



DEBATE PACK

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UK policy towards China

Westminster Hall
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4.30pm to 6.00pm
Debate initiated by Leo Docherty MP

The proceedings of this debate can be viewed on [Parliamentlive.tv](https://www.parliamentlive.tv)

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

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Contents

1.	Background	2
2.	Press Articles	4
3.	Gov.uk	5
4.	PQs	16
5.	Other Parliamentary material	24
5.1	Debates	24
5.2	Early Day Motions	28
6.	Further reading	29

1. Background

As the UK anticipates a post-Brexit future, the nature and terms of its future relationship with a 'rising China' is one of the most important foreign policy issues that it must address. This relationship will unavoidably be particularly complex and multi-faceted.

Critics have argued that, since the coalition government of 2010-15, the official UK [impulse](#) has often been to accentuate the positive and downplay the negative in pursuit of an elusive 'golden era'.

An April 2019 Foreign Affairs Committee [report](#) doubted whether, given the consolidation of the power of Xi Jinping in China, it would be appropriate today for the UK to commit itself to seeking such a close relationship.

A February 2019 RUSI [report](#) expressed concern that a post-Brexit UK could more be vulnerable to Chinese interference in its internal affairs.

Others worry that the UK will struggle to boost ties with China without generating [disagreements](#) with the country which has traditionally been its paramount ally, the US.

Defenders of the current UK government say that it is more willing to [acknowledge](#) that there will sometimes be a need for caution in how it conducts the relationship with China.

Here are just a few examples of just how complex and multi-faceted the relationship is between the UK and China today:

- The ongoing [controversy](#) over whether – and if so, how – the Chinese tech giant Huawei should be involved in the UK's 5G telecoms network;
- The [postponement](#) of a visit by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, to China in February 2019, shortly after the previous Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson, talked about sending the UK's aircraft carrier to the South China Sea once it is in service (however, Philip Hammond, did [attend](#) the second Belt and Road Forum in Beijing in late-April);
- Continuing [concern](#) that the UK is not doing enough to support human rights and democracy in its former colony, Hong Kong, as they come under increasing attack;
- Official UK statistics [revealing](#) that there was an 11% growth in the number of UK visas issued to Chinese

applicants in 2018, amounting to one-quarter of all the UK visas issued that year;

- Growing cooperation between the two countries on foreign aid. Last week, the previous Secretary of State for International Development, Penny Mordaunt, welcomed China's [proposal](#) to establish a 'Multilateral Cooperation Centre for Development Finance'.

2. Press Articles

The following is a selection of news and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or the accuracy of external content.

[Jeremy Hunt urges caution over large Chinese businesses such as Huawei](#)

Guardian
(Press Association)
29 April 2019

[China tells UK to resist pressure over Huawei 5G fears if it wants to protect country's 'long-term development'](#)

Independent
Emma Snaith
29 April 2019

[Hammond courts China economic ties on Beijing trip](#)

Financial Times
Lucy Hornby and George Parker
26 April 2019

[China's relationship with the UK and the EU: From Golden Era to Global Britain and Brexit](#)

Asia Dialogue
Chris Rowley
25 April 2019

[UK must put security concerns above trade with China, say MPs](#)

Daily Telegraph
Sophia Yan
4 April 2019

[Hammond: UK-China relations 'not made simpler' by Williamson](#)

Guardian
Frances Perraudin
21 February 2019

[The Guardian view on Britain and China: it's complicated](#)

Guardian
21 February 2019

[Brexit: What's Next for the China-UK Relationship?](#)

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
Philippe Le Corre
19 February 2019

[The Golden Era of UK-China Relations Meets Brexit](#)

The Diplomat
Oliver Turner
18 December 2018

3. Gov.uk

[Penny Mordaunt welcomes China move on international development](#)

Department for International Development

29 April 2019

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt has welcomed moves by China to look at the way it spends aid in developing countries.

Speaking at the World Bank Meetings in Washington on April 12, she said the UK was building a “positive, constructive relationship with China” on international development.

It came after China signed a Memorandum of Understanding with eight multilateral banks, including the World Bank, in March this year to set up a Multilateral Cooperation Centre for Development Finance.

The idea is to look at how China is operating in the developing world, and to bring benefits to the countries it is investing in.

Ms Mordaunt, the UK governor to the World Bank, said:

“We are trying to build a positive, constructive relationship with China on international development. One of the draws for China is the UK’s technical expertise in this field. They value that. We recognise there are opportunities for China to deliver more tangible benefits in the developing countries they are investing in.

“China’s proposal to set up a ‘Multilateral Cooperation Centre for Development Finance’ has real potential to ensure its huge investments in developing countries meet the key international standards that matter to all of us – on debt, transparency, environment and social safeguards.

“It’s a positive step that the World Bank and a number of other multilateral banks have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with China to develop this initiative.

“The UK looks forward to hearing more plans from China about how this initiative can help achieve sustainable, inclusive development outcomes, which benefit the countries concerned and meet the highest international standards.”

[Belt and Road Forum: Philip Hammond's speech](#)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

26 April 2019

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It’s a pleasure to be back in China for this second Belt and Road Forum. To take stock of how the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has evolved over the past two years...

To discuss the next phase of the Initiative.

To hear, as we have, of China's commitment to the BRI not only to deliver much-needed economic infrastructure but to demonstrate leadership in addressing social and environmental challenges too.

We have all seen how China's own development has lifted hundreds of millions of its citizens out of poverty in just four decades...

...and none of us doubts that the Belt and Road Initiative has tremendous potential to spread prosperity and sustainable development – touching, as it does, potentially 70% of the world's population.

A project of truly epic ambition...

...and I congratulate President Xi and the Chinese people on the scale of this vision...

...and the determination with which it has been pursued.

The UK is committed to helping realise the potential of the BRI – and to doing so in a way that works for all whose lives are touched by the project.

The potential benefits are clear to all of us in this room.

But to deliver them, it is essential that BRI operates to the highest international standards...

...with all parties working together in partnership within the rules-based international system...

...to create genuine win-win outcomes, in which host countries, investors and promoters alike benefit...

...with fair terms...

... sensitivity to local concerns and traditions...

...and the highest environmental standards...

...all delivered to international norms of good governance...

...with full transparency around projects, and around the sustainability of the debt that partner countries are incurring to secure them...

...ensuring that Belt and Road is an example of how globalised, open economic cooperation can deliver benefits for all.

And I welcome the "triple pledge" we heard from President Xi Jinping this morning to ensure the highest international standards in delivery of Belt and Road; to maintain China's commitment to free trade and multilateralism; and to continue the reform and opening up of China's economy.

Two years ago, at the First Belt and Road Forum, I spoke of the UK as a 'natural partner' in Belt and Road...

...citing the complementarity of the UK and Chinese economies...

...the potential of London's deep capital markets to support the future financing needs of the BRI...

...and of the strength of the UK's legal, professional and technical services sectors to support the design, development, contracting and delivery of BRI projects.

And since then, I have worked to turn that vision of cooperation into a reality.

In May 2018, I was pleased to appoint Sir Douglas Flint, former Chairman of HSBC, as HM Treasury's Financial and Professional Services Envoy to the Belt and Road Initiative.

Under his chairmanship, we're bringing together UK business leaders from financial and professional services and China Development Bank, Bank of China, and China Construction Bank to establish a Belt and Road expert board in London.

We have launched, in April 2019, a three-year China Infrastructure Programme to work with China to improve infrastructure development outcomes in Africa and Asia.

And we have worked with the AIIB to deepen our relationship and to support the development of a pipeline of high-quality infrastructure projects.

It is clear that, to support the sheer scale of the BRI vision, private finance will need to play an ever-greater role in these infrastructure projects.

And to unlock that private finance, and reassure investors, we must create a recognised infrastructure asset class for Belt and Road projects...

...with standardised contract terms and uniform reporting that global investors will recognise and trust.

In doing so, we should, of course, draw on the work that G20 and other international organisations are doing to create frameworks for sustainable infrastructure investments; and I want to offer London's world class expertise in project financing and the associated legal, professional and technical skills as a partner of choice in delivering these international-standard infrastructure projects.

The BRI is an extraordinarily ambitious vision. To turn that vision into a sustainable reality it must work for everyone involved.

That means achieving the highest economic, social, governance and environmental standards.

It means attracting the necessary private capital.

It means ensuring that all partner countries and all their citizens can benefit.

Our offer is to bring the best of Chinese manufacturing, engineering and construction with the best of British project design and legal, technical and financial services expertise...as we harness the “Golden Era” of UK-China relations...

...to deliver world-class sustainable infrastructure for all for the twenty-first century.

I look forward to working with all of you to make that happen...

...to deliver jobs, growth and higher living standards for all of our citizens.

Economic talks to further strengthen UK-China relations

HM Treasury

25 April 2019

The tenth Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD) between the UK and China will be held in June in London, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond announced today (25 April 2019).

The announcement comes as the Chancellor is in China attending the second Belt and Road Forum, hosted by President Xi. At the Forum, the Chancellor will set out how the UK is a natural partner for quality global infrastructure initiatives due to the world class talent and expertise this country has to offer. The Chancellor will also make the case for ensuring that projects meet international standards on governance, debt sustainability, and environmental impact.

Over the last ten years EFDs have secured billions of pounds worth of commercial deals for UK companies, boosting investment and jobs. They have also established the UK as the leading financial services partner for China with, for example, an agreement to set up the UK-China Stock Connect, expanding market access for UK financial services firms, and establishing London as the leading global centre for RMB trading.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond said:

“Working with partners across the world to boost jobs, businesses and prosperity at home is key to our post-Brexit future. The UK’s world-leading financial sector, along with our unrivalled expertise in areas such as design, engineering, financing, and legal services, mean we are natural partners for global infrastructure initiatives. And our leadership on high standards and the sustainable development agenda put us at the forefront of responsible investing.

“The forthcoming Economic and Financial Dialogue in June will continue the golden era of relations between China and the UK. By

deepening our cooperation on financial services, trade, and investment with international partners, we can ensure Britain's global future."

Economic and Financial Dialogues are held with a number of key partners; and the ninth UK-China EFD took place in December 2017 in Beijing. The tenth UK-China EFD will see the Chancellor host Vice Premier Hu Chunhua and a Chinese delegation in London for a series of events to showcase the UK's world-leading financial service sector.

As well as speaking at the Belt and Road Forum, the Chancellor will hold meetings with a number of international partners. Also representing the UK at the Forum are Baroness Fairhead, Minister for Trade and Export Promotion, and Sir Douglas Flint, the Treasury's Professional and Financial Services Envoy for the Belt & Road Initiative.

UK-China in 2019: How can diplomacy rise to the challenges of the 21st century?

**Foreign and Commonwealth Office
25 February 2019**

Transcript of speech made at the University of Manchester by HM Ambassador to China, Dame Barbara Woodward.

Thank you for that kind introduction and for the opportunity to speak.

This month marks four years since I arrived in Beijing as Ambassador. In my appointment, the UK rose to one of the challenges of the 21st century and appointed the UK's first female Ambassador to China. An appointment, my colleagues occasionally remind me, that Lord Killearn, formerly a diplomat at the British Embassy in Beijing and latterly Ambassador to Cairo, in 1933 ruled out as "unsuitable and highly inadvisable." I am now one of about 50 female British Ambassadors around the world, which is about 25%.

Although I see women breaking through glass ceilings as part of the solution, to some of the challenges of the 21st century, they are not about me alone.

The challenges are relevant to all of us in this room and beyond. Because if we are serious about solving them, we are serious about building a truly innovative diplomacy which will help build a world fit for purpose in the 21st century. What students, professors, citizens in Manchester – and others like them in the UK and China – do is as crucial as what Ambassadors and diplomats will do.

The challenges I see are significant, they are interconnected and they are all relevant to China.

None will, I suspect, come as a surprise.

The first is primarily at the national level. It is the challenge governments face meeting the needs of their people. For freedom and security. This is not new.

But expectations are changing and frustrations are increasing. The failure of governments to respond effectively has led to new fractures.

Much of the media focus – not least because of our free press – has been on the manifestation of these trends in the United States, in countries across the European Union and, indeed, even here at home.

The same challenges exist, of course, in China. Air pollution, food safety, income inequality, social welfare, access to healthcare, opportunity of education, house prices – these are the touchstones by which Chinese citizens judge the performance of their government.

And wherever we are, there are questions about how governments protect people from transnational threats – terrorism, disease, climate change, child abuse – often and especially those driven by non-state actors.

The second challenge is a shift of power between nations. The idea that China is on the cusp of supplanting the West is both unhelpful and wrong. We may indeed be giving our political models the mother of all stress tests – but it's important also to remember that by and large the liberal democracies are passing them.

That said, it is undeniable that the next decades will see the continuation of rebalancing economic, demographic and potentially military power towards Asia. By 2030, the economies of India and China combined will likely exceed those of the G7 combined.

The third challenge is global. Climate change. Plastics. Anti-microbial resistance. Pandemics. Migration. Ageing populations. These are not business as usual problems. They are existential.

Again, China is to be found at the centre. Simply by force of numbers China is the largest emitter of GHG emissions, the largest user, producer and importer of energy. It is the world's largest consumer of antibiotics. By 2030 there will be more Chinese over the age of 60 than US citizens of any age.

China is also adding 30% a year to the world's GDP growth – equivalent to a G20 economy every year, even when slowing. And of course, without China's extraordinary achievement of lifting 800m people out of poverty, we would not have come close to meeting the MDGs.

So a series of challenges, all of which deeply involve China. All require fresh, innovative thinking and action.

So I am concerned that the current discussion on China is often framed between the theories of a 5th Century BC Athenian historian Thucydides and his Chinese near-contemporaries, Confucius and Sun Tzu. And beyond that, that some of the rhetoric, analysis and actions hark back to might-is-right, great power and the "cold war."

Is that really helpful in 2019?

A fracturing of the rules-based international system, a balkanisation of global science, a bifurcation of the world into competing spheres of influence would be a disaster. It would solve none of the challenges I have set out.

It will not help governments meet the legitimate needs of their people.

It will not help us safely navigate a shifting geopolitical landscape.

It will not protect our global goods or solve global crises.

The world has trodden the path of nationalism and populism before. And it has always ended in the same way. That is why times call for a new diplomacy.

That, of course, means innovation in our bilateral relations. And it means innovation in multilateralism.

Let me take those in turn.

First, the bilateral relationship.

The Golden Era – or Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership – we announced in 2015, during President Xi's visit to the UK, to London and Manchester, was designed to do that.

It reflected the importance of a closer bilateral relationship and a growing complementarity between our respective economic, cultural and scientific bases.

It provided for high-level political set-piece dialogues and interactions between governments, providing the framework for on-the-ground collaborations to thrive.

When we opened Ambassadorial relations with China in 1972, there were seven UK diplomats in Beijing. The China network now covers 5 offices and over 1500 staff.

But that's a fraction of the interaction between our countries. The breadth of the China relationship no longer fits into the corridors of Whitehall, let alone the corridors of the FCO – and nor should it!

And here I want to pay tribute to Manchester.

To Manchester University: your partnership with CETC on Square Kilometre Array; your collaborations on graphene; your joint research with Peking University on genetics. To Manchester United: the biggest Premier League team in China. To Manchester City: the first Premier League team to buy a Chinese team, earlier this month.

To Manchester businesses, who, in the Manchester China Business Forum, have developed a model that others are now emulating.

And to the regional leadership, who have forged a relationship with Wuhan city and who will be the first city in the UK to develop a soft power strategy.

So engaging the experts in this room – and the many more outside of it – freely in the diplomatic effort of building a constructive relationship with China is essential.

For two reasons.

First, precisely because that relationship is messy, it is complex and it is evolving. There is no handbook!

But the thoughtful, considered engagement of the centre ground, especially a shifting centre ground, needs genuine expertise. The answers will need to come both from government that can advise on the political and security risk and from the scientists, academics, businessmen and young people who – to put in bluntly – actually know how these things work and see the opportunity.

The second reason why broadening out our understanding of diplomatic outreach to China is important is because the Communist Party is not China and China is not the Communist Party. I have always characterised our bilateral relationship as a Ding – you may recognise the three-legged bronze urn of Chinese antiquity. Three legs – Government, Business and People – the last of which includes our education and innovation exchanges. When and if any one of the legs looks a little rickety, it is those other two legs that keep it standing.

So, the role of the China network I lead is to build the frameworks that allow collaboration on the ground to thrive.

In Science and Innovation, Research, Educational, a visa service that brought 700,000 Chinese people to Britain last year. Improving the business environment and removing market access barriers. Protecting our children from online harms; intercepting fentanyl before it can kill people in Britain. Encouraging and supporting 80,000 young British people to go and experience China for themselves through the Generation UK programme.

Diplomacy abhors a vacuum. The UK and China will both benefit from getting the high-level dialogues back on track. Otherwise we are losing the space which should be there for constructive discussion. And none of us will gain from that. There has been an active debate in China over the past year about how best to manage the country's foreign relationships. Especially the US. I think open and candid dialogue at the highest levels is a vital part of the answer.

It's important to get those back on track.

Not least because the UK-China relationship is of global significance. We are both Permanent Members of the Security Council, both top 5 economies, both heavily involved across the world with wide and deep bilateral ties and multilateral influence.

So the test for the UK-China relationship now is not just to lead solutions to challenges of unprecedented scale, scope and speed but also to lead the systemic changes that will make the global order and the rules and principles on which it is based more resilient, more robust and more effective in the 21st century.

How can diplomacy and the UK and China rise to this challenge?

A, B, C: Adapt, Build, Create.

In some areas we will need to *adapt* existing structures. We have a system of international organisations, with the UN at its core, which shares and upholds – as best it can – key principles including the rights of the individual, the role of the national state, free trade and the rule of law and provides fora for arbitrating disputes. Whether a country is large or small, developed or developing, might is not right. The UN Charter opens: “We the people of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war...”. There are tragic exceptions, in Syria, Yemen and North Korea, but by and large, they have done that.

This system has benefited everyone, not least China. It is fair to say that the world immediately after World War 2 was a very different one. Where China has a legitimate call to be better integrated, we should facilitate and adapt. We have (finally) done that, for example, with voting rights in the World Bank and IMF.

The growing role of the G-20, which represents 85% of the world GDP and 2/3 of the world’s population, is another good example of that adaptation.

And with China, as fellow members of the UNSC we can offer our strong support to UN Secretary General Guterres’ UN reform programme.

In some areas we will need to *build*.

I think it is impossible not to be touched today by the individual stories of migrants and their numbers coming to Europe. There are around 3000 in the migrant caravan moving towards Mexico. There are around 700,000 Rohingyas now in Bangladesh. And about 1.3m Afghan refugees in Pakistan. The international migration frameworks that we have today are struggling with a situation never envisaged by their architects.

Just as the WTO is struggling to preserve free trade across a global economy which did not have e-commerce or services when it was set up.

And, third, in some areas we will need to *create* new rules and bodies.

China’s rhetoric around the Belt and Road Initiative, its input into the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, its creation of a new ministry for international development, some of its approaches to addressing the absence of security architecture in the Asia-Pacific – signal that it

understands that it benefits as much from a stable international system as the rest of us.

The UK has welcomed China's active role. We were the first major western economy to join the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank.

And now we need new ethical and regulatory frameworks to deal with Artificial Intelligence. We need to keep space and cyberspace from becoming virtual and actual battlegrounds.

There is of course a narrative that any idea that the UK and China can work together to achieve this is naïve. But I challenge that narrative: look at our existing collaboration with China on international development – not just where we spend but how and why. Our partnership on climate and green energy. Our joint discovery of new medicines and treatments. The work we have done together with the Chinese telecommunications company Huawei. And, of course, the way Professor Sir Kostya Novoselov has translated graphene from its Nobel prize roots here in Manchester, to China.

But the proof of the pudding will be in the eating. And a pudding without a recipe or ingredients, like the current slogans of a "community of common destiny" or "shared future of mankind," rightly gives us pause.

So too do attempts to weaken the international order where it suits narrow national interest: perhaps most notably the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea or the recent return to hostage diplomacy, the prevalence of cyberattacks and the use of chemical weapons last year in the UK.

And if new architecture is to work effectively, to be resilient, robust and effective, it will need to be founded on the principles and values which have proved their worth and rules which apply to all.

Conclusion

Sometime in the next decade the world's largest economy will probably be non-western, non-democratic and non-English-speaking. And it will probably be China.

We are in a season of anniversaries. Some, China wants to mark – 40 years of opening up and reform, 70 years since the founding of the People's Republic. Others – 30 years since Tiananmen – it will not.

Perhaps the anniversary least noticed here but with the deepest ideological resonance will be the centenary of the May 4th movement.

The Treaty of Versailles was indeed a lost opportunity for diplomatic innovation, to integrate China – and others – into the global system as it emerged from imperialism and at a historical moment when it was open to western political thought and science as never before. Students took to the streets under the banners of "Mr Science and Mr Democracy."

The cost of this failure has been China turning its back on western democracy in the 1920s and the creation of a historical narrative in

support of nationalism and exceptionalism that, along with 19th century colonialism, has become a pillar of the Chinese Communist Party's legitimacy.

A hundred years later, we are at a similar turning point. How will we respond?

Faced with genuine disagreements, will we focus only on the values that divide us rather than the interests that should unite us?

In an era of increasing competition, will we allow voices in China and the West to present binary choices – to demand that we pick sides – when the solution to our shared problems is joint action?

Challenged by our populations, will we take the easy path back to jingoism rather than the more difficult one forward that sees us working together to meet their legitimate expectations?

And confronted by global problems will we retreat into isolationism or will we forge new partnerships?

These are difficult questions. There is an old Chinese saying: “一问三不知 · 神仙怪不得” – even the Gods cannot blame you if you keep answering “no idea”. But I believe we can and should do better than that today. We have the foundations and the will for a new diplomacy, to build new partnerships and to work together to achieve it.

4. PQs

[Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation](#)

29 Apr 2019 | 247096

Asked by: Peter Dowd

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what official engagements and meetings he has scheduled at the 2nd Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing.

Answering member: John Glen | Treasury

The second Belt and Road Forum took place in Beijing 25th to 27th April 2019. The Chancellor attended the opening ceremony and gave a keynote speech at the main plenary session. He also attended the Gala Dinner and Leaders' Roundtable hosted by President Xi Jinping.

The Chancellor held bilateral meetings with Vice Premier Hu Chunhua, Premier Li Keqiang, Governor of the People's Bank of China Yi Gang and Minister of Foreign Affairs for Thailand Don Pramudwinai. He attended a reception hosted by the China Britain Business Council and Department for International Trade, and met with the CEO of DiDi Will Cheng.

[Trade Agreements: China](#)

29 Apr 2019 | 247095

Asked by: Peter Dowd

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many investment agreements the Government has signed with the Chinese Government since 2010.

Answering member: John Glen | Treasury

The Government has not signed any investment agreements with the Chinese Government since 2010. The UK-China investment relationship is strong, and the UK is the number one destination in Europe for Chinese Foreign Direct Investment.

[Overseas Trade: China](#)

25 Apr 2019 | HL15200

Asked by: Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase foreign investment and trade between the UK and China post-Brexit.

Answering member: Baroness Fairhead | Department for International Trade

The Government works actively to increase trade between the UK and China, including through our overseas network led by HM Trade Commissioner for China, bilateral working groups, and through the broad support the Department for International Trade provides to UK exporters and to Chinese companies wishing to invest in the UK. Ministerial travel also supports this, and provides the necessary platform to progress market access for British goods and services. The Secretary

of State travelled to China five times last year. He secured market access for UK dairy, worth £240m over 5 years, at the Department for International Trade-led Joint Economic and Trade Commission, and led the UK delegation to China's inaugural International Import Expo in November, where the UK secured over £2bn worth of deals. The Government is also conducting a Joint Trade and Investment Review with China, an analytical exercise to explore all options to increase flows of goods, services and investment in our post-Brexit trading relationship.

[Hong Kong: Human Rights](#)

25 Apr 2019 | HL15176

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool | Party: Crossbench

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they are giving to the inclusion of a human rights clause, protecting the rule of law, in any future trade deal that includes trade with Hong Kong; and whether they intend, in conjunction with other countries, to raise issues regarding Hong Kong in international fora, in particular its extradition laws and the autonomy of Hong Kong.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The UK has long supported the promotion of our values globally and this will continue as we leave the EU. We are committed to upholding the UK's high standards and we are exploring all options in the design of future trade and investment agreements, including human rights provisions within these.

We will continue to monitor closely events in Hong Kong, including proposals to change extradition laws, and any developments that may affect Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy. Where appropriate, we will raise issues of concern with the Chinese and Hong Kong authorities, speak publicly about the issue, or raise in international fora.

[China: Embassies](#)

24 Apr 2019 | 244041

Asked by: Helen Goodman

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the projected cost of the planned UK embassy building in Beijing.

Answering member: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is committed to redevelop our embassy site in Beijing which is not fit-for-purpose and does not meet the scale of ministerial ambitions in China. Our SR15 Settlement commits us to provide £80 million of funding towards this raised by the sale of our assets. Project planning continues and is at an early stage. However, details of costs are commercially sensitive.

Engagements

24 Apr 2019 658 c746

Asked by: Dr Julian Lewis

Do the Government accept that the telecommunications firm Huawei is intimately linked with the Chinese communist Government and their deeply hostile intelligence services?

Answering member: David Lidington | Cabinet Office

Legally speaking, Huawei is a private firm, not a Government-owned company, but my right hon. Friend takes us to the question about the proposed roll-out of 5G networks. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has commissioned a wide-ranging and thorough review of this matter. We are giving priority to stronger cyber-security practice across the entire telecommunications sector, greater resilience in telecommunications networks and, critically, diversity in the entire 5G supply chain, because this question goes beyond any single company. When we have taken decisions about that review, we will announce them to the House in the proper way.

Hong Kong: Human Rights

16 Apr 2019 | HL15137

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact that the new national anthem law in China, which applies at the high-speed rail terminus in Hong Kong, and which has made it an offence to insult China's national anthem, while failing to define such insults, will have on the human rights of Hong Kong citizens; and what assessment they have made of the implications of (1) the new Chinese national security law, and (2) proposals to change Hong Kong's extradition laws to enable extradition from Hong Kong to the mainland.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

We believe that it is fitting to show respect to any National Anthem. Whether it is necessary to enforce such respect with legislation is a matter for the Chinese and Hong Kong SAR Governments to decide. In Hong Kong freedom of speech is guaranteed under the Sino-British Joint Declaration, and it is vital that such freedoms are fully respected. Article 23 of the Hong Kong Basic Law requires that Hong Kong enact laws relating to national security. We are not, however, aware of any plans to enact such legislation at the present time.

We are aware of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government's proposals to change the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance and the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Ordinance. We have noted the concerns voiced by legal and business representative organisations and civil society groups in Hong Kong about both the content and the short consultation period allowed for the proposed changes. We have raised a number of issues with the Hong Kong Government, including the implications for both our joint security cooperation and our bilateral extradition treaty and the potential consequences for the UK business community and for UK citizens living

in or travelling through Hong Kong. We will continue to seek clarity from the authorities on these points and to make clear that we would welcome a longer consultation period to allow the issues we and others have raised to be dealt with in a comprehensive way that maintains public and business confidence.

It remains the British Government's view that, for Hong Kong's future success, it is essential that Hong Kong enjoys, and is seen to enjoy, the full measure of its high degree of autonomy and rule of law as set out in the Joint Declaration and enshrined in the Basic Law, in keeping with the commitment to 'One Country, Two Systems'.

Overseas Trade: China

16 Apr 2019 | 242105

Asked by: Dr Dan Poulter

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what plans he has to increase trade between the UK and China.

Answering member: Graham Stuart | Department for International Trade

The Government works actively to increase trade between the UK and China, including through our overseas network led by HM Trade Commissioner for China, bilateral working groups, and through the broad support the Department for International Trade provides to UK exporters and to Chinese companies wishing to invest in the UK. Ministerial travel also supports this, and provides the necessary platform to progress market access for British goods and services. The Secretary of State travelled to China five times last year. He secured market access for UK dairy, worth £240m over 5 years, at the Department for International Trade-led Joint Economic and Trade Commission, and led the UK delegation to China's inaugural International Import Expo in November, where the UK secured over £2bn worth of deals. The Government is also conducting a Joint Trade and Investment Review with China, an analytical exercise to explore all options to increase flows of goods, services and investment.

Trade: China

15 Apr 2019 | HL14946

Asked by: Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government what commitments they have entered into under the Belt and Road Initiative of the People's Republic of China.

Answering member: Baroness Fairhead | Department for International Trade

In 2017 the United Kingdom, together with 26 other countries, endorsed the "Guiding Principles on Financing the Development of the Belt and Road". We continue to engage closely with China on the Belt and Road Initiative. The Department for International Trade assists UK firms by scoping project opportunities, providing finance where appropriate through UK Export Finance, and then supporting bids for contracts in firms' priority markets. In addition, the Government advocates for the application of recognised international standards in

the areas of transparency and anti-corruption, environmental standards, social standards and debt sustainability.

[Antarctic: China](#)

11 Apr 2019 | 241980

Asked by: Sir Nicholas Soames

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the use of bases belonging to the Peoples Republic of China in the Antarctic.

Answering member: Sir Alan Duncan | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

China has established four scientific stations in Antarctica and is currently establishing a fifth. In terms of number of scientific papers, during the period 2011-2015, China ranked sixth (the UK was second) and its scientific activities have continued to increase. Its scientific stations are strategically located across Antarctica and underline China's ambition to increase their influence within the Antarctic Treaty System. China has stated its objective to 'understand, protect and use' Antarctica. Whilst the UK, and many other Parties, have expressed concern regarding China's reference to the 'use' of Antarctica, in light of the Treaty's objectives of Conservation and protection, there is no evidence to date of China undertaking any activities in contravention to the Treaty.

[China: Prosperity Fund](#)

07 Mar 2019 | HL14072

Asked by: Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any of the Cross-Government Prosperity Fund has been used to develop of the film industry and improve museum infrastructure in China.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

In 2016-17, the first year of operation of the cross-government Prosperity Fund, the British Government ran skills and capacity building projects in areas of UK expertise in China, including in the creative and cultural industries. These are areas of large market potential and supported China's continued transition to a sustainable, inclusive and productive economy. They were part of first year transition project, which involved several relatively small, scoping work activities to identify interventions for multi-year programmes in the following years.

Our programming has moved on to larger, multi-year programme interventions and we are now concentrating in China on Rule of Law for Business, Financial Services, Energy and Low Carbon, Infrastructure, Skills, Healthcare and Future Cities. As a result, the UK no longer supports any funding to the creative or cultural industries in China through the Prosperity Fund.

Engagements

06 March 2019 | 655 c958

Asked by: Richard Bacon

Mr Speaker, you are right that the former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull is very welcome here today. As he said in a lecture last night:

“If a state-sponsored adversary has enduring access to staff, software or hardware deployed into a target telecommunication network, then they only require the intent to act in order to conduct operations within the network.”

Given that Chinese law obliges all Chinese companies to assist the Chinese intelligence services, will the Prime Minister explain what the implications are for British Government policy?

Answered by: Theresa May | Prime Minister

We look at these issues very seriously. As regards the issue of 5G security, we are looking at the right approach that we need to take. We want to be able to benefit from that new technology, but of course we need to manage the risks closely and we are considering a full range of policy options. Our review into 5G is still ongoing and no decisions have been taken.

Overseas Trade: Far East

04 Mar 2019 | HL13799

Asked by: Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made in negotiations to advance post-Brexit trading relations with (1) Japan, and (2) China.

Answering member: Baroness Fairhead | Department for International Trade

With Japan, the Prime Minister has agreed with Japanese Prime Minister Abe that the two countries should reach an ambitious bilateral agreement, building on the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement. Japan has also expressed its support for future UK membership of the comprehensive and progressive agreement for trans-Pacific partnership (CPTPP). We are continuing to work with Japan to realise these opportunities for a stronger trading relationship.

The Prime Minister's visit to China in January 2018 set a clear vision for an ambitious future trading relationship and she agreed with Premier Li to conduct a Joint Trade and Investment Review. The Review is an analytical exercise to explore all options to strengthen the relationship without pre-judging outcomes. We have made good progress with the Review and aim to conclude this year.

[China: Foreign Relations](#)

08 February 2019 | 216889

Asked by: Sir Nicholas Soames

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the (a) aims and (b) objectives are of UK policy towards China.

Answered by: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The UK-China relationship is strong, growing, and delivering benefits for both countries. The government's aims and objectives include increasing bilateral trade and investment across the UK, as well as cooperating on matters of global importance such as health, climate change, development, and regional security. Maintaining strong people to people links in areas such as tourism, education and culture is also important. At the same time, our strong partnership allows us to have frank discussions on issues where we disagree.

[China: Foreign Relations](#)

01 November 2018 | 183960

Asked by: by Giles Watling

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what progress he has made on improving relations between the UK and China.

Answered by: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The Prime Minister's visit to China in January opened a new chapter in what has become known as the 'Golden Era' in UK-China relations. The recent meeting between the Prime Minister and Premier Li at the Asia-Europe Meeting Summit in October emphasised the broad mutual benefit from the relationship. Our aim is to maintain a strong partnership which supports economic growth for both countries and helps to tackle global challenges. This stronger partnership should mean we can have frank discussions on issues where we disagree.

[China: Human Rights](#)

26 September 2016 | HL1812

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to conduct a comprehensive review of British foreign policy towards China, including consulting human rights NGOs, human rights lawyers, activists, religious communities and NGOs in China, exiled Chinese dissidents, journalists, academics and other experts, as recommended by the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission.

Answered by: Baroness Anelay of St Johns

The Government's policy towards China is set by the National Security Council. We have a strong relationship with China, as described in the Global Partnership announced at the State Visit of President Xi to the UK in 2015, and reiterated by the Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), during her recent visit to China. In addition to working with China to solve global challenges, and to

develop strong trade, investment and people links, we also promote British values. To inform our policy, we maintain contact with a wide range of stakeholders, including human rights NGOs, journalists and academics. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Hon. Friend the Member for Reading West (Alok Sharma) met Chinese human rights activists when he visited China in August.

5. Other Parliamentary material

5.1 Debates

[UK Telecoms: Huawei](#) [Extract]

Urgent Question | 25 April 2019 | 658 cc881-92

Jo Platt

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to make a statement on the future role of Huawei in UK telecoms infrastructure.

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Jeremy Wright)

The security and resilience of the United Kingdom's telecoms networks is of paramount importance. The UK has one of the world's largest and most dynamic economies, and we welcome open trade and inward investment in our digital sectors, but at the same time the UK's economy can only prosper when we and our international partners are assured that our critical national infrastructure remains safe and secure.

As part of our plans to provide world-class digital connectivity, including 5G, my Department has been carrying out a cross-Whitehall evidence-based review of the supply chain to ensure a diverse and secure supply base. The review aims to ensure stronger cyber-security across the entire telecommunications sector, greater resilience in telecommunications networks and diversity across the entire 5G supply chain. It has considered the full UK market position, including economic prosperity, corporate and consumer effects and the quality, resilience and security of equipment.

Despite the inevitable focus on Huawei, the review is not solely about one company or even one country. We have to strike a difficult balance between security and prosperity and recognise the reality of globalised networks and supply chains, although I will make it clear that our security interests are pre-eminent and that has been the focus of this review. That is the way to ensure that the UK fully realises the potential of 5G through its safe and secure deployment.

As would be expected given the importance of the subject, it is a thorough review of a complex area, which has made use of the best available expert advice and evidence, including from the National Cyber Security Centre. It will report with its conclusions once ministerial decisions have been taken. The review is an important step in strengthening the UK's security framework for telecoms and ensuring the secure roll-out of 5G and full-fibre networks.

I am sure that the House will understand that National Security Council discussions should be confidential and will understand why that must be the case. However, I know that Members on both side of the House feel strongly on this issue and I will make a statement to the House to communicate final decisions at the appropriate time.

Jo Platt

Thank you for granting this urgent question today, Mr Speaker.

What a mess we are in. The only reason we know of the decision to green-light Huawei is from an apparent ministerial leak of a meeting of the National Security Council, which has served only to raise public concern while undermining the integrity of our security agencies. Let me be clear from this side of the House: if a Minister did leak this information, they are not fit to serve in the cabinet and are certainly not fit to be Prime Minister. Indeed, if the leak was for an advantage in a Tory leadership race, that would be truly shocking. Critical issues of national security should be handled with utmost care, not used as political ammunition in a Tory party civil war. A full leak inquiry should be undertaken, and if identified, the individual should immediately resign or be removed from their position.

Turning to the substance of the question, the decision to allow Huawei's involvement in building our 5G network raises some extremely serious questions that must be answered if we are to provide the public with concrete assurances about the integrity and safety of the network. Huawei is a company known from multiple public reports from our security services to manufacture sub-optimal equipment, often at a lower than average cost. Can the Minister clarify if the equipment described just two weeks ago by the technical director of the NCSC as "very, very shoddy" will be the same equipment green-lit for deployment in our networks?

We heard last month in a report from the Huawei oversight board, chaired by the head of the NCSC, that it still has only limited assurance that the long-term security risks presented by Huawei can be managed, and it is still identifying significant issues. For the benefit of the House, can the Minister confirm that is still the opinion of the security services when the Prime Minister has decided to allow them access to our 5G networks for the decades to come?

We need not listen only to the security services: listen to Huawei itself. In a letter to the Chair of the Science and Technology Committee in February, it said that it will take three to five years to see tangible results from its reform programme. Just weeks after those warnings, why has the company been given the go-ahead to help to build our critical national infrastructure?

[...]

Anne Main

We are only here today because there has been a leak. That is incredibly regrettable for the whole of the House — I have heard that opinion from both sides of the House — and national security could not be a more important topic for all of us to be discussing. I am a little concerned that the leak may be trivialised by saying that it is as a result of someone's leadership campaign. I am more concerned that it may be as a result of whistleblowing, because the process is so concerning to someone that they have felt the need to break the bond of trust that has existed for so long.

I accept that the review is going on at the moment in great secrecy, but since this has now been brought out into the open, can my right hon. and learned Friend assure the House that absolutely every consideration will be given to all the concerns that have been raised by hon. Members here today about both our relationship with countries such as Australia and our cyber-security and national security? Importantly, will he make sure that some concept of future deals with China is not colouring what we must now have absolutely at the forefront of our mind — the safety of the British public?

[...]

Norman Lamb

Protecting this country's national security must be non-negotiable, but there have also been reports, including in The Daily Telegraph, that Chinese technology companies have been complicit in the internal repression of ethnic Muslims in western China. That involves the internment of hundreds of thousands of people in "re-education" camps, and the creation of a surveillance state, and it is possible that that includes Huawei. Is the Secretary of State aware of any allegations that specifically involve Huawei, and if so, should we be doing business with a company that engages in that sort of activity?

Jeremy Wright

As the right hon. Gentleman says, our concerns about Huawei are at least in part due to the potential interlocking nature of what it does and what the Chinese state does. That lies at the heart of our concerns, hence the oversight mechanisms with which he is familiar. We will, of course, take full account not just of what he has said, but of all our other information when making our judgment. He will understand that the involvement of the intelligence and security agencies in that process is fundamental and integral, and it means that we can get a good sense of the sort of information he describes.

[...]

Hong Kong: Pro-Democracy Activists [Extract] 10 Apr 2019 | Urgent questions | 658 cc321-331

Mr Alistair Carmichael

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the conviction of pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong.

The Minister for Asia and the Pacific (Mark Field)

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I seem to be here to discuss either this area, the middle east or, indeed, Turkey, a debate to which I was responding in Westminster Hall earlier today.

I emphasise at the outset both to the right hon. Gentleman and to the House that the UK Government are acutely aware of our enduring responsibilities to Hong Kong. We were a joint signatory to upholding the joint declaration between the UK and China some 35 years ago, and the joint declaration is of course lodged with the United Nations. As

such, we remain absolutely committed to monitoring and ensuring the faithful implementation of the joint declaration and the principle of one country, two systems. I reassure the House that we clearly and consistently raise our concerns with the Chinese and Hong Kong authorities. Parliament is updated on developments in Hong Kong through our six-monthly reports submitted by the Foreign Secretary, the most recent of which was published on 27 March. We always stand ready to comment publicly and robustly when appropriate.

Yesterday, the Hong Kong courts gave their verdict on the nine key figures in the Hong Kong Occupy movement. The protesters were arrested after large-scale protests in 2014. Each was found guilty of at least one public nuisance offence, and such offences carry a maximum sentence of seven years in prison. We shall have a better understanding of the severity of the sentence, and therefore the signal that the decision purports to send to others who choose to exercise their rights under Hong Kong's Basic Law and Bill of Rights, once sentences have been handed down. Sentencing is due on 24 April, and the defendants have the right to appeal. It would therefore not be appropriate to comment further or in detail on the ongoing legal cases, but suffice it to say that this is a potentially protracted legal process that may take years rather than months.

I have visited Hong Kong twice as a Foreign Office Minister and have held meetings with a number of senior legal figures. On my most recent visit in November, I raised the issue of the rule of law directly with the deputy chief justice, as well as with representatives from the legal, political and business communities. All staunchly defended the independence of the judiciary and it remains our position that Hong Kong's rule of law remains robust, largely thanks to its world-class independent judiciary. Many Members will know that Baroness Hale, Lord Hoffmann and others are part and parcel of the panel that is based in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong citizens are guaranteed the right to freedom of assembly and demonstration under the Sino-British joint declaration of 1984 and the Basic Law, and it is essential that those rights are properly respected in a democracy. Hong Kong's success and stability depend on its high degree of enduring autonomy and its respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined in the joint declaration and the Basic Law. The Foreign Secretary recently pronounced that he was

"concerned that on civil and political freedoms, Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy is being reduced."

It would be deeply concerning if the ruling discourages legitimate protest in future or discourages Hong Kong citizens from engaging in political activity.

[...]

Defence [Extract]

18 February 2019 | 654 cc1220-44

Motion that the draft Armed Forces Act (Continuation) Order 2019, which was laid before the House on 24 January, be approved.

[...]

Leo Docherty

[...]

Alarmingly, the document does not mention our defence response to China. That is a central challenge that we will have to grapple with in this new era of transformation. I invite the Minister to mention that in his closing remarks.

Mr Deputy Speaker (Sir Lindsay Hoyle)

Hopefully not, because it is not in the debate. I have allowed the hon. Gentleman to carry on, but he must not drag the Minister into something that is not covered in the debate.

[...]

5.2 Early Day Motions

HONG KONG EXTRADITION LAW

EDM 2254 (session 2017-19)

29 March 2019

Fiona Bruce

That this House is concerned about proposed changes to Hong Kong's extradition law to allow the Hong Kong Chief Executive to extradite fugitives to non-contracting jurisdictions including the People's Republic of China; is further concerned that this could facilitate the extradition of pro-democracy activists, journalists, dissidents and foreign nationals including business leaders; notes that the American Chamber of Commerce has expressed grave concerns about the implications of the law for Hong Kong's status as an international financial hub; and urges the United Kingdom Government to raise the issue with the Government of Hong Kong and to consider whether these reforms have implications for the United Kingdom's existing extradition arrangements with Hong Kong.

6. Further reading

[**Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2019**](#), Annual report to Congress, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2 May 2019

[**China and the Rules-Based International System**](#), Foreign Affairs Committee, 04 April 2019, HC 612 2017-19

[**The six-monthly report on Hong Kong 1 July to 31 December 2018**](#), Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 27 March 2019

[**China–UK Relations: Where to Draw the Border Between Influence and Interference?**](#), RUSI, 20 February 2019

[**Correspondence with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office relating to the Government's strategy on China**](#), Foreign Affairs Committee, 13 February 2019

[**UK foreign policy in a shifting world order**](#), International Relations Committee, 18 December 2018, HL 250 2017-19

[**The UK's Relations with China**](#) [Evidence], Foreign Affairs Committee, 26 April 2017 / 30 March 2017, HC 870 2016-17

[**China's domestic politics and foreign policy: January 2017 analysis**](#), Commons Briefing Paper CBP-7870, 19 January 2017

[**Foreign involvement in the Critical National Infrastructure: the implications for national security**](#), Intelligence and Security Committee, Cm 8629, 06 June 2013

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