foreign trading partners." His memo also instructs his administration to identify "the equivalent of a reciprocal tariff for each foreign trading partner."

During the signing event, President Trump [remarked](#), "On trade, I have decided, for purposes of fairness, that I will charge a reciprocal tariff, meaning whatever countries charge the United States of America, we will charge them no more, no less. In other words, they charge the US a tax or tariff, and we will charge them the exact same tax or tariff, very simple."

A strong economy is vital to national security. In addition to reliable access to energy, minerals, and capital, any great power fundamentally requires a resilient, production-oriented, economic infrastructure that ensures a comprehensive and adequate industrial base capable of producing most of the nation's necessities.

Furthermore, America's national debt exceeds \$36 trillion, with a debt-to-GDP ratio surpassing 133 percent. In fiscal year 2024, the cost of servicing the debt's interest [surpassed](#) America's defense budget.

Americans place great importance on fairness and balance. The Declaration of Independence famously states that "all men are created equal" and advocates for equal treatment for all individuals, regardless of status or position. The Constitution establishes a framework that balances power among various branches of government, as outlined in James Madison's *Federalist 51*.

Socrates once remarked, "If measure and symmetry are absent from any composition in any degree, ruin awaits both the ingredients and the composition... Measure and symmetry are beauty and virtue the world over." He was right.

President Trump seeks to implement tariff reciprocity towards America's competitors in a fair, just, and balanced manner. Can this same principle be applied to his peace through strength [deterrence](#) approach? Yes, it can.

[Dynamic parity](#) is a nuclear deterrence strategy that deliberately achieves and maintains a contextually symmetrical balance of nuclear force capabilities, capacities, and composition in relation to the combined nuclear strength of China, North Korea, Russia, and possibly Iran. This strategy seeks to balance America's nuclear deterrent force against the potentially collaborative arsenals of these adversaries, thereby enhancing deterrence, reassuring allies, and preserving strategic stability in a world lacking binding arms control agreements.

America is about [15 years](#) into a 30-year effort to recapitalize its nuclear arsenal, which has a [program of record that offers](#) a one-for-one intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) swap, two fewer ballistic missile submarines, and a reduced bomb load capacity. The current program of record was designed for a world that no longer exists.

Even the Biden administration's acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy [acknowledged](#) the need to explore "options for increasing future launcher capacity or adding more deployed warheads in land, sea, and air capabilities" to address the significant growth and



variety of China's nuclear arsenal. The 2023 Congressional Commission [report](#) on U.S. Strategic Posture stated that the current nuclear modernization program is “necessary, but not sufficient” for facing two nuclear peers: China and Russia.

Americans often assess the fairness of financial rewards and the distribution of costs, commonly reacting to perceived unfairness with feelings of hostility and responding with protest. Regarding economic, political, or national security issues, we are “[wired to resist unfair treatment](#).” This sense of fairness and balance also extends to America's defensive posture. A recent Reagan National Defense Forum [Survey](#) noted that 77 percent of voters were concerned that the national debt might force defense cuts, with 79 percent supporting increased defense spending, and 70 percent of those surveyed were concerned about “Russia launching a thermonuclear attack against the US.”

In this context, geopolitical fairness refers to the perceived evenhandedness among nations in a manner that mutually impacts interests. Meanwhile, geopolitical balance pertains to the distribution of perceived power between states in the international system. The 2024 *Annual Threat Assessment* [noted](#) that Russia possesses the largest, most diverse, and [most modern](#) nuclear weapons stockpile in the world. This infers that America remains inferior in aggregate nuclear weapon numbers and is trailing in modernization, which creates an imbalance.

Correcting long-standing imbalances in trade policy and military shortfalls is vital to the American conscience. Allowing trade deficits with economic competitors to persist without challenge is akin to unilateral disarmament. The US trade deficit for goods reached [a record \\$1.2 trillion](#) in 2024, while the treasury [borrowed \\$2 trillion](#) that same year. Ongoing deficits of this magnitude threaten domestic companies and jobs, putting negative pressure on GDP and the prosperity of individual Americans. Ensuring that America's nuclear deterrent can counter the threats posed by its adversaries will safeguard citizens' security and sovereignty, enabling prosperity.

President Trump's new Trade and Tariff Reciprocity Policy, like the nuclear deterrence strategy of *Dynamic Parity*, places the burden of acceptable behavior on America's competitors. They both empower America to act in the interest of fairness, aiming to achieve balance in both process and product. Geopolitical stability is not born of an America exploited economically or constrained militarily. This kind of weakness is not only provocative but also insulting.

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