



Global Views of the US

ASIA BACKGROUNDER

Indonesia: Indonesian views of the United States have declined sharply over the past year. A large majority (71%) now sees the US influence as mainly negative (up from 47% in 2006), while positive views of the US dropped from 40 to 21 percent. These dramatically negative views of the US also correspond to the broad Indonesian criticism of US foreign policy. Overwhelming majorities disapprove of the US handling of the war Iraq (85%), the Israel-Hezbollah war in Lebanon (81%), Iran's nuclear program (77%), North Korea's nuclear weapons program (73%), and the treatment of detainees at Guantanamo and other prisons (72%). A smaller majority of Indonesians (52%) also disapproves of the US handling of global warming. Not surprisingly, more than four in five (83%) in Indonesia sees the US military presence as a destabilizing force in the Middle East.

China: Views of the US in China have improved slightly over the past year, though remain negative. Positive views of US influence in the world have increased from 22 to 28 percent, while the majority having a negative view of US influence has fallen from 62 to 52 percent. However, Chinese attitudes about US foreign policy are largely negative in most areas: an overwhelming 83 percent disapproves of US handling of the war in Iraq, while a two-thirds (66%) disapproves of US actions in the Israel-Hezbollah conflict. The Chinese also have 60 percent disapproving of the US on Iran's nuclear program and 56 percent on North Korea's nuclear situation. Fifty-nine percent of respondents in China also disapprove of US treatment of detainees at Guantanamo and other prisons. Interestingly, a slight plurality (39%) of Chinese respondents approves of US handling of the issue of global warming. Most Chinese see the US military presence in the Middle East as provoking more conflict than it prevents, with 72 percent holding this view.

India: While Indians have tended to lean fairly positive toward the US in recent years, they are now largely divided, with many expressing no position. Positive views of US influence in the world have dropped sharply to 30 percent (from 54 percent in 2005 and 44 percent in 2006), while negative views are also on the rise, jumping to 28 percent (up from 17 percent in 2006). Indians are also divided on the US handling of the war in Iraq (44% approve, 41% disapprove) and the Israel-Hezbollah war (37% approve, 38% disapprove). A plurality (39%) of Indians disapproves of the US treatment of detainees at Guantanamo and other prisons. However, Indians lean toward approving the US approach to global warming (47%) and of the handling of the two nuclear situations in the region, with pluralities approving of the US on Iran (46%) and North Korea (41%). More Indians than not see the US military presence in the Middle East as a disruptive force, with 38 percent holding this view and just 20 percent believing that the US is aiding stability in the region.

Australia: Australian attitudes about the US have remained quite negative with 60 percent having a mainly negative view of US influence in the world, while just 29 percent views it as mainly positive. Views of the US on foreign policy issues tend to be even more negative; large majorities disapprove of US handling of the war in Iraq (78%), the treatment of detainees at Guantanamo (77%), global warming (68%), the Israel-Hezbollah war (66%), and the nuclear situation with Iran (63%). However, views of the US actions in the North Korean nuclear issues are more mixed, with 48 percent disapproving and 43 percent approving of US actions in this case. More than seven in ten (72%) in Australia believes the US military presence in the Middle East is provoking more conflict than it prevents.

South Korea: A majority (54%) sees the US influence in the world as mainly negative, with positive views of US influence dropping from the previous year, from 44 to 35 percent. Large majorities disapprove of US handling of the war in Iraq (78%), the Israel-Hezbollah war (70%) and detainees at Guantanamo (60%). Interestingly, South Koreans equally disapprove of the US on its approach to the Iranian nuclear program (55%) as on the North Korean nuclear program (55%). US actions on the issue of global warming are viewed somewhat positively in South Korea, as 50 percent give approval to the US on this issue, although 45 percent say they disapprove. Fully three-quarters (75%) of Koreans say that the US military presence in the Middle East provokes more conflict than it prevents.

Philippines: As has been typical of Filipinos a large majority (72%) views the US as a mainly positive influence, though that number has fallen from the very high 85 percent who held this view in 2006. Attitudes about US foreign policy appear to be largely favourable as well. Majorities approve of US handling of almost all areas, including global warming (59%), the war in Iraq (55%), the Israel-Hezbollah conflict (54%), the North Korean nuclear weapon's program (53%), and the Iranian nuclear situation (52%). Yet, Filipinos express some hesitation about the US treatment of detainees at Guantanamo and other prisons: while 36 percent approve of the US on the issue, 32 percent disapprove. Views of the effect of US military presence in the Middle East are largely divided as well, with nearly the same numbers believing that the US is provoking conflict (41%) as those who see it as a stabilizing force (39%).

For more information on this poll, please see the Questionnaire/Methodology:
http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/jan07/BBC_USRole_Jan07_quaire.pdf