

 House of Commons

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AUKUS

Volume 719: debated on Tuesday 6 September 2022

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Simon Fell >

(Barrow and Furness) (Con)

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6. What recent steps she has taken with Cabinet colleagues to strengthen AUKUS—the Australia, UK and US partnership. (Unique identification number 901306 (Unique identification number))

The Minister for Asia and the Middle East >

(Amanda Milling)

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Cabinet Ministers regularly meet their US and Australian counterparts to progress our landmark AUKUS partnership, including recently in the margins of the G20 and Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, and in outbound and inbound ministerial visits. Last month, I visited Australia and met Assistant Foreign Minister Watts, who reaffirmed Australia's full support for AUKUS.

Simon Fell >

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I thank my right hon. Friend for her response. I was pleased last week to welcome to Barrow the Prime Minister and the Defence Secretary, alongside the Australian Deputy Prime Minister, for the commissioning of HMS Anson, in an important sign of the strength of our AUKUS partnership. Does my right hon. Friend agree that the future requires much more close working between like-minded countries to counter authoritarian regimes, not just in the physical domain but in cyber-security and intelligence sharing too?

Amanda Milling >

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I completely agree. The Government have been clear that we must build a network of like-minded countries and flexible groupings if we are to protect our interests globally. I was really pleased when last week the Defence Secretary hosted Australian Deputy Prime Minister Marles at the commissioning ceremony for HMS Anson in my hon. Friend's constituency, demonstrating our deep defence ties, including through AUKUS.

Jim Shannon >

(Strangford) (DUP)

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The Minister's response makes clear the importance of all of us in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland working together, and we in Northern Ireland want to be part of that, contributing soldiers, sailors and airmen. Can the Minister give some indication of whether our soldiers, be it the Irish Guards or the Royal Irish Regiment, will be part of this new security policy?

Amanda Milling >[Share](#)

I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for making sure that Northern Ireland has a voice in this. I am sure that my colleagues in the FCDO and the MOD have heard his pitch.

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