

STAR♦PAC Key Questions for 2020 Federal Candidates

Seeking Peace in the Middle East

1. The US, UK, China, Russia, France and Germany and Iran reached an historic agreement to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran. The agreement significantly constrained Iran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief for Iran, before President Trump announced withdrawal. Do you support rejoining the agreement? What lessons do you draw from this diplomatic approach to conflict resolution vs. military intervention?
2. Most analysts maintain that the Israel/Palestine conflict is a major cause of the broader turmoil in the Middle East. STAR♦PAC supports the American Friends Service Committee positions that resolution of this conflict pivots on these goals: non-violent self-determination for both Palestinians and Israelis, based on international humanitarian and human rights law; an end to the Israeli occupation and further settlement of Palestinian territories; and, recognition of Palestinian refugees' right of return. Do you support these goals? What specific policies would you endorse to advance attainment of these goals?
3. Many Americans believe that we are less secure today than we were before 9/11. STAR♦PAC believes our military intervention over the fifteen years has created "blow back," motivating thousands to join a fight against our presence in their country or region. Do you agree? What steps do you propose to reduce the unintended consequences of military intervention?
4. The United Nations Security Council has established comprehensive strategies for dealing with international terrorism, including non-violent actions addressing underlying causes such as cultural and religious intolerance, failure to recognize human rights and the rule of law, and lack of economic development. Do you support the overall positions and role of the UN regarding terrorism? What exceptions, if any, would you make?

Controlling the Military/Industrial Complex

5. Former President and General Dwight Eisenhower warned, "...We must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists, and will persist." Do you agree with him? What must we do to cope with special interest pressures that have led us to spend as much on our military as the next nine countries combined?
6. Efforts are underway to amend the U.S. Constitution to state that inalienable rights belong to human beings only, so that corporate spending is not a form of protected free speech and can be regulated in election campaigns. Do you support such an amendment? Are there other actions you propose to overcome the impacts of the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision?

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7. War and military action have led to gigantic military expenditures and huge obligations in future budgets to service debt and provide crucial care for our veterans. Do you support reducing U.S. military spending and increasing spending for urgent social and human needs? What spending cuts or tax increases do you propose accomplish this change in priorities?
8. Do you support reducing the US military bases and other presence in foreign countries?
9. U.S. response to international terrorism has led to escalating tactics by our federal government, with growth in domestic surveillance, “enhanced interrogation,” and lethal uses of unmanned drone aircraft outside of declared war zones. Do you agree that these practices should be restricted or curtailed? How would you address this area of concern?
10. Do you support the principle of pre-emptive military intervention? Under what circumstances would you order a military campaign in another nation that has not declared war on the United States, and what constraints would you apply to the campaign?
11. Do you support extending arms control policies to include efforts to end proliferation of conventional weapons, which often are captured and reused by enemies of the U.S.?
12. Would you support a global campaign for full nuclear disarmament, including the U.S. advocating that the nine nuclear-armed nations reduce in parallel nuclear weapons in service, approaching zero by 2030?

Providing Humane Treatment of Migrants

13. Globally, millions of people are refugees, forced to emigrate because of war or the threat of violence in their homelands. Migrants often face desperate living conditions, abuse from criminals, and detainment. Does the United States have a national interest in addressing these areas of concern? What specific policy recommendations do you have to address this crisis?
14. Approximately eleven million migrants are in this country without authorization, thousands are detained, and thousands more have died while trying to cross borders. Do you support DACA and changes which would provide an orderly and humane process to recognize aspiring citizens? What changes would you support for our current immigration policies?
15. Climate change has brought about economic disruption and jeopardized food and water supplies, and so increases the likelihood of armed strife and number of forced migrations. Do you support rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement and working internationally to address climate change? In addition to current agreements, what else would you propose?

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