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**A Snapshot of Public Views of Candidate Foreign Policy Positions and Claims on the Eve of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Presidential Debate**

On the eve of the third and final presidential debate, a survey by the Annenberg Public Policy Center reveals foreign policy vulnerabilities for each contender. Over four in ten believe that the Republican nominee would be more likely than President Barack Obama to take the country into war (Romney: 44.0%; Obama: 18.8%). A majority thinks that Obama has repeatedly apologized for America while visiting foreign countries (62.9%).

Americans are more likely to see President Obama as trustworthy and as one who shares their values than Governor Romney, but rate the candidates equally as a strong leader. The differences in perception of which is more likely to keep the country safe are within the margin of error.

“Knowing what the public believes is important because debates are more likely to reinforce existing beliefs than change them,” noted Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center. The Annenberg Public Policy Center conducted a national telephone survey of 1,177 adults 18 years of age or older from October 17, 2012 through October 21, 2012 to provide a snapshot of the public’s assessment of foreign policy positions and claims (margin of error +/- 3.9%).

In other findings: A majority of Americans know that Governor Mitt Romney has promised to increase military spending (58.9%) and that President Obama supports the Dream Act (73.6%). A majority also believes that the Obama administration has not stood up to Chinese theft of U.S. technology (56.8%). Nearly seven in ten (68.8%) believe that while Mitt Romney was in charge of its day-to-day operations, Bain Capital outsourced jobs to other countries and almost eight in ten (76.7%) believe that Mitt Romney has investments in Chinese companies. More than half (56.8%) believe on the day after the attack on the American diplomatic post in Benghazi, Libya, Barack Obama characterized the attack as an act of terror.

Below is a table of the key findings:

*I'm going to read you some statements made in the 2012 presidential campaign and then ask you how accurate you think the statement is. Please tell me if you think it is very accurate, somewhat accurate, not too accurate, or not accurate at all.*

	Accurate	Not Accurate	Don't Know	Refused
While in foreign countries, Barack Obama has repeatedly apologized for America.	62.9%	30.7%	5.9%	*
While Mitt Romney was in charge of its day-to-day operations, Bain Capital outsourced jobs to other countries.	68.8%	19.7%	11.3%	*
The Obama administration has not stood up to China regarding theft of U.S. technology.	56.8%	29.8%	12.7%	0.7%
The money saved by ending the war in Iraq and reducing the United States involvement in Afghanistan will free up money that can be invested in supporting social programs or reducing the debt.	65.3%	29.3%	4.7%	0.7%
Mitt Romney has investments in Chinese companies.	76.7%	10.9%	11.5%	0.9%
President Obama characterized the attack on the American diplomatic post in Benghazi, Libya as an act of terror the day after the attack	56.8%	35.6%	7.2%	*

\*=less than 0.5%

*Item wording is included in the responses below:*

	Obama	Romney	Both	Neither	Don't know	Refused
Which candidate has promised to increase military spending?	5.3%	58.9%	9.6%	16.4%	9.3%	0.5%
Which candidate favors branding China as a currency manipulator and imposing tariffs on Chinese goods?	12.9%	58.2%	8.9%	8.4%	11.0%	0.6%
Which candidate supports the Dream Act, which provides a path to permanent residence status for young undocumented immigrants who were brought to this country illegally as children?	73.6%	5.0%	6.2%	7.4%	7.6%	*
Thinking about the stated plans of the two candidates, which candidate's plan would be more likely to take the United States into a war?	18.8%	44.0%	10.0%	18.6%	7.2%	1.2%
Regardless of whom you support for president in 2012, which candidate do you trust to do a better job keeping the country safe?	48.9%**	41.5%**	3.5%	3.5%	2.0%	0.6%

\*=less than 0.5%

\*\*within margin of error; difference between Obama and Romney not statistically significant

*I am going to read you some phrases. For each one, please tell me how well that phrase applies to the following candidates (Barack Obama)(Mitt Romney). Please use a scale from 0 to 10, where "zero" means it does not apply at all and 10 means it applies extremely well. Of course you can use any number in between.*

Item Means are Reported in the Table

	Obama	Romney
Strong Leader	5.68	5.71
Trustworthy	5.64**	4.85**
Shares my values	5.54**	4.73**

\*\*differences are statistically significant at  $p < .01$

## **Methodology**

The third wave of the Annenberg Public Policy Center's 2012 Political Knowledge Survey was conducted by telephone between October 17 and October 21, 2012. In total, 1,177 interviews were completed in the third wave; 618 were completed with respondents in battleground states (410 by landline; 208 by cell phone) and 559 with respondents in non-battleground states (363 by landline and 196 by cell phone). Battleground states consisted of Colorado, Florida, Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Wisconsin. Interviews were completed in English and Spanish. The data were weighted separately for the battleground and non-battleground samples and then combined to reflect the proportion of the adult population in the battleground and non-battleground states. Weighting corrected for known differences in the probability of selection of respondents, and balanced to known population parameters based on the 2012 March Supplement of the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS). Weighting parameters included gender, age, race, education, Census region, and population density (based on the 2010 Decennial Census). In addition, the data were weighted to reflect the distribution of the adult population by phone status (cell phone only, landline only or dual-user), based on the CDC's 2011 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). Adjusting for the effect of weighting, the maximum margin of sampling error for the full sample is +/-3.9% at the 95% confidence level. Interviewing, weighting, and tabulation were conducted by Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS) of Media, PA.