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Caleb Diamond: Thank you, Operator. And welcome, colleagues. We have a great briefing today on Biden's first overseas trip, the upcoming G-7/NATO summits, and the bilateral meetings on the sidelines. So we'll get right to it, but first I do want to introduce our speakers.

So we have with us today Matt Goodman – he's the CSIS senior vice president for economics; Rachel Ellehuus, our deputy director and senior fellow with the CSIS Europe Program; Heather Conley, senior vice president for Europe; and then we'll close with Jim Lewis, also senior vice president here at CSIS. They'll each go over brief opening remarks and then we'll open it up to your questions.

And with that, I'll turn it over to Matt.

Matthew P. Goodman: OK. Thank you, Caleb. And good afternoon, everyone. This is Matt Goodman, and I'm going to cover just the G-7 part of the trip.

So to start with, my sort of sound bite or kind of overall take on this, I think, you know, this could be the most consequential G-7 summit since the aftermath of September 11th. Of course, that will depend on both the substance and the optics of the event. But just to remind, the G-7 is still a group of the largest seven advanced market democracies, and you need to say all of those words in order to – for that statement to be true, that they are still the seven largest advanced market democracies. And there is also, in addition to the seven individual countries, the EU, which has actually two seats. So when you see pictures with nine people, don't be surprised because there are two European presidents who also get seats in addition to the three EU members and the U.K. and Japan, Canada, Japan – the U.S., Canada, Japan. And in addition to those countries, four other countries have been invited as guests: Australia, India, the Republic of Korea, and South Africa. And these countries will participate in some of the sessions: the ones on the open societies and democracy, the ones on health, but not some of the other discussions.

This is the first in-person G-7 meeting since 2019. The U.S., to remind, was the host last year in 2020 but did not hold a summit, either virtual or in person. And strangely, this is Joe Biden's second summit – (laughs) – as G-7 leader, because there was a virtual G-7 leaders meeting back in February of this year. But this is the first sort of regular G-7 summit. It will be held in Carbis Bay in Cornwall in the U.K. from this Friday, June 11th, through Sunday the 13th.

This is going to be a big test of Boris Johnson's desire to show that there is such a thing as global Britain, since this is the first full year of Britain's independence from the EU. And so it's the first of two big conferences along with the COP-26 conference in the fall that the U.K. will be hosting. So the U.K. has laid out – to talk about substance – the U.K. has laid out four areas of

priority. The first is leading the global recovery from COVID and strengthening resilience against future pandemics. The second is championing free and fair trade. The third is tackling climate change and protecting, preserving the planet's biodiversity. And fourth, is championing shared values.

Just to quickly go through this, in the first category of leading the global recovery, sort of two pieces of that. One is the kind of macro and financial response, which has been a matter of discussion among finance ministries who met just a few days ago and, of course, the international financial institutions have been talking a lot about this. And I'd say the bottom line is you're going to see statements of, you know, continued determination to, first, spend money within the G-7 countries – the U.S. certainly wants there to be a continued statement of fiscal support within G-7 countries – but also to then provide financial support to the rest of the world, including through new allocations and reallocations of special drawing rights from the IMF and concessional finance from both the World Bank and the IMF, among – in addition to bilateral support.

Still in this category, on global recovery and the pandemic, you're also going to see strong statements about pushing out vaccines through the COVAX facility and other international cooperative efforts. I think the things people are looking at are sort of what the numbers are going to be around that, how many. You know, there was a letter that came in from various nonprofit groups just today suggesting that the G-7 ought to commit to pushing out 1 billion or as much as 2 billion vaccine doses before the end of this year and to get so 60 (percent), 70 percent of people around the world vaccinated by next year of the whole population of the world.

So you'll see that. You'll see maybe statements about an IMF plan to push out \$50 billion of support as well for this, and then pandemic preparedness. There will be some – you know, some – probably some deliverables there for how they – these countries are going to prepare for future pandemics. So that's the first category.

Second issue is trade. To be honest, I think this is going to be the – probably the weakest set of outcomes in the sense there will be statements of determination to reform the WTO, to go after market-distorting practices meaning, basically, China's massive subsidization and industrial policies. You know, there'll be talk of going after forced labor. You'll hear about digital, you know, climate-related trade deals and health-related trade matters.

But I think, you know, there isn't – as you all know, you know, the Biden administration has not sort of laid out yet a kind of broad trade strategy, and there are a lot of trade differences within this group still, especially U.S.-EU, that are still lingering out there. So I'm not expecting very much on trade.

The third issue is climate. The climate ministers met last month and they agreed to, you know, the ambition to redouble down, the ambition to keep the climate – the global warming increase, the 1.5 degrees Celsius versus 2 degrees and, you know, to prepare for – to announce greater ambition on greenhouse gas emissions before the COP-26 meeting in the fall.

They've agreed to some others. I think you'll expect the leaders to endorse certain other things that have been out there like an agreement among the G-7 to end funding of coal-fired power plants. There will be – you know, the finance ministers agreed to move towards mandatory climate-related disclosure for banks and other companies. So there'll be a cluster of things around climate.

And then, finally and importantly, shared values. This is really getting to those issues of forced labor, corruption, but also, importantly, global development. That's always been a theme of the G-7, and I think the thing I'm looking for there is their – what the G-7 leaders are going to announce about sustainable development finance, some new initiatives to support, you know, infrastructure development in developing countries and, potentially, a reupping of this so-called Blue Dot Network, although it might be more like a green dot where – a sort of high-quality infrastructure investment.

So just – that's the sort of public agenda. There will also, obviously, be lots of private conversations, and those will be dominated by China and Russia. I think Heather and Rachel are going to talk more about Russia. But just to stay on China, in addition to the issues I've touched on like subsidies and response to the Belt and Road Initiative, corruption, other values-related issues, I think there are going to be pretty pointed discussions about shared concerns about maritime security, about Taiwan.

Interestingly, you'll have all of the four Quad members there because you'll have the US, Japan, Australia, and India at the table. I think they will talk a lot about in the China context economic coercion because India – I mean, China has been coercing Australia, limiting their exports of various key export products like wine and barley and other things because Australia had the audacity to suggest an investigation of the Wuhan origins of the crisis and other things that Australia has done, apparently, that concern Beijing. And then there will be, obviously, a lot of talk in the China context about human rights issues, democracy, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and so forth.

So just to wrap up, I would say I think the big question around this summit is whether these advanced market democracies can project a sense of confidence, of their willingness and ability to contribute to global governance in these specific areas that I've mentioned, you know, whether the U.S. can show its leadership in this context after a rocky few years, and given the doubts about what's going to happen, you know, post the first Biden term still lingering out there, I think that will be hanging out there. And then, you know, ultimately will they be able to lay out a credible vision

and then some very tangible steps to move towards that vision across all these issues? Those are the big, I think, questions hanging out here.

So I will pass it onto, I think, Rachel, next.

Rachel Ellehuus: Super. Thank you, Matt. I'm certainly listening to, hearing a lot of similar themes at the NATO stop to what you've just laid out, particularly this ambition of the U.S. returning to the table and showing its commitment and its leadership, and trying to get everybody on board in a certain direction.

So at the NATO summit, you know, on 14 June, I think Biden comes to the table with sort of three messages. The first is the importance of working with allies and partners to both update and maintain the rules of the road. And this is on everything from cyber, to anti-corruption in EU channels, disinformation, emerging technologies, and then some of the trade and taxation aspects that Matt laid out. But the idea here is that these rules need updating. They've served us well. And the best way to do this updating and maintenance is with allies and partners.

His second message is going to be this theme of democratic values which, again, you heard on the G-7 stop. And Biden will say something along the lines of: Democratic values can't be separated from our interests. So this will make an interesting conversation in NATO, where there are a number of countries – whether it be Turkey, or Hungary, or Poland – who actually are democratically backsliding on the core NATO values and principles. Things like rule of law, freedom of the media, addressing corruption. So there'll be some tough messages there, despite this goodwill message of the U.S. being committed to the alliance, committed to Article 5 – which I do think he'll repeat – and committed to sort of leading the alliance.

And on that last point, of U.S. commitment and leadership, I will offer that Biden could be met with a dose of skepticism from allies and partners who are around that table. And this is because, you know, some of them sort of look at the U.S., and they see what's going on here domestically, and they worry about the future of the Republican Party. They worry about what happens after Biden. They worry that some of the negative language about allies and partners and the U.S. commitment to NATO and global leadership could falter again.

There's still others who have a skepticism of U.S. leadership for another reason. And in that category, I'd put a country like France, which in many ways benefitted from the absence of U.S. leadership in recent years and was looking at that as an opportunity to push their agenda of greater European strategic autonomy. Whether that's in economics, or trade, or foreign policy, or defense, there is a sense that, well, you've been gone for a while so you can't just come back and assume your seat at the head of the table. Things have moved on, and we have to create space for European leadership. And I think this could play out even in a NATO context.

The last summit was in 2018. We all remember that, because it was – it was really so dramatic, where there was a lot of friction among countries, and the United States refused to – or, President Trump refused to underline the U.S. commitment to Article 5 in the alliance in the way that was – had become normal for decades previous. There will be a communique. There'll be a pretty extensive decision sheet, I think in contrast maybe to the G-7 stop, where Matt suggested there might not be many deliverables. NATO has its own process so, in fact, there will be a lot of deliverables.

And all of these deliverables will be centered around the theme of preparing NATO for the future and making it fit for purpose to go into the next few decades. And the moniker that the NATO secretary-general has used is NATO 2030. He had convened an experts group, and then they settled on several themes that would be carried forward to this summit. So I'll just quickly go through those. There are nine, so I'll be – I'll be brief and hold any detail for questions.

The first is the launch of a new strategic concept. For those who follow NATO, you'll recall that the last one is from 2010. So in fact, it doesn't mention climate, it doesn't mention China. It really needs some updating. And I think that will be led by the NATO secretary-general rather than the North Atlantic Council, so it can move rather quickly. And I think the goal is to launch that here and then deliver it at the NATO summit in 2020 in Madrid.

The second is making sure that NATO's political identity keeps up with all the developments on the military side. Many people forget that NATO is not just a military alliance, it's also a political alliance with some pretty robust consultation mechanisms built into Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty. And so as developments on the military side have moved ahead, there's a sense that there has to be a political consultation to shape the debate, to shape the response, to improve speed of decision-making and the knowledge of those who will be making those decisions. So I expect that to be an aspect, increasing this political consultation arm of the alliance. France in particular is pushing for a political pledge that would recommit allies to those values and principles that I mentioned at the outset.

Thirdly, there will be a statement on elevating cyber under the moniker of strengthening deterrence and defense. NATO's done a lot in terms of readiness, modernization, defense investment since 2014. I think there's a sense that now cyber needs to be elevating. We have to – allies have to raise the threshold for cyberattacks and impose more costs, and think more about the rules that govern cyber response because, technically, it is now an operational domain alongside the conventional ones and it actually can invoke an Article 5 response.

Number four is resilience. NATO has always had a focus on the resilience of its digital communications and physical infrastructure, but now that would be expanded to include resilience of supply chains and vetting of foreign direct investment in sensitive technology areas. So there I anticipate a resilience pledge and development of national resilience goals to kind of help countries come up to that speed and that ceiling that NATO is establishing.

Fifth is greater cooperation on emerging technologies and innovation. I think NATO – you'll probably see the announcement of the launch of a defense innovation accelerator or hub by which countries could cooperate on defense investment around new technologies, and the funding of that would be voluntary. There might also be an artificial intelligence implementation strategy that would start to establish principles of use.

Sixth, partnerships. There's a sense that increasingly, much like the G-7's going a bit global, NATO needs to enhance its partnerships with India, allies in the Asia-Pacific. And here an undercurrent is China; that, you know, NATO is a North Atlantic alliance, but certainly it has partnerships further afield that can help in this competition or tension with China.

Seventh is training and capacity building. I'm happy to go into more detail with regard to Afghanistan, but one of the ways that the alliance is thinking about maintaining continuity in Afghanistan after the military departure but still showing commitment is retaining some sort of civilian presence in country to do capacity building for security institutions, but also providing out-of-country training for Afghan national security forces and special forces in particular. And that would likely happen in third countries like Iraq and Jordan and maybe even Central Asia. So training and capacity building.

Two more and then I'll conclude.

Eighth is security implications of climate. And I stress security implications of climate because certainly the EU has a role to play in climate as well, but NATO is focused primarily on those security implications. They'll come out with a climate action plan that has specific milestones, for example around increasing the sustainability of their bases or political commitments on reducing military emissions. Those are the types of things that would fall in that bucket.

And then, finally and possibly the most contentious one here, is resourcing. So as most of you I think know, you know, NATO doesn't have much direct funding. It's really the indirect funding of the 2 percent that individual allies spend on defense. And so the secretary-general has been pushing for what he calls a substantial and graduated increase in common funding for NATO to make it operate more effectively. He hasn't necessarily said what requirements and what things would fall into this bucket, and I think that has caused some tension with France in particular and a number of other

allies who are sort of principally against increasing resources without knowing what those resources are going towards and that they will be value added. And so there's a little bit of pushback from France, but also others about the sequence and the method. So I think we'll see some statement about resourcing and the need to increase resources. The question will be whether NATO allies give the secretary-general almost like a blank check to increase common funding or if they will require some rigor in terms of the areas in which he feels he needs that increased common funding before giving that green light.

I'll conclude there and save the rest to Q&A.

Heather A. Conley: Thanks, Rachel. This is Heather Conley. I'm going to cover –we're going to go a big backward in trip – I'm going to cover the U.S.-U.K. bilateral meeting between President Biden and Prime Minister Johnson, look at the U.S.-EU summit portion, and then move to the main event, the U.S.-Russia summit in Geneva on the 16th.

So in many ways President Biden did all of us a great service with his op-ed in The Washington Post, which helped very much define some of the overarching themes of this entire trip. Some are calling this the three Cs – COVID, China, and climate – and that those are the themes that will be really throughout most of the major visits. But when President Biden sits down with Boris Johnson, he's already said those magic words in the op-ed, he called it the "special relationship," although we understand from some press sources that Prime Minister Johnson doesn't like the term "special relationship," perhaps making it – the U.K. a little bit too weak and needy. Again, according to some sources.

But the fact that he said those words reinforces that even when, as vice president, President Biden didn't support the U.K. departing the European Union, certainly President Biden has noted that Prime Minister Johnson had very similar approaches to politics as did former President Trump. I think you're really seeing where the White House is placing allies as the highest priority, even over some of the decisions and the behaviors that they've exhibited. Certainly, Prime Minister Johnson and Brexit, I would argue Nord Stream 2 as another policy space where the Biden administration has made a clear priority, putting allies and the relationship and the need to advance a very robust agenda over any particular issue.

Again, just to remind, what makes the special relationship special are really sort of three core areas. Clearly military and intelligence. And what we're seeing in a post-Brexit U.K., with their recently-released integrated review, is a U.K. that wants to stay as close as possible in lockstep with the United States on its – on its military posture, particularly on technology and cyber capabilities, certainly underscored. But the U.K. wishing to keep a priority of defense and deterrence in the Euro-Atlantic area while it tilts to the Indo-Pacific – again, a nod to the U.S. prioritization of the Indo-Pacific.

The second part of the special relationship is that economic trade relationship. Clearly that will be part of the conversation bilaterally. There is no indication that there'll be any movement forward towards a U.S.-U.K. free trade agreement. This is certainly a blow to the U.K., that is now signing new free trade agreements, seeking to have a pathway to join, through observer status, CPTPP. But this will definitely be a missing link.

The other close area of cooperation is in development assistance. And again, as Matt noted, there's going to be a lot of focus on sustainable development, development assistance in general. But here in the U.K. we certainly have a more robust conversation where the government made a decision to decrease spending on development assistance. And that very much is a – is a very active conversation politically, even within Boris Johnson's party. But we work so closely with the U.K. on the development agenda.

And the third, of course, is foreign policy. Really seeing the U.K. now outside of the EU, being able to be more nimble, flexible. It can be a first mover on sanctions policy. We've certainly seen that effect on China. So we are seeing that closer – certainly that closer cooperation.

The one area where President Biden – I'm not sure how much publicly they will talk about it – is, in fact, one of the most significant consequences of Brexit, and that is Northern Ireland. And again, I think as part of the trade conversation – or, I shall say, the lack of bilateral trade and free trade agreement – is the fact that Brexit and the British government's interpretation of the Northern Ireland protocol has definitely put an enormous strain on the Good Friday Peace Agreement, something that President Biden feels very strongly about. Typically, the U.S. plays a role of an honest broker, if you will, tries to offer its mediation in a helpful way. But clearly, President Biden has put his thumb on the Irish portion of that, focusing on making sure that we don't return to violence in Northern Ireland, which of course, unfortunately, we have already seen those indications.

Before the president leaves the U.K. he will see the queen on Sunday at Windsor Castle, certainly something that – very important and special considering the loss of Prince Philip, as well as the announcement of a newest great grandchild.

So, with that, let me hop, skip back to Brussels and the U.S.-EU summit, where again those three Cs are going to be in action: COVID response, certainly; climate; and China – and the fourth C, cyber, which Jim will chime in on here at the end.

You know, right after President Biden – after the election, the European Union sent the Biden administration a list, an agenda of things that it wanted to cooperate very closely with the United States, and in many ways

President Biden's op-ed in The Washington Post was the answer that the U.S., in fact, rather than look to the EU and their list of issues, wants to put forward his own agenda. And I think we will see that certainly play out in the U.S.-EU summit.

U.S. presidents don't typically like U.S.-EU summits. They are not frequently held, not even during the Obama administration. President Trump certainly had viewed the EU as a foe, although got along with the former European Commission president very well and was able to negotiate some bespoke trade agreements. So this is not always the easiest mechanism for the U.S. to use, but it still is very important.

And the most important agenda item is technology and trade, particularly digital trade. This is where we have so many differences with the EU regarding data flows, the fact that a European judicial decision has not allowed Privacy Shield to move forward. There's been no answer, although the administration is trying to address that. We've had a trade truce on Airbus subsidies, even on the digital services tax issue, but this isn't resolution. And so the announcement, likely, of the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council is one step to address it, but the gap – the growing gap between the United States and the European Union on a whole range of technology issues is really starting to, I think, fray future – the future transatlantic economy.

Finally, policy issues. Rachel mentioned resilience. Resilience will continue to be a very important issue on the U.S.-EU agenda on a whole range of issues: disinformation; misinformation; energy security; lots of coordination on policy vis-à-vis Belarus, which – some important decisions the EU has to make on potentially sectoral sanctions against Belarus; Ukraine. Western Balkans is another huge issue. So there is an enormous amount of issues on the table. This meeting in some ways is symbolic. It helps set that table. But the EU plays a very important role on a wide range of issues of great importance to the United States.

Then let me move very quickly to Geneva, to the U.S.-Russia summit. You know, in many ways President Biden is giving President Putin a great deal of stature with this meeting despite really an uptick and an increase in malign and aggressive behavior. That behavior, of course, the United States, working with our European partners, have sanctioned against. But as we've seen over the last several days, as I'm sure Jim will walk us through, these cyberattacks continue through criminal groups, and President Putin continues his strong support of Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, and a wide variety of issues. So this is really giving him a great deal of stature.

It's unclear what the outcome of the summit will be. Both the Kremlin and the White House have been playing down expectations of any breakthrough. It seems that every U.S. president early in their tenure believes that they

need to frame the U.S.-Russian relationship to manage the relationship. I think President Biden is attempting to do that, similar to his predecessors, trying to maintain a(n) openness to cooperate on areas where we need to cooperate, where we'd like to cooperate. Arms control, clearly, will be the key issue, as well as hope for cooperation in climate, in the Arctic, perhaps getting Russia to support a future Iran nuclear agreement, getting humanitarian corridors opened in northern Syria to Idlib. These could be the more specific areas of cooperation.

But President Biden is very clear, knows Mr. Putin, knows Russian activity is also going to go through a litany of the areas where we are contesting and must be tough with Russia across a suite of issues on human rights, certainly behavior in Ukraine, Belarus, increasing concerns about their cyber activity, hoping to create some guardrails for that activity. And this will be very challenging to manage that public-facing what did we get out of this very high-stature event. Mr. Putin will use it very tactfully back in Russia that the behavior does not matter, he will still get the meeting. But hopefully, we can get to some outcomes where we can create a more stable and predictable relationship that President Biden wishes. The problem is Mr. Putin's entire foreign security policy is based on instability and unpredictability, and he uses that tool on a daily basis. So this will be a great challenge.

And with that, let me turn it over to Jim Lewis for concluding remarks on all the conversations related to cyber.

James Andrew Lewis: Thanks, Heather. And hi to everyone. I'll be quick because we've covered a lot of ground already.

You've heard some of the big issues. Cyber fits in all of them. A strategic approach to China. The Europeans are as much at risk from Chinese cyber espionage as we are, but they're a little ambivalent on how to respond.

The idea of a tech partnership. I expect there will be some announcement of – involving a D-12 or a T-12 or whatever we're calling it these days, but part of the tech partnership will be – involve cybersecurity, cyber research. There might be announcements of the selection of sherpas or something to work on this. The main goal will be to build a cooperative approach, and this is becoming one of the centerpieces of U.S. policy. So a cooperative approach to cybersecurity in the G-7, with the EU, and in NATO.

In NATO, you've got NATO 2030, the plans for the future, where cyber and hybrid are crucial elements of defense moving forward, as you heard from Rachel.

Finally and most importantly, all these are good – and so a tech partnership is a good way to build alliances and coming up to a common approach on China is good – although I don't think we'll get there – working with NATO to reaffirm their cyber commitments, all that's useful, but the key action is with

Russia. And so what's going to happen with Russia. I think there are – a key element of this will be the president laying down a marker with Putin that this kind of behavior is no longer acceptable. The Russians may object – you know, how do you know it was us. They may not. But the point here is to issue a warning that behavior that we accepted in the past – and, frankly, we've been accepting it for about 20 years – is no longer acceptable, and that the ransomware attacks have cut a little too close to the bone when it comes to the public safety of Americans. So laying down that marker, warning the Russians.

Putin, of course, will be trying to assess, trying to test how strongly committed the U.S. is. He's heard this from presidents before, so he'll want to know what's behind it. It's not going to be something that pursues agreement or negotiation. It was only two weeks ago that the Russians agreed that – as part of a larger global agreement, that countries would not knowingly allow their territory to be used for wrongful actions in cyberspace. So international commitment isn't going to have that much of an effect. It will be the decision of the Russians and of Vladimir Putin as to the credibility of the American warning.

So I'm looking forward to see what we'll get. The administration has a very strong team. They are very strongly committed to making progress on this issue. But the Russians are going to be a tough nut to crack.

Why don't I stop there?

Caleb Diamond: Great. And I think we can now turn it over to the Q&A.

Operator: (Gives queuing instructions.)

And our first question comes from the line of George Condon with National Journal. Your line is open. Please go ahead.

Q: (Off mic) – much.

I wanted to touch on something. Matt touched on this. But isn't the – a lot of all these meetings overshadowed by the reality of four years of Trump and the challenges to U.S. leadership and the alliance? What does Biden have to prove in these summits to convince them that the U.S. deserves to be back? And he always talks about his experience. Does he have a personal relationship with this generation of world leaders? What's the burden on him here?

Matthew P. Goodman: Well, I can take a first crack since you mentioned my name. This is Matt. But I'm sure Heather has thoughts on that – this question as well.

I think that, you know, the bar is high for President Biden because of the – well, I'd say, really, because of two things. One you mentioned, which is that

the G-7 had a pretty rough patch for the last four years with Donald Trump having not hosted a meeting last year, having, you know, sort of, basically, walked out of the 2018 summit in Charlevoix, Canada, and then refused to sign the communiqué, the famous picture, you know, of Trump with his arms folded with sort of the painting of Merkel leaning in and so forth. And so – and, you know, and then policies that sort of, you know, clearly, rattled our – a lot of our allies, including our European ones, who are at the core of the G-7. Again, Heather will have more to say about that.

But the other factor is the G-7 itself, you know, this group that used to be the steering group for the global economy when it was founded back in the 1970s in the wake of the oil shocks and other disruptions. The global economy, you know, is now challenged in terms of legitimacy and credibility based on, you know, the G-20 now being the broader group, bringing in some of the big emerging markets including, notably, China and India and Russia, but also, you know, not having delivered a lot over the last, you know, 10, 20 years, frankly, in the G-7.

So there's a – there's a high bar on both of those levels, and I think Biden has to show that he's confident, that the U.S. is back, that the U.S. is ready to do what it needs to do domestically. You know, that's, obviously, his top priority in his administration is investing at home, building back better, and he's got to credibly show that he's doing what he needs to do and that that's going to not only bring the U.S. back economically, but it's going to sort of in some way normalize our political dysfunction or address that – the political dysfunction, therefore, holding out the prospect that he is actually going to be reelected in 2024 or, you know, some other Democratic candidate will take over from him or even a sensible Republican. We will not slide back into Trumpism. That's the message he needs to try to convey, and that's a tough message, especially this early in the administration.

I think, again, Heather knows his relationship with some of these leaders, but they're pretty long standing because, you know, you have people who, like Merkel, have been around for a long time. Even Mario Draghi, the Italian, although it's his first G-7 summit, you know, is somebody who's a very familiar face. So I don't think that's going to be an issue, but I do think he's got a very high bar to jump over.

Heather?

Heather A. Conley: Yeah, George, thanks. This is Heather.

I think what President Biden needs to do is show consistency, credibility in U.S. promises, and to really see this as stabilizing our alliance network both in Europe and in the Indo-Pacific, and in stabilizing it helping to build a more sturdy and durable foundation so these alliances, you know, are fit for purpose for the future for strategic competition but for the digital revolution that is – that is upon us.

So, you know, you – sort of to keep the ambitions of we can stabilize, we cannot restore the alliances as they were. They were fraying for quite some time under previous American presidents. We had lost our understanding that our – America’s alliance structure is our strategic advantage globally – both economically and from a security perspective.

So we’re going to have to rebuild that – that own knowledge in the United States, but as well as with allies – that, you know, we have – trust has been very profoundly broken. This has created hedging strategies among our allies. So we won’t get everything that we want, but in this rebuild process we can shift our alliances. But actually, to Matt’s point, our allies will not believe this is – will hold, until they see in several election cycles that regardless of administration U.S. policy does see the benefit of alliances. And that – you know, that is something that has to be proven to them. They will not accept any promises of that. It has to be proven.

Operator: (Gives queuing instructions.)

Matthew P. Goodman: While people are thinking, Operator, can I say one more thing that I forgot to mention? It’s Matt Goodman. Can folks hear me?

Operator: Yes, go ahead.

Matthew P. Goodman: OK. Just one thing I forgot to mention is that – and that the presence of the U.S., Japan and Korea at the meeting suggests the possibility – for those interested in Asia-Pacific or Indo-Pacific affairs – of a trilateral meeting. There is a U.S.-Japan sidebar meeting likely to happen between President Biden and Prime Minister Suga, and some discussion of whether President Moon of Korea might join that meeting, which would be, you know, a significant opportunity for the three to try to figure out a way to enhance and advance trilateral cooperation in the face of some, you know, continued tensions between Japan and Korea. If folks are interested, I can say more. I forgot to mention that.

Operator: (Gives queuing instructions.)

OK, and George Condon with The National Journal, your line is open again.

Q: I’m sorry to jump in and hog it, but nobody else seemed to be so I’ll take advantage.

If you – I’ve only been covering these since ’83 in Williamsburg. But if you go back to Ramouillet in ’75, hasn’t free trade been a key part of something the U.S. and the allies have been pushing? And you have – Trump was the first president, I think, who didn’t push free trade. Is this something that’s been damaged now, or can – Biden doesn’t seem to be a real champion of

free trade either. Is this just something that's now no longer really a part of the G-7 agenda?

Matthew P. Goodman: Well, you're right, George. This is Matt, again. You're right that trade has been at the center of G-7 conversations, you know, from the beginning. And it's been usually framed as a critical source of growth in the global economy, and for these seven large economies in particular. And you know, it has remained on the agenda formally. And as I mentioned, it is one of the four priorities the U.S. hosts have laid out. They framed it as free and fair trade. The addition of "and fair," although that's, you know, been kicking around since as long as you've been doing this – that's impressive you go all the way back to Williamsburg. But it's sort of been – I think under the Trump administration it was kind of formally added to the framing of the trade conversation.

So even under Trump, the G-7 did make statements about the importance of trade and, you know, as long as it's fair. And now how you define "fair" is, you know, in the eye of the beholder. And obviously President Trump had a different view of that than other presidents have had. I do think it is a – there is a question lingering out there about trade among the other G-7 partners on the Biden administration's approach to trade. There are questions about that because of two things. One, the Biden administration has not yet removed the tariffs that President Trump imposed on allies, on steel, aluminum, and other things. And so those are still out there, and a bit of a sore point – thorn in the side for some of our allies. And secondly, because the Trump (sic; Biden) administration hasn't yet laid out a broad sort of convincing trade strategy.

To be fair, this is very early in an administration. A lot of people are impatient for strategies on everything. It is only four-plus months in. And in my experience, it takes at least six to nine months before you get the team in place and starting to have debates about issues – important issues like trade. And so give them a bit of time. But I do think there are concerns, sort of more to your understated point, that maybe this administration isn't as convinced about the benefits of, you know, global trade, or certainly of traditional trade agreements. I mean, they signaled that pretty clearly.

So the question is, can they, you know, convince their partners that they're going to have a robust trade strategy that gets at the WTO issues, gets at, you know, the distortions of the trading system that China's brought, and then lays out some, you know, convincing agreements that it's going to pursue, even if sort of new style agreements that the Biden administration wants to present in its own – in its own way. So those are – I think those are good questions. But it's formally on the agenda, and always has been. It's just been sort of approached in a slightly different way in the last, you know, several years.

Operator: Thank you.

Our next question comes from the line of Ashley Parker with The Washington Post.

Q: Hey. Thanks for doing this.

My question is, President Biden, you know, very much has cast himself as a master of personal diplomacy, both domestically and internationally, in emphasizing how much, you know, those personal relationships he has matter. I was just hoping someone could sort of speak to, you know, what do you think we should expect to see from him on this trip? And, you know, is your assessment that he will fare better or worse abroad than he has at home, for instance, so far with congressional Republicans?

Heather A. Conley: This is Heather. I'm happy to take a whack at that. Yes, thank you so much.

I mean, I think we sometimes overemphasize the personalities when two leaders get together. I sort of see it as, you know, positive personal relations give space and opportunity to do riskier and more difficult political things, if there is trust. And, you know, I think back to George's earlier point, this is where President Biden is a transatlanticist. He has spent enormous amounts of time in Europe through the conference circuit – you know, Munich security conference is a perfect example of that. He does know these leaders very well. So I think you'll see lots of that retail politics around all of the G-7 table. He sees them again at the NATO table, new colleagues at the EU table. So, I mean, I think this is really the in-person version of we are – we are back, America is back. And I do understand.

I think the important thing is, though, if these leaders have shifted their view, they have restive public and are challenged by rising anti-Americanism in their own countries. So, you know, it is difficult for European leaders to take difficult steps. And I think they have been, to Matt's point, a little surprised that – they know this is not an administration that is focusing on America first, but they see a lot of buy American. They see, you know, that there is trade truces, which are welcomed, but they aren't, you know, immediately ending some of these programs. And so I think they do begin to understand there's greater continuity in U.S. foreign – in economic policy, than one would suggest from two very different individuals and personalities and political views.

So I think there is acknowledgement. He'll – President Biden will be very welcomed. But there is, I think, again, sort of a sense that Europe, I think, had a higher expectation at the beginning that the Biden administration would be clinging more to their agenda. And they're seeing the U.S. saying, no, you come to my agenda and how we're going to prepare ourselves for some strategic competition and technology. So I think you'll see a little tension across the board on this, but he will be absolutely most welcome.

If I can pause, let me – let me turn to Rachel. One bilateral that we – that we didn't tell you about that is really important is President Biden's bilateral with Turkish President Erdogan on the margins of the NATO summit. Rachel, can I turn to you real quickly to just through a couple of the key points there?

Rachel Ellehuus: Thanks, Heather. And I actually think this is a good example of a relationship or an area where Biden's personal relationship with President Erdogan leave many hopeful that he can at least create some sort of stability in the relationship, and possibly even get some cooperative behavior out of Erdogan. Of course, Biden knows Turkey very well from his time in Congress. When he was vice president he was actually charged with sort of the Turkey-Cyprus-Eastern Med-Greece. So he's been in these conversations. He knows how Erdogan operates. He understands that negotiating style. And of course, after the attempted coup in 2016 he was the principal that was sent into Turkey to try to mollify the Turks and get the relationship back on track, clearly with limited success.

But the last time those two spoke was on April 23rd. That was the day before Biden recognized the Armenian Genocide Resolution, as the first president to do that officially. So that was a really big deal for Turkey. But the fact that Biden was able to pull that off without much of a reaction from Turkey other than some empty threats to depart Incirlik Air Base – to kick us out of Incirlik Air Base, and sort of rejecting our assertions, I think that speaks to the fact that Erdogan does actually want good relationships with the U.S. – not least because he needs that economic relationship with the U.S., and the appearance of a cooperative relationship, in order to retain his base, which is very much built on a functioning Turkish economy that is tethered into the West.

So I fully expect that Biden will – as he did with Russia, or as he will do with Russia, deliver the tough messages on democracy and human rights. There are some U.S. citizens who are imprisoned in Turkey. There are some U.S. companies who've been affected by Erdogan's crackdown on the media environment. But at the same time, I think Biden will look for areas of cooperation with Turkey. There are certainly some clear regional issues on which we're very much aligned.

In Afghanistan, Turkey's been a key partner, particularly in their operation of the airport. So any sort of follow-on presence in the region would depend on that airport remaining operational for international presence to come into the country to provide humanitarian aid. Turkey is also an important partner with regard to Libya, and even on Ukraine, and in Syria. We have a shared interest in preventing an increased – or, a renewed flow of refugees out of Idlib, and stabilizing the situation through delivery of humanitarian aid. So I think there are a handful of these issues where Turkey and the U.S. are actually more strategically aligned than Russia and Turkey.

Now, of course, I think somebody previously called it hedging. And Erdogan has certainly been hedging in his relationship with Russia and trying to use that to his benefit to extract concessions from NATO allies, as well as the United States. So Biden will have a fine line to walk. He needs Turkey to appear to be more cooperative in NATO and, in particular, in the Eastern Med, because this has certainly been a thorn in the side of the alliance.

And I know all of you are very familiar with S-400. I don't expect any resolution on that. But at least this engagement has the opportunity to avoid things spiraling in a more negative direction. For example, Turkey feeling that it has no choice but to procure more Russian systems that could undermine NATO security. But again, I think that personal relationship between these two is actually a positive, despite a rather negative overall relationship.

Operator: Thank you. And our next question comes from the line of Darlene Superville with the Associated Press. Your line is open.

Q: Thank you. Thanks for your time this afternoon.

I can't remember if it was Rachel or Heather who mentioned the president's upcoming meeting with the queen. But I was wondering if either of you knew whether President Biden had ever met the queen before, and under what circumstances? And I have a second question, which I realize is probably best for someone from the U.K., but the queen has now met with every U.S. president since, I believe, it was Harry Truman, with the exception of LBJ. What can be – what's different about this meeting with Biden, other than the fact that she will be without Prince Philip for one, and then of course someone mentioned the new grandchild that was just born yesterday? Thank you.

Heather A. Conley: So thank you. I'm not sure I'm going to be able to answer your question. I don't have a recollection of President Biden meeting with the queen in previous visits per – I really can't. So I apologize. There may be an interaction. I just – I don't – I don't recall it.

But, yeah, your wonderful, you know, lesson of the long tenure of Queen Elizabeth, and the many American presidents that she has seen, and some of the delicate messages and meetings that she's had to deliver through that incredible history, I think there is a great deal of poignancy to this because of Prince Philip's – his death, to know that this is the twilight of this particular monarchy, that some of the responsibilities are shifting to other members of the royal family. That this is – you know, these visits are particularly, I think, very, very powerful because she represents that rich history, that rich U.S.-U.K. special relationship. She has seen it in action and in peril for those – for those decades. So it is – I think it is significant.

And of course, you're absolutely right with yesterday's announcement there is an American part of the royal family and a relationship there, which is something, you know, obviously, to celebrate.

Q: Thank you.

Operator: Thank you.

And our next question comes from the line of Miya Tanaka with Kyodo News. Your line is open.

Q: Oh, hi. Thank you for doing this.

I just have a quick question on Taiwan. So what would be the significance if Taiwan is mentioned in the G-7 leaders statement? And if mentioned, it could likely be something that emphasizes the peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, but do you think that would be a message strong enough to deter China from any aggression against Taiwan? And if there is no mention on Taiwan in the leaders statement, how would China perceive that? Thank you.

Matthew P. Goodman: Well, this is Matt. I can take a crack at that.

You know, as I mentioned, I think that in the private conversations there will be discussion of the concerns around Taiwan or around China's sort of increased pressure on Taiwan, and a concern that there may be further efforts like that by China, and how the West should respond. I think particularly the presence, as I mentioned, in addition to Japan and the United States, both Indo-Pacific countries, you will also have, you know, Australia, South Korea, India present means that there is, you know, more of an opportunity for sort of a frank and honest conversation about that. Of course, the Europeans are also concerned about this and have, you know, enhanced their military, you know, friends in the region as well. But this is something that is of concern to this group, and I think they will – they will talk about it privately.

Whether they will say in their communique or other statements something publicly I think – you're alluding to the fact that in the recent statements in the bilaterals between President Biden, on the one hand with Prime Minister Suga of Japan and then President Moon of Korea, there were references along the lines of the ones you cited about, you know, concern about maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. And whether they will repeat that language in the G-7, I think, is uncertain, but I would not expect a lot more than that. And that is not going to, obviously, by itself be enough to deter Beijing from anything in particular, but the fact that the – that, again, the world's largest – seven largest advanced market democracies expressed their concern about that among other issues would be – you know, would be noted in Beijing and elsewhere. So I think it is possible that that will be a

part of the – you know, the written outcomes of the – of the summit, but I wouldn't expect a lot more than that.

Operator: OK.

And you appear to have no further questions.

Caleb Diamond: Well, colleagues, I think we can call the briefing here. Thank you again for calling in. We'll have a transcript out very shortly and you'll receive it in your inbox. Please do reach out to me and the External Relations Office here at CSIS if you'd like to speak with any of our experts further. We'd be happy to help set that up. Have a nice day.

(END)