



House of Commons  
Foreign Affairs Committee

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# Tilting horizons: the Integrated Review and the Indo-Pacific

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**Eighth Report of Session 2022–23**

*Report, together with formal minutes relating  
to the report*

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## Foreign Affairs Committee

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## Summary

We are living in an ever more complex and difficult world. Instead of coming together in a peaceful and prosperous “new world order”, as foreseen after the cold war ended, we are fighting for our conception of freedoms and to protect our alliances and the rules-based system that underpins global rights and norms. We are in the era of deterrence diplomacy, and it is one where our failure to act to defend and enhance that which prevents and protects could have catastrophic consequences. To face these geopolitical challenges, the Government produced an Integrated Review combining security, defence, development and foreign policy in March 2021, then, responding to what it described as a “contested and volatile world”, it published a Refresh of that review in March 2023.

Both reviews, while stressing that the UK’s primary security focus is on the Euro-Atlantic area, also allocated a high priority (labelled a “Tilt” in the Integrated Review) to the Indo-Pacific region.

We welcome this focus on a region which is of crucial importance for the UK’s prosperity and security. The geopolitical and economic centre of gravity of the world is moving steadily eastward towards the Indo-Pacific, home to half the world’s people and producing 40% of global GDP, and which is at the forefront of trade diplomacy and technological innovation.

At the same time, the Indo-Pacific region presents serious security challenges, as it is at the centre of intensifying geopolitical competition with multiple potential flashpoints.

The overall strategy to take advantage of these opportunities and meet these security challenges adopted in the Integrated Review was cooperation in a range of policy areas and on different levels with countries in the region to defend UK interests by seeking common ground on which to cooperate.

A key element—though not enunciated until the Refresh—is the UK’s policy towards the People’s Republic of China (PRC), run by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which is built on three pillars: defend against security challenges from the PRC; align with other countries to encourage the PRC to comply with its international commitments; and engage with the PRC in areas of common and global interest like climate change and global health.

We welcome the long-term prioritisation of the Indo-Pacific region, noting that the Euro-Atlantic region remains the most acute geographic focus, and encourage the Government to ensure that this policy shift is consistent, sustained and meaningful in the long term, and that we have historic commitments to the Middle East. To effect this shift, it should provide sufficient resources and explain how these will be targeted, the objectives the Government seeks to achieve, and the criteria by which it will evaluate the success of the Tilt.

At the same time, we stress that this prioritisation should not be at the expense of other world regions in which the UK has long-term interests and responsibilities.

We welcome the Government's diplomatic progress in the Indo-Pacific region following the publication of the Integrated Review, including the UK's Dialogue Partner status with ASEAN and its accession to membership of the CPTPP. We also welcome the development of alliances like AUKUS. We recommend expanding these to include appropriate partners in the region and considering UK applications to join other groupings with whom our objectives coincide, like the Quad.

We recommend broadening and deepening cooperation with countries in the region, whether initially "like-minded" or not, in building resilience so that they are better able to withstand a wide range of challenges to their security.

In examining the UK's relationship with three countries, Indonesia, Japan and Taiwan, we conclude that there is now a sound basis for further development in several crucial policy areas, and we recommend steps to be taken to make these mutually beneficial relationships even closer. However, the Government's inability to set out clearly the long-term objectives and outcomes of the Tilt risks failing to meaningfully deter the risks to UK sovereignty from a more aggressive PRC, and the opportunities of greater engagement with the Indo-Pacific.

In striving to meet security challenges in the region, our priority is the maintenance of peace and stability. Defence of national sovereignty and democratic values is in no way "escalation". Deterrence is aimed at preventing war. The past three decades have been marked by a failure of deterrence. We need to build renewed deterrence to defend the status quo and prevent wars, and not allow ourselves to be shamed or blackmailed by those seeking to undermine us into not making ourselves more resilient. Foreign policy cannot be solely in the remit of the FCDO.

The world has become more difficult, but that is no reason to retreat. The dangers we face are not grim inevitabilities, but challenges to be addressed together with our allies and other partners. Our foremost priority must be preventing conflict. That requires the creation of space for dialogue—with vocal disagreement. It means cooperation where there is no risk to our security. It means recognising that strategic competition is a natural part of our global ecosystem. But it also requires the UK to be able to set out red lines, from a position of strength, and that is only possible if the UK Government meaningfully embraces policies of resilience and deterrence.

# 1 Evolution of the Tilt

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## The geopolitical context

1. In the years following the end of the cold war, we appeared to be living in an ever more benign world. As the danger of confrontation and annihilation receded, economies were boosted by a ‘peace dividend’. Trade became freer and international investment boomed, and more and more countries acceded to institutions that make up the Rules-Based International Order (RBIO) established after World War 2. A march towards democracy began across the globe, one full of hope that closer ties would reduce conflict.

2. These trends have since been slowed or reversed. Geopolitical tensions are rising and a new, more complex, arms race has begun. World trade growth is threatened by rising protectionism as countries seek to improve their economic resilience. Major powers are seeking to undermine RBIO. Autocracies are rising and democratic institutions even in the so-called bastions of freedom are challenged by populism and social media. War is raging in Ukraine, drawing in actors globally as they take a stand against the achievement of sovereignty through violence. Meanwhile tensions are high across the Taiwan Strait, with countries across the world alert to the global impact of any outbreak of hostilities and anxious concerning any moves which would undermine the freedoms and right to self-determination of the people of Taiwan.

3. We are living in an ever more complex and difficult world. Instead of coming together in a peaceful and prosperous “new world order”, as foreseen after the cold war ended, we are fighting for our conception of freedoms, forced to take a stand to defeat the notion that sovereignty can be achieved through violence, and we are fighting to protect our competitive advantage: our alliances and the rules-based system that underpins global rights and norms.

4. We are in the era of deterrence diplomacy, and it is one where our failure to act to defend and enhance that which prevents and protects could have catastrophic consequences. We must not allow ourselves to be shamed or blackmailed by those seeking to undermine us into not making ourselves more resilient. As hostile states look for novel ways to infiltrate and undermine the UK, it becomes more important that resilience is a cross-Government endeavour. From futureproofing supply chains to nurturing our tech sector, foreign policy cannot be solely in the remit of the FCDO.

5. In striving to meet security challenges in the region, our priority is the maintenance of peace and stability, not least by cooperating with other countries in building defence and security resilience. Defence of national sovereignty and democratic values is in no way “escalation”, as is suggested by those who threaten the use of force in an attempt to coerce others to bend to their will. Deterrence is aimed at preventing war, not at ramping up violence.

6. During the cold war, nuclear weapons were used fairly effectively to deter any potential aggressor from starting a war in Europe. The past three decades, however, have been marked by a failure of deterrence, culminating in the re-invasion of Ukraine in 2022. We need to build renewed deterrence to defend the status quo and prevent an even wider war breaking out, for example between the PRC and Taiwan.

7. The world has become more difficult, but that is no reason to retreat. We can stand together against autocracies, as the alliance to help Ukraine has shown. The dangers we face are not grim inevitabilities, but challenges to be understood and addressed together with our allies and with all those who are prepared to work with us despite differences in outlook. We need to work together to build resilience so that we are prepared to meet challenges, both foreseen and unforeseen. Our foremost priority must be preventing conflict. That requires the creation of space for dialogue—with vocal disagreement. It means cooperation where there is no risk to our security. It means recognising that strategic competition is a natural part of our global eco-system. But it also requires the UK to be able to set out red lines, from a position of strength, and that is only possible if the UK Government meaningfully embraces policies of resilience and deterrence.

## The Tilt is established, then refreshed

### *The Integrated Review*

8. In response to the developing geopolitical situation and the new challenges posed to the UK, the *Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy* (the ‘Integrated Review’),<sup>1</sup> published in March 2021 and subtitled *Global Britain in a competitive age*, was intended to reconsider many aspects of the UK’s domestic and foreign policy in the light of changes since the previous review in 2015, viewing defence policy as integrated with foreign, trade and other related international policies.<sup>2</sup> Those findings of the Integrated Review that relate to the policy of ‘tilting’ to the Indo-Pacific appear in relevant sections of subsequent chapters of this report.

### *This inquiry’s scope*

9. Our Indo-Pacific Tilt inquiry was launched in September 2021 to explore the questions raised by the ‘Tilt to the Indo-Pacific’ announced in the Integrated Review. In our initial call for evidence, we asked both regional and country-specific questions about the UK’s main interests (especially threats and opportunities) in the Indo-Pacific region; its role in regional bodies; its response to China’s growing aggressiveness; the FCDO’s consequent resource priorities; and the Government’s approach to strengthening relations with Indonesia, Japan and Taiwan<sup>3</sup> in particular.

10. In response, we received 19 pieces of written evidence and held five oral evidence sessions consisting of 10 panels in total. In December 2022 we visited Taiwan, where we met the President, Premier, Foreign Minister, other government officials, Government and opposition politicians and representatives of civil society and UK business. We also have held numerous private meetings to explore the themes in this report. We are extremely grateful to all those who have contributed to this inquiry, and to the Government of Taiwan who, due to COVID-19, twice agreed for our visit to be re-scheduled.

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1 HM Government, *Global Britain in a competitive age: The Integrated Review of Defence, Development, Security and Foreign Policy*, CP403, March 2021.

2 HM Government, *Global Britain in a competitive age: The Integrated Review of Defence, Development, Security and Foreign Policy*, CP403, March 2021.

3 Foreign Affairs Committee [Foreign Affairs Committee launches inquiry into tilt to the Indo-Pacific](#) 22 July 2021.



### ***The Committee's report on updating the Integrated Review***

11. Our December 2022 report on the anticipated update to the Integrated Review, entitled *Refreshing our approach? Updating the Integrated Review*,<sup>4</sup> was broadly supportive of the Integrated Review's approach, but made recommendations for what a "Refreshed" Integrated Review (the 'Refresh') should contain. Our initial conclusion was that the Integrated Review has provided a robust and flexible framework to guide UK foreign policy decisions out to 2025. We stressed that enhancing the resilience of the UK should be central to the Refresh. Whilst we felt the Integrated Review's overall<sup>5</sup> characterisation of China as a "systemic competitor" should be upgraded to "threat", we argued that we would only support doing so if the change were accompanied by "carefully calibrated and proportionate policy change, particularly on domestic resilience and security, rather than empty rhetoric".<sup>6</sup>

12. At the same time, we said in *Refreshing our approach?* that the Government needed to be firmer and more explicit in articulating the UK's security interests when it comes to the PRC and that the current path of the CCP poses a significant threat to the UK on many different levels.<sup>7</sup> "The long-term goal," we concluded, "must be to foster greater resilience and economic diversification, so that in future the UK has more freedom to choose its actions in response to any aggression or human rights abuses by the PRC."<sup>8</sup>

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4 Foreign Affairs Committee, Fifth Report of Session 2022–23, [Refreshing our approach? Updating the Integrated Review](#), HC 882

5 In one context, but not in others, China was described in the IR as presenting a threat: "China and the UK both benefit from bilateral trade and investment, but China also presents the biggest state-based threat to the UK's economic security." HM Government, *Global Britain in a competitive age: The Integrated Review of Defence, Development, Security and Foreign Policy*, CP403, March 2021, p 62

6 Foreign Affairs Committee, Fifth Report of Session 2022–23, [Refreshing our approach? Updating the Integrated Review](#), HC 882, p 11, para 17

7 Foreign Affairs Committee, Fifth Report of Session 2022–23, [Refreshing our approach? Updating the Integrated Review](#), HC 882, p 10, para 17

8 Foreign Affairs Committee, Fifth Report of Session 2022–23, [Refreshing our approach? Updating the Integrated Review](#), HC 882, p 14, para 24

**Box 1: What is the Indo-Pacific region?**

As noted in an earlier inquiry by the House of Lords International Relations and Defence Committee (IRDC), the Integrated Review did not define the term “Indo-Pacific”, which is contested and has various definitions.<sup>9</sup>

Replying on 24 November 2022 to a question on which countries the FCDO includes in its definition of the Indo-Pacific region, the then Minister of State for Indo-Pacific, Anne-Marie Trevelyan, said:

“The Indo-Pacific Directorate-General in the FCDO has lead responsibility for relations with the following countries and territories: India and Indian Ocean (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka), North East Asia (China, Hong Kong, Japan, Mongolia, North Korea (DPRK), South Korea (RoK), Taiwan), South East Asia (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, Vietnam) and Oceania (Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu). There is close coordination with other departments leading work on neighbouring countries, especially Pakistan and Afghanistan.”

This is a list of responsibilities, not a definition, and it does not contain an explanation of the criteria for inclusion and the underlying concept. It does, however, provide an indication of geographical scope that was absent from the Integrated Review.

It should also be noted that Pitcairn Island and British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) are absent from this response, and that the UK’s commitments to its Overseas Territories in the Indo-Pacific are also important.

Source: [Question for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office UIN 88890](#), tabled on 16 November 2022, Answered by FCDO Minister Anne-Marie Trevelyan on 24 November 2022.

**The Integrated Review Refresh**

13. The Government published the Refresh subtitled *Responding to a more contested and volatile world*, in March 2023. In the Refresh, the Government recognised that the Integrated Review had anticipated some but not all the global turbulence of the previous two years and that, as a result, it had helped instigate record investment in defence and “a more active and activist posture for Britain on the world stage”. But, it continued, what could not fully have been foreseen in 2021 was the pace of geopolitical change and the extent of its impact on the UK. The Refresh, the Government concluded, would build on the approach set out in the Integrated Review, “setting out the next evolutionary step in delivering on its aims, against the backdrop of a more volatile and contested world”.<sup>10</sup>

14. In explaining its geographic priorities in the Refresh, the Government stated that the UK’s overriding priority “remains the Euro-Atlantic, which is essential to the defence of our homeland and to our prosperity as a nation”, adding that the UK “will also prioritise the Indo-Pacific, a region critical to the UK’s economy, security and our interest in an open and stable international order”.<sup>11</sup>

9 International Relations and Defence Committee, 1st Report of Session 2021–22 [The UK and China’s security and trade relationship: A strategic void](#), *HL Paper 62*, September 2021, p 18, Box 3

10 HM Government, *Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023*, [CP 811](#), March 2023, p 2

11 HM Government, *Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023*, [CP 811](#), March 2023, p 2, para 17

## The Tilt was welcome, but lacks long term clarity and outcomes

15. We welcome the focus, expressed in the Integrated Review and sustained in the Refresh, on a region which is of crucial importance for the UK's prosperity and security.

16. The geopolitical and economic centre of gravity of the world is moving steadily eastward toward the Indo-Pacific, which is already the world's growth engine, home to half the world's people and producing 40% of global GDP, with some of the fastest-growing economies, accounting for 17.5% of the UK's global trade and 10% of inward foreign direct investment (FDI).<sup>12</sup> It is at the forefront of new global trade arrangements and leads in the adoption of digital and technological innovation and standards.

17. At the same time, the Indo-Pacific region presents serious security challenges, as it is at the centre of intensifying geopolitical competition with multiple potential flashpoints resulting from unresolved territorial disputes, nuclear proliferation, climate change and terrorism. Much of world trade transits Indo-Pacific choke points.

18. The overall strategy to take advantage of these opportunities and meet these security challenges adopted in the Integrated Review was cooperation in a range of policy areas and on different levels with countries in the region to defend UK interests by seeking common ground on which to cooperate.

19. The Refresh announced the delivery of the Tilt to the Indo-Pacific, with the achievements listed as delivered being:

- Agreeing Free Trade Area (FTA) agreements with Australia, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Singapore and Vietnam.
- Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) in various policy areas signed with Indonesia, Malaysia, the Maldives, the Philippines, South Korea and Vietnam.
- Achieving Dialogue Partner status with ASEAN.
- Agreeing a five-year Plan of Action and applying to join the ASEAN Regional Forum.
- Deepening bilateral political, economic and security relations across the region.
- Successfully negotiating accession to the Comprehensive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).
- Launching a new Singapore hub for British International Investment.
- Deploying two Royal Navy Offshore Patrol Vessels supporting operations across the Indo-Pacific.
- Co-launching the Partners in the Blue Pacific initiative.
- Driving the green transition to net zero through the Climate Action for a Resilient Asia programme.<sup>13</sup>

12 HM Government, *Global Britain in a competitive age: The Integrated Review of Defence, Development, Security and Foreign Policy*, [CP403](#), March 2021, p 66

13 HM Government, *Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023*, [CP 811](#), March 2023, pp 24–25, para 20

20. While we welcome these achievements, many were already in train before the Tilt was announced in 2021. **The Indo-Pacific Tilt served to confirm an existing trend of increasing engagement with countries in the Indo-Pacific region and demonstrated the intent of Government to persist with and deepen this engagement in the long term. However, there has been no explanation of the outcomes that the Government expects from the Tilt policy. The Government’s inability to set out clearly the long-term objectives and outcomes of the Tilt, either in the form of a written strategy, or even before this Committee, risks failing to meaningfully deter the risks to UK sovereignty from a more aggressive People’s Republic of China (PRC), and to take full advantage of the opportunities of greater engagement with the Indo-Pacific.**

21. The finality implied by the statement in the Refresh that “The UK has delivered on the IR2021 ambition for a tilt”<sup>14</sup> is unhelpful. In oral evidence the Foreign Secretary told us, when asked if the Tilt has been achieved: “To one extent, the answer is yes, given the fact that we have already achieved things like AUKUS, the jet agreement with Japan, Italy and the UK, or our accession to the CPTPP. To another extent, the answer is inevitably going to be no, because it is an ongoing piece of work; it does not have a completion date or a completion point. It is about ongoing engagement with the region, hopefully for decades to come.”<sup>15</sup>

22. A more accurate description of the Tilt in the Refresh would have been that the internal structural and organisational focus had been achieved. However, in evidence we concluded that the Tilt had not been fully incorporated across all component parts of the UK’s foreign and security apparatus. There was little uplift, for example, to funding in the Indo-Pacific through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF), the UK Government’s primary conflict prevention and security tool.

**23. Therefore, we welcome the Foreign Secretary’s recognition that delivery of the Tilt’s outcomes is by no means complete, that his statement provides long-term intent, and that the Government will be keen to ensure that it is supported by a correspondingly long-term shift in resources and a clearer enunciation of the outcomes to be achieved in coming decades.**

24. In oral evidence, the Foreign Secretary took on board that “the use of the word [“tilt”] does imply a tilt to, and therefore, by definition, a tilt away ... I have never been a fan of the word ‘tilt’. It is a useful enough word, and frankly I cannot think of a better one, but it does imply a zero-sum game. That is an error, because we do not view it as a zero-sum game”.<sup>16</sup> The post-Tilt language of the Refresh may be less confusing: “the target we now have is to make this increased engagement [with the Indo-Pacific region] stronger and enduring, and a permanent pillar of the UK’s international policy.”<sup>17</sup>

25. We share the Foreign Secretary’s reservations on the Government’s terminology. The Tilt may have had the negative side-effect of eliciting a feeling of neglect in areas that appeared to have been tilted away from, like the Middle East. The relationship with the European Union was difficult at the time, but should not have been omitted in the

14 HM Government, Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023, [CP 811](#), March 2023, p 13, para x

15 [Q221](#) (James Cleverly)

16 [Q231](#) (James Cleverly)

17 HM Government, Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023, [CP 811](#), March 2023, p 22, para 17

Integrated Review; this omission was remedied in the Refresh and meaningful resolve was demonstrated in the Windsor Framework adopted in February 2023 and the visit of the Foreign Secretary to Brussels to meet EU counterparts in July.<sup>18</sup> **While we support a stronger foreign policy focus on the Indo-Pacific region, it should not be achieved at the expense of regions where we have historic and pressing commitments, in particular the Middle East.**

26. **We welcome the realistic and pragmatic response in the Refresh to recent geopolitical events and trends, in particular the primary focus on the Euro-Atlantic and the establishment of the Indo-Pacific as a permanent pillar of the UK’s international policy.**

27. The concept of “Global Britain” was central to the Integrated Review (whose title was “*Global Britain in a competitive age*”), where it represented the new post-Brexit freedom to forge relationships across the world—the basis for the Indo-Pacific tilt. The term “Global Britain” is conspicuous by its absence in the Refresh.

28. **We support the continued prioritisation of the UK’s relationship with Indo-Pacific countries and all efforts to expand trade and investment links with one of the fastest growing regions of the world, which will benefit the economies of the UK and our partners globally.** It is notable that the first two post-Brexit free trade agreements (FTAs) have been with Indo-Pacific countries: Australia and New Zealand.

29. The Refresh states that the Tilt was pursued largely through non-military instruments, such as diplomacy, trade, development, technological exchange and engagement with regional organisations, with only a modest increase in defence spending.<sup>19</sup> **This stress on the use of diplomatic instruments should continue to the extent possible, alongside effective deterrence to minimise the risk of armed conflict.**

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18 HM Government, [The Windsor Framework: A new way forward](#), CP 806, February 2023

19 HM Government, [Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023](#), CP 811, March 2023, p 7, para 4

**Box 2: Global and regional priorities**

The written evidence we received presents a wide spectrum of often contradictory advice on regional, and even global, priorities.

Asmiati Malik of Universitas Bakrie Indonesia, and the University of Bristol's Robert Yates and Scott Edwards' joint submission supports the focus on a secure and peaceful Indo-Pacific as vital to the UK's economic and security interests.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, Harry Halem and Jay Mens, respectively Research Associate and Executive Director of the Cambridge Middle East and North Africa Forum, while acknowledging that the Indo-Pacific is of vital importance to British foreign policy and grand strategy, suggest that a tilt to the Middle East is more apt for British capabilities, limiting British diplomatic and political leverage in the Indo-Pacific to managing the rivalry between India and Pakistan.<sup>21</sup> Robin Porter, an academic China specialist, dismisses the term "Indo-Pacific" as a "hollow construct", suggesting that "it does not shed any light on the aspirations or current political direction of states in the region" and that it is not "helpful in defining an approach in diplomatic, commercial or cultural terms which could usefully guide other countries in their interactions with those states".<sup>22</sup>

Walter Ladwig III, Senior Lecturer in International Relations at King's College London, advocates focusing on key subregions of greatest priority to the UK, especially the Western Indian Ocean, and not trying to engage with all of the Indo-Pacific. Britain, he says, should not invest much effort into ASEAN.<sup>23</sup> Whilst Ben Bland, Director of the Southeast Asia Program at the Lowy Institute at the time of submitting written evidence, agrees that the UK cannot hope to make a difference in all parts of such a large region, he insists that Southeast Asia is the region that is most at stake for the UK and its allies, and that the UK should make the most use of its ASEAN Dialogue Partner status. Within the region, he says, the UK should focus on Indonesia.<sup>24</sup>

LSE IDEAS, the foreign policy think tank of the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), stresses the need to respond to China's military assertiveness with a mix of collective security and deterrence arrangements<sup>25</sup> and Walter Ladwig proposes to deal with such assertiveness by joining with partners in speaking out against China's violations of international law.<sup>26</sup> Malik, Yates and Edwards instead counsel that the UK should avoid focusing primarily on "US-led interventions aimed at countering China"<sup>27</sup> and Robin Porter says the UK "should steer well clear of committing itself to any military strategy resembling containment of China"<sup>28</sup>.

**30. It is not yet clear whether the Tilt has achieved a permanent rebalancing of UK foreign policy. It will only have done so if prioritisation is maintained consistently over a long period during which relationships can be built and sustained on the basis of the original Tilt.**

31. We held an Indo-Pacific flashpoint policy simulation<sup>29</sup> in March 2022 which indicated that while the Integrated Review clearly set out the significance of the Indo-Pacific within the context of the stability of the international order, the lack of a shared understanding of specific UK interests in the region—among the UK and its allies—affected UK actions

20 Asmiati Malik, Robert Yates and Scott Edwards ([TIP0001](#)), para 1.1

21 Cambridge Middle East and North Africa Forum ([TIP0010](#)), para 4

22 Robin Porter ([TIP0004](#)), para 6

23 Walter C. Ladwig III ([TIP0008](#)), para 22

24 Ben Bland ([TIP0005](#)), paras 9,36

25 LSE IDEAS ([TIP0017](#)) paras 9–10

26 Walter Ladwig ([TIP0008](#)), para 25

27 Asmiati Malik, Robert Yates and Scott Edwards ([TIP0001](#)), para 5.1

28 Robin Porter ([TIP0004](#)), para 21

29 For details, see Annex 1.

during the crisis as well as regional perceptions of what the UK could offer. It highlighted the need for our own inquiry to seek a clearer understanding of UK interests in the Indo-Pacific and ways to communicate them domestically and internationally.<sup>30</sup>

*32. We welcome the acceptance in the Refresh of our recommendation that the Government work away from the word “tilt” to describe its policy towards the Indo-Pacific while continuing to prioritise the region. We also welcome the list of additional actions the Government proposes to take to implement its newly-described policy of making the Indo-Pacific region a permanent pillar of UK foreign policy. We recommend that these initiatives, and the overall policy shift they embody, be sustained in a consistent way over a long period and that they be clearly communicated both to our own population and to our partner countries, including those in the Indo-Pacific region.*

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30 For details, see Annex 1.



## 2 Resources

33. Policy implementation effectiveness depends, among other things, on adequate, including human, resources. The Indo-Pacific Tilt, both in its original and refreshed form, is an integrated approach, not limited to increased defence cooperation with allies in the region but also including cooperation with many countries to achieve sustainable growth, requiring experts in economic, technology as well as security and defence policies who understand and can operate effectively in local cultures.

34. We welcome the Government's doubling of the number of High Commissions across the Pacific Island countries (from three to six) over the past three years, as well as the opening in 2019 of the UK Mission to ASEAN.<sup>31</sup>

35. While the Refresh reiterated the continuing shift of UK foreign policy toward the Indo-Pacific region, it made sparse mention of the allocation of resources for this purpose. It indicated a doubling of China-facing resources and an increase in funding for the BBC World Service, but was silent on plans to boost the UK's diplomatic footprint in the Indo-Pacific, for example by adding staff to embassies or allotting extra funds for new educational programmes.

36. We are concerned that resources for dealing with the region as a whole may not yet be adequate for purpose.<sup>32</sup> Within the region, there may be a particular need for more China-facing resources. While the Refresh commits the Government to doubling these in quantitative terms,<sup>33</sup> there may also be a need to alter practices such as depending on rotated generalists who lack a China background and increasing recruitment of Mandarin speakers and China experts—not exclusively within the FCDO.<sup>34</sup>

37. The Indo-Pacific flashpoint simulation we held in 2022 highlighted how regional crises would put considerable strain on the UK's capacity to articulate and implement responses. It led us to conclude that our inquiry should seek a clearer assessment of the UK's existing institutional capacity for policy action in the Indo-Pacific across Government departments, with a view to identifying possible, desirable and necessary levels of capacity.

38. The Indo-Pacific Tilt section of the Refresh<sup>35</sup> lists future actions in nine areas of prioritised cross-government engagement, with varying expenditure implications. These areas are:

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31 UK Government website [UK boosts diplomatic ties in Australia and the Pacific as Minister Amanda Milling begins visit to the region](#) 8 August 2022.

32 The Australian Strategic Policy Institute advised that "a major risk to UK success in the Indo-Pacific is not having sufficient resources—and leadership time, attention and commitment—to engage in the region and keep UK institutions and companies focused on the directions the Tilt and AUKUS provide." Defence, Strategy and National Security at Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) ([TIP0013](#)), p 3

33 HM Government, Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023, [CP 811](#), March 2023, p 31

34 In regard to the most prominent challenge in the region, China, James Jennion, a former policy specialist with the Foreign Affairs Committee, warns that the FCDO and the Government as a whole "seriously lack China capability". He continues: "FCDO teams rely too heavily on rotated generalists who lack substantive experience and knowledge of China. The Government should ramp up its civil-service-wide drive to recruit staff with experience of living, studying and working in China. This should also include people with advanced Chinese language skills, which are strangely under-regarded in Whitehall." James Jennion ([TIP0020](#)), para 5

35 HM Government, Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023, [CP 811](#), March 2023, pp 24–25, para 20



- Further deepening the UK's partnership with Australia, including through implementation of the FTA and AUKUS.
- Building on our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with India, implementing the UK-India 2030 Roadmap, supporting India's G20 presidency, advancing negotiations on a FTA, strengthening our defence and security partnership, progressing collaboration on technology and leading the maritime security pillar of India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.
- Deepening defence cooperation with Japan through our Reciprocal Access Agreement and Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP, development of a sixth-generation fighter jet) with Italy, supporting Japan's G7 presidency, and implementing our FTA and digital partnership.
- Delivering the landmark UK-Republic of Korea Bilateral Framework and upgrading our existing FTA.
- With Singapore, delivering on our FTA, Digital Economy Agreement and Green Economy Framework, and working towards a bilateral strategic partnership.
- Delivering the UK-Indonesia Roadmap 2022–24.
- With Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, strengthening our partnerships across shared priorities in trade and investment, climate change, maritime security and wider security relationships.
- Pursuing final-phase negotiations to accede to CPTPP.
- Delivering development investment through British International Investment's new regional hub in Singapore, bolstering cooperation in science and technology, and supporting regional resilience.
- Driving the green transition to net zero, delivering the Just Energy Transition Partnerships with Indonesia and Vietnam, and supporting climate adaptation in particular through the Climate Action for a Resilient Asia programme.
- Deepening engagement with Pacific Island countries and regional resilience in the Pacific, supporting the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and as a founding member of the Partners in the Blue Pacific initiative.
- Delivering the UK-ASEAN Plan of Action and applying to join the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus and ASEAN Regional Forum.

39. The lack of information on financial provision to support the achievement of the goal of further developing the UK's activities in the Indo-Pacific in the Refresh inhibits effective scrutiny. For example, a stronger focus on cooperation with countries in the Indo-Pacific region requires that more UK diplomats have a working knowledge of relevant languages, so we would like to see how this requirement will be fulfilled, including cost estimates. Also, as noted earlier, there has not been an uplift in CSSF funding for the Indo-Pacific, again raising concerns regarding sufficiency of funding.

40. In the Refresh the Government states that it will double funding to build China capabilities across government to better understand China and allow the UK to engage confidently where it is in our interests to do so. **This is a welcome development, but no detail has been provided.**

41. The Refresh is more specific in announcing that £20 million will be provided to enable the BBC World Service to protect all 42 World Service language services, support English language broadcasting and counter disinformation. **This is also a welcome development, though World Service language coverage still needs to be restored or initiated for several Indo-Pacific countries, for example, broadcasts in Malay (the language of Malaysia, a Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) ally) and Hokkien (spoken in Singapore, Taiwan and the Fujian province of China) have been abandoned, and there have never been World Service broadcasts in two national languages of ASEAN countries which we wish to influence, Khmer (the language of Cambodia) and Lao—Cambodia and Laos are the two countries in Southeast Asia closest to China.**

42. We welcome the Government's funding of institutions that facilitate interchanges with China. This should be maintained at a level that will ensure long-term commitments to engage with the Indo-Pacific region as a permanent pillar of the UK's foreign policy are met.

43. **The continuing high priority of the Indo-Pacific in the 2023 Refresh should be matched by a commensurately expanded resource allocation to ensure delivery. While welcoming the doubling of spending on China-facing capability and the £20 million more for the BBC World Service, there needs to be more transparency on the extent and distribution of additional funding for the UK's capability for the Indo-Pacific as a whole.**

44. *The Government should now explain how its prioritisation of the Indo-Pacific region will be translated into long-term resource allocation, for example in a reallocation of FCDO budget towards the Indo-Pacific and an increase in the number of diplomatic posts in the region, and it should indicate in which countries these will be located.*

45. *The Government should enumerate extra expenditure more comprehensively and transparently than it has done in the Refresh. We welcome the doubling of funding to build China capabilities; this should be itemised in broad terms so that it is clear what kind of resources will be added. The Government should spell out what will be needed to strengthen diplomatic contact and people-to-people relationships with China, as promised in the Refresh, and how much extra this will cost.*

46. *The Government should also ensure the commensurate uplift of CSSF funding for Indo-Pacific region is put in place.*

47. *We recommend that the FCDO publish and implement a long-term, sustainable language strategy for Indo-Pacific languages, including targets for language learning, encouraging the establishment and/or expansion of language teaching in UK by developing a plan to expand existing university departments or add new departments, as appropriate, supported with additional Government funding, and adjusting diplomat posting and rotation policy to ensure optimal use of foreign languages learned.*

***48. While welcoming the extra £20 million to be spent on the BBC World Service, including for protecting the 42 foreign languages in which it broadcasts, we recommend that World Service coverage should be restored in languages which have been discontinued (Malay and Hokkien) and initiated in important Indo-Pacific languages in which the World Service has not yet broadcast (Khmer and Lao).***

### 3 Strategy for the People’s Republic of China

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49. This chapter covers the Government’s overall strategy towards the PRC, under Chinese Communist Party (CCP) rule. China’s threatening posture against Taiwan is dealt with in chapter 11.

50. The Committee recognises the activities of the Chinese Communist Party as a threat to the UK and its interests. Increased assertiveness is inherent within competition between nations, however the behaviour of the Chinese Communist Party is currently characterised by increased aggression towards the UK.

51. The Government’s China strategy was loosely implied in a paragraph in the Integrated Review which talked of adapting to “China’s growing impact on many aspects of our lives”, but was not spelled out clearly.<sup>36</sup> A House of Lords International Relations and Defence Committee inquiry found in September 2021 that there was a “strategic void” in the UK’s policy for trade and security with China.<sup>37</sup> James Jennion, a foreign policy expert, argued in 2021 that the Government had “not articulated a coherent China strategy” and that the “tension between the economic benefits of engagement with China and the Government’s desire for the UK to be a ‘force for good’” had led to “a muddled approach to China” exemplified by the “half-hearted sanctions announced in March 2021” over Xinjiang, when “nobody of real seniority was held accountable”. This “fundamentally self-contradictory approach to China”, he concludes, “has led to a Department—and Government—which is attempting to look and work in opposite directions.”<sup>38</sup>

52. The FCDO subsequently states that it has, in consultation with other departments, developed a China strategy that the then Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, in her evidence to us on 28 June 2022, said was not publicly available.<sup>39</sup> Concerningly, it is not even available to senior Ministers in other Government departments, nor more widely within Government, we understand, due to the security classification attached to it. The Government should revisit this to ensure that all relevant Government Ministers have been read-in, otherwise cross-Government implementation will be incoherent, as is too often demonstrated. As we have not had access to the strategy, or any briefing on it, we cannot judge whether the Government’s strategy is in any way effective or well designed.

53. While it is understandable that the Government does not publish a complete policy towards the PRC because awareness by the CCP of some of its military or trade competitor strategies would undermine the effectiveness of the strategy, the failure to outline clear foreign policy, let alone a cross-Government stance towards China, makes it difficult for that strategy to be complied with by both state and non-state actors, including civil servants, academics and businesses. Given the publication by Germany of a China strategy, it is evidently possible for the UK Government to publish a public, unclassified, version which would give the public and private sectors the guidance they are seeking. We heard from UK universities in another inquiry by this Committee that they need more

36 HM Government, *Global Britain in a competitive age: The Integrated Review of Defence, Development, Security and Foreign Policy*, CP403, March 2021, p 22

37 International Relations and Defence Committee, 1st Report of Session 2021–22 [The UK and China’s security and trade relationship: A strategic void](#), HL Paper 62, September 2021.

38 James Jennion ([TIP0020](#)), para 7

39 [Q132](#) (Liz Truss)

clarity on China policy so that they can ensure security of joint academic research with China, whilst educational institutions should see it as their responsibility to pursue human rights compliant and security aware partnerships; sadly it appears this is unlikely without Government leadership.<sup>40 41</sup> Concern over a “lack of consistent and coherent policy on China” that was “creating uncertainty for the business community” was expressed by a representative of the UK business sector in the House of Lords International Relations and Defence Committee inquiry into the UK and China’s security and trade relationship.<sup>42</sup>

54. In the absence of legal restraint and/or FCDO advice in the form of such a strategy document, individuals or business entities may engage unwittingly in activities which are contrary to the aims of the China strategy, or at worse knowingly engage in partnerships claiming in this vacuum to be able to plead ignorance. We do however welcome the creation of the new Investment Security Unit created for businesses to obtain security advice from the Government regarding potential partnerships, funding streams and activities.

55. The Refresh provides a facile answer to some extent by including a two-page section on the UK’s policy towards China that consists of protecting the UK and its peoples against threats from the CCP; aligning with other countries to influence China’s actions in a favourable direction; and engaging with China on framework issues such as climate change and global health.<sup>43</sup> It remains to be seen to what extent those who have been clamouring for the UK to publish a China policy—so they can know how to comply with it—will be satisfied by this. The current vacuum around the acceptable parameters for engagement with the PRC, and what partnerships or business ventures constitute a risk to critical national infrastructure or national security, gives those with hostile and malign motives, and profiteers a get out of jail free card and increased risk to UK PLC.

56. Immediately before we completed this report, the Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) published its report on China. The ISC concluded that the greatest risk to the UK is China’s ambition to become a technological and economic superpower, on which other countries are reliant.<sup>44</sup>

57. We support many of the conclusions and recommendations in the ISC report. In particular, we concur with the ISC’s overall assessment: “Tackling the threats posed by China requires the UK to have a clear strategy on China, which is forward thinking, joined up and utilises a ‘whole-of-government’ approach. Work to develop such a strategy may now be in train, but there is still a long way to go.”<sup>45</sup>

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40 Professor Sir Anthony Finkelstein, President of City, University of London said that there were some areas of support from Government where improvements could well be made. “ Clearly, one area of importance is clarity on China policy. We need a UK China policy.” [Q33](#) (Sir Anthony Finkelstein).

41 Alan Mackay, Deputy Vice-Principal International and Director of Edinburgh Global at the University of Edinburgh concurred with the suggestion that what is needed is “dynamic, coherent, brighter red lines”. [Q39](#) (Alan Mackay)

42 Fang Wenjian, Chairman of the China Chamber of Commerce in the UK, and General Manager of Bank of China in London, said: “A lack of consistent and coherent policy on China...is creating uncertainty for the business community.” House of Lords International Relations and Defence Committee 1st Report of Session 2021–22 International Relations and Defence Committee, 1st Report of Session 2021–22 [The UK and China’s security and trade relationship: A strategic void](#), *HL Paper 62*, September 2021, p 21, para 56

43 HM Government, Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023, [CP 811](#), March 2023, pp 30–31

44 Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament, China, [HC 1605](#), 13 July 2023, para 1

45 Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament, China, [HC 1605](#), 13 July 2023, p 54 Conclusion R

58. We also agree that the Government must “adopt a longer-term planning cycle with regards to the future security of the UK if it is to face Chinese ambitions, which are not reset every political cycle.”<sup>46</sup> This means “adopting cross-government policies which may well take years to stand up, and require multi-year spending commitments.”<sup>47</sup> This will probably require cross-party agreement. “For a long-term strategy on China—thinking ten, fifteen, twenty years ahead,” the ISC concludes, “the Government needs to plan for it and commit to it now: the UK is severely handicapped by the short-termist approach currently being taken.”<sup>48</sup>

59. *The Government should urgently publish an unclassified version of its China Strategy to ensure cross-Government coherence and also publish sector-specific guidance to support, in particular, industries of critical national importance, national security, or data-intensive industries. It must also ensure all relevant Ministers have been briefed on the higher classification version.*

## Responding to Chinese Communist Party assertiveness

60. China’s leaders of all political persuasions have sought to re-establish their country’s wealth and power since the late nineteenth century. What is now called the “China dream”, as the chairman of the People’s Republic of China, Xi Jinping, terms it,<sup>49</sup> has become a possibility after 45 years of economic growth resulting from Deng Xiaoping’s policy of opening and reform. Having previously followed Deng’s advice to “hide your capacity, bide your time”,<sup>50</sup> the CCP has now adopted a more assertive and aggressive approach, challenging the Rules-Based International Order and projecting its military power into the South China Sea, where its territorial claims—inherited from the predecessor government of Chiang Kai-shek—have for many years clashed with those of neighbouring countries.<sup>51</sup>

61. Although the PRC has never controlled Taiwan, and indeed historically the CCP has rejected the idea of ownership, the CCP has, since its 1949 victory in the 1946–1949 civil war, claimed it as an integral part of China and has in recent years specifically constructed narratives around its importance to Xi Jinping’s “great rejuvenation” of China. There is now an explicit effort to coerce Taiwan, or to take it by force, in defiance of the self-determination of the people of Taiwan, to create an additional province of the PRC. As part of its efforts to undermine the success of Taiwan, and its independent Government, the CCP mounts cyber attacks against Taiwan daily, intending to weaken the resolve of its people and sow division between Taiwan and countries that support its democracy and right to self-determination. It should be noted that during our visit to Taiwan, with the

46 Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament, China, [HC 1605](#), 13 July 2023, para 17

47 Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament, China, [HC 1605](#), 13 July 2023, para 17

48 Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament, China, [HC 1605](#), 13 July 2023, para 17

49 Xi Jinping [Address to the First Session of the 12th National People’s Congress](#) 17 March 2013.

50 From the “24-character strategy” reliably attributed to Deng in the early 1990s: “Observe calmly; secure our position; cope with affairs calmly; hide our capacities and bide our time; be good at maintaining a low profile; and never claim leadership.” Cited in Paul J. Bolt and Adam K. Gray [China’s National Security Strategy](#) US Air Force Institute for National Security Strategy, 2007.

51 The Council on Geostrategy, strongly supporting the Integrated Review’s characterisation of China as a “systemic competitor”, says that while the CCP has always had a hierarchical worldview, seeing itself as central to China’s success and China as central to the Eastern Hemisphere, “it now has the material power to enforce its writ beyond China’s shores”. The PRC has shown that it is prepared to use its growing economic and military power to revise the geopolitical status quo, as can be seen by “the way it has trampled on neighbouring countries’ sovereignty and torn up agreements it previously ratified when they no longer suit its interests”, as in the South China Sea. Council on Geostrategy ([TIP0015](#)), para 8



exception of a handful of interlocutors, all those we engaged with wished to protect the status quo, not officially declaring independence, but most certainly not re-joining China as a province. The desire not to live under CCP rule was repeatedly expressed from both sides of the political spectrum.

62. Despite protestations that it is not, China is seeking to project its power worldwide by exerting pressure, economic as well as diplomatic, on countries to recognise its sovereignty over Taiwan. The CCP requires countries to adhere to its “One China” policy and opposes what it calls the “two Chinas” or “one China, one Taiwan” policy. The UK’s official policy is to “acknowledge” China’s “One China” policy, without declaring adherence to it.<sup>52</sup>

63. The PRC is also seeking to extend its power to other countries with the explicit use of transnational repression as a form of foreign policy, for example by sanctioning British Members of Parliament, placing bounties on those seeking refuge from the CCP and blackmailing expatriate dissidents to return home.<sup>53</sup> A particularly egregious and blatant instance is the passing of the Hong Kong National Security Law in Beijing in 2020; the remit of this law is global, criminalising debate or comment about Hong Kong by anyone, anywhere,<sup>54</sup> and is now being applied to former Hong Kong legislators who have fled overseas.<sup>55</sup> The CCP thus seeks to silence criticism of its human rights abuses, and impose its foreign policy and Xi Jinping thought, beyond its own borders. This is a challenge to the functioning of democracies globally.<sup>56</sup>

64. We also believe that the activities above such as the attack on demonstrators outside the Chinese consulate in Manchester are not isolated incidents, but rather a sustained attempt by the PRC to intimidate expats and dissidents from China and Hong Kong living abroad into refraining from holding or expressing certain views or beliefs. The CCP is working to silence anyone willing to voice criticism against its most egregious acts. **In addition to reactively addressing such incidents as they occur, the UK must work with allies to proactively communicate to the PRC that such a policy is unacceptable. The Government should work to raise this issue at international fora, and in conversations when engaging directly with the Chinese Government.**

65. *The Government must recognise repeated attacks on Hong Kong dissidents as part of wider PRC policy of repression, and proactively challenge this behaviour and communicate the unacceptability of such a policy directly with representatives of the PRC.*

66. China poses a military challenge to the UK in that action to materialise its territorial claims would disrupt vital sea routes connecting us to our major trading partners in

52 The then FCO told us during an earlier inquiry: “Under the terms of a 1972 agreement with China, HMG acknowledged the position of the government of the PRC that Taiwan was a province of China and recognised the PRC Government as the sole legal government of China.” House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee Seventh Report of Session 2005–06, [East Asia](#), July 2006, para 174

53 According to a Spanish NGO, Safeguard Defenders, 230,000 Chinese people have been persuaded involuntarily to return to China. [Safeguard Defenders website](#) (accessed on 5 July 2022)

54 [The Law of the People’s Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region](#) [full text official English version] (accessed on 5 July 2022)

55 On 3 July 2023, the Hong Kong police announced a HK\$1 million (£100,500) bounty for eight Hong Kongers self-exiled abroad who are charged with secession and colluding with foreign forces under the National Security Law. [US and UK condemn Hong Kong bounties for exiled political dissidents](#), Financial Times, 5 July 2023.

56 The Australian Strategic Policy Institute describes China as presenting “a systemic challenge to open societies and democratic states whether in Europe, North America or the Indo-Pacific or elsewhere”. Defence, Strategy and National Security at Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) ([TIP0013](#)), p 4

the region and probably freeze access to key technologies such as semiconductors. The economic impact of this would be substantial globally, but not as significant as the resulting cost of the sanctions that would need to be enacted against the PRC in response to this hostile action. The UK is also working to help democratic allies regarded as actual or potential adversaries by China. These include Japan and South Korea, as well as countries in Southeast Asia whose maritime areas are claimed by the PRC and countries like India with continuing unresolved territorial disputes with China. Japan is at particular risk not only because of China's claim to its Senkaku Islands but because of its resolute support for Taiwan and because of its historical invasion of China, and therefore its ready availability as a target for the CCP to inveigh against to divert public opinion away from domestic problems. In confronting an aggressive China, the UK should work with allies to strengthen deterrence that can discourage China from aggression and encourage it to fulfil its international obligations.<sup>57, 58, 59</sup> When China seeks directly to influence UK Government policy by applying economic coercion and diplomatic pressure, the UK needs to resist and insist on adhering to its values; such resistance will make it a credible partner for countries in the Indo-Pacific.<sup>60</sup>

67. The consensus among our witnesses strongly supported the UK taking a strong stance alongside regional allies and other partners in building strong deterrence against Chinese aggression, with only one contrary view.<sup>61</sup>

## China and transnational repression

68. The Government's policy towards human rights in China—crucially including human rights in Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet—cannot be separated from its defence of human rights at home, as the PRC projects its totalitarianism abroad. The Government's refusal to take meaningful action after the Chinese Consul-General in Manchester and his colleagues attacked Hong Kong protesters—hospitalising at least one—in 2022 signalled an unwillingness to take strong action to deter such instances of transnational repression. We believe that the Chinese officials, including the Consul-General in Manchester, who took part in that attack, should have been declared *personae non gratae* and expelled from

57 LSE IDEAS, the LSE's foreign policy think tank, details the collective security arrangements needed to manage China's ambitions over places like Taiwan and recommends military modernisation to deter China, with the UK considering how best it can contribute to the US' more explicit deterrence posture. LSE IDEAS (TIP0017), pp 14,17

58 Wyn Rees, Professor of International Security, and Peter Magill, PhD student, both at the University of Nottingham, conclude that the way for the UK to deter aggression is to "work with allies in the region to help to construct security architecture that will deter a rising China from using its muscle against its neighbours" Wyn Rees and Peter Magill (TIP0011), para 13

59 Gray Sergeant, a Research Fellow at the Henry Jackson Society's Asia Studies Centre and Chair of Hong Kong Watch, recommends that the Royal Navy should continue freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea and cooperation with the Japanese military "as both signal opposition to PRC revisionism", and the UK should work with allies to prepare economic sanctions against China in the event of an invasion or economic blockade of Taiwan. Gray Sergeant (TIP0003), paras 12–13

60 While recognising China's "growing military assertiveness", Walter Ladwig focuses on resisting economic coercion by China, advising that if the UK wishes to be a more consequential actor in the Indo-Pacific, stand up for its values and bolster a rules-based order, it will need to "be prepared to weather Chinese pressure" Walter C. Ladwig III (TIP0008), para 26

61 The exception is Robin Porter, an academic China specialist, who says that most Indo-Pacific alliances are led by the United States and that their objectives are predicated on the assumption that China must be contained, a strategy pursued by the United States from the 1950s to the 1970s, but unsupported by the UK, which sustained a limited trade with the PRC. "It is not, and never has been", he concludes, "in the UK's interests to have a hostile relationship with China." While the UK may support some of the goals of the US Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy, it should "steer well clear of committing itself to any military strategy resembling containment of China" Robin Porter (TIP0004), para 19



the country.<sup>62</sup> Equally the decision not to call in the Chinese Ambassador immediately following the placing of bounties on three individuals seeking refuge in the UK once again demonstrated a lack of resolve to uphold human rights and take a stand against explicit efforts at transnational repression on UK shores.

69. *We welcome the Government's China policy statement in general terms in the Refresh. However, this policy now needs to be fleshed out so that practitioners such as academics and businesspeople can be fully aware of the limits within which they can operate with and in China. The FCDO should explain the rationale and method by which it intends to separate issues over which there is contention with China from those on which it seeks close cooperation with China, especially in areas such as trade and educational links, where the line of demarcation is not always clear.*

70. *In the absence of a publicly available, and practical, strategy for business, academia, civil society and others to adhere to, it is vital that the Government updates existing legislation and guidance in an urgent and clear manner so that organisations can understand the parameters within which they should be operating. The Procurement Bill was a good example of important legislation to give businesses a clear steer on what the Government perceives as acceptable and unacceptable procurement practices, but this needs to be undertaken in an urgent and structured manner.*

71. *The Government should have had a policy of zero tolerance of transnational repression. It is unacceptable that this has not been the position up to now. It should now announce a clear policy of zero tolerance of transnational repression and be prepared to expel any foreign diplomats who engage in intimidation of, or physical attacks on, British Citizens or those who seek refuge on UK shores. If the Government is unwilling to defend its own people at home, and those seeking safety, it will lose all credibility at claims or attempts to deter autocracies and aggression abroad. The Government should be prepared to assert that defence is not an escalation.*

## Building supply-chain resilience

72. Autocrats are seeking to neuter our ability to act on the world stage through the weaponisation of supply chains. Failure to diversify our supply chains, whether it be near-shoring or friend-shoring, or recognise the importance of critical components such as cellular IOT modules or critical minerals, is leaving us weakened at home, and abroad.

73. **We must recognise that all pillars of society are under attack from autocracies and that our resulting defence against them must be a defence of all of our society.** The need for supply-chain resilience became of particular concern during the COVID-19 pandemic, when supply chains were disrupted because of travel restrictions, the suspension of many activities at ports and airports globally, and shortages of transport workers. After these temporary problems were overcome, increasing geopolitical tensions resulted in an awareness of CCP weaponisation of supply chains, highlighting even more strongly the risks of the UK's and other countries' dependence on critical imports. The "chip famine" of 2020–2022 in particular demonstrated the impact of this overdependence on a single source for components that are vital for national defence as well as consumer products.

62 The Foreign Secretary did not agree. He told the Committee that "the Chinese officials involved in that incident left the country. None of our officials was expelled from China. I regard that as a diplomatic win." [Q276](#) (James Cleverly)

As we learned from diverse interlocutors during our visit to Taiwan, semiconductor supply is excessively concentrated in Taiwan, with Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) providing the majority of advanced semiconductor chips globally.<sup>63</sup> Even without the threat of a Chinese blockade, cyber attack or invasion, this dependence is highly risky: in summer 2021, Taiwanese chip manufacturing was hit by a drought that limited the supply of ultrapure water for cleaning wafers.<sup>64</sup>

74. Our discussions with government and business in Taiwan indicated to us that the UK can play an important role in deepening the collaborations in trade and talent as well as the technology development of the two sides in supply chain resilience and particularly on semiconductor supply chain development, though this cooperation should include much else, including electric vehicles, battery storage, advanced materials for future energy production and AI.<sup>65</sup>

75. We examine this situation further and will provide recommendations for diversifying our critical minerals supply chain in our Critical Minerals inquiry.

76. The UK also faces the challenge of avoiding dependence on China for critical technologies in the way that happened with Huawei and 5G. The technological competition with China is deepening. China has made no secret of its intent to master critical technologies such as AI and quantum computing. We should work with our allies and regional partners to better protect our technological edge where it still exists, to uphold international rules and standards, and ensure that we do not become dependent on China for future critical technologies.<sup>66</sup>

77. Concerned about the risk that disruption across the Taiwan Strait would have “a catastrophic effect on the global economy”, the Government is seeking to diversify supply chains.<sup>67</sup> While the Foreign Secretary told us that doing a whole-economy audit on supply chains is an “absolutely mammoth task” that is not necessary,<sup>68</sup> it appears that the UK has “strategic dependency” on China in fewer areas than the other four Five Eyes members.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless, the Government, while recognising that “credibly we are not going to extract China from our, or indeed anyone else’s, supply chains”, sees the need for “the safety that comes from a blended portfolio”<sup>70</sup> and is taking action, in concert with others in the international community, to address supply-chain diversification, in particular with regard to high-end semiconductors.<sup>71</sup>

78. This approach reflects the more nuanced approach taken by the G7 at their summit in Hiroshima in May 2023, where the final communique proclaimed that the countries would coordinate their “approach to economic resilience and economic security that is based on diversifying and deepening partnerships and de-risking, not de-coupling.”<sup>72</sup> The

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63 [Q66](#) (Jason Hsu)

64 Eamon Barrett, [Taiwan’s drought is exposing just how much water chipmakers like TSMC use \(and reuse\)](#), Fortune, 12 June 2021.

65 This was reinforced by oral evidence from Jason Hsu, a former Taiwan MP and tech entrepreneur. [Q66](#) (Jason Hsu)

66 LSE Ideas ([TIP0017](#)), para 19

67 [Q238](#) (James Cleverly)

68 “If an avalanche is coming, you do not need to count the snowflakes.” [Q238](#) (James Cleverly).

69 [Q238](#) (James Cleverly)

70 [Q235](#) (James Cleverly)

71 [Q239](#) (James Cleverly)

72 The White House [G7 Hiroshima Leaders’ Communique](#) (accessed on 11 July 2023)

aim is not “a completely binary decision”, but to capitalise on the benefits of using various providers across the world while making sure that this is done in a way that is responsible from a security perspective.<sup>73</sup>

79. There is also a need to be aware of other forms of reliance on China that may be less obvious, such as the acquisition by China of ports and naval bases in the Indian Ocean. While these may be seen initially as natural extensions of China’s growing economic power, for example the base in Djibouti may initially be used for PLA Naval vessels fighting piracy and oceanographic survey ships surveying for underwater minerals, it is likely that survey vessels will also be used for military purposes, including preparation for submarine and underwater drone deployment.<sup>74</sup> Such ports and bases may be used to establish an expanding presence of the PLA Navy, the world’s largest navy in terms of the number of ships, across the world’s oceans.<sup>75</sup> To meet the potential challenge of a PLA Naval choke hold on the UK’s seaborne trade, we need to discourage countries from providing bases for the PLA Navy to the extent possible while developing alternative maritime routes and strengthening the Royal Navy’s capabilities, in coordination with our allies, to deal with any threats to our sea routes.

80. Another dimension of resilience is resilience against data exfiltration. The CCP is designing and subsidising the creation of technologies which exfiltrate the data of users globally. It is only through the acquisition of significant levels of data that they can further develop technologies and tools to build a tech-totalitarian state. The PRC has also developed its information operations capability, including both influence operations and theft of data and technology. Influence operations have spread from within China and its immediate environs to other countries in the Indo-Pacific region and elsewhere in the world. The same infrastructure used initially for China’s near-abroad can be used to target countries like the UK. At the same time, China may be building big data sets to help improve its AI capabilities, and the UK, like every other country, is vulnerable to this. Such operations are strategic and long-term, tied directly to initiatives such as “Made in China 2025”,<sup>76</sup> which, though ostensibly is designed to stimulate domestic innovation, has a substantial element of international intellectual property theft.

81. The Refresh correctly identified that the UK needs to further strengthen national security protections in areas where the actions of the PRC pose a threat to our people, prosperity and security. It also notes that where there are attempts by the PRC to coerce or create dependencies, the UK will work to push back against them. This position was framed primarily through a focus on bolstering the UK’s economic security, and the Government wants to step up work to protect the capabilities, supply chains and technologies of strategic importance to the UK and allies. Examples of this included the commitment to publish a new strategy on supply chains; deliver the Critical Minerals Strategy and develop a Semiconductor Strategy that improves the resilience of semiconductor supply chains at home and overseas.

82. Underpinning this ambition is the idea that strategic vulnerabilities in the above areas leave the UK exposed to coercion and global crises. The risk to the UK is one of dependence on technologies and infrastructure designed and created by authoritarian states. The

73 [Q9](#) (Dr Collier)

74 [China’s Emerging Subsurface Presence in the Indian Ocean](#) The Diplomat, 3 December 2022.

75 Andrew Tate, [China now has the world’s largest navy as Beijing advances towards goal of a ‘world-class military’ by 2049, says US DoD](#) Janes, 2 September 2020.

76 [Q7](#) (Dr Collier) [Q8](#) (Dr Collier)

National Cyber Security Centre's (NCSC) Annual Review 2022 outlined the risk China poses in this area: "It is clear that China is seeking to supplant the originating, founding principles that underpin today's technologies and implant their authoritarian traits of surveillance and control into tomorrow's". The NSCS also concluded that technological dependency undermines a country's ability to project its norms and values: "As China extends the use and influence of its technology, via the Digital Silk Road initiative, third-party countries dependent on Beijing's support for their digital infrastructure are arguably more likely to support them in international institutions, such as the UN or WTO."<sup>77</sup>

83. The Australian Strategic Policy Institute's Critical Technology Tracker identifies that China's global lead extends to 37 out of 44 technologies, covering a range of crucial technology fields spanning defence, space, robotics, energy, the environment, biotechnology, artificial intelligence (AI), advanced materials and key quantum technology areas. Given the systemic threat posed by dependence, the challenge for the UK is twofold—to invest in the capabilities that generate domestic strategic advantage, and urgently identify critical areas that are most at risk in terms of technology, infrastructure, or component dependence on China and implement mitigation strategies.

84. The Government has made some progress in identifying strategic dependencies in critical areas, but the approach appears disjointed. The National Protective Security Authority identifies 13 national infrastructure sectors but specifies that not everything within a national infrastructure sector is judged to be critical. This room for variance creates the potential for confusion in policymaking. For example, in the Government's National Semiconductor Strategy command paper, healthcare is referred to as both being contiguous with, and as part of, critical national infrastructure in varying parts of the document. In contrast, the United States Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency outlines 16 critical infrastructure sectors, underpinned by Presidential Policy Directive/PPD-21, which advances a national unity of effort to strengthen and maintain secure, functioning and resilient critical infrastructure. The UK would benefit from a centralised definition of critical national infrastructure to inform the work of Government departments and agencies.

85. Additionally, attempts by the Government to identify and protect critical national infrastructure and economic sectors where there is a national security risk are weakened by a lack of consistency in the Government's approach. For instance, the 2021 National Security and Investment Act details 17 sensitive areas of the economy as 'notifiable acquisitions', rightly allowing the government to scrutinise acquisitions that could harm the UK's national security. There was no similar framework outlined in the Government's Public Procurement Bill currently in parliament, despite the threat posed by the Chinese Communist Party embedding technologies into the UK public sector. The Government should look to harmonise procurement security and acquisition security across economic sectors and critical national infrastructure to minimise strategic vulnerabilities.

**86. *The Government should intensify its efforts to discourage the use of superficially harmless technologies (e.g. Hikvision surveillance cameras) which are capable of being used for remote data harvesting. The Government should also launch a national discussion around data release, and data exfiltration, so that the public are better equipped to make responsible decisions about their own data.***

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77 National Cybersecurity Center, [NCSC Annual Review 2022](#), (accessed on 8 July 2023)

87. *The Government recognises the threat that the Chinese Communist Party could use economic coercion to influence UK decision making by targeting strategically critical sectors. The Government has not taken adequate action to tackle this threat. It must work to identify which technologies, infrastructure and components the UK is most dependent on China for, and plan to mitigate dependencies. Priority should be afforded to areas where such technologies are embedded in Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) and the Internet of Things. The Government should create a strategic dependency risk assessment of technologies, infrastructure and components embedded in Critical National Infrastructure.*

88. *Cross-government and external agency coordination in mitigating the risk of technological dependence on China is uneven and disjointed. The Government should create a central CNI list to improve coordination and clarify areas of priority. With the technology sector now dominated by a few key players, we are now over-reliant on Chinese technology. This is the direct result of deliberate, carefully directed and well-coordinated CCP policy to create dependence. We cannot overcome this dependence without an equally well-coordinated resilience strategy.*



## 4 Alliances and partnerships

89. We welcome the Refresh’s more nuanced foreign policy approach, moving away from the bipolar competition between democracies and authoritarian states that was the main focus of the Integrated Review and towards a tripartite distinction between “like-minded” democratic allies; partners who may share some but not all of our values and prefer neutrality to alliance; and countries, often with autocratic regimes, with whom we compete to uphold the rules-based system. The middle-ground partners are a particular priority: the UK can find common ground to cooperate on capacity building despite differences on values and foreign policy stances, and we recognise the work of the current Foreign Secretary to increase engagement with these partners.

90. In the Integrated Review, the Government promised to work with existing multilateral structures such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), in which the UK became a Dialogue Partner soon after the Integrated Review was published, and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), which the UK applied to join just before the publication of the Integrated Review and joined in March 2023.

91. Neither the Integrated Review nor the Refresh mentions the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), the world’s largest trade bloc, which, though China-dominated, includes the UK’s allies in the Indo-Pacific, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. (The UK is a founding member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), another Chinese initiative). The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF, launched by the US in 2022) was not mentioned in the Integrated Review because it was formed after publication; however, it is also not mentioned in the Refresh. **These are major omissions. The Government should explain its stance towards these bodies, even if it is, as the Foreign Secretary has indicated, too early to decide on applying to join them.**

92. *The Government should publish, by December 2023, an assessment of progress made to date in the development of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), for example to what extent it might serve UK interests and objectives in the Indo-Pacific and how it interacts with other multilateral initiatives such as the CPTPP and the G7’s Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment. At the same time, the Government should publish an assessment of the role of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in the Indo-Pacific with a view to considering seeking to join it, including an evaluation of its effect on UK interests in the region, an independent estimate of its potential to increase trade and incomes in the Indo-Pacific, and an assessment of its advantages and disadvantages, particularly vis-à-vis the CPTPP. It is our view that to compete with the PRC’s efforts to create mirror or standalone economic organisations, the UK can—but only when it is strictly necessary—play a role through participation, to prevent these organisations overly creating economic reliance on the PRC and its approach to international standards.*

93. While the Integrated Review draws attention to the Commonwealth’s global role, it makes scant mention of it in the context of the Indo-Pacific tilt, merely mentioning it as the basis for cultural links with India. It is important not to ignore the important potential role of an organisation in which the UK is a major player with 19 members in the Indo-Pacific region (Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Fiji, India, Kiribati, Malaysia, the Maldives, Nauru, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Singapore,

Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu). The UK already has defence cooperation with several of these, and there are ready opportunities in many of them to extend the UK's soft power, building on historical links and common values, and to build on existing arrangements for common working and burden sharing in security and defence, including in areas such as cyber security and maritime policing. ***The Government should explore and exploit opportunities for further developing of people-to-people and defence/security links with Commonwealth countries in the Indo-Pacific region, based on historical ties and shared values.***

94. The Integrated Review mentioned defence and security cooperation on maritime security, enhancing the UK's engagement and exercising with its partners in the Five-Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA), and increasing the UK's engagement with regional security groupings, but these were not further specified. The Integrated Review also did not mention then-existing groupings such as the Indo-Pacific Quadrilateral Dialogue (The Quad, which was revived in 2017) and the Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy (FOIP) initiated by the US government in 2017. AUKUS was formed after the IR was published.

### Quadrilateral Security Dialogue

95. While stressing the importance of AUKUS, the Refresh makes no mention of the Quad established in 2007 and renewed since 2017 between Australia, India, Japan and the United States. We heard differing opinions from witnesses on whether the UK should apply to join the Quad, with some strongly supporting UK membership,<sup>78</sup> others suggesting that it is too early to consider this now<sup>79</sup> and one group against the proposal altogether.<sup>80</sup> While understanding the reservations, ***we see advantage in working with the Quad to develop a coordinated strategy covering the whole Indo-Pacific maritime area, and applying to join the Quad at such time as the existing members feel is appropriate.***

96. ***Given the strength of our bilateral defence relationships with Quad members and the correlation between the UK's and Quad's objectives, the UK should seek to join the Quad.***

### Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)

97. A major improvement in the Refresh is that it introduces the UK's own nuanced and multifaceted definition of a free and open Indo-Pacific (FOIP), adopted in support of the vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific shared by many regional partners following its first enunciation by then Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007.<sup>81</sup> ***A Free and Open Indo-Pacific is the right basis for cooperation between widely differing countries in the region on common policy areas, as it establishes basic principles on which like-minded countries can agree and then move on to fashion shared approaches to putting***

78 LSE IDEAS says that "the UK should welcome an opportunity or invitation to join the group on a 'Quad plus' basis. LSE IDEAS (TIP0017), para 23

79 Walter Ladwig suggests that "it would be premature to talk about adding new states at a time when the group is beginning to find its feet", so, as a starting point, the UK "could look to deepen its bilateral relationships with each of the individual Quad members" Walter C. Ladwig III (TIP0008), para 23

80 Malik, Yates and Scott warn that the Quad has a reputation as "an anti-China alliance seeking to securitise the region" and that South Korea, Indonesia Malaysia, Laos, Thailand and Cambodia are sceptical about it, so "bringing in extra powers is likely to heighten concerns as much of the desire to extend the Quad comes from outside the region" Asmiati Malik, Robert Yates and Scott Edwards (TIP0001), para 1.3

81 Abe Shinzo, [Realizing a Free and Open Indo-Pacific](#), Project Syndicate, 26 September 2022.

**them into practice. Again, if we wish to prevent the undermining of international standards and the values of the rules-based system, our joining some Indo-Pacific specific organisations is crucial, to support our allies and uphold those values. The PRC should not perceive, or falsely portray, increased multilateral partnership and engagement as being hostile, or directed at the PRC. Any effort to do so should be exposed for the false narrative that it is.**

**Box 3: The UK’s definition of Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)**

A core tenet of the UK’s approach in the Indo-Pacific will be to support the vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific shared by many regional partners. The UK believes that a free and open Indo-Pacific is one where a regional balance of power ensures no single power dominates, and where a rich tapestry of institutions and partnerships shape a stable but adaptable regional order in which: states can make choices free from coercion, disinformation and interference; territorial integrity is respected and disputes resolved in line with international law; international rules and norms govern the sea, land and air as well as international trade; shipping lanes remain secure and open; action is taken against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; and countries are resilient against the full range of threats and risks, whether from climate change, natural disasters or cyberspace.

Source: HM Government, Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023, [CP 811](#), March 2023, p 22, para 18

## AUKUS

98. We welcome the prominence the Refresh gives to AUKUS as a prime example of the defence, security and technology partnerships that the UK intends to pursue. AUKUS is not purely about Australia acquiring a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines. There is a cyber and advanced technology sharing and joint development component that could be equally, if not more, significant. There is an in-principle agreement amongst the three powers to work together as closely as possible across the full suite of advanced technologies, including cyber, AI, quantum and undersea technologies, including in submarine detection. These could deliver tangible outcomes more quickly than the submarine programme.<sup>82</sup>



99. The AUKUS submarine-building programme will provide the UK with economic as well as security and technological benefits. These will be enhanced should “Strand B” cooperation be extended to partners such as Japan and South Korea.<sup>83, 84</sup>

100. The Government should do more to counter disinformation on AUKUS, including the false charge that AUKUS is a “great challenge to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime”,<sup>85</sup> which assumes public misunderstanding of the difference between a nuclear-propelled and a nuclear-armed submarine. Much of this disinformation emanates from the PRC and its allies such as Russia.<sup>86</sup>

**101. *The Government should propose to Australia and the United States that Japan and South Korea be invited to join an AUKUS technological defence cooperation agreement focused on Strand B activities only.***

### Five-Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA)

102. Other than AUKUS, no other alliance or partnership is explicitly allocated funds in the Refresh. Notably, the Five-Power<sup>87</sup> Defence Arrangements (FPDA), which have been a success in terms of regular UK military exercises with reliable local partners, are alluded to only once in the Refresh, with no indication of an increase in their scope, activities, membership, manpower—or budget. The FPDA is a limited agreement, confined to the defence of Malaysia and Singapore, and requiring only consultation; its exercises have expanded in complexity and scope since it was founded in 1971. **In the face of challenges such as the more aggressive role of China in the South China Sea, the Five-Power Defence Arrangements, with their solid history of military cooperation, could be a firm basis for a wider regional alliance in Southeast Asia.**

83 When asked if it was the Government’s position to support Canada, New Zealand and Japan joining the AUKUS Strand agreement, the Foreign Secretary replied: “This is an area that sits across both defence and diplomatic areas. I know that there is a huge amount of interest in AUKUS from those countries. They are all slightly different—for example, Canada is not aspiring to have a nuclear propulsion submarine fleet, and the New Zealand position on all issues nuclear is different to ours—but they are very interested more generally in making sure that we do technology sharing. I am glad that you raised this as a point, because a lot of people think purely about the propulsion systems for the submarines. There will inevitably be a whole load of other benefits, some of which have just not even been slightly predicted yet, which will spill over from AUKUS. That is why it is such an exciting programme, and one that is multi decades in its execution and, through its lifespan, will have a whole load of other technology benefits, both nuclear and non-nuclear, which our partners internationally will want to share with us.” [Q287](#) (James Cleverly) He further elaborated, when asked if the non-nuclear sub pillar of AUKUS has potentially greater long-term value in the sense of broadening out to include more specific allies such as Japan and Korea: “There is so much positive potential in this...I am glad that there is this line of questioning from the Committee, because it does give me the chance to say that this is about more than just nuclear-powered submarines. There are technologies that inevitably will be derived from this, which will ultimately not have applications within the nuclear-powered, conventionally-armed submarine programme. In civilian applications and others, it will drive a generation of new skills in all three countries and probably in others.” [Q290](#) (James Cleverly)

84 In response to a letter from the Committee following the oral evidence session, the Foreign Secretary said that “as our work progresses on AUKUS Pillar Two and other critical defence capabilities, we will seek opportunities to engage allies and partners”. The allies and partners referred to are not further specified. Letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Foreign Affairs Committee, 13 July 2023.

85 The words of Russia’s Deputy Foreign Minister, Sergei Ryabkov in September 2021. [AUKUS deal leaves Russia ‘concerned’ that Australia will have nuclear-powered submarines](#) Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 1 October 2021.

86 “For instance: Andrew Korybko, [Why is AUKUS a threat to Russia?](#) CGTN, 3 February 2022.”

87 Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore and the United Kingdom.

## 5 Human rights and the Rules-Based International Order

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103. The Integrated Review placed an emphasis on a values-driven foreign policy, stating that the UK's first goal was to support open societies and defend human rights. The China policy enunciated in the Refresh includes a commitment to align with other countries to push back against behaviours that violate human rights. For such alignment to be effective, the Government cannot ignore human rights issues in partner countries. The UK can share its experience of developing human rights protection in the UK while also learning from the experience of other countries. Such a dialogue should be conducted within the framework of international agreements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

104. The UK is committed to defending the Rules-Based International Order (RBIO) globally, including in the Indo-Pacific. However, both the Integrated Review and the Refresh state that this defence is no longer sufficient, and that the UK will prioritise shaping activity across the strategic arenas where developments will be most consequential for our core national interests and protecting the international order. There is significant effort by the CCP to insert Xi Jinping thought into multilateral organisations' reports and statements; the UK Government should ensure these are not accepted. Equally, we should ensure that we help resource these organisations central to RBIO, and that we stand or support candidates who would act to defend these institutions. We cannot allow autocrats to demand silence. While we welcome the Government's more nuanced approach, we are concerned that it provides scope for core national interests to be pursued at the expense of defending and strengthening RBIO, for example by ignoring human rights issues in partner countries. This is not the policy we adopt with our closest allies, and it is weak to adopt it when the PRC continues to perpetrate, as Parliament has declared it, a genocide by the PRC in Xinjiang against the Uyghurs, severe human rights abuses in Tibet, and egregious violations of the agreements reached with the UK to uphold the rights of individuals in Hong Kong. Government action remains restricted to condemnatory words; the Government should adopt the position of the Parliament.

105. On the basis of our 2021 report on atrocities in Xinjiang, in which we reported on the use of forced labour in the cotton industry there,<sup>88</sup> we reiterate our demand that the Government find a legislative vehicle to achieve the same objective as the US' Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act passed in 2021, under which there is a rebuttable presumption that import prohibition applies to goods mined, produced or manufactured in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.<sup>89</sup>

106. We should also take every opportunity to raise the case of Jimmy Lai and any other British Nationals being arbitrarily detained by the PRC. As the PRC continues to engage in hostage taking for political purposes, or to arbitrarily detain British Nationals under false pretences to secure its own power and silence dissent, the UK cannot under any circumstances refuse to speak out on this outrageous breach of international law.

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88 House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee Second Report of session 2021–22 [Never Again: The UK's Responsibility to Act on Atrocities in Xinjiang and Beyond](#), June 2021.

89 117th Congress, [Public Law 117–78 Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act](#), 2021 (accessed on 8 July 2023).

107. *The Government should explain whether it is adopting a two-track approach: negotiating trade agreements separately from discussions on human rights, or a conditional approach: in which trade deals are explicitly linked to—and limited by—our trading partner’s human rights record.*

108. **It is unacceptable that trade should be prioritised over human rights to the extent that states that regularly violate human rights can continue to do so unsanctioned and our consumers, wittingly or unwittingly, participate indirectly by buying products made in inhumane conditions.**

109. *The Government has as yet failed to sanction any companies for human rights abuses within their supply chains, demonstrating a lack of resolve towards preventing Uyghur forced labour products from flooding the UK. The Government should rectify this.*

110. *The Government must not be silent on human rights abuses, including state hostage-taking, by autocracies like the PRC and should use its status as a permanent member of the UN Security Council to denounce such abuses and coordinate action to end them.*

## 6 The maritime dimension

111. The maritime dimension of the Tilt to the Indo-Pacific—implicit in the term Indo-Pacific—is crucial to understanding the UK’s interests in the region, which is bound together by oceans, not by terrestrial geographies, and which contains key shipping choke points and multiple criminal challenges.<sup>90</sup> Given the importance of the region for the UK’s trade, protection of sea lanes is one of our foremost priorities.<sup>91, 92, 93</sup>

112. To some extent, the Royal Navy can contribute to this defence, as is shown by the deployment of HMS Tamar and HMS Spey,<sup>94</sup> the maiden voyage of Carrier Strike Group 21, HMS Richmond transiting through the Taiwan Strait in September 2021, and AUKUS.<sup>95</sup> However, given the size of the maritime area to be defended and the distance from the UK, diplomacy and involvement with regional groupings are also essential.<sup>96</sup>

113. In confronting maritime (“blue”) crime, the Blue Planet Fund, the UK’s £500 million programme supporting developing countries to protect the marine environment and reduce poverty,<sup>97</sup> can be used to help protect the marine environment in the region, as developmental responses are important in dealing with the root causes of maritime crime, such as poverty. There are over 112 multilateral institutions in the region that deal with blue crime, many of them developing trust and confidence through their technical cooperation, coordination, information sharing, maritime domain awareness activities, and capacity building.<sup>98</sup>

114. The UK is in a good position to capitalise on its centuries of maritime experience not only to partner with navies in the region to deter seaborne threats, but also to help countries from India to the Pacific Islands to build their own capacity to patrol their waters and combat maritime crime, especially Commonwealth nations. We also recommend the creation of a trilateral maritime freedom of movement cooperation agreement, made up of Japan, India and the UK, focused on joint exercises in the region.

90 Malik, Yates and Edwards point out: “The Indo-Pacific is not bound together by terrestrial geographies and relationships but by oceanic ones. It presents a series of specifically maritime security challenges. It features key shipping chokepoints such as the Malacca and Bab-el-Mandeb Straits, extremist violence in the Sulu and Celebes Seas and Strait of Hormuz, as well as multiple expressions of blue crime including piracy, smuggling of various sorts, illegal fishing and pollution.” Malik, Yates and Edwards (TIP0001), para 151

91 Asmiati Malik, Robert Yates and Scott Edwards (TIP0001), para 1

92 Robin Porter (TIP0004), para 20

93 Basil Germond (TIP0012) paras 1.1–1.3

94 Malik, Yates and Edwards (TIP0001), para 1.5.2

95 Basil Germond (TIP0012) para 1.3

96 Malik, Yates and Edwards (TIP0001), para 1.5.4

97 [The Blue Planet Fund](#) (accessed on 6 July 2023)

98 Malik, Yates and Edwards (TIP0001), para 1.5.4

## 7 Capacity building

115. The Integrated Review promises to build capacity in partner countries, mainly in defence, security, cyber security and legal policy areas. These are all areas in which the UK may have a comparative advantage because of long experience.

116. The UK, both at Government and private-sector levels, can also play a key role in economic capacity building, legal reform, regulation, governance and representation, and digitisation of governance services contributing to institutional strengthening, to promote development. The UK can partner with developing country Governments to help them foster socio-economic development, sustainable growth and embrace the rule of law. Industry can support Indo-Pacific governments by advising local authorities on the development of governance codes, sustainability finance frameworks and regulatory regimes. The UK has great expertise to share with regional partners around developing their business environments, building services hubs and financial centres.<sup>99</sup>

117. The UK can also build partnerships by targeting ODA towards the region. Currently \$1 trillion is owed to China by developing countries; these debt traps undermine sovereignty and the rule of law. The UK could use development projects (including Prosperity Fund projects) to provide technical assistance to countries seeking to develop their business environment and attract more international trade and investment. Areas where UK industry could best support governments and regulators on development efforts include: promoting foreign investment; strengthening governance and accountability; developing sustainable finance frameworks; promoting financial inclusion through the deployment of FinTech, digital solutions and alternative finance; developing capital markets overseas; and providing financial training.<sup>100</sup>

118. The UK should also look to foster regulatory cooperation with individual countries through establishing dialogues such as the Economic and Financial Dialogues with India and China and the Financial Dialogues with Japan and Singapore. Such dialogues can be central to bilateral partnerships, bringing benefits for citizens on both sides and providing a platform for jointly addressing emerging challenges. It can also lead to more considered approaches to financial regulation, reduce the risks of market fragmentation and make it easier for UK-based financial and related professional services businesses to service clients and customers in the Indo-Pacific region.<sup>101</sup>

119. In 2017 the Asian Development Bank estimated the financing gap in economic infrastructure for Asia at \$459 billion per year, doubling to \$907 billion with the expected need to fund social infrastructure. This infrastructure financing deficit is slowing growth and efforts to eradicate poverty or respond to climate change, and this is likely to be an underestimate in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>102</sup>

120. The Clean Green Initiative announced by the Government in November 2021 at COP26, which aims to help poor countries make use of green technologies and grow their

99 TheCityUK ([TIP0002](#)), para 5

100 TheCityUK ([TIP0002](#)), para 15

101 TheCityUK ([TIP0002](#)), para 14

102 TheCityUK ([TIP0002](#)), para 16

economies in a sustainable manner,<sup>103</sup> has the potential to channel more infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific region. This provides UK-based financial and related professional service industries with opportunities to finance, design support and help in the implementation of the various projects.<sup>104</sup>

121. We welcome capacity building initiatives such as the UK Prosperity Fund ASEAN Low Carbon Energy Programme, which draws on the expertise of the UK's financial and related professional services industry.<sup>105</sup>

## Human security

122. There is scope for increased cooperation between the UK and regional partners to build disaster capacity to respond to human security challenges by providing training in such areas as peacekeeping, disaster response, climate change mitigation, and addressing the challenge of threats to our global oceans. Dealing with these challenges can help de-escalate issues that might otherwise produce tensions and conflicts.

123. Another area in which the UK may be able to share experience to good effect is foreign policy formulation and diplomatic representation. Even though many countries in the region have centuries of experience of practising sophisticated diplomacy, they may not all have taken part to the fullest extent in modern international institutions set up since World War 2. The UK can share what it has learned from participation in such institutions, including informal as well as formally defined procedures. There is scope for the FCDO to set up a Diplomatic Academy in the Indo-Pacific along the lines of the Diplomatic Academy that provides training for its own staff to build capacity in partner countries that choose to take advantage of the facility.

***124. The Government should establish a Diplomatic Academy in the Indo-Pacific region to build capacity in foreign policy formulation and diplomatic representation in partner governments that wish to make use of it. This would be a projection of soft power and the strength of rule of law and governance structures which will reinforce the economies and resilience of partner countries.***

***125. The Government could also seek to pursue programmes such as those suggested above through unifying organisations such as the Commonwealth grouping, and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.***

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103 The UK's Clean Green Initiative (CGI) is designed to help to scale up public and private investment in quality, sustainable infrastructure globally. [PM launches new initiative to take Green Industrial Revolution global gov.uk](#) (accessed on 4 July 2023)

104 TheCityUK ([TIP0002](#)), para 17

105 TheCityUK ([TIP0002](#)), para 13



## 8 Freeing up movement

126. The development of people-to-people relationships is vitally important for implementing the Government's Indo-Pacific Tilt. However, partner countries continue to complain that, for example, educational and business links are hampered by the difficulty of obtaining a UK visa. The only mention of visas in the Refresh is in the section on Ukraine, in which it is shown that the UK granted 219,400 Ukrainian visas to the UK, demonstrating that where there is a will there is a way, even with short timescales.<sup>106</sup>

127. Now that the UK has joined the CPTPP, it will have to respect CPTPP provisions on enhanced business mobility, including for short-term business visitors, investors and qualified professionals.

128. Chapter 12 of CPTPP specifies that a country ("Party") shall grant temporary entry or extension of temporary stay to business persons provided that those business persons follow the granting Party's prescribed application procedures for the relevant immigration formality and meet all relevant eligibility requirements for temporary entry or extension of temporary stay. Exceptions are limited to cases in which such temporary entry might affect adversely the settlement of a labour dispute at the intended place of employment or the employment of anyone involved in such a dispute.<sup>107</sup>

129. Given the vast untapped skills resources in the Indo-Pacific region and the shortage of essential skills in the UK economy, these provisions of CPTPP on labour mobility present an opportunity to take advantage of this evident complementarity.

130. The provision of higher education places in the UK to students from the Indo-Pacific region should not be considered an alternative funding model aimed at propping up an underfunded education sector. Taking advantage of the UK's highly-ranked universities and its use of the English language as the teaching medium, the UK can exert strong soft power in the Indo-Pacific by continuing to bring in large contingents of students from the region. Population and economic trends will help diversify away from reliance on students from one country (China). Most students will return home after their studies and there is huge benefit from having a high proportion of the educated work force in the Indo-Pacific region who have an understanding of—and an affection for—the UK as a result of having lived and studied here. Student numbers should not be counted in with general immigration, especially when considering policies to control immigration.

**131. *The Government should assess CPTPP provisions supporting business mobility alongside existing commitments in bilateral agreements with countries in the Indo-Pacific such as the FTAs with Australia and New Zealand.***

**132. *We recommend that the Government examine current visa procedures with a view to facilitating entry for those visiting the UK from Indo-Pacific partner countries for purposes such as studying, teaching or doing business.***

106 HM Government, Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023, [CP 811](#), March 2023, p 41 diagram between paras 25 and 26

107 [CPTPP Chapter 12](#) (accessed on 5 July 2023)

## 9 ASEAN

133. The Integrated Review stated that the UK would work with existing structures such as ASEAN and that it would support ASEAN’s “central role in regional stability and prosperity”. It committed to the UK becoming a Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, which it did in August 2021; the UK has since agreed a five-year Plan of Action with ASEAN and applied to join the ASEAN Regional Forum, which involves a closer relationship with ASEAN than Dialogue Partnership.<sup>108</sup>

134. We welcome the further undertaking in the Refresh that the UK’s role in the region will be stable, enduring and guided by respect for regional perspectives, supporting ASEAN centrality and the Pacific Way. This assurance is important because Southeast Asian and Pacific countries are interested in long-term consistency rather than grandiose promises that disappear in the next policy round, or attempts to pressure them into alliances that do not align with their own national objectives.

### ASEAN Dialogue Partner status

135. As a Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, the UK is in a position to work with ASEAN countries on challenges in such areas as trade, climate change, maritime security and transnational crime. ASEAN is not, though, a military alliance, and its members have diverse loyalties.<sup>109</sup> **It is vital to pursue links with Southeast Asian countries on both multilateral and bilateral tracks, respecting different value-systems and cultures.**

### Economic follow-through

136. The UK should follow through on its commitments and maximise its influence by maintaining the pace of regular high-level visits to the region, being represented at ASEAN meetings, and by establishing platforms that deepen UK-ASEAN cooperation on areas of mutual interest.<sup>110, 111</sup>

*137. We recommend that as well as taking full advantage of the UK’s recently acquired status as a Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, the UK should begin negotiations for an FTA with ASEAN, and concentrate equally on building bilateral relationships with ASEAN members based upon cooperation on those countries’ development objectives and UK expertise and experience in such areas as maritime security, finance, environmentally-friendly agriculture and technology.*

*138. A proximate objective should be the signing of wide-ranging agreements, like those the UK has with Malaysia and Indonesia, with other ASEAN member countries as appropriate, and where possible upgrading existing strategic partnership agreements to Economic and Financial Dialogues.*

108 The UK is obviously not eligible for full membership as it is not in Southeast Asia. Canada and the EU are members of the ASEAN Regional Forum.

109 For example, Cambodia and Laos are close to China and the Philippines and Thailand are US allies, while Malaysia and Singapore are members of the Five Powers Defence Arrangements (FPDA) alongside the UK, Australia and New Zealand.

110 TheCityUK ([TIP0002](#)), para 13

111 TheCityUK suggests that the UK establish a UK-ASEAN Business Summit that takes place on the side lines of official UK-ASEAN engagements, such as dialogues between ministers or senior officials, and that the UK should consider establishing an FTA with ASEAN TheCityUK ([TIP0002](#)), para 13



***139. Official Development Assistance (ODA) in the region should be targeted on regulatory improvement to strengthen the rule of law and build an effective business environment to encourage both domestic and inward investment. Progress on this should be measured by establishing a model composed of indicators based on World Bank and OECD business-friendliness criteria against which each country can be assessed annually.***

## 10 Countries

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### Taiwan

140. Taiwan was a glaring omission from the Integrated Review,<sup>112</sup> so we welcome its inclusion in the Refresh.<sup>113</sup> Taiwan’s economic importance—and its crucial role in global supply chains—should not be underestimated.<sup>114</sup> The emphasis placed on Taiwan by our Committee reflects our resolute belief in the importance of protecting the right to self-determination and to choose your own Government, free from threat or coercion. In an era of deterrence, Taiwan matters, because sovereignty must not be achieved through violent means. As the UK undertakes its Tilt, we need friends to Tilt towards. It is entirely right that fellow democracies engage in Inter-Parliamentary dialogue.

### *Taiwan’s international status*

#### *De facto independence*

141. Although Chinese officials claim that Taiwan has been part of China for 1,800 years,<sup>115</sup> it was only when the Manchu Empire took control of China and Taiwan that China ruled there. However just as the British Empire took control of India and Sri Lanka at the same time, it did not make Sri Lanka part of India. The Qing emperors exercised suzerainty over Taiwan from 1683 to 1895, when it was ceded to Japan. From 1945 to 1949 Chiang Kai-shek ruled Taiwan from the mainland, but the PRC has never ruled Taiwan, it has instead consistently demonstrated a determination to take Taiwan ever since its aborted invasion of the island in 1949 to distract from domestic woes, be it the COVID-19 pandemic or crises in the Chinese economy.

142. Taiwan is already an independent country, under the name Republic of China (ROC). Taiwan possesses all the qualifications for statehood, including a permanent population, a defined territory, government, and the capacity to enter into relations with other states—it is only lacking greater international recognition.<sup>116</sup> Taiwan’s government has not made an official proclamation of independence—because China regards that as a *casus belli*—but President Tsai Ing-wen states that this is because Taiwan is “an independent country already” so has no need to declare itself an independent state,<sup>117</sup> although we noted that during our visit the vast majority of political interlocutors wanted to uphold the status quo, not declare full independence or become a province of the PRC.

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112 HM Government, *Global Britain in a competitive age: The Integrated Review of Defence, Development, Security and Foreign Policy*, CP403, March 2021.

113 HM Government, *Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023*, CP 811, March 2023, pp 30–31, 43

114 Michael Reilly, former British Representative to Taiwan and Member of the Advisory Board at Global Taiwan Institute, said people in the UK see Taiwan as a small island on the other side of the world, while it is comparable with Australia in terms of population and economy. Were it not for geopolitics, it would almost certainly be in the G20. Q65 (Michael Reilly) Comparable, but not the same. Taiwan’s population is 23.6 million, that of Australia 26.5 million; Taiwan’s GDP in 2022 was USD762 billion and Australia’s USD1.7 trillion, which puts Taiwan’s GDP per capita at USD32,288, half that of Australia at USD64,151.

115 For example, the then Chinese ambassador to the United States (and now Foreign Minister), Qin Gang. Qing Gang, *Chinese ambassador: Why China objects to Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan*, Washington Post, 4 August 2022.

116 Gray Sergeant (TIP0003), para 1

117 Lily Kuo, *Tsai Ing-wen says China must ‘face reality’ of Taiwan’s independence*, The Guardian, 15 January 2020.

### *Taiwan people don't want to be part of China*

143. Extensive opinion polling shows there is little to no desire amongst the Taiwanese public to be ruled by the PRC. In recent years there has been a steady decline in support for both immediate and eventual unification with China. While the preservation of the status quo remains the most popular choice, support for independence has grown. The percentage of people in Taiwan self-identifying as exclusively Taiwanese has reached a record 66% while the percentage of people identifying as both Chinese and Taiwanese is 28% and the proportion identifying themselves as exclusively Chinese has collapsed to 4%.<sup>118, 119</sup>

### *China's threat to use force*

144. China has been developing its military with the taking of Taiwan, via force or coercion, in mind.<sup>120</sup> The future of Taiwan should be of concern to any country concerned with preserving the existing international order, as any attempt to take Taiwan using military force would be an affront to the principle of state sovereignty and would also alter the balance of power in the Pacific, threatening Japan's security, interrupt 30% of global trade, and give China greater ability to force project its military.<sup>121</sup>

145. There is general agreement among witnesses that a Chinese invasion of Taiwan is not inevitable, but is a last resort.<sup>122</sup> The CCP is predicted to have the political option to choose military action against Taiwan in 2027, the date by which the PLA has been mandated by the CCP to be ready to perform its core missions, including retaking Taiwan—and the centenary of the PLA's founding. However, this does not mean that invasion will be inevitable then, nor that the CCP would have military capability by that point, not least because they would need to be able to force match other leading global economies. Other forms of coercion or assault to force occupation could include:

- economic and political coercion
- catastrophic cyber attack or economic attack on semiconductor capabilities
- economic embargo
- economic and food blockade
- false-flag humanitarian options
- attempts to collapse Taiwanese society from inside.<sup>123, 124</sup>

118 Pew Research Center data cited in [Majority of Taiwanese don't identify as 'Chinese': poll](#) The Sydney Morning Herald, 13 May 2020.

119 Michael Reilly told us that "the Taiwanese are growing more and more distant from China" with every day that goes by. "Twenty years ago, you might have been able to sell to a lot of Taiwanese inhabitants the idea of unification with China. Getting more than a tiny minority to accept that nowadays is very unlikely. They have seen what happened in Hong Kong." [Q95](#) (Michael Reilly)

120 Gray Sergeant ([TIP0003](#)), para 5

121 Gray Sergeant ([TIP0003](#)), para 9

122 Gray Sergeant said that China may not risk annexing Taiwan in the near future for numerous reasons, including the fear of failure Gray Sergeant ([TIP0003](#)), para 6

123 [Q95](#) (Alessio Patalano)

124 Michael Reilly agreed that while China has the capability to invade, it will only do so as a last resort because it would be tantamount to an admission of failure. He said China is more likely to use a coercive approach while applying area access denial to the US so it could not come to Taiwan's defence. [Q95](#) (Michael Reilly)

146. Not all witnesses agree that China's stance towards Taiwan is a problem for the UK. A minority view is that the UK has no commitment to protect Taiwan against China.<sup>125</sup> However, there is broad consensus that the economic implications globally, let alone the duty as a UN Security Council permanent member to uphold the rules-based system and the right to self-determination, require UK interest. There is scope for UK action to help protect Taiwan. Among measures that we might take to deter and punish Chinese aggression are: directly calling out China for its intimidating rhetoric and military manoeuvres; avoiding the use of neutral-sounding phrases like "any activity" and "all sides" when referring to cross-Strait tensions; publicly and privately urging China to show restraint; working to secure membership of international organisations for Taiwan; working with allies to prepare economic sanctions against China, to be applied in the event of an invasion or economic blockade of Taiwan; not recognising Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan if China takes it without the consent of the Taiwanese people; and increasing parliamentary and societal exchanges and engagement.<sup>126</sup>

147. The Committee is very alert to the importance of preventing Xi Jinping from deciding that conflict over Taiwan is inevitable. There is a risk that miscalculation escalates tensions, or that Xi Jinping fears other nations are goading him into action before PRC military capability needed to invade Taiwan has been reached. Equally, caution is needed to ensure efforts to defend Taiwan's right to self-determination do not force an outcome in which the CCP cannot decide not to invade Taiwan, for fear of this being misrepresented as a loss for the CCP, rather than a decision to respect the rules-based order.

148. Since the 1990s Taiwan has become a model liberal democracy. Freedom House has consistently scored Taiwan highly for both political rights and civil liberties. In 2021 the Economist Intelligence Unit singled out Taiwan as a "beacon for democracy in Asia".<sup>127</sup>

### **UK-Taiwan relations**

149. The UK could pursue closer relations with Taiwan if it were not over-cautious about offending the CCP. There may have been a tendency to avoid some forms of engagement with Taiwan because they are expected to elicit objections from China even though China has not specifically defined them as unacceptable,<sup>128</sup> though this does now appear to be less of a problem and the UK should focus on explaining the importance of dialogue.<sup>129</sup>

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125 Robin Porter describes Taiwan as, for the Chinese government, "an issue arising from the Chinese civil war of the late 1940s" and says we have "never previously committed ourselves to protecting Taiwan from China, nor should we". His view is that "'hawks' on both sides have over-hyped the Taiwan issue". Robin Porter ([TIP0004](#)), para 21

126 Gray Sergeant ([TIP0003](#)), para 18

127 Gray Sergeant ([TIP0003](#)), para 2

128 Michael Reilly said that a lot of the problem is "a perception here in Whitehall rather than the reality". China has consistently made clear their red lines between what they will and will not tolerate. Ministers can visit other than in the areas of foreign affairs and defence, and the Prime Minister. [Q54](#) (Michael Reilly)

129 Alessio Patalano, Professor of War and Strategy in East Asia at King's College London, said that while there is an institutional state of mind that traditionally makes people rush to the question of what China is going to do, in recent years the Government is starting to take steps and push back on that general attitude. UK foreign policy behaviour seems less constrained and less worried about the fear of China preventing things from happening. [Q56](#) (Dr Patalano)

150. The practice of appointing UK representatives to Taiwan who have extensive experience of working in China may be counterproductive because they may be over-sensitised to potential opposition to their actions from the Chinese government.<sup>130, 131</sup>

### High-level visits

151. Before the Tilt, there was a dearth of high-level UK visits to Taiwan, with ministerial visits few and far between and no FCDO official higher than director level having visited by the end of 2021, despite it having been agreed 25 years earlier that there is no reason why a Cabinet Member could not visit Taiwan.<sup>132</sup> The UK should loosen self-imposed restrictions on who can interact with Taiwanese officials. The US and Japan have shown that communication is possible even at the highest level.<sup>133</sup> There has been a procession of high-level visits by politicians from other countries in recent years, including the visit of Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the US House of Representatives in August 2022.<sup>134</sup> We welcome the recent visit to Taiwan of Trade Minister Greg Hands. Our own visit was the first by a Committee of the House of Commons in 16 years. ***The UK Government should support visits by trade, science and education ministers both inward and outward with Taiwan.***

### Trade and investment with Taiwan

152. Trade and investment between the UK and Taiwan are substantial but well below potential, considering the size of Taiwan's economy. Two-way trade in goods and services is on a gently rising trend, with the UK running a small deficit.<sup>135</sup>

153. In November 2022, the President of Taiwan, Tsai Ing-wen, told the Minister of State for Trade, Greg Hands, visiting Taipei to co-host the 25th annual UK-Taiwan Trade Talks, that Taiwan hopes that the UK will work together with it to promote the signing of bilateral investment and trade agreements.<sup>136</sup> This is particularly important to Taiwan as it seeks to reduce its own economic dependency on China, at a time when Beijing is using its influence to prevent other countries from signing FTAs with Taiwan.<sup>137</sup> China does not object to countries having free trade agreements with Taiwan provided that they sign them

130 Gray Sergeant suggests that the UK should "avoid sending to Taiwan top officials with extensive experience in the PRC, who may have internalised a desire not to upset Beijing". Gray Sergeant (TIP0003), para 17

131 Michael Reilly says: "We have had three successive heads of post, all of whom have served in Beijing. I am not actually sure that is helpful. If you have spent time in Beijing being harangued by the foreign ministry, you tend to end up being more cautious. Maybe getting in somebody who has spent time in Tokyo, particularly given the Taiwanese-Japanese relationship, could be very helpful in increasing our understanding." Q66 (Michael Reilly)

132 Q51 (Michael Reilly)

133 He also suggests that cabinet-level visits should become routine and that the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary should be more forthcoming in sending messages to Taiwan's leaders to congratulate them on election victories, send condolences following natural disasters, and, as in the case of Taiwan's mask donations in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic thank them for assistance. Gray Sergeant (TIP0003), para 18

134 BBC News Taiwan: [Nancy Pelosi meets President Tsai to Beijing's fury](#), 3 August 2022.

135 Total two-way trade in goods and services between the UK and Taiwan was £8.6 billion in 2022, an increase of 0.6% or £47 million in current prices from 2021. Of this, UK exports to Taiwan amounted to £3.9 billion (£280 million, 6.8%, down on 2021) and UK imports from Taiwan totalled £4.7 billion (up £327 million, 7.4%). Taiwan was the UK's 32nd largest trading partner in the four quarters to the end of Q4 2022 accounting for 0.5% of total UK trade. In 2021, the outward stock of foreign direct investment (FDI) from the UK in Taiwan was £2.6 billion, accounting for 0.1% of the total UK outward FDI stock. Inward FDI stock in the UK from Taiwan is undisclosed. [Trade and Investment Factsheets: Taiwan](#), Department for Business & Trade (accessed on 8 July 2023)

136 Ben Blanchard, [Taiwan aims for British trade deal as minister meets president](#), Reuters, 9 November 2022

137 Gray Sergeant (TIP0003), para 18

with China first and they consult China before negotiating with Taiwan.<sup>138</sup> The UK could align with allied nations to all sign Trade Agreements simultaneously to demonstrate that this sort of economic leverage is unacceptable.

154. Given the complementary nature of our economies, we recommend the Government particularly focus on joint investment and trade around global goods such as Net Zero cooperation. The UK and Taiwan can be the two largest offshore wind nations, and there are opportunities in hydrogen, and energy resilience. Equally, we can partner on technologies such as the internet of things (especially silicon), and medical technologies.

### **CPTPP**

155. Taiwan's membership of CPTPP would benefit both the UK and Taiwan because free trade between them and the few other high-tech manufacturing countries in CPTPP would eliminate the bureaucracy that would exist with bilateral negotiations. It would also have a positive psychological impact on Taiwan, which feels vulnerable and isolated from most multilateral organisations.<sup>139, 140</sup> ***Now that the UK is a full member of CPTPP it can and should campaign for Taiwan to be admitted.***

### **Climate change cooperation with Taiwan**

156. Offshore wind farms have been a very important element in the growth of the bilateral trade relationship between the UK and Taiwan, and there is an opportunity for further development in this area, given that Taiwan is slightly behind the curve in its own plan to meet the self-imposed goals for meeting the challenge of climate change.<sup>141</sup> Equally hydrogen presents important opportunities for energy partnerships.

### **UK-Taiwan collaboration in education**

157. Opportunities abound for mutually beneficial partnerships in education between the UK and Taiwan.

158. In 2018 Taiwan's National Development Council announced the Blueprint for Developing Taiwan into a Bilingual Nation by 2030, which makes English language acquisition and proficiency a priority for Taiwan. The British Council's work in English and Education has been contributing to improved English proficiency in Taiwan for years but was stepped up in 2020, when it was commissioned by Taiwan's Ministry of Education to provide research and consultancy to inform their Bilingual 2030 policy decisions.<sup>142, 143</sup>

159. The British Council also secured a contract in 2021 with the Examinations Yuan (the ministry responsible for learning and development within the civil service) to deliver

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138 [Q67](#) (Michael Reilly)

139 [Q69](#) (Michael Reilly)

140 This point is also supported by Gray Sergeant. Gray Sergeant ([TIP0003](#)), para 18

141 [Q68](#) (Alessio Patalano)

142 British Council ([TIP0009](#)), para 6.1

143 Alessio Patalano told us that taking advantage of the opportunity presented by Taiwan's Bilingual 2030 programme would be "absolutely essential to start changing the perception of Taiwan as a tiny island far off in the middle of several places that are far away. Unless we start changing that, and we do that through those cultural links, the whole idea of the Indo-Pacific Tilt will never take hold because we need to rediscover that kind of link". [Q68](#) (Dr Patalano)



English training to 40 senior-ranked civil servants. The Ministry of Education separately asked the British Council to prepare a proposal to deliver English training to their civil servants.<sup>144</sup>

160. The first cohorts of English Language Teaching Assistants were recruited to teach in Taiwan in 2022 under the British Council's Teaching Assistants programme, which is fully funded by Taiwan's Ministry of Education.<sup>145</sup>

161. In the 2020/2021 academic year Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) announced £100,000 in scholarships solely for UK students to study in Taiwan. By late 2021, 18 Taiwanese universities and 150 British students had been awarded the MOFA scholarship. In addition, 227 UK students had secured Turing scholarships to study in Taiwan in 2021/2022.<sup>146</sup>

162. There was a 5% increase to 9,469 in students from Taiwan studying in the UK in the 2019/2020 academic year, including 4,465 in higher education.<sup>147</sup> This is a welcome development, but there is scope for a much larger influx, given Taiwan's high per capita incomes, developed secondary education sector and need for education in both English language and high technology. We should be proud of our contribution to Taiwan's English language ambitions.

163. There is ample scope for expanding the teaching of Chinese language (Mandarin, Modern Standard Chinese) in the UK using teachers from Taiwan. As we learned during our visit to Taiwan, the Ministry of Education offers full training and accreditation for teachers of Chinese, and the Taiwan government operates a scheme for sending teachers abroad that subsidises travel to and from the UK but—unlike the comparable arrangements made under the auspices of China's Confucius Institutes—does not impinge on the autonomy of the host institution by selecting and paying such teachers directly. It also does not require all teachers to teach from a CCP-approved rendition of history and culture. Teachers from Taiwan provide an alternative for education authorities in the UK to choose instead of the Confucius Institutes that currently play a large part in Chinese language teaching in the UK, and which are controlled ultimately by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and therefore the CCP. We welcome the Government's freezing of further funding to Confucius Institutes. We also urge the British Government to urgently pursue meaningful discussion with the Taiwanese Government to reduce our reliance on Confucius Institutes, an arm of the CCP, in our schools and universities, and to ensure we have the Mandarin competency we need in the UK. We also encourage the British Government to prevent Mandarin A-Levels from being taken by native-Mandarin speakers, as this has caused an evidenced and significant drop in Mandarin being taken at A-Level, because non-native speakers are being discouraged by the raising of the grade boundaries this has caused<sup>148</sup> and to consider the introduction of the Chinese Ancient Civilisation A-Level which has 100% private funding for the first year to prove concept. We want to increase understanding of Chinese culture, history and language to support our young people.

144 British Council ([TIP0009](#)), para 6.3

145 British Council ([TIP0009](#)), para 6.7

146 British Council ([TIP0009](#)), para 6.5

147 British Council ([TIP0009](#)), para 6.6

148 Bill Hayton, [A-level Chinese is a pointless scam](#) The Post, 18 August 2022



### ***The UK's position on China-Taiwan relations***

164. We welcome the acceptance in the Refresh of our recommendation that the Government reiterate its position that the “Taiwan issue”—an unfortunate choice of words<sup>149</sup>—should be settled peacefully by people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait through dialogue, and not through unilateral attempts to change the status quo, though the Refresh fails to restate its acknowledgment of China’s “One China Policy” (as distinct from accepting the policy itself).

165. The UK’s “One China” policy is not the same as China’s “One China” principle. Rather than agreeing to China’s claim to Taiwan, the UK, like other liberal democracies, merely acknowledges Beijing’s position. **This policy of acknowledgment needs to be better understood across Whitehall departments to prevent policymakers from misspeaking or acting over-cautiously when it comes to interacting with Taiwan and Taiwanese officials.**<sup>150</sup> **As part of this, the importance of the Taiwan strait, as a safeguard, should be understood.**

166. The Refresh also does not consider the development of cooperation between the UK and Taiwan in as multifaceted a way as it does with other partners in the region. For example, while it is mentioned in the context of the PRC’s threat to invade, Taiwan is missing from the Refresh list of diplomatic objectives. **The UK needs to build on its existing cooperation with Taiwan and with like-minded partner countries to help achieve Taiwan’s peaceful objectives and strengthen its resilience. This is not a threat to the CCP, but a friendship with a fellow democracy.**

167. The UK should also exert pressure on China to allow Taiwan back into international bodies like the WHO, where its participation can be of great benefit to partners globally, as evidenced by its key role in revealing COVID-19 to the world. Such efforts should be aligned with Taiwan’s own priorities, chiefly observer status at the World Health Assembly, the decision-making body of the WHO, as well as participation in the International Civil Aviation Organisation and Interpol. Not only are these more obtainable (unlike full UN membership), but would provide Taiwan with critical information on the wellbeing of its citizens and the ability to contribute to the global good.<sup>151</sup>

168. ***The UK Government must identify meaningful activities, and red lines, that enable it to shape and pursue an effective policy of deterrence diplomacy to contribute to the protection of the right of self-determination of the people of Taiwan. The last two decades are mired in failures to deter autocratic countries from pursuing sovereignty through violence and coercion.***

169. ***The UK should engage with Taiwanese and other major companies to secure inward investment in the semiconductor and wind industries in the UK to enhance resilience by building an alternative supply source for advanced semiconductors and wind energy components, whether this involves onshoring or friendshoring.***

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149 Gray Sergeant points out that, despite China’s challenge to peace and stability across the Strait, Taiwan should not be regarded as a mere issue or problem, but as “a partner for a free and open Indo-Pacific and a fellow liberal democracy which has a lot to contribute to the rest of the international community”. Gray Sergeant ([TIP0003](#)), para 10

150 Gray Sergeant ([TIP0003](#)), para 16

151 Gray Sergeant ([TIP0003](#)), para 18

170. *The Government should press for Taiwan to take its place in international bodies, including the WHO, the OECD, the IEA and the CPTPP, for the benefit of all countries.*

171. *We recommend that the Government this year publish a plan to scale up its cooperation with Taiwan over the next five years on English language teaching in Taiwan and Mandarin teaching in the UK to meet the requirements of Taiwan’s Bilingual 2030 programme and the UK’s need to reduce dependence on Confucius Institutes, especially in secondary schools where breaches of freedom of speech will be an issue, just as they have been in universities.*

## Japan and Korea

172. Japan and the Republic of Korea (Korea) are key security and technology partners of the UK in East Asia. Japan offers fertile ground for improved cooperation, military-industrial collaboration and military exercises; there is a strong confluence of interests between Japan and the UK.<sup>152</sup> Japan has since 2007 promoted a “free and open Indo-Pacific” region stretching from the Gulf of Aden in the west to the Pacific coast of America, and from the Baring Strait in the north down to the Southern Ocean. Other countries, now including the UK,<sup>153</sup> have adopted the concept.<sup>154</sup>

## Resilience

173. Rather than pursuing decoupling, Japan is focused on building resilience by:

- Smart re-shoring (near- and friend-shoring):
  - E.g. Japan’s recent agreement with Taiwan’s main microchip manufacturer to have a joint venture research institute and factory in Japan
- Building 5G and 6G with core partners (not including China)
- Building a network of trusted partners:
  - E.g. Japan and the US have launched a global digital connectivity partnership.<sup>155</sup>

174. Japan has been facing difficulties in obtaining ICT supplies, including semiconductors, and the expansion of the cyber-attack surface resulting from the rapid growth of digitisation in ICT supply chains, making the global supply chain more vulnerable to cyber attacks, as the number of ICT assets has increased as work has shifted more remotely. To deal with this situation, Japan passed an Economic Security Bill in May 2022 to make supply chains more resilient, ensure the stable operation of critical infrastructure and make sure that major critical infrastructure companies in 14 sectors, including communications, energy, electricity, finance and transport, submit a plan to the Japanese Government for the prior deployment of critical systems, so that the Government can review the manufacturers and countries of origin of those systems. Reportedly, 5G base stations will be included in those

152 Wyn Rees and Peter Magill (TIP0011), para 11

153 See Box 3, above and HM Government, Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023, CP 811, March 2023, , p 22, para 18

154 Council on Geostrategy (TIP0015), para 3

155 Q127 (Alessio Patalano)

critical facilities. The review process could also allow the Japanese Government to urge critical infrastructure companies to refrain from adopting vulnerable systems that can be more easily undermined by cyber attacks.<sup>156</sup>

### **Military and security cooperation**

175. The Integrated Review stated that “Japan is one of our closest strategic partners, including on security, and we are committed to deepening this partnership.”<sup>157</sup>

176. Japan’s military posture has changed in recent years. In 2001 it opened a requirement to use military power as part of its statecraft. This moved Japan away from having a purely deterrence-by-denial posture, towards one that uses military power to react to crises and shape regional environments. First in 2009 there was a growth in the scope of military power with Japan’s counter-piracy mission. Then in 2014–2015 the first National Security Secretariat was created and the first National Security Strategy was adopted, reorganising the way in which the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Office can integrate the use of military tools within their broader foreign and security policy. One example of this was the visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs Taro Kono to Brunei in 2018, to make the point that Japan was considering port visits as a strategic tool of foreign policy.<sup>158</sup>

177. In January 2023, as mentioned in the list of Tilt achievements in the Refresh, the UK (the first European country to do so) signed a Reciprocal Access Agreement with Japan that allows mutual Armed Forces deployment, accelerates defence and security cooperation, cements the UK’s commitment to Indo-Pacific security and allows both forces to plan and deliver larger scale, more complex military exercises and deployments. This is a substantial agreement and one welcomed by the Committee, although we would welcome enhanced maritime engagement and joint exercises with our partners in Japan to secure freedom of maritime movement, potentially in a trilateral format with India.

178. The UK and Japan are, with Italy, developing a new combat aircraft, the Tempest, to replace Typhoon. It is expected to be in service in the mid-2030s.<sup>159</sup> Building on this collaboration on defence technology, Japan is keen to join AUKUS. Therefore the Government could consider encouraging AUKUS partners to agree to expand AUKUS strand B to include Japan.

179. The intersection of developments in security and in the humanitarian policy area is a field in which Japan has traditionally demonstrated its capabilities in the Indo-Pacific region. As a result, one means to deepen engagement with Japan may be for the UK to learn more from Japan’s expertise in responding to both regional disasters and participation in peacekeeping operations.<sup>160</sup>

180. Japan has been a leader in providing conceptual thinking on human security and in providing and developing practical expertise in addressing insecurity. Japanese human security is focused on freedom from wants, including food and development. The Asian

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156 [Q134](#) (Mihoko Matsubara)

157 HM Government, *Global Britain in a competitive age: The Integrated Review of Defence, Development, Security and Foreign Policy*, [CP403](#), March 2021, p.62

158 [Q117](#) (Alessio Patalano)

159 Prime Minister’s Office, [PM announces new international coalition to develop the next generation of combat aircraft](#), 9 December 2022.

160 Catherine Jones ([TIP0006](#)), para 12

Development Bank (ADB) and JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency, Japan's overseas development agency) have developed programmes of assistance and support for the region. As an engaged party with the ADB, the UK can reinforce the work already done in the region through this body as well as through ASEAN.<sup>161</sup> Together we could also seek to support Taiwan to improve its food resilience.

### **Cyber security in the Indo-Pacific region**

181. The effect of Russia's renewed illegal invasion of Ukraine has been substantial for the Indo-Pacific on three fronts:

- Communications resiliency: the ability to withstand an emergency, be it a natural disaster such as flooding or human action such as a power failure or terrorist incident.
- The convergence of cyber and space security<sup>162</sup>: the Internet increasingly depends on space-enabled communication and information services, while at the same time the operation of satellites and other space assets relies on Internet-based networks, which makes these assets, like cars and medical equipment, devices on the Internet of Things.

182. During the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games 2020 in July to September 2021, there were 450 million cyber attacks, twice the number that hit the London 2012 Games. Japan's cyber defences prevented any disruption of Tokyo 2020. This success was due to:

- Threat intelligence and monitoring for corrupted and vulnerable defences.
- Total security solutions to enhance cyber hygiene, for example including:
  - ‘A Instituting a policy of regularly changing passwords.
  - ‘A Configuring firewalls to prohibit outside entities from accessing data resources.
  - ‘A Encrypting data at all stages to maintain its privacy in the event of data loss.
  - ‘A Backing up data regularly so critical systems can quickly be recovered.
- Talent development and red-teaming through numerous cyber exercises and awareness-raising training sessions.
- The inclusion of cyber security specialists from the beginning of the formation of the Tokyo 2020 oversight team in 2013<sup>163</sup>.

183. The success of Tokyo 2020 in fending off cyber threats was also due to cooperation between the public and private sectors in Japan and the sharing of cyber-security best practices by the UK Government and the City of London, which hosted the 2012 Games.<sup>164</sup>

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161 Catherine Jones ([TIP0006](#)), para 18

162 [Q120](#) (Mihoko Matsubara)

163 [Q132](#) (Mihoko Matsubara)

164 [Q132](#) (Mihoko Matsubara)

184. Japan has learned from the experience of Ukraine. Even though the damage caused by cyber attacks from Russia in Ukraine has been less than expected, that was due to Ukraine's massive efforts to strengthen its cyber defences in collaboration with the US, UK and other state actors since 2014. Another target of the Russians was communications infrastructure, so Ukraine has actively decentralised its communications infrastructure. SpaceX's Starlink satellite Internet service has demonstrated resiliency against jamming and cyber attacks. Chinese military researchers have argued that a combination of soft and hard kill methods could be used to make some Starlink satellites lose their functions. So Japan has learned that it needs to raise its defence capabilities in both cyber and space domains. There is ample scope for cooperation between the UK and Japan in these areas, and also trilaterally with Taiwan.<sup>165</sup>

### *Economic partnership with Japan*

185. The UK and Japan have a strong economic partnership, underpinned by a strong commitment to the global rules-based system and extensive trade and investment ties.<sup>166</sup>

186. There is scope for a further increase in bilateral services trade and the CEPA was a significant milestone in helping to achieve it. It provided greater opportunities for the UK and Japanese regulators to work towards mutual compatibility of their regulatory and supervisory frameworks for financial services. The CEPA also provides a framework for collaborating on issues such as sustainable finance and approaches to new financial services, and shape global industry standards by jointly engaging with international institutions including the G7, G20 and WTO. Industry is eager to partner with Japanese counterparts to explore how the financial sector can address demographic challenges accompanying the "silvering" of the UK and Japanese economies. UK and Japanese businesses can work together to develop innovative new models of finance to drive the silver market and ensure the sustainability of health and pension systems.<sup>167</sup>

### *Collaboration in science and technology*

187. The UK and Japan have a strong record of collaboration in science and technology. In recent years, the area of this cooperation has increased and become more diversified, largely because of increased funding through programmes such as the Fund for International Collaboration. Japan's investment in R&D has exceeded 3% of GDP for the past 16 years, standing at 3.51% in 2020, with a continued increase in the governmental science budget each year. UK researchers constitute the fourth largest group of visiting researchers to Japan (after China, the US and South Korea), accounting for 4.8% of the total. The UK is the third most popular destination for Japanese researchers on mid/long-term overseas placements (8.7% of the total).<sup>168</sup>

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165 [Q120](#) (Mihoko Matsubara)

166 In 2019, UK-Japan trade in services reached £13.1 billion, with financial services accounting for 56% of all UK services exports to Japan. Japan is the UK's sixth largest investment partner globally and second largest outside the EU-28 after the US, with two-way investment valued at £995.4 billion in 2018. Nearly 1,000 Japanese companies have a commercial presence in the UK, collectively employing more than 100,000 workers, with a majority of these jobs outside London. The UK is also used by many Japanese financial institutions as a strategic base for the Europe, Middle East and Africa region. TheCityUK ([TIP0002](#)), para 21

167 TheCityUK ([TIP0002](#)), para 22

168 UKRI ([TIP0018](#)), para 24

188. Collaboration with Japan is growing with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)-wide level engagement.<sup>169</sup> Japan offers potential for large-scale investment in UK science and technology and also for strong collaboration across strategically important technologies, including technology families outlined in the Innovation Strategy.<sup>170</sup>

189. The UK and Japan are broadly aligned in their approach to digital and data policy, with similar data protection regimes, attitudes towards digital infrastructure, cyber security, digital standards and ambitions to ensure the free flow of data globally and spur onward tech adoption and diffusion. UKRI has supported nearly 300 collaborative projects in 2012–2020.<sup>171</sup>

190. The UK already collaborates with Japanese partners across a number of multilateral initiatives, including CERN, the International Institutes for Applied Systems Analysis, SKA and the Belmont Forum. UKRI has partnered with Japanese funders to produce specific calls in several scientific specialisms.<sup>172</sup> Several areas have been identified for deeper engagement.<sup>173</sup>

**191. We welcome the UK-Japan Digital Partnership signed in December 2022, under which the two countries will cooperate more closely in 14 areas.** Pillar one is particularly important: digital infrastructure and technologies, which includes joint promotion of initiatives to ensure a reliable supply of semiconductors to strengthen resilience.

**192. We also welcome the signing of the UK-Republic of Korea bilateral framework of cooperation in June 2022 and the July 2022 data adequacy agreement signed between the UK and the Republic of Korea, as well as the February 2022 Digital Economy Agreement between the UK and Singapore.**

### *People-to-people links: education*

#### *Language teaching*

193. There is scope for improvement in communication between the UK and Japan. Over 90% of people in Japan cannot carry on a conversation in English, and the proportion of British people who speak Japanese is probably even smaller. More resources should be offered to increase English language teaching in Japan, primarily via the British Council, and more funding allocated for Japanese teaching in the UK with the involvement of the Japan Foundation, especially taster classes at secondary schools and the availability of Japanese GCSEs.

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169 According to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), UKRI-Japan Society for the Promotion of Science call inviting proposals within the social sciences and humanities that address COVID-19 challenges resulted in 170 applications for 10 awards. There was a similar level of demand for the previous joint call in Life Sciences. This highlights the strong demand from the UK community for further expansion of opportunities to support partnerships with Japan. Collaboration with Japan now covers all areas of UKRI at a high level of intensity and excellence. UKRI (TIP0018), p 25

170 UKRI (TIP0018), para 26

171 Between April 2012 and March 2020, UKRI and its councils funded 298 collaborative projects involving UK and Japanese researchers, totalling £240.7 million. Funding levels suggest a rich community of partners are already in place who could maximise opportunities. UKRI (TIP0018), para 28

172 Advanced materials; regenerative medicines and infectious diseases; life sciences; AI and society. -UKRI (TIP0018), para 30

173 Synthetic biology; AI and robotics; the Arctic; healthy ageing; advanced materials; clean energy; digital technologies; science in and for society. UKRI (TIP0018), para 31



194. While Japan is a large, stable, advanced economy, it ranks 29th on the World Bank's Doing Business index.<sup>174</sup> Foreign players face regulatory, linguistic and cultural challenges and English is not universally spoken. Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) is advancing a major reform of Japan's English education system, including the introduction of English as a formal subject at primary level and a new national syllabus. The UK should be positioning itself as the strategic partner for Japan on English language reform. Within this reform agenda, universities are encouraged to assess English language speaking ability as part of the university entrance tests. This change has the potential to catalyse wider change in the way that teachers are trained and in the way that English is taught.<sup>175</sup>

### *Educational technology*

195. Japan has one of the lowest usage rates of Educational Technology in classrooms, according to OECD data, with principals reporting that only 10% of students in Japan had lessons incorporating technology.<sup>176</sup> MEXT is making a major investment to upgrade IT infrastructure in schools across Japan and equip students with digital skills. In the higher education sector, there are plans to introduce a new national platform for online university courses. The UK is seen internationally as a leader in this area, having invested in Education Technology over many years.<sup>177</sup> There is clearly a strong potential for cooperation in this area.

### *Higher education exchanges*

196. There is huge potential for an increase in higher education exchanges between the UK and Japan. The number of UK students at Japanese universities is low: only 730 in 2019 and 550 in 2020, although we welcome that the Turing scheme already promises to be positively increasing outward mobility, awarding 1,169 mobilities for UK students to come to Japan in its first year.<sup>178</sup> In the 2020/21 academic year, there were only 3,000 students from Japan studying in UK higher education institutions, compared to 151,690 from China, 126,535 from India, 23,075 from Pakistan, 5,075 from South Korea and 4,920 from Nepal.<sup>179</sup> (For comparison, the population of Japan is 125.1 million, Korea 51.5 million and Nepal 30.5 million.)<sup>180</sup>

### *Joint research*

197. UK-Japan research collaboration is very high quality (at three times the world average and higher than with the US, China and Germany), but at a very low volume (less than 20,000 joint citations in the last five years). The UK should be seeking to resource joint calls in priority research fields to raise the volume of joint research and major joint projects. The British Council is providing seed funding for new joint research in the fields

174 [Ease of doing business in Japan](#), The World Bank Doing Business Archive (accessed on 8 July 2023)

175 British Council ([TIP0009](#)), para 3.10

176 OECD [Tackling coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Contributing to a Global Effort](#) (accessed on 8 July 2023)

177 British Council ([TIP0009](#)), para 5.8

178 Over 90% of Japan's international students are from Asia. British Council ([TIP0009](#)), para 5.3

179 [Higher Education Statistics Agency \(HESA\) website](#) (accessed on 4 July 2023).

180 [World Bank Population Data 2022](#) (accessed on 4 July 2023)



of climate change and healthcare through its higher education consortium RENKEI. It has also brought together UK and Japanese universities with partners in ASEAN to support clean growth in the Indo-Pacific region through new ODA-funded research projects.<sup>181</sup>

**198. *The Government should establish a timetable for signing a digital partnership agreement with the Republic of Korea similar to the one the UK has with Japan within the framework of the 2022 UK-Korea bilateral framework of cooperation. This should include cooperation on ensuring a reliable supply of semiconductors.***

**199. *The Government should support a formal agreement on closer engagement of AUKUS Strand B with Japan in the short term with a potential view to eventual Japanese membership of AUKUS, which would greatly strengthen AUKUS' role in the Indo-Pacific.***

**200. *The UK should negotiate with Japan an agreement on expanded cooperation on the teaching of English in Japan and Japanese in the UK.***

## North Korea

201. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) remains a major security threat, firstly to the Republic of Korea and to Japan, and then to all countries within reach of its missiles, which now potentially includes the countries of North America as North Korea is testing ICBMs. As it stated at the UN in June, the UK is firmly opposed to North Korea's missile tests and urges North Korea to return to dialogue and take credible steps towards denuclearisation.<sup>182</sup>

202. North Korea exerts a malign influence on the world, and supports the Russian renewed illegal invasion of Ukraine. It is not clear yet whether North Korea will supply weapons to Russia or send workers to help rebuild towns in Russian-occupied Ukraine.

203. North Korea is an active cyber security threat actor. In addition to gathering strategic information, North Korea is also leveraging cyber operations to generate government revenue at a time when it is heavily sanctioned.<sup>183</sup>

204. North Korea's foreign policy is the outward extension of its highly repressive domestic regime. The UK Government condemns systematic and widespread human rights violations there. The UK should prioritise supporting its partners in Japan and South Korea, and in particular recommend seeking deeper partnership with Japan on the taking of citizens as hostages, which Japan is seeing frequently with North Korea taking its people hostage.<sup>184</sup>

181 British Council (TIP0009), para 5.5

182 United Nations Security Council, Citing Growing Tensions on Korean Peninsula, [Top Peacebuilding Official Warns Security Council Pyongyang's Missile System 'Can Reach Most Points on Earth'](#), 13 July 2023

183 Q121 Jamie Collier

184 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan website, [Abductions of Japanese Citizens by North Korea](#) (accessed on 9 July 2023)

## India

205. We welcome the prominence given to India in the Refresh, specifically to developing cooperation in many policy areas, including security, trade and technology, and building on the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and implementing the UK-India 2030 Roadmap.<sup>185</sup>

206. The Indian economy has been experiencing strong growth and an expansion of its middle class, and is expected to continue doing so, potentially mirroring the expansion which has taken place in China since the opening and reform policy began 45 years ago.<sup>186</sup>

207. Protecting national interests requires a continuation of the UK's strong naval presence in the West Indian Ocean sector of the Indo-Pacific region that should be increasingly coordinated with like-minded countries, in particular France, the United States and India, to sustain and strengthen the UK's key role there. **India's partnership with Australia, Japan and the US in the Quad offers a golden opportunity to strengthen these defence ties and the UK should be directly involved in it as a full member.**<sup>187</sup>

208. While India is rightly focused on developing its own resilience, the country offers itself to the UK as an alternative source of low-tech labour-intensive products to China that can contribute an element of diversification to the UK's supply chain resilience strategy. Many businesses previously wholly reliant on China within its supply chains are now adopting a China +1 model, with India seeking to carve itself out, and well placed, to be the +1. Manufacturing in India is seen by some as the greatest prospect to build India's prosperity over the next decade. The reduction of risk from over-reliance on manufacturing in China to India would be productive. ***The UK Government should also review recent Indian legislation around transparency of ownership and consider whether any measures therein could be adopted in British legislation. The UK should prioritise big data, AI, biological engineering and tech manufacturing relationships with India. There is an opportunity for the UK to work with India in the joint shaping of global norms and standards for many areas of joint interest, in particular intellectual property, data and biological engineering.***

209. The UK and India have completed seven rounds of negotiations on the India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which should boost trade and investment between the two countries. **We are concerned that the pace of negotiations should be maintained so that agreement can be reached as soon as practicable.**

210. The UK and India have diverse interests, for reasons of history, geography and economics. India has not condemned the Russian renewed illegal invasion of Ukraine and Russian war crimes being perpetrated due to Putin's desire to achieve sovereignty through violence. At the same time, India has increased its trade with Russia, which is helping the Kremlin to mitigate the impact of sanctions. The Indian Government has also organised bogus "tax raids" to curb the BBC's freedom of expression in India and the UK and India

185 HM Government, Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023, [CP 811](#), March 2023, p 24 para 20

186 [How the middle class will play the hero in India's rise as world power](#), The Economic Times, 9 July 2023

187 When asked if it is the intention of the UK Government to apply to join the Quad, the Foreign Secretary told the Committee: "This is one of the areas we discussed in the AUKMIN meeting. We have not finalised that. A lot of the relationships that we are building with the region are strong enough and robust enough that it might mean that there is not a great deal of additional value. I am not saying no but we would need to assess it." [Q288](#) (James Cleverly)

have had disagreements over human rights in India (and the UK), especially around Kashmir. As a long-standing partner of India, the UK is well placed to reiterate that re-shoring with the world's largest democracy is an asset, and that adoption of autocratic tendencies would bring this into question.

211. The relationship between India and China is complex, and provides an opportunity for the UK to work with India to counter-balance the most aggressive instincts of the CCP in the Indo-Pacific. The Indian Government's shift to looking Eastwards, and wanting to be more assertive in this space, provides a natural point for co-operation. A specific investment in maritime co-operation, especially in Indo-Pacific oceans, has significant merit, whether it be focused on joint training, counter-trafficking, enhanced maritime security or protecting freedom of movement in international waters.

212. The relationship between the UK and India has developed rapidly in recent years. In the academic year 2020/21, the number of students from India in the UK's higher education sector reached a record 126,535, having increased sharply each year from only 9,945 in 2016/17.<sup>188</sup> If current trends are maintained, Indian students in the UK will outnumber Chinese students, whose number remained stable at 151,690 in 2020/21<sup>189</sup> and is forecast to edge down in future years for both demographic and geopolitical reasons, perhaps allaying concerns about the financial over-dependence of UK universities on Chinese students.

**213. *We recommend that the Government set a deadline for the early conclusion of negotiations on the India-UK FTA. Unless already included in the FTA, the Government should also consider negotiating agreements with India similar to the UK-Australia supply chain and critical minerals agreements to establish shared principles of supply chain risk identification and mitigation. The UK should seek to increase its reliance on India for manufacturing and pursue enhanced maritime security co-operation.***

**214. *The Government should also seek to support student numbers to grow from India, but also expand our Science and Technology co-operation, putting it at the centre of our ambitions with our Indian partners.***

## Indonesia

215. Indonesia is the most populous country in Southeast Asia, a G20 economy, the world's third biggest democracy, the largest Muslim-majority nation, a high-tech manufacturing economy, and prioritises freedom of movement in the South China Seas.<sup>190</sup> For these reasons, and because of its military posture,<sup>191</sup> and willingness to act as a counter-voice to China, the UK should make strengthened relations with Indonesia a priority,<sup>192</sup> though, given the UK's historic ties in the region, not necessarily its first priority.<sup>193</sup> Indonesia has traditionally acted in a leadership role within ASEAN, encouraging democratic norms and leading many of the region's governance innovations, so it could be a key national partner

188 [Higher Education Statistics Agency](#) (accessed on 6 July 2023)

189 [Higher Education Statistics Agency](#) (accessed on 6 July 2023)

190 Ben Bland (TIP0005), para 36

191 LSE IDEAS (TIP0017), para 30

192 Ben Bland (TIP0005), para 36

193 [Q158](#) (Gregory Poling)

within Southeast Asia for the UK.<sup>194</sup> ASEAN has a special position in Indonesian foreign policy because the ASEAN Charter is ratified into Indonesian law; no other charter that Indonesia has signed as a member of a multilateral forum is ratified legally.<sup>195</sup>

### *UK engagement and diplomatic capacity*

216. **The UK's approach to Indonesia should be underpinned by sufficient diplomatic capacity and greater political willingness than it is currently perceived to have.** The UK is viewed as inconsistent in its dealings with Indonesia, with few tangible outcomes being implemented. The UK Embassy is considered to have less diplomatic capacity compared to other European countries.<sup>196</sup>

217. The first challenge, which the Foreign Secretary has started to address, is to increase high-level political engagement with Indonesia. No UK Prime Minister has visited Jakarta since David Cameron in 2015, although Indonesian President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) came to London in 2016.<sup>197</sup> There have only been nine bilateral visits in the history of both countries. Most of the challenges in the bilateral relationship today are the same ones as on the first state visit to the UK in 1979.<sup>198</sup>

218. While Indonesia is a proudly independent country that avoids alliances with countries like the UK, it is important to bear in mind that such avoidance applies also to alliances with our competitor powers. The UK should focus on maintaining and developing cooperation with Indonesia in those areas in which we have common interests.<sup>199</sup>

### *Defence cooperation*

219. One area in which the UK and Indonesia can derive great benefit from such cooperation is the military sector, technological manufacturing and defence.<sup>200</sup> Indonesia is a country of 17,500 islands, so there is ample scope for cooperation between the UK and Indonesia on maritime security, which is a key priority in Indonesia's White Paper alongside our shared interest in protecting the freedoms of the South China Seas.<sup>201</sup> The UK could help with what it has learned in its own governance transformation in this area, whether through training, workshops or information sharing.<sup>202</sup> Joint maritime training exercises would be welcome.

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194 Asmiati Malik, Robert Yates and Scott Edwards (TIP0001), para 4.1

195 [Q148](#) (Shafiah Muhibat)

196 Asmiati Malik, Robert Yates and Scott Edwards (TIP0001), para 4.2

197 Ben Bland ([TIP0005](#)), para 37

198 [Q166](#) (Ben Bland)

199 Ben Bland suggested that while Indonesia's foreign policy is that of a non-aligned country trying to balance competing forces and it does not always agree with us, there is nevertheless great value in building a relationship with a country that will not always see eye to eye with us but also will not also see eye to eye with other great powers in the world. [Q167](#) (Ben Bland),

200 LSE IDEAS told us that collaboration in the military sector and defence diplomacy should be a priority. LSE IDEAS ([TIP0017](#)), para 31

201 Asmiati Malik, Robert Yates and Scott Edwards ([TIP0001](#)), para 4.6.1

202 Asmiati Malik, Robert Yates and Scott Edwards ([TIP0001](#)), para 4.6.4

220. Indonesia has positive experience in using its military to support society. It has experience in contributing to UN peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities.<sup>203</sup> Indonesia's highly-developed approach<sup>204</sup> makes it a potential mutual learning partner for the UK in these areas.

### **Economic engagement**

221. Both the UK and Indonesia also have much to gain from economic diplomacy, encompassing development cooperation but focused on boosting trade and investment. The expansion of the Indonesian middle class will offer many opportunities for UK companies willing to navigate the sometimes complicated but often rewarding business scene in Indonesia.<sup>205</sup> While Indonesia is not an easy place for foreigners to do business because of these complexities, a domestic market approaching 300 million people is too big to ignore.<sup>206</sup>

222. Despite Indonesia's status as an increasingly promising market for global investment and business, the UK's economic links with the country are particularly underdeveloped.<sup>207</sup> UK-Indonesia services trade in 2019 amounted to a mere £825 million, while in that year UK FDI stock in Indonesia was £7.1 billion, accounting for 0.5% of total UK outward FDI stock.<sup>209</sup>

223. The British Chamber of Commerce in Indonesia (Britcham) is increasingly important in enhancing relations between the UK and Indonesian business communities, yet there is a perceived lack of interest from the UK and Britcham is viewed as less proactive and institutionalised than its counterparts in neighbouring countries.<sup>210</sup>

224. Comparative advantage for foreign investment will increasingly be with high-tech manufacturing. Indonesia has made clear that it no longer wants to be primarily a mineral exporter and the Indonesian government is moving extraction into the domestic sphere. It wants foreign investment in the downstream industries, particularly processing and manufacturing. The digital economy may not be the most open or easy in the region, but it is the biggest; companies that want to make money in the digital service space have to have a presence in Indonesia.<sup>211</sup> There are also opportunities for UK business in the use of digital transactions, which has taken off post-pandemic, and in digital health.<sup>212</sup>

225. There are several priority areas for Indonesia where economic links with the UK are particularly welcomed: the blue economy; the green economy; coastal and marine management; offshore energy; moving the capital.

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203 Catherine Jones ([TIP0006](#)), para 9

204 Indonesia is a top ten contributor to UN peacekeeping operations. Its approach to peacekeeping focuses on engaging with local populations, seeking to build long-term sustainable peace initiatives that are resilient after peacekeepers have left, ensuring the conduct of peacekeepers is of the highest standards and they have adequate pre-deployment training and experience to be successful in their role. These are all areas where there are potential practical synergies with the UK. Catherine Jones ([TIP0006](#)), para 6

205 Ben Bland ([TIP0005](#)), para 38

206 [Q159](#) (Gregory Poling)

207 Asmiati Malik, Robert Yates and Scott Edwards (TIP0001), para 4.3

208 Ben Bland ([TIP0005](#)), para 39

209 TheCityUK ([TIP0002](#)), para 23

210 Asmiati Malik, Robert Yates and Scott Edwards (TIP0001), para 4.4

211 [Q159](#) (Gregory Poling)

212 [Q161](#) (Paddy Abbot)

**Box 4: Indonesia's priorities**

- **The blue economy:** Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country in the world, with 17,500 islands and a 72.6 million km<sup>2</sup> Exclusive Economic Zone. The fisheries sector contributes only 3.7% to GDP and has a USD950 billion potential. The UK could support the Indonesian government through knowledge sharing in sea conservation, fishery technology and aquaculture. Indonesia is keen to develop seaport infrastructure to maximise the export of marine products. This includes building new ports and creating smart sea-logistic management. Much of this is in East Indonesia, where industrial zones and special economic zones seek to make doing business easier. The UK could bridge potential cooperation with business-to-business schemes.
- **The green economy:** The Indonesian government is keen to use sustainable energy to achieve net-zero emissions and waste management targets. Its growing middle class, currently estimated at 52 million, creates increasing energy demands. The Government plans to produce 43 GW of energy by 2030, but it can only now provide 28.5 GW. The UK is well placed to assist in Indonesia's shift away from fossil fuels to more environmentally-friendly sources. This could take the form of knowledge sharing, production-sharing contracts or technological transfer.
- **Coastal and marine management:** Indonesia has been developing a coordinated response to maritime security issues through consolidation of the Indonesian Maritimes Security Agency (BAKAMLA) and the opening of its own Maritime Information Centre (IMIC). The UK has engaged in an innovative transformation of its own maritime governance through the opening of the Joint Maritime Security Centre (JMSC) in 2020. Indonesian maritime practitioners have a strong desire to engage in knowledge exchange to strengthen these efforts. The UK could use lessons learned in its own governance transformation, whether through training, workshops, or information sharing.
- **Offshore energy production and renewable energy:** Indonesia's growing population and rising living standards are creating increasing energy demands. Through the State Electricity Company and the General Plan of National Electricity, the Indonesian government has an ambitious plan to produce 43 GW of energy by 2030, compared to current output of 28.5 GW. The UK is well-placed to assist in Indonesia's shift away from fossil fuels to more environmentally-friendly sources. This could take the form of knowledge sharing, production-sharing contracts or technology transfer.
- **Moving the capital:** The Indonesian government has decided to move the capital to North Kalimantan to create a new economic centre there and reduce overcrowding in Jakarta. This development will create 1.3 million jobs and stimulate IDR 5.8 trillion in investment, 19% coming from the national budget and the rest from private finance. The new capital will require significant infrastructure such as hospitals, offices and universities. It will be founded on renewable energy and integrated public transport. The UK's expertise in education, renewable energy, modern farming, public transport and city management positions it as a desirable partner

Source: Asmiati Malik, Robert Yates and Scott Edwards (TIP0001)

226. The UK has a 30-year plus relationship with Indonesia in support of sustainability and development. This longevity has given the UK consistency and a unique long-term perspective. Work on low-carbon development, together with environmental and forestry work, has provided Indonesia with a demonstration of how to take forward sustainability initiatives in Southeast Asia, which is helpful to Indonesia in its presidency of ASEAN in 2023.<sup>213</sup>



### *Technological cooperation*

227. There is strong potential for technological cooperation with Indonesia, based on experience with existing projects such as the joint research and innovation programmes developed between UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and Indonesian partners on infectious diseases, hydrometeorological hazards and biodiversity.<sup>214</sup>

228. The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) is planning to develop a programme around clean energy transitions in island nations, in partnership with Indonesia. Research into sustainable energy islands, encompassing all possible energy technologies and solutions, would leverage UK leadership and expertise built through existing UKRI and wider programmes. Such a programme would facilitate mutual learning between the UK and Indonesia, building on existing UKRI investments and a number of relevant UK examples of implementing low-carbon, sustainable energy island solutions. This work would enable the application of smart energy technologies and solutions to the over 130 inhabited islands that make up the UK.<sup>215</sup>

229. The Indonesian government has a strategic focus on the sustainable management of biodiversity—balancing the need for conservation and economic development through natural resource management.<sup>216</sup>

### *Educational exchanges*

230. There is great potential for increased educational exchanges between the UK and Indonesia. While the UK has a broadly positive reputation in Indonesia, Indonesia is not as well known in the UK. Only one UK university, SOAS, offers advanced study of the Indonesian language.<sup>217</sup> There are over 3,000 Indonesian students at UK universities, but the reverse exchange is less evident.<sup>218, 219</sup>

231. Indonesia is one of the five priority countries named in the UK's International Education Strategy, reflecting strong potential for growth in educational provision there.<sup>220</sup> Indonesia has one of the world's largest tertiary education systems, with over 4,650 universities, of which the vast majority are private and only half are accredited.<sup>221</sup> Whilst access to higher education is growing, only 8.8% of the population has a tertiary qualification. The focus on skills and human capital development is a national policy priority. In 2016 there were 46,000 Indonesian students abroad.<sup>222</sup>

232. Under Jokowi's administration, foreign universities can open branches in Indonesia, with Monash University the first to do so.<sup>223</sup>

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214 UKRI ([TIP0018](#)), para 33

215 UKRI ([TIP0018](#)), para 35

216 For instance, the Newton Fund has funded the Wallacea Research Programme, which forms part of a wider programme of activities (funded by multiple partners) focused around Alfred Russell Wallace, and initiated by the Indonesian government, ends in 2021. There is appetite to build on the successes of this programme, outside the Newton Fund framework. UKRI ([TIP0018](#)), para 36

217 Ben Bland ([TIP0005](#)), para 42

218 Catherine Jones ([TIP0006](#)), para 10

219 The UK Higher Education Statistics Agency shows there were 3,690 in the 2020/21 academic year. [HESA](#)

220 British Council ([TIP0009](#)), para 7.1

221 British Council ([TIP0009](#)), para 7.2

222 British Council ([TIP0009](#)), para 7.3

223 Asmiati Malik, Robert Yates and Scott Edwards ([TIP0001](#)), para 4.5.3



233. The British Council is focused on building more partnerships, increasing mobility and the number of students in UK education, as well as strengthening English as a key enabler for Trans National Education (TNE). Research has been completed on the top 50 Indonesian universities to share with the UK. This complements the launch of new British Council Going Global Partnerships to encourage more TNE models between the two countries. The British Council is also working with the Indonesian Ministry of Education to advertise Indonesia International Student Mobility Awards, a pilot scheme running from 2021 to 2025. The Government is committed to establishing a technical working group to take forward recent recommendations for “a minimum level of proficiency certified by an English language test for Indonesian high schools and higher education institutions” that emerged from research with the British Council and the Indonesian Ministry of Education<sup>224</sup>

### ***Creative economy and the arts***

234. Indonesia is looking to be a major player in mainstreaming the global economy globally, as one of the steps to reach the Sustainable Development Goals. It initiated the Resolution for the International Year of the Creative Economy for Sustainable Development, passed by the UN General Assembly in November 2019. With its world-leading creative sector, there are clear opportunities for the UK to work with Indonesia to develop the creative and social economy. The British Council has worked with the Indonesian government on how these sectors can contribute more to both national development goals and as part of the post-COVID economic recovery strategy. Creative Economy is included within the UK-Indonesia Joint Trade Review.<sup>225</sup>

### ***Human rights and civil society engagement***

235. Indonesia has a long tradition of pluralism, freedom of religion and belief and inter-religious harmony, and is widely respected for its transition from authoritarian rule to democracy.<sup>226</sup> It remains the most vibrant democracy in Southeast Asia.<sup>227</sup>

236. Rising religious intolerance threatens to destroy these achievements; it was a major theme in the 2019 presidential election. Incidents of violence against religious minorities, particularly Christians, Ahmadiyya Muslims, Shi’a Muslims and adherents of religions or beliefs not recognised by the state, including indigenous traditional beliefs, continue periodically within a climate of impunity.<sup>228</sup>

237. The blasphemy laws have long been a cause of division, as they contain a very low threshold of requirements for evidence or proof of intent. The laws are misused for political reasons to silence dissent, criticism or debate. A Joint Ministerial Decree in 2008 prohibited promulgation of Ahmadiyya teachings and in 2011 the Minister of Religious Affairs called for the banning of the Ahmadiyya. There has been some improvement under President Joko Widodo, but intimidation and restrictions continue.<sup>229</sup>

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224 British Council (TIP0009), para 7.6

225 British Council (TIP0009), para 7.8

226 CSW (TIP0019), para 14

227 Ben Bland (TIP0005), para 43

228 CSW (TIP0019), para 16

229 CSW (TIP0019), para 18

238. The UK can enhance its engagement with civil society in Indonesia through development cooperation with local NGOs and also through facilitating connections between Indonesian NGOs and their counterparts in the region and beyond.<sup>230</sup>

239. The UK can also be more active in promoting digital rights and digital literacy in Indonesia. Indonesia has some of the world's most active social media users.

240. As set out in the UK-Indonesia Partnership Roadmap 2022 to 2024,<sup>231</sup> the two countries are planning to expand and deepen collaboration with Indonesia in the areas mentioned above. We welcome this long-term vision of a strategic partnership based on mutual benefit and respect, and the contribution it can make to peace, freedom and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

## Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands

241. While recognising the key role of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands in the Tilt to the Indo-Pacific, we have, for reasons of time and space, not devoted them as much attention as we would have liked.

### Australia and New Zealand

242. Australia and New Zealand are two of the UK's key allies in the Indo-Pacific. Like the UK, they are members of the Commonwealth, the Five Eyes and the FPDA as well as the CPTPP, of which both were founder members.

243. The Integrated Review set out ambitious objectives for developing the UK's relationship with both countries. It said that the UK will continue to invest deeply in partnerships with Australia and New Zealand (also Canada), based on shared history, values and people-to-people connections, including as members of the Commonwealth, and that the UK would continue to work bilaterally with each of them across foreign policy and security issues, intelligence, law enforcement and defence, including through the Five Eyes partnership. The Integrated Review also committed the UK to reach bespoke FTAs with Australia and New Zealand. More specifically, the Integrated Review said the UK would develop work with the Australian space agency.<sup>232</sup>

244. Bilateral negotiations on the FTAs with both Australia and New Zealand were successful. The UK signed an FTA with New Zealand in February 2022.<sup>233</sup> In March 2023 Parliament approved the UK-Australia FTA.<sup>234</sup>

245. The Refresh set as a major objective fulfilment of these FTAs, together with moving the AUKUS to the implementation phase and working with Australia, as well as Japan, Canada and South Korea, to develop approaches to strengthen collective economic resilience.<sup>235</sup>

230 Ben Bland ([TIP0005](#)), para 43

231 [UK-Indonesia Partnership Roadmap 2022 to 2024](#) (accessed on 6 July 2023)

232 HM Government, *Global Britain in a competitive age: The Integrated Review of Defence, Development, Security and Foreign Policy*, CP403, March 2021, pp 58, 61, 67, 101

233 HM Government, [UK and New Zealand sign comprehensive trade deal](#), 28 February 2022.

234 Legislation.gov.uk website, [Trade \(Australia and New Zealand\) Act 2023](#) (accessed 9 July 2023)

235 HM Government, *Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023*, CP 811, March 2023, p 24 para 20, p 28 para 31

246. In September 2022 the UK and Australia signed a Joint Supply Chain Resilience Initiative and in April 2023, three years after setting up a UK-Australia Critical Minerals Joint Working Group, and have also agreed a statement of intent to support the critical minerals sector.<sup>236</sup>

### **Pacific Islands**

247. The Pacific Islands countries are of great strategic importance. While not highly populated,<sup>237</sup> they are spread across hundreds of islands occupying 15% of the Earth's surface and are part of the Third Island Chain. While Australia and New Zealand continue to be strongly focused on the region, there is also a role for the UK to play in coordination with its allies there. An Australian Government White Paper in 2017 encouraged like-minded states like the UK to become more engaged in the Pacific Islands as a counterweight to an increased activity and influence of China.<sup>238</sup>

248. The Integrated Review made scant mention of the Pacific Islands within its broader Tilt to the Indo-Pacific, mentioning the Pacific Island Forum in passing as one of the regional organisations, like ASEAN, that the UK would work with.<sup>239</sup> The Refresh in 2023 added that the UK would deepen engagement with Pacific Island countries and regional resilience in the Pacific, supporting the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent as a founding member of the Partners in the Blue Pacific initiative.<sup>240</sup>

249. We welcome the launching of the Partners in the Blue Pacific by the UK, along with Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the United States, in June 2022.<sup>241</sup> PBP will enable better coordination between like-minded countries in support of Pacific-led initiatives by the Pacific Islands Forum.

250. We welcome the Foreign Secretary's visit to the Pacific Islands after his participation in the G7 meeting in Japan in April 2023<sup>242</sup> but regret that no Foreign Secretary had visited most of these countries since the 1970s. It is unfortunate, though understandable, that the Foreign Secretary had to cut short his visit to Samoa because of the crisis in Sudan.

251. Support for Pacific Islands needs to be long-term and consistent to dispel the current perception that the UK is only responding to increased diplomatic activity in the region by other countries, especially China. While China has the resources to supply infrastructure to the Pacific Island countries, it may be a less helpful partner than the UK in developing free and open societies, and a high-risk provider of security and defence.

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236 HM Government, [UK charges up ties with Western Australia in new critical minerals pledge](#), 4 April 2023

237 The World Bank estimates that its Pacific Islands member countries have a total population of only 2.3 million. [The World Bank in Pacific Islands](#), World Bank (accessed on 10 July 2023) This evidently excludes Papua New Guinea, which has a comparatively vast population among the islands of 10 million. [World Bank population data](#) (accessed on 10 July 2023).

238 [Australian Government 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper](#) (accessed on 10 July 2023)

239 HM Government, *Global Britain in a competitive age: The Integrated Review of Defence, Development, Security and Foreign Policy*, CP403, March 2021, p 66

240 HM Government, *Integrated Review Refresh: Responding to a more contested and volatile world 2023*, CP 811, March 2023, p 25 para 21

241 The White House, [Statement by Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States on the Establishment of the Partners in the Blue Pacific \(PBP\)](#), 24 June 2022.

242 HM Government, ["Partnering for the long haul": British Foreign Secretary visits Pacific nations](#), 18 April 2023

252. High-level visits are essential, but will only bear fruit if they result in more agreements like those that emerged from the Foreign Secretary’s 2023 visit to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, which covered areas such as clean energy, climate change mitigation, ocean protection, public health and supporting open societies and free media.<sup>243</sup>

253. The UK can play an important role in capacity building in the Pacific Islands. The sparse population of many islands impedes the development of administrative expertise, so that they may be reliant on outside assistance—for example on World Bank experts on short-term assignments—for policy formulation and oversight. The UK can help build self-sufficiency by training indigenous experts in both home and foreign policy areas. Setting up a Diplomatic Academy in the region would be an investment that could provide high returns in terms of closer and more effective diplomatic links between the UK and the Pacific Islands.

254. Another area in which the UK can provide capacity-building is that of human rights. The Pacific region has some of the highest rates of violence against women recorded in the world—twice the global average, with an estimated two in every three Pacific women impacted by gender-based violence. Along with high rates of violence, women and girls in the Pacific region experience persistent inequalities, including low levels of participation in decision-making, limited economic opportunities, and restricted access to basic services. The Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls (Pacific Partnership) brings together governments, civil society organisations, communities and other partners to promote gender equality, prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG), and increase access to quality response services for survivors.<sup>244</sup> Substantial work on tackling VAWG overseas was in progress in DfID at the time of the merger with the then FCO; we would like to know in how this work has developed, in particular in Pacific Island countries in cooperation with the Pacific Partnership, in the FCDO since then.<sup>245</sup>

***255. We encourage repeat visits by the Foreign Secretary to the Pacific Islands at appropriate intervals and recommend that the Government consider attending Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) meetings such as the PIF leaders meeting. We also recommend setting up a UK-Pacific Islands consultative body to widen and deepen cooperation between the UK and the Pacific Islands, in addition to continued focus on Partners in the Blue Pacific and expanded cooperation with individual Pacific Island countries.***

***256. The Government should explain if, and, if so, how it is supporting the Pacific Partnership and other efforts to end violence against women and girls (VAWG) in the Pacific Islands.***

243 HM Government, [“Partnering for the long haul”: British Foreign Secretary visits Pacific nations](#), 18 April 2023

244 [UN Women: Asia and the Pacific](#) (accessed on 10 July 2023).

245 [DfID Violence against women and girls overseas](#) (accessed on 10 July 2023)

## 11 Conclusion

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257. Our inquiry establishes that the Tilt to the Indo-Pacific region and its continuation as a long-term reorientation to that region is a necessary and welcome development of the UK's foreign policy. The Indo-Pacific is of crucial importance for the UK's economy and security, offering opportunities for trade and investment in a populous and rapidly developing area while also presenting challenges arising from dependence on sea routes that pass through choke points in the region and from the aggressive stance of the PRC to our allies and partners there.

258. It is vitally important that such a major policy shift be fully understood by all departments, as implementation requires a coordinated, whole-of-government approach if it is to be successful. It appears that there is confusion in Whitehall about the Tilt to the Indo-Pacific, stemming from a failure to explain the policy, and its implications for resource allocation, across Government.

259. Our recommendations are designed to rectify this shortcoming by requiring greater clarity on detail from the Government and by proposing concrete steps designed to help deliver the shift towards the Indo-Pacific region, thereby giving substance to the rhetoric.

260. We hope the Government's reconfirmed policy emphasis on the Indo-Pacific region will be sustained with the support of a continuing broad consensus for the foreseeable future and beyond.

# Conclusions and recommendations

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## Evolution of the Tilt

1. The Indo-Pacific Tilt served to confirm an existing trend of increasing engagement with countries in the Indo-Pacific region and demonstrated the intent of Government to persist with and deepen this engagement in the long term. However, there has been no explanation of the outcomes that the Government expects from the Tilt policy. The Government's inability to set out clearly the long-term objectives and outcomes of the Tilt, either in the form of a written strategy, or even before this Committee, risks failing to meaningfully deter the risks to UK sovereignty from a more aggressive People's Republic of China (PRC), and to take full advantage of the opportunities of greater engagement with the Indo-Pacific. (Paragraph 20)
2. Therefore, we welcome the Foreign Secretary's recognition that delivery of the Tilt's outcomes is by no means complete, that his statement provides long-term intent, and that the Government will be keen to ensure that it is supported by a correspondingly long-term shift in resources and a clearer enunciation of the outcomes to be achieved in coming decades. (Paragraph 23)
3. While we support a stronger foreign policy focus on the Indo-Pacific region, it should not be achieved at the expense of regions where we have historic and pressing commitments, in particular the Middle East. (Paragraph 25)
4. We welcome the realistic and pragmatic response in the Refresh to recent geopolitical events and trends, in particular the primary focus on the Euro-Atlantic and the establishment of the Indo-Pacific as a permanent pillar of the UK's international policy. (Paragraph 26)
5. We support the continued prioritisation of the UK's relationship with Indo-Pacific countries and all efforts to expand trade and investment links with one of the fastest growing regions of the world, which will benefit the economies of the UK and our partners globally. (Paragraph 28)
6. [The Refresh states that the Tilt was pursued largely through non-military instruments, such as diplomacy, trade, development, technological exchange and engagement with regional organisations, with only a modest increase in defence spending.] This stress on the use of diplomatic instruments should continue to the extent possible, alongside effective deterrence to minimise the risk of armed conflict. (Paragraph 29)
7. It is not yet clear whether the Tilt has achieved a permanent rebalancing of UK foreign policy. It will only have done so if prioritisation is maintained consistently over a long period during which relationships can be built and sustained on the basis of the original Tilt. (Paragraph 30)
8. *We welcome the acceptance in the Refresh of our recommendation that the Government work away from the word "tilt" to describe its policy towards the Indo-Pacific while continuing to prioritise the region. We also welcome the list of additional actions the Government proposes to take to implement its newly-described policy of making the*



*Indo-Pacific region a permanent pillar of UK foreign policy. We recommend that these initiatives, and the overall policy shift they embody, be sustained in a consistent way over a long period and that they be clearly communicated both to our own population and to our partner countries, including those in the Indo-Pacific region. (Paragraph 32)*

## Resources

9. [In the Refresh the Government states that it will double funding to build China capabilities across government to better understand China and allow the UK to engage confidently where it is in our interests to do so.] This is a welcome development, but no detail has been provided. (Paragraph 40)
10. [The Refresh is more specific in announcing that £20 million will be provided to enable the BBC World Service to protect all 42 World Service language services, support English language broadcasting and counter disinformation.] This is also a welcome development, though World Service language coverage still needs to be restored or initiated for several Indo-Pacific countries, for example, broadcasts in Malay (the language of Malaysia, a Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) ally) and Hokkien (spoken in Singapore, Taiwan and Fujian province of China) have been abandoned, and there have never been World Service broadcasts in two national languages of ASEAN countries which we wish to influence, Khmer (the language of Cambodia) and Lao—Cambodia and Laos are the two countries in Southeast Asia closest to China. (Paragraph 41)
11. The continuing high priority of the Indo-Pacific in the 2023 Refresh should be matched by a commensurately expanded resource allocation to ensure delivery. While welcoming the doubling of spending on China-facing capability and the £20 million more for the BBC World Service, there needs to be more transparency on the extent and distribution of additional funding for the UK's capability for the Indo-Pacific as a whole. (Paragraph 43)
12. *The Government should now explain how its prioritisation of the Indo-Pacific region will be translated into long-term resource allocation, for example in a reallocation of FCDO budget towards the Indo-Pacific and an increase in the number of diplomatic posts in the region, and it should indicate in which countries these will be located. (Paragraph 44)*
13. *The Government should enumerate extra expenditure more comprehensively and transparently than it has done in the Refresh. We welcome the doubling of funding to build China capabilities; this should be itemised in broad terms so that it is clear what kind of resources will be added. The Government should spell out what will be needed to strengthen diplomatic contact and people-to-people relationships with China, as promised in the Refresh, and how much extra this will cost. (Paragraph 45)*
14. *The Government should also ensure the commensurate uplift of CSSF funding for Indo-Pacific region is put in place. (Paragraph 46)*
15. *We recommend that the FCDO publish and implement a long-term, sustainable language strategy for Indo-Pacific languages, including targets for language learning, encouraging the establishment and/or expansion of language teaching in UK by*



*developing a plan to expand existing university departments or add new departments, as appropriate, supported with additional Government funding, and adjusting diplomat posting and rotation policy to ensure optimal use of foreign languages learned. (Paragraph 47)*

16. *While welcoming the extra £20 million to be spent on the BBC World Service, including for protecting the 42 foreign languages in which it broadcasts, we recommend that World Service coverage should be restored in languages which have been discontinued (Malay and Hokkien) and initiated in important Indo-Pacific languages in which the World Service has not yet broadcast (Khmer and Lao). (Paragraph 48)*

## Strategy for the People's Republic of China

17. *The Government should urgently publish an unclassified version of its China Strategy to ensure cross-Government coherence and also publish sector-specific guidance to support, in particular, industries of critical national importance, national security, or data-intensive industries. It must also ensure all relevant Ministers have been briefed on the higher classification version. (Paragraph 59)*
18. [We believe that the activities outlined in the report, such as the attack on demonstrators outside the Chinese consulate in Manchester. are not isolated incidents, but rather a sustained attempt by the PRC to intimidate expats and dissidents from China and Hong Kong living abroad into refraining from holding or expressing certain views or beliefs. The CCP is working to silence anyone willing to voice criticism against its most egregious acts.] In addition to reactively addressing such incidents as they occur, the UK must work with allies to proactively communicate to the PRC that such a policy is unacceptable. The Government should work to raise this issue at international fora, and in conversations when engaging directly with the Chinese Government. (Paragraph 64)
19. *The Government must recognise repeated attacks on Hong Kong dissidents as part of wider PRC policy of repression, and proactively challenge this behaviour and communicate the unacceptability of such a policy directly with representatives of the PRC. (Paragraph 65)*
20. *We welcome the Government's China policy statement in general terms in the Refresh. However, this policy now needs to be fleshed out so that practitioners such as academics and businesspeople can be fully aware of the limits within which they can operate with and in China. The FCDO should explain the rationale and method by which it intends to separate issues over which there is contention with China from those on which it seeks close cooperation with China, especially in areas such as trade and educational links, where the line of demarcation is not always clear. (Paragraph 69)*
21. *In the absence of a publicly available, and practical, strategy for business, academia, civil society and others to adhere to, it is vital that the Government updates existing legislation and guidance in an urgent and clear manner so that organisations can understand the parameters within which they should be operating. The Procurement Bill was a good example of important legislation to give businesses a clear steer on what the Government perceives as acceptable and unacceptable procurement practices, but this needs to be undertaken in an urgent and structured manner. (Paragraph 70)*

22. *The Government should have had a policy of zero tolerance of transnational repression. It is unacceptable that this has not been the position up to now. It should now announce a clear policy of zero tolerance of transnational repression and be prepared to expel any foreign diplomats who engage in intimidation of, or physical attacks on, British Citizens or those who seek refuge on UK shores. If the Government is unwilling to defend its own people at home, and those seeking safety, it will lose all credibility at claims or attempts to deter autocracies and aggression abroad. The Government should be prepared to assert that defence is not an escalation. (Paragraph 71)*
23. We must recognise that all pillars of society are under attack from autocracies and that our resulting defence against them must be a defence of all of our society. (Paragraph 73)
24. *The Government should intensify its efforts to discourage the use of superficially harmless technologies (e.g. Hikvision surveillance cameras) which are capable of being used for remote data harvesting. The Government should also launch a national discussion around data release, and data exfiltration, so that the public are better equipped to make responsible decisions about their own data. (Paragraph 86)*
25. *The Government recognises the threat that the Chinese Communist Party could use economic coercion to influence UK decision making by targeting strategically critical sectors. The Government has not taken adequate action to tackle this threat. It must work to identify which technologies, infrastructure and components the UK is most dependent on China for, and plan to mitigate dependencies. Priority should be afforded to areas where such technologies are embedded in Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) and the Internet of Things. The Government should create a strategic dependency risk assessment of technologies, infrastructure and components embedded in Critical National Infrastructure. (Paragraph 87)*
26. *Cross-government and external agency coordination in mitigating the risk of technological dependence on China is uneven and disjointed. The Government should create a central CNI list to improve coordination and clarify areas of priority. With the technology sector now dominated by a few key players, we are now over-reliant on Chinese technology. This is the direct result of deliberate, carefully directed and well-coordinated CCP policy to create dependence. We cannot overcome this dependence without an equally well-coordinated resilience strategy. (Paragraph 88)*

## Alliances and partnerships

27. [Neither the Integrated Review (IR) nor the Refresh mentions the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), the world's largest trade bloc, which, though China-dominated, includes the UK's allies in the Indo-Pacific, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. (The UK is a founding member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), another Chinese initiative). The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF, launched by the US in 2022) was not mentioned in the IR because it was formed after publication; however, it is also not mentioned in the Refresh.] These are major omissions. The Government should explain its stance towards these bodies, even if it is, as the Foreign Secretary has indicated, too early to decide on applying to join them. (Paragraph 91)

28. *The Government should publish, by December 2023, an assessment of progress made to date in the development of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), for example to what extent it might serve UK interests and objectives in the Indo-Pacific and how it interacts with other multilateral initiatives such as the CPTPP and the G7's Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment. At the same time, the Government should publish an assessment of the role of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in the Indo-Pacific with a view to considering seeking to join it, including an evaluation of its effect on UK interests in the region, an independent estimate of its potential to increase trade and incomes in the Indo-Pacific, and an assessment of its advantages and disadvantages, particularly vis-à-vis the CPTPP. It is our view that to compete with the PRC's efforts to create mirror or standalone economic organisations, the UK can—but only when it is strictly necessary—play a role through participation, to prevent these organisations overly creating economic reliance on the PRC and its approach to international standards. (Paragraph 92)*
29. *The Government should explore and exploit opportunities for further developing of people-to-people and defence/security links with Commonwealth countries in the Indo-Pacific region, based on historical ties and shared values. (Paragraph 93)*
30. [While stressing the importance of AUKUS, the Refresh makes no mention of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (the Quad) established in 2007 and renewed since 2017 between Australia, India, Japan and the United States. We heard differing opinions from witnesses on whether the UK should apply to join the Quad, with some strongly supporting UK membership, others suggesting that it is too early to consider this now and one group against the proposal altogether. While understanding the reservations,] we see advantage in working with the Quad to develop a coordinated strategy covering the whole Indo-Pacific maritime area, and applying to join the Quad at such time as the existing members feel is appropriate. (Paragraph 95)
31. *Given the strength of our bilateral defence relationships with Quad members and the correlation between the UK's and Quad's objectives, the UK should seek to join the Quad. (Paragraph 96)*
32. A Free and Open Indo-Pacific is the right basis for cooperation between widely differing countries in the region on common policy areas, as it establishes basic principles on which like-minded countries can agree and then move on to fashion shared approaches to putting them into practice. Again, if we wish to prevent the undermining of international standards and the values of the rules-based system, our joining some Indo-Pacific specific organisations is crucial, to support our allies and uphold those values. The PRC should not perceive, or falsely portray, increased multilateral partnership and engagement as being hostile, or directed at the PRC. Any effort to do so should be exposed for the false narrative that it is. (Paragraph 97)
33. *The Government should propose to Australia and the United States that Japan and South Korea be invited to join an AUKUS technological defence cooperation agreement focused on Strand B activities only. (Paragraph 101)*

34. In the face of challenges such as the more aggressive role of China in the South China Sea, the Five-Power Defence Arrangements, with their solid history of military cooperation, could be a firm basis for a wider regional alliance in Southeast Asia. (Paragraph 102)

## Human rights and the Rules-Based International Order

35. *The Government should explain whether it is adopting a two-track approach: negotiating trade agreements separately from discussions on human rights, or a conditional approach: in which trade deals are explicitly linked to—and limited by—our trading partner’s human rights record.* (Paragraph 107)
36. It is unacceptable that trade should be prioritised over human rights to the extent that states that regularly violate human rights can continue to do so unsanctioned and our consumers, wittingly or unwittingly, participate indirectly by buying products made in inhumane conditions. (Paragraph 108)
37. *The Government has as yet failed to sanction any companies for human rights abuses within their supply chains, demonstrating a lack of resolve towards preventing Uyghur forced labour products from flooding the UK. The Government should rectify this.* (Paragraph 109)
38. *The Government must not be silent on human rights abuses, including state hostage-taking, by autocracies like the PRC and should use its status as a permanent member of the UN Security Council to denounce such abuses and coordinate action to end them.* (Paragraph 110)

## Capacity building

39. *The Government should establish a Diplomatic Academy in the Indo-Pacific region to build capacity in foreign policy formulation and diplomatic representation in partner governments that wish to make use of it. This would be a projection of soft power and the strength of rule of law and governance structures which will reinforce the economies and resilience of partner countries.* (Paragraph 124)
40. *The Government could also seek to pursue programmes such as those suggested above [in the Capacity building chapter] through unifying organisations such as the Commonwealth grouping, and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.* (Paragraph 125)

## Freeing up movement

41. *The Government should assess Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) provisions supporting business mobility alongside existing commitments in bilateral agreements with countries in the Indo-Pacific such as the FTAs with Australia and New Zealand.* (Paragraph 131)
42. *We recommend that the Government examine current visa procedures with a view to facilitating entry for those visiting the UK from Indo-Pacific partner countries for purposes such as studying, teaching or doing business.* (Paragraph 132)

## ASEAN

43. It is vital to pursue links with Southeast Asian countries on both multilateral and bilateral tracks, respecting different value-systems and cultures. (Paragraph 135)
44. *We recommend that as well as taking full advantage of the UK's recently acquired status as a Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, the UK should begin negotiations for an FTA with ASEAN, and concentrate equally on building bilateral relationships with ASEAN members based upon cooperation on those countries' development objectives and UK expertise and experience in such areas as maritime security, finance, environmentally-friendly agriculture and technology.* (Paragraph 137)
45. *A proximate objective should be the signing of wide-ranging agreements, like those the UK has with Malaysia and Indonesia, with other ASEAN member countries as appropriate, and where possible upgrading existing strategic partnership agreements to Economic and Financial Dialogues.* (Paragraph 138)
46. *Official Development Assistance (ODA) in the region should be targeted on regulatory improvement to strengthen the rule of law and build an effective business environment to encourage both domestic and inward investment. Progress on this should be measured by establishing a model composed of indicators based on World Bank and OECD business-friendliness criteria against which each country can be assessed annually.* (Paragraph 139)

## Countries

### Taiwan

47. *The UK Government should support visits by trade, science and education ministers both inward and outward with Taiwan.* (Paragraph 151)
48. *Now that the UK is a full member of CPTPP it can and should campaign for Taiwan to be admitted.* (Paragraph 155)
49. [The UK's "One China" policy is not the same as China's "One China" principle. Rather than agreeing to China's claim to Taiwan, the UK, like other liberal democracies, merely acknowledges Beijing's position.] This policy of acknowledgment needs to be better understood across Whitehall departments to prevent policymakers from misspeaking or acting over-cautiously when it comes to interacting with Taiwan and Taiwanese officials. As part of this, the importance of the Taiwan strait, as a safeguard, should be understood. (Paragraph 165)
50. The UK needs to build on its existing cooperation with Taiwan and with like-minded partner countries to help achieve Taiwan's peaceful objectives and strengthen its resilience. This is not a threat to the CCP, but a friendship with a fellow democracy. (Paragraph 166)
51. *The UK Government must identify meaningful activities, and red lines, that enable it to shape and pursue an effective policy of deterrence diplomacy to contribute to*



*the protection of the right of self-determination of the people of Taiwan. The last two decades are mired in failures to deter autocratic countries from pursuing sovereignty through violence and coercion. (Paragraph 168)*

52. *The UK should engage with Taiwanese and other major companies to secure inward investment in the semiconductor and wind industries in the UK to enhance resilience by building an alternative supply source for advanced semiconductors and wind energy components, whether this involves onshoring or friendshoring. (Paragraph 169)*
53. *The Government should press for Taiwan to take its place in international bodies, including the WHO, the OECD, the IEA and the CPTPP, for the benefit of all countries. (Paragraph 170)*
54. *We recommend that the Government this year publish a plan to scale up its cooperation with Taiwan over the next five years on English language teaching in Taiwan and Mandarin teaching in the UK to meet the requirements of Taiwan's Bilingual 2030 programme and the UK's need to reduce dependence on Confucius Institutes, especially in secondary schools where breaches of freedom of speech will be an issue, just as they have been in universities. (Paragraph 171)*

### **Japan and Korea**

55. We welcome the UK-Japan Digital Partnership signed in December 2022, under which the two countries will cooperate more closely in 14 areas. (Paragraph 191)
56. We also welcome the signing of the UK-Republic of Korea bilateral framework of cooperation in June 2022 and the July 2022 data adequacy agreement signed between the UK and the Republic of Korea, as well as the February 2022 Digital Economy Agreement between the UK and Singapore. (Paragraph 192)
57. *The Government should establish a timetable for signing a digital partnership agreement with the Republic of Korea similar to the one the UK has with Japan within the framework of the 2022 UK-Korea bilateral framework of cooperation. This should include cooperation on ensuring a reliable supply of semiconductors. (Paragraph 198)*
58. *The Government should support a formal agreement on closer engagement of AUKUS Strand B with Japan in the short term with a potential view to eventual Japanese membership of AUKUS, which would greatly strengthen AUKUS' role in the Indo-Pacific. (Paragraph 199)*
59. *The UK should negotiate with Japan an agreement on expanded cooperation on the teaching of English in Japan and Japanese in the UK. (Paragraph 200)*

### **India**

60. [Protecting national interests requires a continuation of the UK's strong naval presence in the West Indian Ocean sector of the Indo-Pacific region that should be increasingly coordinated with like-minded countries, in particular France, the United States and India, to sustain and strengthen the UK's key role there.]



India's partnership with Australia, Japan and the US in the Quad offers a golden opportunity to strengthen these defence ties and the UK should be directly involved in it as a full member. (Paragraph 207)

61. *The UK Government should review recent Indian legislation around transparency of ownership and consider whether any measures therein could be adopted in British legislation. The UK should prioritise big data, AI, biological engineering and tech manufacturing relationships with India. There is an opportunity for the UK to work with India in the joint shaping of global norms and standards for many areas of joint interest, in particular intellectual property, data and biological engineering.* (Paragraph 208)
62. [The UK and India have completed seven rounds of negotiations on the India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which should boost trade and investment between the two countries.] We are concerned that the pace of negotiations should be maintained so that agreement can be reached as soon as practicable. (Paragraph 209)
63. *We recommend that the Government set a deadline for the early conclusion of negotiations on the India-UK FTA. Unless already included in the FTA, the Government should also consider negotiating agreements with India similar to the UK-Australia supply chain and critical minerals agreements to establish shared principles of supply chain risk identification and mitigation. The UK should seek to increase its reliance on India for manufacturing and pursue enhanced maritime security co-operation.* (Paragraph 213)
64. *The Government should also seek to support student numbers to grow from India, but also expand our Science and Technology co-operation, putting it at the centre of our ambitions with our Indian partners.* (Paragraph 214)

### **Indonesia**

65. The UK's approach to Indonesia should be underpinned by sufficient diplomatic capacity and greater political willingness than it is currently perceived to have. (Paragraph 216)

### **Pacific Islands**

66. *We encourage repeat visits by the Foreign Secretary to the Pacific Islands at appropriate intervals and recommend that the Government consider attending Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) meetings such as the PIF leaders meeting. We also recommend setting up a UK-Pacific Islands consultative body to widen and deepen cooperation between the UK and the Pacific Islands, in addition to continued focus on Partners in the Blue Pacific and expanded cooperation with individual Pacific Island countries.* (Paragraph 255)
67. *The Government should explain if, and, if so, how it is supporting the Pacific Partnership and other efforts to end violence against women and girls (VAWG) in the Pacific Islands.* (Paragraph 256)

# Annex 1: Indo-Pacific flashpoint policy simulation

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## Indo-Pacific flashpoint policy simulation, March 2022: high-level findings

- 1) In March 2022, the Foreign Affairs Committee (FAC) launched a pilot programme of three policy simulations. These simulations focus on fictitious but plausible future scenarios and are intended to inform parliamentary scrutiny of Government policy by enabling members of Committees to explore and anticipate future policy questions and needs.<sup>246</sup>
- 2) This Annex offers a high-level presentation of the outcomes and areas of focus that emerged from the first policy simulation, which took as its scenario a major crisis in the Indo-Pacific in 2027. Held in March 2022, this simulation involved: members of the FAC as the country teams' national decision-makers;<sup>247</sup> academics and diplomats as policy advisers; and Committee staff as team managers. A more detailed analysis was made available to the Committee and its staff after the simulation with a view to informing the FAC's Indo-Pacific inquiry.

## Purpose and outline of the Indo-Pacific simulation

- 3) The simulation was designed to explore the international implications of a major crisis in the Indo-Pacific, involving an escalation of tensions across the Strait of Taiwan, with specific reference to the UK. In particular, the simulation and its attendant scenario was designed to draw upon the methodology of 'dynamic learning' to:
  - i) Understand what such a crisis might look like and the factors shaping the way in which it developed; and
  - ii) Identify the ways in which the UK might engage with the crisis and shape its outcomes.

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<sup>246</sup> The game design and scenario for each simulation in the pilot programme have been developed and delivered by Committee staff in collaboration with a specialist game design company, Stone Paper Scissors. In doing so, the Committee has drawn on, and benefited, from wide-ranging academic and diplomatic expertise. The Specialist Adviser for the first simulation on a major crisis in the Indo-Pacific was Professor Alessio Patalano, Professor of War and Strategy in East Asia at the Department of War Studies, King's College London. Professor Patalano declared the following interests: Professor of War & Strategy in East Asia at the Department of War Studies (DWS), King's College London (KCL); Fellow, Royal Historical Society (FRHistS); Visiting Professor, *Japan Maritime Command and Staff College* (JMCSC); Adjunct Fellow, *Institute of Contemporary Asian Studies*, Temple University Japan; Senior Fellow, *Policy Exchange*, Senior Fellow, *Royal United Services Institute* (RUSI).

<sup>247</sup> Participation in the first simulation was restricted to Members of the FAC. Subsequent simulations have also involved participants from other Committees of the House of Commons and House of Lords.

- 4) The scenario was set in 2027.<sup>248</sup> This date allowed Members to test relevant assumptions of the 2021 Integrated Review,<sup>249</sup> which the Government intended to implement by 2025. Five countries were played by members of the FAC: Australia; China; Japan; Taiwan; and the UK. Two design choices informed the outcome of the simulation in particular: the decision to test a more ambiguous scenario in which tensions were escalating over potential changes in the status of territorial claims; and the decision to focus on testing countries' responses by representing the United States as an independent variable.<sup>250</sup>
- 5) The analysis of the dynamics of this one-off simulation held under limited time conditions should be regarded as indicative, reflecting only the nature of this specific policy game. Nevertheless, it was possible to draw clear areas of focus that the Committee might wish to pursue within its Indo-Pacific inquiry.

### Potential areas for consideration during the FAC's Indo-Pacific inquiry

- 6) An analysis of the simulation dynamics and data capture highlighted two priorities and multiple related questions for the FAC to consider in its inquiry on the Indo-Pacific:

#### *What are the UK's core interests in the Indo-Pacific?*

- 7) The Integrated Review clearly set out the significance of the Indo-Pacific within the context of the stability of the international order. However, the simulation highlighted the importance of a shared understanding of specific UK interests in the region—among the UK and its allies—both during a potential the crisis and in terms of regional perceptions of what the UK could offer in general.
- 8) Suggested area of focus for the FAC's Indo-Pacific inquiry: a clearer understanding of i) UK interests in the Indo-Pacific and ii) ways to communicate them domestically and internationally.
- 9) Within this context, the following questions could also be addressed:
- How should UK direct and indirect interests in the Indo-Pacific be defined—including those unfolding from key relationships with regional and European allies and partners, and regional organisations?
  - How should the bilateral relationship with Taiwan be developed?

248 This was the date by which China's National People's Congress has committed to being "on track" to achieving a "world class military" by mid-century. Several senior US military personnel have also identified 2027 as the point by when the Chinese political leadership expects the country's military to possess the capabilities to invade Taiwan. See, for example, Admiral Davidson [testimony](#) to Senate Armed Services Committee; General Mark Milley, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, [Full Testimony Transcript on 2022 Budget Request](#), Washington, DC, 23 June 2021

249 HM Government, *Global Britain in a Competitive Age: The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy*, [CP 403](#), March 2021

250 The US was a non-played entity represented by the Control Team. Teams could consult with the US but it was not an active player.

- How should the UK network its bilateral, minilateral and multilateral relationships in the Indo-Pacific, including with European allies and via defence arrangements such as AUKUS?<sup>251</sup>
- How can the UK ‘shape’ regional security and competition through pursuit of medium- and long-term policy objectives, rather than ‘reacting’ to regional crises?

***Does the UK possess adequate institutional capacity to pursue its interests in the Indo-Pacific?***

10) Even before the Integrated Review was published, the UK had started to re-engage in the Indo-Pacific region using a variety of capabilities from across Government—from the regular and persistent deployment of naval assets, to the work conducted by the British Army in Brunei, and strengthened relations through ASEAN and CPTPP. However, the simulation highlighted the implications of regional crises for the UK, especially in its capacity to articulate and implement responses.

11) Suggested area of focus for the FAC’s Indo-Pacific inquiry: a clearer assessment of the UK’s existing institutional capacity for policy action in the Indo-Pacific across Government departments, with a view to identifying possible, desirable and necessary levels of capacity.

12) Within this context, the following questions could also be addressed:

- What is the level of regional specialisation across the Government, especially within the FCDO and MoD but also within departments such as those for Transport, Trade, and Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (now Business and Trade, and also Science, Innovation and Technology)?
- How is expertise on the Indo-Pacific developed, retained and shared across the UK Government?
- Are current resources and structures adequate to meet present and future needs and to coordinate across Government, especially when working with regional mechanisms?
- How does the UK Government develop its understanding of regional security perceptions, architecture and crisis-response mechanisms—create ‘muscle memory’ within Government and established channels for UK action within the region?

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251 Such defence arrangements would now also include the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP), a multilateral initiative to develop a next-generation fighter by 2035, announced by the UK, Italy and Japan in December 2022. [Joint Leaders’ Statement: UK-Italy-Japan: 9 December 2022](#), 9 December 2022, (accessed 10 July 2023)

## Annex 2: Visit to Taiwan

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We visited Taiwan from 30 November to 2 December 2022 and met members of the government of the Republic of China (Taiwan), including President Tsai Ing-wen, Premier Su Tseng-chang, Minister of Foreign Affairs Joseph Wu, Minister of Economic Affairs Wang Mei-Hua, National Development Council Minister Kung Ming-Hsin, Deputy Minister of the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) Chiu Chui-Cheng, Secretary-General of the National Security Council Wellington Koo and Deputy Secretary-General of the National Security Council Hsu Szu-Chien.

We also met, separately, the Legislative Yuan Foreign and National Defence Committee and members of the opposition Kuomintang (KMT) Party.

We held discussions with civil society groups in association with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy and were briefed on the business environment in Taiwan by UK companies operating in Taiwan, including Standard Chartered, HSBC, ARM and Oxford Instruments.

# Formal minutes

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**Tuesday 18 July 2023**

## **Members present**

Alicia Kearns, in the Chair

Sir Chris Bryant

Neil Coyle

Drew Hendry

Henry Smith

Graham Stringer

## **Implementing the Integrated Review: Tilt to the Indo-Pacific**

Draft Report (*Tilting horizons: the Integrated Review and the Indo-Pacific*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

*Ordered*, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 260 read and agreed to.

Annexes and Summary agreed to.

*Resolved*, That the Report be the Eighth Report of the Committee to the House.

*Ordered*, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

*Ordered*, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available (Standing Order No. 134).

## **Adjournment**

Adjourned till Tuesday 5 September at 2.00 pm.



## Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

### Tuesday 26 October 2021

**Professor Rory Medcalf**, Head, National Security College, Crawford School of Public Policy

[Q1–21](#)

### Tuesday 26 October 2021

**Dr Jack Holland**, Associate Professor in International Relations/Security, University of Leeds; **Dr Sidharth Kaushal**, Research Fellow, Royal United Services Institute

[Q22–49](#)

### Tuesday 16 November 2021

**Michael Reilly**, Former British Representative to Taiwan, Member, Advisory Board, Global Taiwan Institute; **Dr Alessio Patalano**, Professor of War and Strategy in East Asia, King's College London, Senior Fellow, Policy Exchange; **Jason Hsu**, Former Taiwanese MP; Tech Entrepreneur

[Q50–115](#)

### Tuesday 05 July 2022

**Dr Alessio Patalano**, Professor of War & Strategy in East Asia, King's College London; **Dr Jamie Collier**, Senior Threat Intelligence Advisor, Mandiant; **Mihoko Matsubara**, Chief Cybersecurity Strategist, NTT Corporation

[Q116–135](#)

**Bill Emmott**, Writer and Consultant, Former Editor-in-Chief, The Economist; **Robert Ward**, Japan Chair, International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)

[Q136–147](#)

### Tuesday 22 November 2022

**Shafiah Muhibat**, Deputy Executive Director for Research, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Jakarta; **Gregory Poling**, Senior Fellow and Director, Southeast Asia Program and Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Washington, D.C.; **Patrick Abbot**, UK Director, NIRAS Development Consulting, Managing Director, LTS International

[Q148–165](#)

**Ben Bland**, Director of the Asia-Pacific Programme, Chatham House, Former Director of the Southeast Asia Programme, Lowy Institute; **Jurgen Haacke**, Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, London School of Economics (LSE); **Aaron Connelly**, Senior Fellow for Southeast Asian Politics and Foreign Policy, International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)

[Q166–181](#)

### Tuesday 10 January 2023

**Asoke Mukerji**, Former Indian Ambassador to the United Nations; **Sir Dominic Asquith KCMG**, Former British High Commissioner to India

[Q182–193](#)

**Walter Ladwig III**, Senior Lecturer in International Relations, King's College London; **Garima Mohan**, Senior Fellow, The German Marshall Fund of the United States; **Aman Hingorani**, Lawyer and mediator, Supreme Court of India; **Mosharraf Zaidi**, Journalist and CEO, Tabadlab

[Q194–220](#)

**Monday 12 June 2023**

**Rt Hon James Cleverly MP**, Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; **Sir Philip Barton KCMG OBE**, Permanent Under-Secretary, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

[Q221-292](#)

## Published written evidence

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The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

TIP numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

- 1 Bland, Mr Ben (Director of the Southeast Asia Program, Lowy Institute) ([TIP0005](#))
- 2 British Council ([TIP0009](#))
- 3 CSW ([TIP0019](#))
- 4 Cambridge Middle East and North Africa Forum ([TIP0010](#))
- 5 Council on Geostrategy ([TIP0015](#))
- 6 Edwards, Dr Scott (Research Associate, University of Bristol); Malik, Dr Asmiati (Advisor, Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Indonesia); and Yates, Dr. Robert (Lecturer, University of Bristol) ([TIP0001](#))
- 7 FCDO ([TIP0021](#))
- 8 Germond, Dr Basil (Senior Lecturer, Lancaster University) ([TIP0012](#))
- 9 Hingorani, Dr. Aman (Lawyer & Mediator, Supreme Court of India) ([TIP0023](#))
- 10 Jennion, James ([TIP0020](#))
- 11 Jones, Dr Catherine (Lecturer, University of St Andrews) ([TIP0006](#))
- 12 LSE IDEAS ([TIP0017](#))
- 13 Ladwig, Dr. Walter C. (Senior Lecturer in International Relations, King's College London) ([TIP0008](#))
- 14 Porter, Professor Robin ([TIP0004](#))
- 15 Rees, Professor Wyn (Professor of International Security, University of Nottingham); and Magill, Mr Peter (Doctoral Research Student, University of Nottingham) ([TIP0011](#))
- 16 Sergeant, Gray (Research Fellow - Asia Studies Centre, The Henry Jackson Society) ([TIP0003](#))
- 17 Shoebridge, Michael (Director Defence, Strategy and National Security, Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI)) ([TIP0013](#))
- 18 TheCityUK ([TIP0002](#))
- 19 UK Research and Innovation ([TIP0018](#))

## List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

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All publications from the Committee are available on the [publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

### Session 2022–23

Number	Title	Reference
1st	Missing in action: UK leadership and the withdrawal from Afghanistan	HC 169
2nd	The cost of complacency: illicit finance and the war in Ukraine	HC 168
3rd	Encoding values: Putting tech at the heart of UK foreign policy	HC 170
4th	Developments in UK Strategic Export Controls	HC 282
5th	Refreshing our approach? Updating the Integrated Review	HC 882
6th	Stolen years: combatting state hostage diplomacy	HC 166
7th	Guns for gold: the Wagner Network exposed	HC 167
1st Special	Lagos calling: Nigeria and the Integrated Review: Government Response to the Committee's Seventh Report of Session 2021–22	HC 573
2nd Special	Missing in action: UK leadership and the withdrawal from Afghanistan: Government Response to the Committee's First Report	HC 630
3rd Special	The cost of complacency: illicit finance and the war in Ukraine: Government Response to the Committee's Second Report	HC 688
4th Special	Encoding values: Putting tech at the heart of UK foreign policy—Government Response to the Committee's Third Report	HC 811
5th Special	Refreshing our approach? Updating the Integrated Review: Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report	HC 1401
6th Special	Stolen years: combatting state hostage diplomacy: Government Response to the Committee's Sixth Report	HC 1596

### Session 2021–22

Number	Title	Reference
1st	In the room: the UK's role in multilateral diplomacy	HC 199
2nd	Never Again: The UK's Responsibility to Act on Atrocities in Xinjiang and Beyond	HC 198
3rd	Sovereignty for sale: the FCDO's role in protecting strategic British assets	HC 197

<b>Number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Reference</b>
4th	The UK Government's Response to the Myanmar Crisis	HC 203
5th	Global Health, Global Britain	HC 200
6th	Sovereignty for sale: follow-up to the acquisition of Newport Wafer Fab	HC 1245
7th	Lagos calling: Nigeria and the Integrated Review	HC 202
1st Special	A climate for ambition: Diplomatic preparations for COP26: Government Response to the Committee's Seventh Report of Session 2019–21	HC 440
2nd Special	Government response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2021–22: In the room: the UK's role in multilateral diplomacy	HC 618
3rd Special	Government Response to the Committee's Fourth Report: The UK Government's Response to the Myanmar Crisis	HC 718
4th Special	Government response to the Committee's Third Report: Sovereignty for sale: the FCDO's role in protecting strategic British assets	HC 807
5th Special	Never Again: The UK's Responsibility to Act on Atrocities in Xinjiang and Beyond: Government Response to the Committee's Second Report	HC 840
6th Special	Global Health, Global Britain: Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report	HC 955
7th Special	Government Response to the Committee's Sixth Report: Sovereignty for sale: follow-up to the acquisition of Newport Wafer Fab	HC 1273