European Union Diplomacy and the Trump Administration: multilateral strategies in a transactional world?

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European Union Diplomacy and the Trump Administration: multilateral strategies in a transactional world?

- Multilateralism and transactionalism: two worlds of diplomacy?
- The European Union: compulsive or contingent multilateralism?
- The Trump Administration: transactionalism in practice?
- Exploring the EU/Trump relationship: four cases
- Towards the future: convergence, divergence or divorce?
- Conclusions
Multilateralism and Transactionalism: two worlds of diplomacy? (1)

A Model of Multilateral Diplomacy

- Embedded institutions and rules
- Convergent values
- Diffuse reciprocity
- Trust
- Negotiated orders
- Process orientation
- Linkages, leverage and learning
- Comprehensiveness/coherence
Multilateralism and Transactionalism: two worlds of diplomacy? (2)

A Model of Transactional Diplomacy

- Centred on power/assets
- Specific reciprocity
- Suspicion
- The art of the deal
- Cost effectiveness
- Results orientation
- Piecemeal/contradictory
- Decoupling, Disruption and unpredictability
The European Union: compulsive or contingent multilateralism?

- From ‘effective multilateralism’ to ‘principled pragmatism’ in the Global Strategy
- The search for ‘strategic autonomy’ and its implications: the EU as a ‘power’ among other ‘powers’?
- Internal challenges to the liberal order: the impact of illiberal democracy?
- Challenges to the rules-based order and the EU response
- Tensions between comprehensive approach, the search for consensus/coherence and linked challenges
- From process orientation to conditionality?
- A corrosion of trust internally and externally?
- Implications for legitimacy and credibility
The Trump Administration: transactionalism in practice?

- Absence of ‘grand strategy’
- Downgrading of institutions and rules: WTO, Paris, NATO...
- Promotion of ‘sequential bilateralism’ and deal-making
- Personalisation of the diplomatic process
- Rejection of values-based diplomacy
- Targeting of allies and adversaries
- Domesticism: ‘transnational nationalism’ and the weaponizing of the US economy
- Piecemeal and contradictory diplomacy
- Erosion of trust
Exploring the EU/Trump Relationship: four cases

• The securitization of trade: ‘trade policy is security policy’ in an ‘America first’ world: but how can the EU respond?

• Iran: ‘transactional diplomacy’ vs multilateral coordination: but where’s the power?

• Syria and Afghanistan: not so much the actions but the absence of consultation and negotiation

• NATO: transactionalism as applied to alliance politics – but a boost to EU defence policy?

Can the EU trust the US in this conjuncture? But remember the long term as well as the short...
Conclusions: convergence, divergence or divorce?

- **Convergence**: long term geopolitical and geo-economic needs, multipolarity, robustness of multilateral and transnational institutions, ‘we’ve seen it all before’

- **Divergence**: secular trends to differentiation and disputes, attractions of other ‘poles’ for both the EU and the US, infusion of cost-benefit calculations in economics, politics and security

- **Divorce**: de-legitimization of institutions and rules, corrosion of domestic consensus in EU and US, emergence of new alignments and coalitions

Multilateralism and transactionalism have always coexisted in transatlantic relations: but can or should the underlying consensus on institutions and values be maintained?