

# What is the proposed “Core Five (C5)” grouping?

The **Core Five (C5)** is a **reported proposal** attributed to former US President **Donald Trump**, under which a **new elite global grouping** would be created. It would consist of **five major powers**:

- **United States**
- **China**
- **Russia**
- **India**
- **Japan**

The idea reportedly appeared in an **unpublished draft of the US National Security Strategy (NSS)**, as revealed by *Politico*. Though the White House has officially denied it, experts believe the concept reflects Trump’s strategic worldview.

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## Why was the C5 proposed?

The proposed C5 reflects a shift in **global power dynamics** and dissatisfaction with **existing Western-dominated forums** like the **G7**, which includes:

- US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan

## Key motivations behind C5:

1. **Declining dominance of Europe** in global geopolitics
2. **Rise of Asia**, particularly China and India
3. Trump’s belief in **great power politics** rather than ideological alliances
4. Preference for **direct engagement among powerful states**

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## Key Features of the Core Five (C5)

### 1. Limited, elite grouping

- Like the **G7**, but **smaller and more power-centric**

- Focuses only on **major military, economic, and demographic powers**

## 2. Regular summits

- Would meet periodically at **leader-level summits**
- Discussions would be **issue-based**, not broad development agendas

## 3. Security-focused agenda

According to *Defense One*, the **first agenda item** could be:

- **Middle East security**
- **Normalization of relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia**

This suggests a **hard-security and geopolitical focus**, rather than economic or climate cooperation.

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## How is C5 different from existing groupings?

Aspect	G7	G20	Proposed C5
Nature	Western-dominated	Broad & inclusive	Power-centric
Members	Mainly Europe + US, Japan	Developed + developing	Only major powers
Focus	Economy, democracy	Economy, development	Security & geopolitics
Europe's role	Central	Important	Excluded

## Official US Position

- The **White House has denied** the existence of any alternative or secret NSS.
- Press Secretary **Annah Kelly** stated:

“No alternative, private or secret version exists.”

However, **national security experts argue** that:

- Even if unofficial, the idea **aligns with Trump's worldview**
  - It reflects his preference for **transactional diplomacy** and **strongman politics**
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# Expert Opinions and Analysis

## Torrey Taussig (Former US National Security Council official)

- Said C5 fits Trump's **non-ideological worldview**
- Emphasizes:
  - Cooperation among **strong regional powers**
  - Acceptance of **spheres of influence**
- Notably, **Europe is excluded**, suggesting:
  - A possible **downgrading of Europe's role**
  - Implicit recognition of **Russia's influence in Europe**

## Michael Sobolik (Former Trump administration aide)

- Warned that C5 would be a **major departure** from Trump's earlier policy
- Earlier approach:
  - **Great Power Competition**, especially against China
- C5 suggests:
  - Potential **accommodation or engagement** with China instead of confrontation

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## Implications for Global Politics

### 1. Impact on Western unity

- Weakens traditional alliances like:
  - **NATO**
  - **G7**
- May marginalize Europe in global decision-making

### 2. Shift from values to power

- Less focus on:

- Democracy
- Human rights
- More focus on:
  - Military strength
  - Strategic influence

### 3. Normalization of multipolarity

- Acknowledges that global power is now **distributed**
- Moves away from **US-led liberal international order**

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## Significance for India (UPSC Angle)

### Opportunities

- Recognition of India as a **major global power**
- Direct participation in **top-level security decision-making**
- Strategic autonomy preserved (non-ideological grouping)

### Challenges

- Sitting with **China and Russia** may complicate India's interests
- Risk of being drawn into **great power rivalries**
- Possible dilution of platforms like **Quad**

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## Conclusion

The proposed **Core Five (C5)** represents a **potential restructuring of global governance**, centered on **power politics rather than shared values**. Though officially denied, the idea reflects broader trends:

- Declining Western dominance
- Rise of Asia
- Preference for **small, decisive power blocs**

For India, the C5—if ever realized—would be both an **opportunity for greater global influence** and a **test of diplomatic balancing skills**.

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### ☐☐ UPSC Ready Keywords:

- Multipolar world order
- Great power politics
- Spheres of influence
- Decline of Western dominance
- Strategic autonomy

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