



ΚΕΝΤΡΟ ΔΙΕΘΝΩΝ ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΙΚΩΝ ΑΝΑΛΥΣΕΩΝ  
CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC ANALYSES

# **Trump's new GWOT (Global War On Tariffs): The United States' quest for national (economic) security and the rise of India**

LTC (Ret) Georgios KOUKAKIS

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**September 2025**

## Disclosure Statement

The opinion expressed in this paper represents the author's personal views and in no way reflects the official position of the Center for International Strategic Analyses (KEDISA) or any other Institute or Organization he is affiliated with. The events analysed in this paper refer to the time period until September 1, 2025.

Heraklion (Crete), 01 September 2025

*Georgios Koukakis*

**Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Georgios KOUKAKIS**

-----  
Secretary General & Senior Researcher of KEDISA

Academic Head of the '*Security Studies in the Mediterranean*'  
Educational Programme of the Center for CE-LL of the University of the Aegean

## About the author



Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Georgios KOUKAKIS has graduated from the *Hellenic Military Academy* (2002), the *Hellenic Army War College* (2020) and the *Hellenic Supreme Joint War College* (2023). He retired in 2024 on his own initiative, after serving for 22 years as a Leader and Staff officer in several Special Forces and Infantry Units, and as an Instructor in the Hellenic Airborne School and the Hellenic Infantry School.

He holds a Master of Arts in '*Governance, Development and Security in the Mediterranean*' from the Department of Mediterranean Studies of the University of the Aegean (Rhodes, Greece) –having graduated 1<sup>st</sup> among his Class with his dissertation focusing on the prospects of establishing a *National Security Council* (NSC) in the Hellenic Republic (Greece)– and an Adult Instructor of the Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning Center (CE-LLC) of the University of the Aegean (Rhodes, Greece).

He is also a Senior Analyst in the *Center for International Strategic Analyses* (KEDISA), a Research Associate of *HERMES Institute of International Affairs, Security & Geoeconomy* (I.I.A.S.GE.) and a member of the *Hellenic Institute of Strategic Studies* (HEL.I.S.S.), *ALLILONnet* the Global Network of Greeks and Friends of Greece for Solidarity in the Professional Field and the *Mercury Negotiation Academy* (MNA). He has participated as a speaker in several seminars and conferences regarding international relations in the fields of foreign policy, security and defense.

## Trump's new GWOT (Global War On Tariffs)

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Many of his articles and research papers have been published in the '*Global Security and Intelligence Notes*' (GSIN) and the 'South and South East Asia Security Research Centre' (SSEASRC) Research Notes of the Buckingham Centre of Security & Intelligence Studies (BUCSIS), the '*HAPSc Policy Briefs*' Journal of the Hellenic Association of Political Scientists, the '*NRDC-GR Herald*' Journal of NRDC-GR, the '*Military Review*' Journal of the Hellenic Army General Staff (HAGS), the '*Cultural Diplomacy Journal*' of the Hellenic Institute of Cultural Diplomacy (HICD).

He currently serves as the Academic Head of the educational programmes (in Greek) '*Security Studies in the Mediterranean (BASIC)*', 'Getting to know Security Studies through the work of Thucydides', and '*European Defence: New reality, challenges & prospects*' of the Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning Center of the University of the Aegean.

In addition to his involvement in academic research regarding international relations, Georgios is a columnist in a number of foreign affairs, geopolitics and international affairs websites such as '*Foreign Affairs - The Hellenic Edition*', '*Policy Journal*', '*Geopolitics & Daily News*', '*HuffPost Greece*', '*Liberal*', '*Infognomon Politics*', '*LEP*' and '*Active News*'.

He is the co-author of the book (In Greek) '*National Security: Myths and Reality*' that was published in April 2023, the author of the book '*Armed Conflict & National Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*' that was published in January 2025.

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**Email** : [g\\_k\\_koukakis@yahoo.gr](mailto:g_k_koukakis@yahoo.gr)

**LinkedIn** : [Georgios Koukakis](#)

**Research Gate** : [Georgios Koukakis](#)

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## Abstract

The Global War On Terrorism (GWOT) that was initiated in 2001 by President George W. Bush is without doubt a major milestone in U.S. foreign policy. In 2025, President Donald Trump initiated a new GWOT (Global War On Tariffs) which will most probably be another milestone not only in U.S. foreign policy but in world politics as well. Although these two wars might seem completely different, they are similar in the way that they both aim at addressing the United States' most pressing national security threat at the time, in the context of the perceived strategic competition. The purpose of this article is to explain the on-going U.S. foreign policy under President Trump's second administration (Trump 2.0) which has led to the imposition of increased tariffs on a large number of actors such as China, India and the EU. The main argument is that in order to fully understand U.S. foreign policy, someone must take into consideration the way it is affected by national security objectives and the perceived strategic competition, as these two factors are the main drivers of it.

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**Key words:** Tariffs, United States, China, EU, India, Trump 2.0, Foreign Policy, National Security, Economic Security, Trade War, Strategic Competition



## **Abbreviations**

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| ATA     | Annual Threat Assessment                    |
| DNI     | Director of National Intelligence           |
| EU      | European Union                              |
| GWOT    | Global War On Terrorism                     |
| GWOT II | Global War On Tariffs                       |
| IEEPA   | International Emergency Economic Powers Act |
| I2U2    | India - Israel - UAE - United States        |
| MAGA    | Make America Great Again                    |
| NEC     | National Economic Council                   |
| NSC     | National Security Council                   |
| NSS     | National Security Strategy                  |
| ODNI    | Office of Director of National Intelligence |
| SCO     | Shanghai Cooperation Organization           |
| USMCA   | United States - Mexico - Canada             |
| VAT     | Value-Added Tax                             |
| WMD     | Weapons of Mass Destruction                 |

## 1. Introduction

The 9/11 terrorist attacks on U.S. soil are without doubt one of the milestones in the history of the United States, not only due to the shock that they caused worldwide, but also because they resulted in the implementation of the *Global War On Terrorism (GWOT)* to address the –number one at that time– national security threat of terrorism. In this context, the U.S. President *George W. Bush* stated on *October 11, 2001* that:

*“[...] the world has come together to fight a new and different war, the first, and we hope the only one, of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A war against all those who seek to export terror, and a war against those governments that support or shelter them”* ([George W. Bush Presidential Library, n.d.](#)).

Despite all expectations, a second global war –this time of an economic nature– was initiated by the newly elected U.S. President *Donald Trump* 14 years later. More precisely, in early 2025 the United States gradually imposed additional tariffs to state and non-state actors globally, an action that resulted in the imposition of additional tariffs on their behalf too, and vice versa. This behavior –referred to by many scholars and analysts as a *global Trade War* ([Towfighi, 2025](#))– is characterized by the author as the *new GWOT (Global War on Tariffs)*, not only because tariffs are being used by the United States as a weapon but also to relate this new economic war to the first *GWOT* that was initiated in 2001.

Even though these two wars might seem completely different, they are similar in that they both aim at addressing the United States' key national security threat in the context of the strategic competition as it is perceived by each administration. This raises the following question:

*What are the main drivers of the U.S. foreign policy?*

The author *argues* that in order to fully understand U.S. foreign policy, someone must take into consideration the way it is affected by national security objectives and the perceived strategic competition, as these two factors are the main drivers of it. Thus, the

article's *purpose* is to explain the contemporary foreign policy of the United States under the second administration of President Donald Trump (Trump 2.0) regarding the imposition of increased tariffs in a large number of states.

Its *importance* stems from the fact that: the U.S. foreign policy affects both the domestic and foreign policies that are being implemented by other state and non-state actors all around the world; the imposition of increased tariffs is a very important matter that affects the economic security of individuals, enterprises, states, and organizations; understanding the contemporary conditions of the strategic environment helps policy makers make more effective decisions; and –last but not least– highlights the importance of using national security as an *analytical tool* to interpret state behavior and strategic competition.

As far as the article's structure is concerned, first it provides information regarding the way the United States' foreign policy is connected to its national security, after that it analyses how the United States perceives strategic competition by examining its latest National Security Strategy and Annual Threat Assessment, then it presents the milestones of the new GWOT, and concludes with some remarks concerning future implications for the United States and the world.

## 2. The connection between U.S. foreign policy & national security

The concept of national security was introduced by the United States at the institutional level through the *National Security Act* that was published on *July 26, 1947* ([U.S. Government Publishing Office, 2025](#)), establishing inter alia the *National Security Council (NSC)* –the principal institution of the United States for addressing national security issues– whose function is:

*“[...] to advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more*

*effectively in matters involving the national security [...]*" (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 2025:7).

Due to the fact that national security is perceived differently by each state, it is imperative to examine how it is defined by the United States. To this end, the U.S. Department of Justice provides the following definition:

*"National security encompasses the national defense, foreign intelligence and counterintelligence, international and internal security, and foreign relations. This includes countering terrorism; combating espionage and economic espionage conducted for the benefit of any foreign government, foreign instrumentality, or foreign agent; enforcing export controls and sanctions; and disrupting cyber threats that are perpetrated by nation states, terrorists, or their agents or proxies"* (U.S. Department of Justice, n.d.).

As understood by the aforementioned definition, the United States perceives national security as the state's ability to counter any foreign and/or domestic threat that endangers its national interests, therefore comprising both *external* and *domestic/internal security*. Moreover, it is obvious that one of the many sectors that national security is related to is the *economy*, as the definition clearly refers to economic espionage, export controls and sanctions. This means that countering economic threats and imposing specific economic measures contribute to the enhancement of the U.S. national security.

Taking into consideration that the *economy* is one of the main instruments –the second one is the armed forces– of a state's *hard power* (Wagner, 2014), it is totally comprehended why one of the key national security goals of the United States is to safeguard its economy and apply economic measures to achieve its objectives. In fact, the economy's role is so vital for the national security of the United States that President Bill Clinton established an additional Presidential advisory board –complementary to the NSC– in 1993 entitled *National Economic Council (NEC)*, having as a function:

*"[...] to coordinate policy-making for domestic and international economic issues; to give economic policy advice to the President; to*

*ensure that policy decisions and programs are consistent with the President's economic goals; and to monitor implementation of the President's economic policy agenda"* ([The White House, n.d.](#)).

It also needs to be noted that each U.S. President must –within 150 days of taking office–transmit an annual *National Security Strategy* (NSS) report to the Congress, which inter alia defines the worldwide *objectives* of the United States, as well as the *ways* that the newly elected administration is planning to use the elements of the *national power* in order to achieve the set objectives and protect the U.S. *national interests* ([U.S. Government Publishing Office, 2025:69-70](#)). In other words, the foreign policy of the United States depends on the perceptions of each President regarding other actors and is guided by the content of each NSS, having as an overall goal to safeguard the U.S. national interests.

### **3. The U.S. perception of contemporary strategic competition**

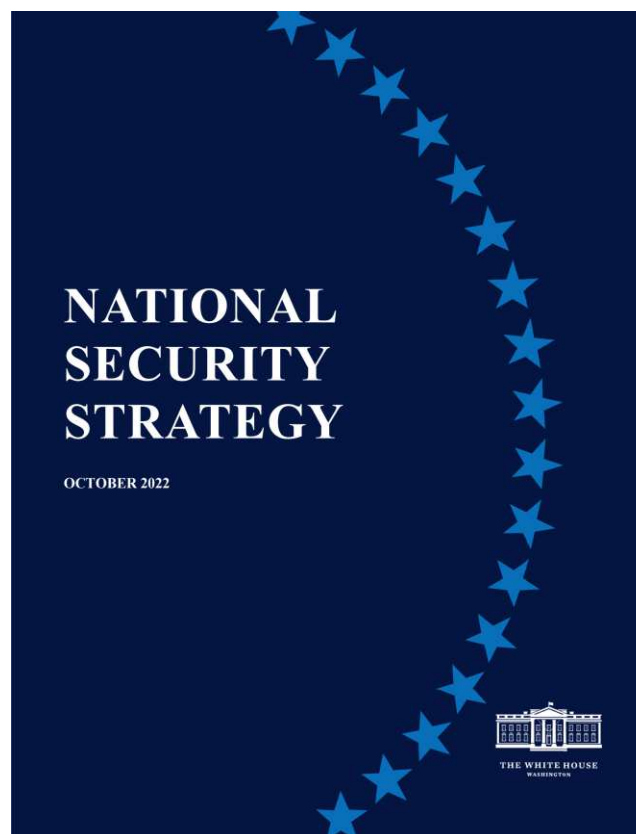
Even though contemporary strategic competition has shifted to new domains such as space, cyberspace and/or the information space ([Koukakis, 2024b](#)), the *economy* undoubtedly remains –and will always be– one of the main instruments of a state's *hard power*. Thus, economic measures are an integral part of every state's foreign policy, often leading to primary *economic crises*, which in turn generate secondary crises (energy crises, food crises, etc.), thus forming an environment of *permacrises* and *polycrises* ([Koukakis, 2023](#)). In this context, one of the best ways to understand a state's perception of contemporary strategic competition is to examine its official grand strategy security documents, as these documents usually identify the state's main *rivals* in addition to the *key domains* in which their competition takes place.

#### **3.1 The provisions of the National Security Strategy**

The latest official grand strategy security document of the United States is the aforementioned NSS, which was published in 2022 under the Biden administration ([The White House, 2022](#)). The 2022 NSS stresses that the prosperity of the United States relies inter alia on a fair and open international *economic system*, also noting that *China* is

violating the longstanding rules-based economic world order ([The White House, 2022:34](#)). Moreover, it defines “*Out-Competing China and Constraining Russia*” as the United States' first global priority, referring that *China*:

*“[...] is the only competitor with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to do it. Beijing has ambitions to create an enhanced sphere of influence in the Indo-Pacific and to become the world's leading power. [...] Beijing frequently uses its economic power to coerce countries. It benefits from the openness of the international economy while limiting access to its domestic market, and it seeks to make the world more dependent on the PRC while reducing its own dependence on the world”* ([The White House, 2022:23](#)).



**Figure 1:** The 2022 National Security Strategy (Cover page)

**Source:** The White House ([2022](#))

The 2022 NSS also notes that *Russia* is pursuing an imperialistic foreign policy not only in Europe (Ukraine) but also in the Middle East (Syria) aspiring to change the established world order ([The White House, 2022:25](#)), stating inter alia that:

*“Russia now poses an immediate and persistent threat to international peace and stability. This is not about a struggle between the West and Russia. It is about the fundamental principles of the UN Charter, which Russia is a party to, particularly respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the prohibition against acquiring territory through war”* ([The White House, 2022:25-26](#)).

As far as *India* is concerned, the 2022 NSS contains references that note the importance of the U.S.-India cooperation in various fields ([The White House, 2022:12](#)), highlighting several collaborative schemes such as the *Quad* (Australia - India – Japan - United States) which focuses on maritime & transnational security, economic security & prosperity, critical & emerging technologies, cyber security, and regional emergencies ([Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Australian Government, n.d](#)), and *I2U2* (India - Israel - UAE - United States) which focuses on water, energy, transportation, space, health, and food security ([U.S. Department of State, n.d.](#)), stating that the Quad will be critical to addressing regional challenges in the Indo-Pacific ([The White House, 2022:37](#)) and that:

*“As India is the world’s largest democracy and a Major Defense Partner, the United States and India will work together, bilaterally and multilaterally, to support our shared vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific”* ([The White House, 2022:38](#)).

Finally, the 2022 NSS –taking into consideration that it was published during the Biden administration, thus expresses the former President’s views– refers to the *European Union* as a partner defining a cooperative approach, as it states that:

*“We will work with the EU to strengthen trade, investment, and technological cooperation grounded in shared democratic values—promoting an open and inclusive global economy, setting high standards for trade, ensuring fair competition, supporting labor rights, driving decarbonization, fighting corruption, and protecting our innovations from uses that run counter to our interests and values”* ([The White House, 2022:39](#)).

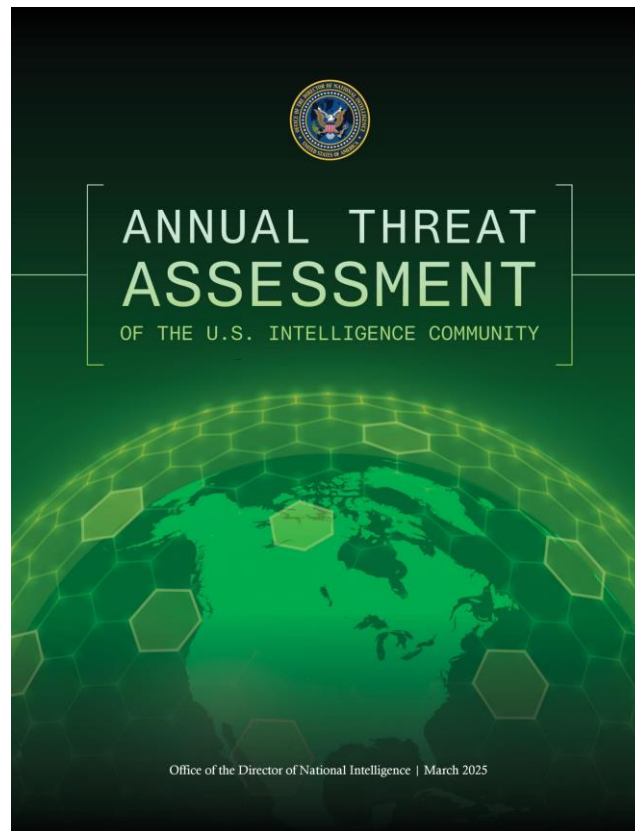
### **3.2 The provisions of the Annual Threat Assessment**

Another document of strategic importance –issued by the Office of Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) – is the *Annual Threat Assessment* (ATA), the latest of which was published under the Trump 2.0 administration on *March 18, 2025* ([ODNI, 2025](#)). Given the fact that Trump administration's NSS has not been issued yet, the 2025 ATA provides useful insight regarding the way President Trump perceives other actors –thus what kind of foreign policy he is going to implement– since each *Director of National Intelligence* (DNI) is appointed by the U.S. President upon advice and consent of the Senate ([ODNI, n.d.](#)). Even though the 2025 ATA identifies *China, Russia, Iran* and *North Korea* as the major state actors that threaten the United States, it reaffirms the content of the 2022 NSS as it states that:

*“China stands out as the actor most capable of threatening US interests globally, though it is also more cautious than Russia, Iran, and North Korea about risking its economic and diplomatic image in the world by being too aggressive and disruptive”* ([ODNI, 2025:9](#)).

Moreover, as far as the economic sector is concerned, the 2025 ATA stresses that China has the ability to restrict quantities of several critical materials and affect global prices, also referring that China aspires to become the leading world economic power, dominate global markets and supply chains of strategic importance, limit foreign competitors, and make other nations dependent on it ([ODNI, 2025:12](#)).





**Figure 2:** The 2025 Annual Threat Assessment (Cover page)

**Source:** ODNI ([2025](#))

Regarding *Russia*, the 2025 ATA reaffirms the content of the 2022 NSS as it identifies Russia as adaptive and resilient hostile state actor that controls a significant part of the Arctic ([ODNI, 2025:17](#)), possesses advanced cyber ([ODNI, 2025:19](#)), WMD ([ODNI, 2025:20](#)) and space ([ODNI, 2025:20-21](#)) capabilities, stressing inter alia that:

*“Regardless of how and when the war in Ukraine ends, Russia’s current geopolitical, economic, military, and domestic political trends underscore its resilience and enduring potential threat to U.S. power, presence, and global interests”* ([ODNI, 2025:16](#)).

*India* on the other hand is perceived by the United States as a possible threat to the U.S. national security –because it is considered to be the second largest country (right after China) for illicit fentanyl precursor chemicals and pill pressing equipment ([ODNI,](#)

2025:6)– and an emerging competitor due to its participation in BRICS, as the 2025 ATA states that:

*“[...] Moscow is increasingly willing to [...] use non-Western organizations like the Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) group to press policies such as de-dollarization” (ODNI, 2025:17).*

As far as the *European Union (EU)* is concerned, the 2025 ATA does not include any negative reference about the organization, containing some citations that highlight the threats it faces from China in space (ODNI, 2025:15), from Russia in Ukraine (ODNI, 2025:22), and the Huthis in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean (ODNI, 2025:25).

#### 4. Explaining the new GWOT

Therefore, it is evident that the official U.S. perception –as expressed in the 2022 NSS and the 2025 ATA– of both the Biden and Trump administrations is that China is the primary strategic competitor of the United States, posing a severe national security threat mainly in the economic sector, while Russia is considered as a secondary national security threat that does not endanger the U.S. economy. On the other hand, India is considered as an actor that needs to be treated with caution, while the EU seems to be viewed by the United States as a current and future partner in many sectors. This institutional perception though, does not fully justify –at least as far as the EU is concerned– the new GWOT that broke up in early 2025, raising the following question:

*How can this aggressive U.S. foreign policy in the economic sector be explained?*

The answer to this question lies in President Trump's perception that the existing tariff rates between the United States and other actors are not reciprocal, thus harming the U.S. economy and, by extension, the national interests and overall national security of the United States. Therefore, President Trump –in the context of his declared aspiration to *Make America Great Again (MAGA)*– is attempting to establish a new economic world order more favorable to the United States. This ambition was highlighted inter alia through

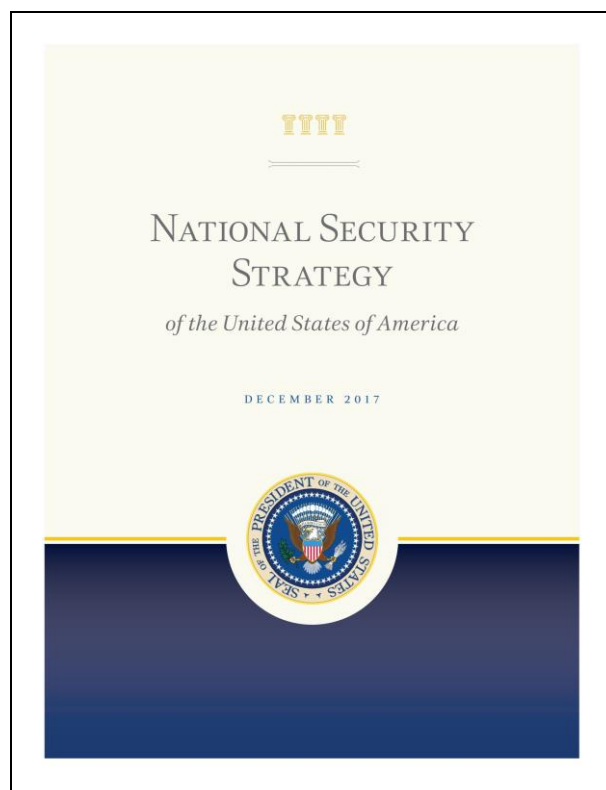
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the following statement of the White House on the occasion of the trade agreement that was signed on *July 27, 2025* between the U.S.-EU:

*“President Trump’s America First economic agenda is restoring our industrial might, securing energy dominance, and making the United States the premier destination for advanced manufacturing and industrial investment. In just six short months, President Trump has reaffirmed the United States as the world’s most attractive destination for investment and the unrivaled leader in innovation, research, and advanced manufacturing. Other American Presidents have tried and failed to reach a significant trade deal with the European Union. With this latest deal, President Trump has once again proven that bold leadership, economic strength, and unwavering resolve deliver results no other leader could achieve”* ([The White House, 2025d](#)).



**Figure 3:** The 2022 National Security Strategy (Cover page)

**Source:** The White House ([2017](#))

It must also be stressed that the President Trump's perception concerning the *trade relations* of the United States with other actors was depicted in the 2017 NSS which was issued during first administration, as the document stated that:

*"Fair and reciprocal trade, investments, and exchanges of knowledge deepen our alliances and partnerships, which are necessary to succeed in today's competitive geopolitical environment. Trade, export promotion, targeted use of foreign assistance, and modernized development finance tools can promote stability, prosperity, and political reform, and build new partnerships based on the principle of reciprocity"* ([The White House, 2017:34](#)).

As far as the use of *economic measures* to promote the U.S. national interests is concerned, the aforementioned strategic document also defined the *deployment of economic pressure on security threats* as one of the priority actions of the U.S. economic diplomacy, stating that:

*"Economic tools—including sanctions, anti-money-laundering and anti-corruption measures, and enforcement actions—can be important parts of broader strategies to deter, coerce, and constrain adversaries. We will work with like-minded partners to build support for tools of economic diplomacy against shared threats. Multilateral economic pressure is often more effective because it limits the ability of targeted states to circumvent measures and conveys united resolve"* ([The White House, 2017:34](#)).

## 5. Milestones of the new GWOT

*Tariffs* are taxes that are levied by a state mostly on *imported goods* in order to increase their price, thus promoting a state's local businesses and protecting its domestic industry from unfair competition ([European Council, n.d.](#)). As a result, tariffs are used as a means of *negotiation* to regulate trade relations between states, leading to either *trade agreements* that specify all aspects regarding tariffs or *trade wars*, which comprise the

imposition of trade restrictions from one another in the context of their unresolved economic dispute ([European Parliament, n.d.](#)). Even though tariffs are completely different in nature from terrorist acts, they can also be seen as a national security threat as they greatly affect a state's *economic security*, being one of the many components of its national security ([Koukakis, 2024c](#)).

That was the case on *February 1, 2025* when the United States implemented additional tariffs on goods imported from *Canada, Mexico* and *China* ([The White House, 2025a](#)), and on *March 12, 2025* applied an additional 25% tariff on steel and aluminium imports from the *European Union* ([European Commission, 2025a](#)). While the aforementioned tariffs on Mexico and Canada were later suspended due to the USMCA agreement ([Goldman, 2025a](#)), the same did not apply for the EU which responded by announcing the implementation of countermeasures on U.S. imports, scheduled to take effect on mid-April ([European Commission, 2025a](#)).

Moreover, on *April 2, 2025* –a date proclaimed by President Trump as *Liberation Day* ([Mena, 2025](#))– the United States announced a *universal tariff* of 10% on imported goods, stating:

*“President Trump is invoking his authority under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act of 1977 (IEEPA) to address the national emergency posed by the large and persistent trade deficit that is driven by the absence of reciprocity in our trade relationships and other harmful policies like currency manipulation and exorbitant value-added taxes (VAT) perpetuated by other countries”* ([The White House, 2025b](#)).

As a result, *China* implemented additional 84% tariffs on U.S. imports, an action that led to a further increase of 145% on behalf of the United States on *April 8, 2025* ([The White House, 2025c](#)), only to be responded on behalf of China by increasing tariffs on U.S. goods on 125% on *April 12, 2025* ([Gan, 2025](#)). As far as other actors are concerned, on *April 9, 2025* the United States suspended the implementation of the aforementioned universal tariff for a time period of 90 days, an action that was emulated by the EU on *April*

14, 2025 ([European Commission, 2025b](#)). Since then, the United States has been negotiating regarding tariffs with several actors, while the Chinese Ministry of Commerce stated on May 2, 2025 that:

*“The tariff and trade war was unilaterally initiated by the US, and if it wants to negotiate, it must demonstrate genuine sincerity — that includes being prepared to correct its wrongdoings and cancel its unilateral tariff hikes, [...] China’s position remains consistent: If it’s a fight, we will see it through to the end. If it’s talk, the door is open”* ([Liu, 2025](#)).

On May 12, 2025 the United States and China mutually agreed to postpone the imposition of additional tariffs until August 12, 2025 ([Huld, 2025](#)), and on July 7, 2025, President Trump sent several letters to many states and the European Union, proposing tariffs ranging from 20% to 40%, also extending the aforementioned tariff suspension to all states besides China until August 1, 2025 ([Buchwald & Liu, 2025](#)). As far as the *European Union* is concerned, President Trump proposed a single 30% tariff on EU-imported products, while the President of the *European Commission* (Ursula von der Leyen) responded by stating that:

*“We take note of the letter sent by U.S. President Trump outlining a revised tariff rate and a new timeline. Imposing 30 percent tariffs on EU exports would disrupt essential transatlantic supply chains, to the detriment of businesses, consumers and patients on both sides of the Atlantic. Few economies in the world match the European Union's level of openness and adherence to fair trading practices. The EU has consistently prioritized a negotiated solution with the U.S., reflecting our commitment to dialogue, stability, and a constructive transatlantic partnership. We remain ready to continue working towards an agreement by August 1. At the same time, we will take all necessary steps to safeguard EU interests, including the adoption of proportionate countermeasures if required. Meanwhile, we continue to deepen our global partnerships, firmly anchored in the*

*principles of rules-based international trade*" ([European Commission, 2025c](#)).

On *July 29, 2025* the U.S. reached a political, not binding agreement with the EU on tariffs and trade, through which the two actors agreed inter alia on a 15% U.S. tariff ceiling for almost every EU good (tariffs on certain strategic products will maintain past tariffs) that is imported to the United States and reducing by 50% the existing tariffs on steel, aluminium and copper ([European Commission, 2025d](#)). It must also be noted that, even though the U.S.-EU trade agreement has been characterized by many analysts as NOT a good deal for the EU since the past average tariff rate was approximately 1.2% ([Goldman, 2025b](#)), the official webpage of the European Commission states that:

*"The political agreement reached between President von der Leyen and President Trump serves the EU's core economic interests in stable and predictable trade and investment relations between the EU and the US. At the same time, it fully respects the EU's regulatory sovereignty and protects sensitive areas of EU agriculture, such as beef or poultry. [...] Beyond taking the immediate actions committed, the EU and the US will further negotiate, in line with their relevant internal procedures, to fully implement the political agreement"* ([European Commission, 2025d](#)).

Shortly after the U.S.-EU trade agreement, on *July 31, 2025*, the White House published an Executive Order which further modified the U.S. tariff rates, also providing a thorough list of the adjusted reciprocal tariffs for a large number of actors ([The White House, 2025e](#)). As far as *China* is concerned, the 90-days tariff pause was extended on *August 12, 2025* for 90 more days a few hours before the expiration deadline ([Breuninger & Javers, 2025](#)), while a Framework Agreement was agreed on *August 21, 2025* between the U.S. and the EU ([European Commission, 2025e](#)). A few days after though, President Trump expressed his intention to impose additional tariffs to actors with digital taxes, digital services legislation, and digital markets regulations unless they remove them –as he perceives them as an attack to the American Tech Companies which give a complete pass



to Chinese tech companies— stating through his personal account in Truth Social on *August 26, 2025* that:

*“[...] I put all Countries with Digital Taxes, Legislation, Rules, or Regulations, on notice that unless these discriminatory actions are removed, I, as President of the United States, will impose substantial additional Tariffs on that Country's Exports to the U.S.A., and institute Export restrictions on our Highly Protected Technology and Chips. America, and American Technology Companies, are neither the “piggy bank” nor the “doormat” of the World any longer. Show respect to America and our amazing Tech Companies or, consider the consequences! [...]” (Trump, 2025).*

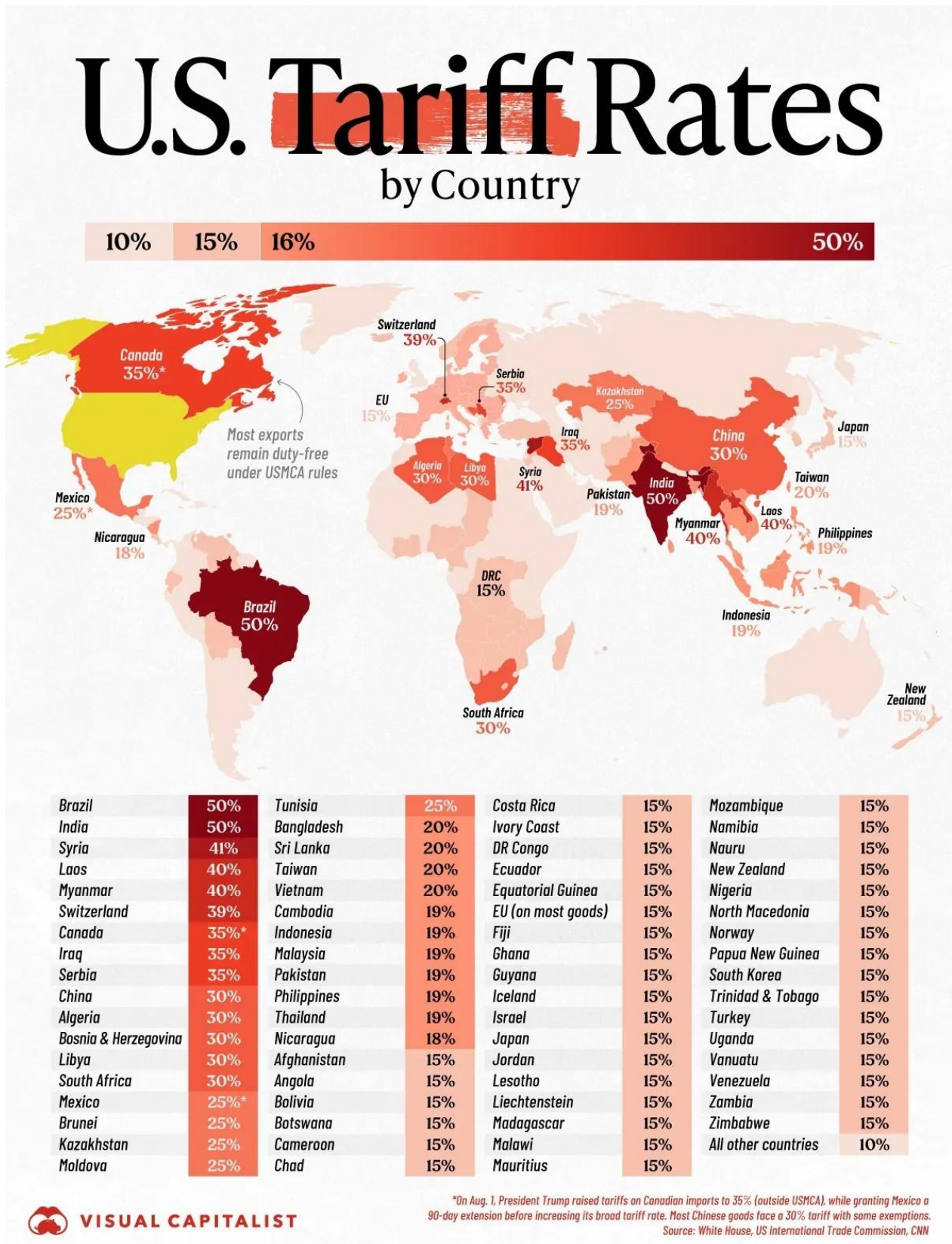
Finally, an additional 25% tariff rate (reaching a total rate of 50%) was imposed by the White House to *India* on *August 27, 2025* due to the latter's import of Russian oil (Lawder & Kumar, 2025),<sup>1</sup> while as far as the EU is concerned several officials expressed their concerns regarding the future U.S. foreign policy towards the EU in the context of the U.S.-EU trade agreement. More specifically, the *European Commission's Vice President* (Teresa Ribera) stated that the EU must be ready to reassess the aforementioned trade agreement in case the United States proceed to the imposition of additional tariffs (Starcevic, 2025), to be complemented by the former *EU Commissioner for Digital Affairs* and former Minister for the Economy and Finance of France (Thierry Breton) who published an article noting that:

*“Let us be blunt: an alternative EU negotiating path was possible; one that did not involve our submission. Pre-emptive capitulation was not the only option: there should have been an assumed balance of power between partners of equal weight. [...] Why is Europe – the US's largest trading partner – not treated on the same terms as Mexico or Canada, which have trade volumes with the US that are comparable to the EU's?” (Breton, 2025).*

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<sup>1</sup> The United States' intention to impose additional tariffs to India had been announced by the White House on *August 6, 2025* (The White House, 2025f).





**Figure 4:** The new tariff rates that have been imposed by the United States to actors worldwide

**Source:** Voronoi (2025)

## 6. Concluding remarks

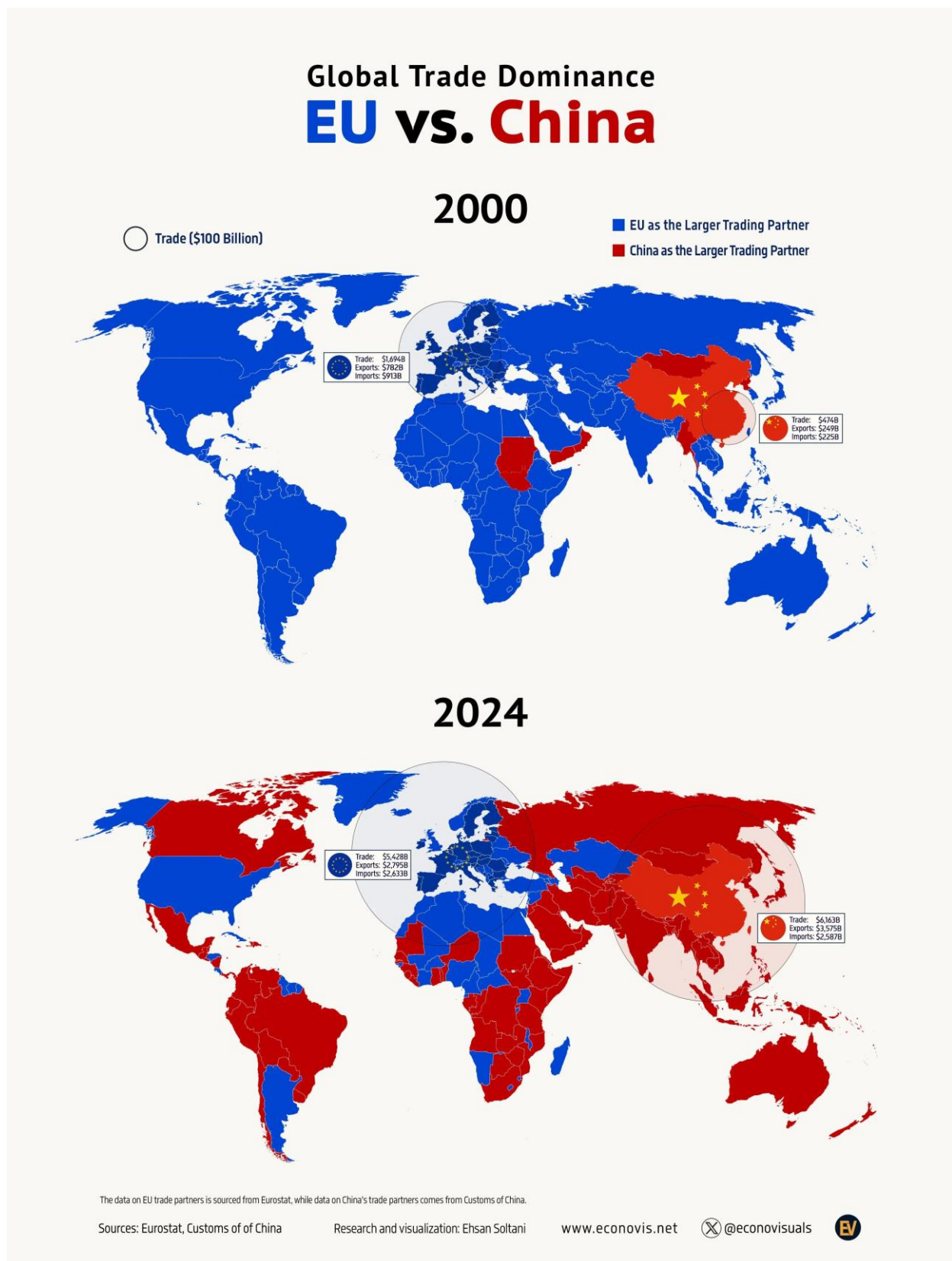
Taking into consideration the facts that have been presented, it is evident that the U.S. foreign policy under Trump 2.0 administration uses tariffs as a means of negotiation with its perceived strategic (economic) rivals in order to (re)shape favorable trade conditions and (re)gain economic world dominance. In other words the Trump 2.0 administration, taking into consideration that the U.S. President wants to put an end to the war in Ukraine and Gaza –thus does not want to deteriorate relations with *Russia* and Israel– in order to focus on *China*, focuses on economic security –one of the most important components of national security– because the economy is the main field of competition between the two actors.

As far as the *EU* and *India* are concerned, the aggressiveness of the United States' new foreign (economic) policy can be understood as an effort to minimize the negative impact that the euro's use (the European Union currency) (€) has against the dollar, and set an example for other pro-Western actors so that they do not approach Russia. In this context, the author believes that the new NSS which is expected to be published in late 2025 will most probably contain –just like President Trump's first NSS published in 2017 ([The White House, 2017:18-20](#))– many references to the *economy* and the *economic relations* of the United States with other actors.

Moreover, it needs to be stressed that the new GWOT can eventually harm the economy and subsequently the national security of the United States, as *China*, *India* and the *EU* –some of the largest economic actors in the world and major U.S. trade partners ([Office of the United States Trade Representative, n.d.a](#); [Office of the United States Trade Representative, n.d.b](#); [Office of the United States Trade Representative, n.d.c](#))– can take severe trade and economic countermeasures against the United States in the long run. The negative impact would be even worse for the United States if these countermeasures are taken in a coordinated manner –an action that was proposed by the Chinese President calling the EU to establish a *common economic front* with China against the United States ([Davidson, 2025](#))– as the U.S. Intelligence Community (IC) has already warned in the latest ATA that cooperation among United States' hostile actors can expand the national security threat ([ODNI, 2025:9](#)).

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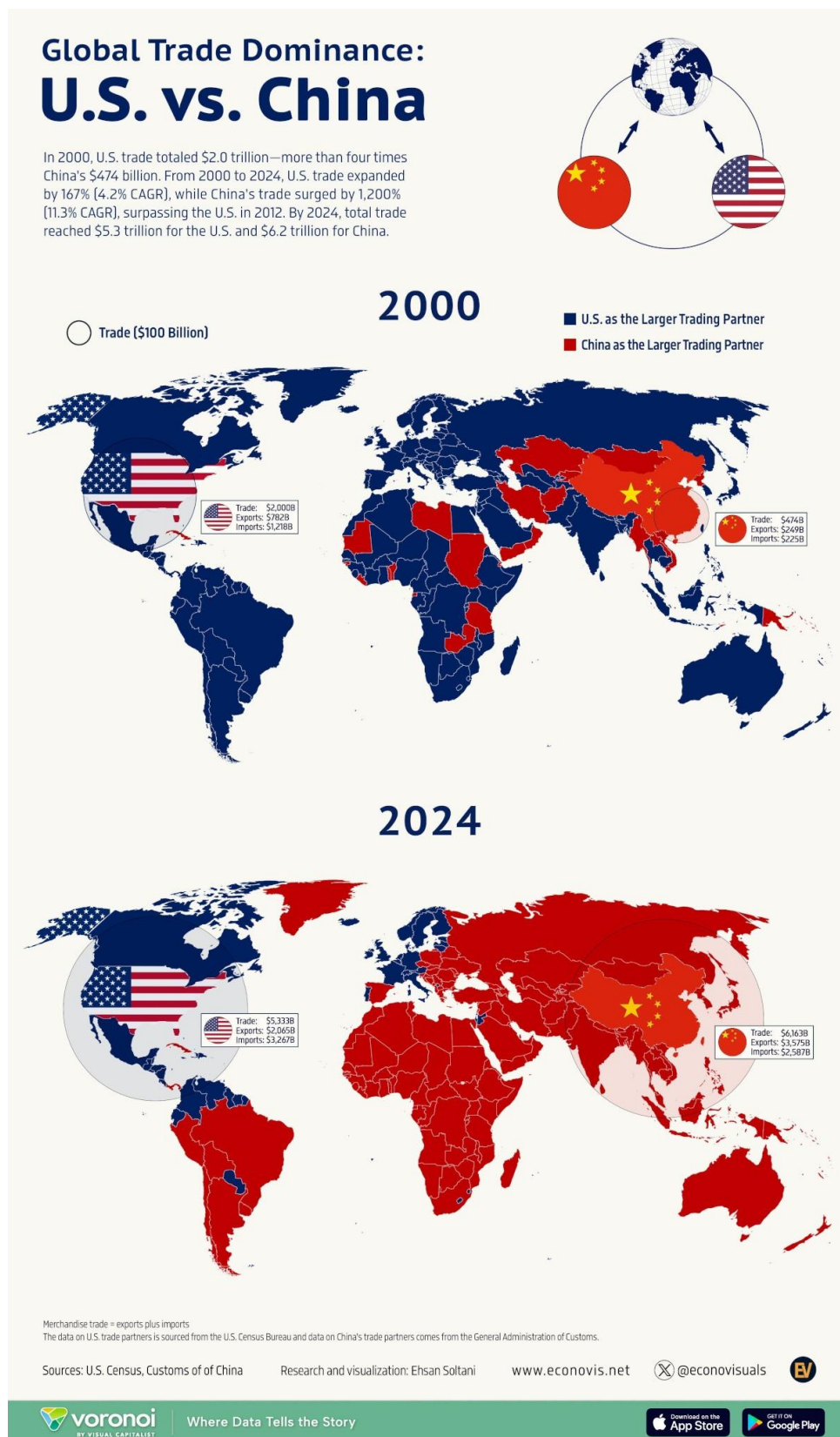
**Figure 5:** Comparison of Global Trade Dominance between EU & China

**Source:** Soltani (2025a)



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**Figure 6:** Comparison of Global Trade Dominance between the U.S. & China

**Source:** Soltani (2025b)

In fact, President Trump's aggressive attitude might lead to that, as trust –a vital factor in international relations– in the U.S. President seems to have been lost. This is obvious in Thierry Breton's aforementioned article, in which he also stated noted that:

*“We were told that capitulation was preferable to uncertainty and the risk of a trade war. Wars, it is true, often end in surrender. But after conceding so much to secure hypothetical tariff stability – an understandable demand from our businesses – what real guarantees have we obtained? What if Europe is “punished” again, this time for not buying enough US gas? Or if its businesses choose instead to invest those hundreds of billions into the European economy and jobs?” (Breton, 2025).*

Even though the United States seems (for the time being) to have won its first trade battle with the EU, the most probable scenario regarding the U.S.-China trade relations is that the United States will have a hard time reaching to an agreement with China, as the latter –on the contrary to the EU (Soltani, 2025a)– has dominated global trade (Soltani, 2025b) (**Figures 5 & 6**). This means that China has far more alternatives than the EU, making it more resilient in the economic and trade sector and providing it the capacity to absorb the “tariffs shock” more easily than the EU. Besides, the U.S. decision to extend the deadline for imposing additional tariffs to China, confirms this assessment.

Moreover, despite India –as a regional indo-Pacific major actor– could help the United States maintain or even change the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific in its favour, taking into consideration the current conditions, it will most probably enhance its relations with China and Russia to counter the aggressive U.S. foreign policy. At this point, it must be stressed that India's Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) visited –seven years after his last visit (MacRae, 2025)– China between *August 31, 2025* and *September 1, 2025* to participate the 25<sup>th</sup> *Shanghai Cooperation Organization* (SCO) Summit, on the sidelines of which he met with the Chinese (Xi Jinping) and Russian (Vladimir Putin) President.

As far as the bilateral relations between *India* and *China* are concerned, the press release that was published by Prime Minister Modi's Office on *August 31, 2025* stated that:

*“Both leaders [...] reaffirmed that the two countries were development partners and not rivals, and that their differences should not turn into disputes. [...] On economic and trade relations, they recognized the role of their two economies to stabilize world trade. They underlined the need to proceed from a political and strategic direction to expand bilateral trade and investment ties and reduce trade deficit. Prime Minister noted that India and China both pursue strategic autonomy, and their relations should not be seen through a third country lens. The two leaders deemed it necessary to expand common ground on bilateral, regional, and global issues and challenges, like terrorism and fair trade in multilateral platforms.”* (Prime Minister of India, 2025a).

Concerning the bilateral relations of India with Russia, a second press release was issued on September 1, 2025 stating that:

*“The leaders discussed bilateral cooperation, including in the economic, financial, and energy sectors and expressed satisfaction with the sustained growth in bilateral ties in these areas. [...] The two leaders reaffirmed their support for further strengthening of the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between the two countries. [...]”* (Prime Minister of India, 2025b).

Taking into consideration –as it all seem– the strengthening of the bilateral relations of India with China and Russia, it needs to be noted that in case India decides to back a new reserve currency in the context of its participation in BRICS –an action that it has not backed so far despite Russia's efforts (Koukakis, 2024a)– the economic world order as we know might eventually come to an end.

To conclude, it must be understood that if Trump's new GWOT continues for a long period of time, a new economic crisis might appear. This will have the exact opposite outcome than the one expected by (and for) the United States and severe consequences

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for the rest of the world, a view that was also expressed by the Chinese President who on *April 11, 2025* stated that:

*“[...] there will be no winners in a tariff war, and going against the world will isolate oneself [...]”* ([Davidson, 2025](#)).



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