



United States Embassy Singapore

27 Napier Road

Singapore 258508

<http://singapore.usembassy.gov>

AMERICAN ENGAGEMENT IN ASIA STANDS STRONG AND STEADY IN POLITICAL WINDS BY DAVID I. ADELMAN, U.S. AMBASSADOR TO SINGAPORE

The United States has a long history of highly-charged debates as part of our intensely competitive elections. Despite the rough-and-tumble of our campaigns, our national elections are followed by the unification of the American people in support of the President of the United States. Today, our democratic system will once again be on full display as Americans from every walk of life vote to decide who will lead the United States from the White House for the next four years. Our political season captures the world's attention for the impact it has beyond our borders and for the marvel that is our wide-open marketplace of ideas.

Understandably, most of the debate this year focused on the American economic recovery. But, for much of the world, and especially our friends in the Asia-Pacific region, there is a special interest in the impact the results of today's elections will have on American international relations. History shows us U.S. elections typically do not mark rapid and dramatic changes in U.S. foreign policy. While media reporting and commentary has focused on America's rebalancing toward the Asia-Pacific region over the last three years, it is important to keep in mind the many decades-long deep American engagement and cooperation here spanning Democratic and Republican administrations. There are numerous examples. Negotiations of the highly successful U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreement occurred during both the Bill Clinton and George W. Bush presidencies. Similarly, the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, which was brought to fruition with President Obama's signature last year, was initiated before he took office four years ago. The examples are not limited to trade. The move to a more flexible and sustainable American security presence in the Asia-Pacific has covered multiple American presidents from both parties.

Regardless of the outcome of today's election, Americans across the political spectrum understand that peace and prosperity in the 21st century will depend on international relations in the Asia-Pacific region, and the United States, as a Pacific power, will play a vital role. Indeed, one of the central underpinnings of American foreign policy over the next decade will be to increase our investments—diplomatic, economic, and strategic—in the Asia-Pacific region. Our commitment to do so has enjoyed bipartisan support in Washington for many years. Americans agree that our friendships in Asia grow stronger when our policies promote regional stability, open markets, free trade, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

As we engage in our mission in Singapore, we are often asked about America's perspective on China. As President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton have said many times, the United States welcomes a strong, stable, prosperous, peaceful China that plays a responsible role in world affairs. We know that China has a vital role promoting peace, security, stability, and prosperity, both regionally and globally.

Along with the rest of the international community, the United States counts on China's leadership in addressing many of our common global challenges. This constructive orientation is not subject to dramatic shifts in the political wind. Rather, it is part of a long-term commitment by the United States to a broad-based engagement in Asia.

As the United States celebrates our democracy today with the participation of millions of our citizens in a free and fair election we give honor to our founding principles which date back to 1776. No matter who leads our country from the Oval Office during the next four years, the American engagement in Asia will stand strong and steady.