

Debate Pack

CDP 0132 | (2021)

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Global Britain, human rights and climate change

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1 Global Britain, human rights and climate change

A debate on **Global Britain, human rights and climate change** is scheduled to take place in Westminster Hall on Tuesday 7 September 2021, from 4:30pm to 5:30pm. The debate will be opened by Hywel Williams MP.

1.1 Background and summary

The 2015 Paris Climate Agreement was the first universal, legally binding climate change agreement to explicitly include human rights.¹ The preamble of the agreement states that “climate change is a common concern of humankind” and adds “[Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights...](#)”

The Government has cited this reference when discussing COP26, the climate change conference to be held in Glasgow in November 2021. Anne-Marie Trevelyan, Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth, said “[human rights are a cross-cutting consideration in all climate action.](#)” Nigel Adams, Minister in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, says the Government is calling on States “[to address the human rights implications of climate change and ensure that any action taken to respond to climate change complies with their human rights obligations.](#)”

The [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (1948) sets out fundamental human rights to be universally protected.

A major UN scientific report recently warned the global temperature is expected to reach 1.5°C of warming between 2030 to 2035. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s sixth report, released on 9 August, says this means [increasingly extreme heatwaves, droughts and flooding.](#)

Access to clean water and sanitation, food, shelter and other basic human needs may all be detrimentally affected by these changes, meaning people may be left without access to basic human needs. Amnesty International says the climate emergency “[is a human rights crisis of unprecedented proportions.](#)”

In a 2015 report The UN Environment Programme’s executive director described climate change as “[one of the greatest threats to human rights of our generation.](#)” However, Achim Steiner also observed that while the UN and

¹ “[Integrating human rights at the UNFCCC](#)”, UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, accessed 13 August 2021

governments acknowledge climate change can impact human rights “[there is less agreement on the corresponding obligations of governments and private actors to address this problem.](#)”

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has identified the [human rights which are most affected by climate change](#), including the right to life, development, food, health, water and sanitation, housing and cultural rights. The Office also identifies indigenous peoples, women, children, migrants and internally displaced persons and persons with disabilities as the groups most affected by climate change. It also describes what a human rights-based approach to climate change looks like:

Human rights can be integrated in climate change-related actions by applying a rights-based approach to policy and development.

[...]

The rights-based approach requires States to respect, protect, promote and fulfil all human rights for all persons. This includes preventing foreseeable human rights harms caused by climate change or, at the very least, mobilizing the maximum available resources in an effort to do so.²

Tackling climate change will be the UK Government’s “[number one international priority.](#)” The Government’s “[Global Britain in a Competitive Age](#)” (March 2021) report acknowledged that climate change will “cause increasing damage” with the effects felt most acutely in sub-Saharan Africa, South and East Asia and the Middle East. The Government confirmed its commitment to aligning all UK ODA (Official Development Assistance) with the Paris Agreement “[reflecting our commitment to tackling climate change and its effect as a driver of future instability and poverty.](#)” The Integrated Review in March 2021 also said it would “mainstream nature into all government policy.” A new aid strategy is expected in late 2021, which is likely to set out in further detail how the Government intends to meet these commitments in practice. When alignment with the Paris Agreement was announced in 2019, the Government cited four examples:

(1) use of carbon pricing in bilateral programme appraisals (2) ensuring investment for fossil fuels is in line with Paris temperature goals (3) a proportionate approach to climate risk assessment and (4) ensuring programmes don’t undermine countries’ NDC [Nationally-Determined Contributions to emissions reduction] and adaptation plans.

However, the Government’s decision to reduce ODA spending in 2021, allocating 0.5 percent of GNI (Gross National Income) rather than the [0.7 percent UN target](#) it has previously met, has been [widely criticised](#). The International Development Committee (IDC) Chair, Sarah Champion MP, said

² “[Frequently asked questions on human rights and climate change](#)”, UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 2021

the [reduction threatened the UK's role](#) as a “development superpower” and would undermine the UK's assumption in 2021 of the G7 presidency and host of the COP 26 conference on climate change.³ Climate and biodiversity is one of the FCDO's seven priorities for ODA spending, allocating £534 million in 2021/22.⁴ This is the third highest amount allocated for a thematic area (behind humanitarian preparedness and the response to the Coronavirus pandemic).

The Library has collated a range of [Parliamentary briefings and publications on climate change](#). This includes the Library series of [Climate Change Explainers](#) along with an explanation of UK climate change policy. It also provides resources on COP 26, including Library paper [COP26: the international climate change conference, Glasgow, UK](#) which discusses the UK's priorities for the conference and a brief overview of previous COPs.

³ International Development Committee, [Chair statement on UK's ODA commitment reduction](#), 25 November 2020

⁴ [HCWS935 \[Official Development Assistance Budget 2021-22\]](#), 21 April 2021. See also Commons Library Research Briefing CBP-9224, [Reducing the UK's aid spending in 2021](#), 20 July 2021.

2

Press and media articles

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

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

[Modern Slavery Is a Crisis Made Worse by Climate Change and Pandemic](#)

Teen Vogue
Lela Tolajian
9 August 2021

[Human rights can't be a sacrificial lamb for climate action](#)

The Hill
Danielle Butcher
28 July 2021

[Fighting for an end to conflict will help save lives and the planet](#)

The Times (Subscription required)
Anthony Mangnall and Rushanara Ali
22 July 2021

[Climate Change Is Not a Reason to Give China a Pass on Human Rights](#)

Slate
Alex Chow, Jessica Leung and Jeffrey Ngo
14 July 2021

[A Human-Rights Approach to Global Challenges](#)

Project Syndicate
Mary Robinson
13 July 2021

[UK students sue government over human rights impact of climate crisis](#)

The Guardian
Isabella Kaminski
30 April 2021

['It's a hypocrisy': Boris Johnson's 'Global Britain' government accused of failing world's poorest](#)

Yahoo News
Phoebe Dampare Osei
16 April 2021

Is “Global Britain” losing its voice?

The New Statesman

Harry Lambert

6 April 2021

A successful Cop26 is essential for Britain and the world. Here's how it can happen

The Guardian

Simon Lewis

23 March 2021

PM accused of hypocrisy over claim that climate is 'foremost priority'

The Guardian

Fiona Harvey

16 March 2021

Children paying the price for eco-car smuggling

Mail Online

Sebastian Meyer

20 November 2020

The UK Government Has Bailed Out Companies Complicit in Human Rights Abuses and Environmental Destruction

Vice

Ben Charlie Smoke

17 August 2020

Climate Change Is A Human Rights Issue

Climate Action

6 December 2019

3

Press releases

[Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy](#)

Cabinet Office | 16 March 2021

The Integrated Review is a comprehensive articulation of the UK's national security and international policy. It outlines three fundamental national interests that bind together the citizens of the UK – sovereignty, security and prosperity – alongside our values of democracy and a commitment to universal human rights, the rule of law, freedom of speech and faith, and equality.

The Integrated Review concludes at an important moment for the United Kingdom. The world has changed considerably since the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review, as has the UK's place within it.

The document, which is the product of over a year of work across government and of consultation with a wide range of external organisations and thinkers, sets out a vision for Global Britain. This includes:

- an emphasis on openness as a source of prosperity
- a more robust position on security and resilience
- a renewed commitment to the UK as a force for good in the world
- an increased determination to seek multilateral solutions to challenges like climate change

It also stresses the importance of deepening our relationships with allies and partners around the world, as well as moving more swiftly and with greater agility.

In this context, the Integrated Review sets out four overarching objectives:

1. **Sustaining strategic advantage through science and technology**, incorporating it as an integral element of national security and international policy to firmly establish the UK as a global S&T and responsible cyber power. This will be essential in gaining economic, political and security advantages.
2. **Shaping the open international order of the future**, working with partners to reinvigorate the international institutions, laws and norms that enable open societies and economies such as the UK to flourish. This will help our citizens and others around the world realise the full benefits of democracy, free trade and international cooperation – not least in the future frontiers of cyberspace and space.

3. **Strengthening security and defence at home and overseas**, working with allies and partners to help us to maximise the benefits of openness and protect our people, in the physical world and online, against a range of growing threats. These include state threats, radicalisation and terrorism, serious and organised crime, and weapons proliferation.
4. **Building resilience at home and overseas**, improving our ability to anticipate, prevent, prepare for and respond to risks ranging from extreme weather to cyber-attacks. This will also involve tackling risks at source – in particular climate change and biodiversity loss.

The Integrated Review sets out the government's overarching national security and international policy objectives to 2025. These will inform future policy-making for all government departments. They will also inform future Spending Reviews, offering further opportunities to align resources with ambition over the long term. We will ensure all government's instruments work together, coordinated by enhanced strategic capabilities at the centre, to achieve our objectives.

4

PQs

Ethics and Human Rights: Climate Change

14 Jul 2021 | 699 c355

Asked by: Steven Bonnar

What preparations he has made for discussion at COP26 of (a) ethics and (b) human rights matters relating to climate change.

Answered by: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth

The UK recognises the serious and unequivocal threat that climate change poses to our planet, and that it can indeed undermine the enjoyment of human rights. The Paris agreement preamble states that respecting and promoting our human rights is fundamental to effective climate implementation. Therefore, human rights are a cross-cutting consideration in all climate action, so we will be working with all countries this year to achieve an ambitious, inclusive and shared outcome from COP26 to help safeguard human rights.

Asked by: Steven Bonnar

I thank the Minister for that answer. Scotland was not only the first country in the world to declare a climate emergency, but the first in the world to establish a dedicated climate justice fund—a fund that was recently doubled by the SNP Scottish Government in Edinburgh. Will the UK Government, ahead of COP Glasgow, match Scotland's ambitions? Will this Government create such a fund, and will the Minister and the COP26 President ensure that the focus of COP26 is placed squarely on the rights of those who will be affected first and foremost by the climate emergency?

Answered by: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth

As my right hon. Friend the COP26 President set out, the UK remains one of the largest donors in supporting a number of areas, including, obviously, humanitarian assistance and humanitarian rights. I would be interested to hear more on the details of the climate justice fund to understand the premise of it, but the UK continues to have an absolutely clear commitment to that.

Human Rights

12 Jul 2021 | 28998

Asked by: Dame Diana Johnson

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps (a) he and (b) his Department is taking to help support and protect from harm human rights defenders working on (i) climate change and environmental rights and (ii) land rights and forced displacement to

protect (A) indigenous peoples, (B) LGBT communities and (C) other marginalised groups and (iii) investigating corruption and the misuse of public funds.

Answered by: Nigel Adams | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government strongly supports Human Rights Defenders worldwide to enable them to carry out their work safely and without fear. In 2019, the Minister of State responsible for Human Rights, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, launched the document 'UK support for Human Rights Defenders' which was drawn up with significant and important input from relevant stakeholders, including Amnesty International, and which sets out how the UK Government engages with Human Rights Defenders to advance the human rights agenda globally.

Following the FCDO's reorganisation and publication of the Integrated Review, the UK remains strongly committed to this agenda and will continue to support and work in partnership with Human Rights Defenders to promote open societies and the UK's force for good agenda. We will reflect these commitments in the various strands of strategic planning which will flow from the Integrated Review.

The FCDO also monitors repression of HRDs in its annual Human Rights and Democracy Report, the most recent of which was published earlier this month. That report paid tribute to the courageous work of HRDs and listed support for them as a UK international policy priority.

The UK also recognises the serious and unequivocal threat that climate change poses to our planet, and that it can undermine the enjoyment of Human Rights. It is important that States comply with their human rights obligation when taking any action to respond to climate change. The UK, therefore, calls on States to address the human rights implications of climate change and ensure that any action taken to respond to climate change complies with their human rights obligations.

Environment Protection

21 Apr 2021 | 179314

Asked by: Matthew Pennycook

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what his policy is on the recognition by the UN of the human right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

Answered by: James Duddridge | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK recognises the serious and unequivocal threat that climate change poses to our planet, and that it can undermine the enjoyment of human

rights. However, any recognition of a new legal right must give due regard to the structure of international human rights law so as not to undermine the notion and value of human rights as a whole.

Summit of Democratic Governments

House of Lords | 30 Nov 2020 | 808 c505

Asked by: Baroness D'Souza

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for convening a summit of the governments of the 10 leading democracies in spring 2021.

Answered by: Lord True | Cabinet Office

My Lords, our G7 presidency will convene a number of democratic nations next year, building on the G7's shared values as democratic and open societies. This is part of a year of UK international leadership. The Government do not currently plan to convene an additional summit of 10 democracies in spring 2021.

Asked by: Baroness D'Souza

I thank the noble Lord for his Answer. It is likely that global Britain will be in want of an international role following the end of the transition period. The UK still has considerable convening power, as shown by the recent joint letter signed by the UK, Canada and Australia on events in Hong Kong. Surely a transatlantic and transpacific democratic alliance could have a synergistic effect in tackling major problems such as climate change, building 5G, security, corruption and human rights. This would aim to be not an "anti" group, but rather a co-operating bloc to deal with specific issues and become something positioned between liberal naivety and the Cold War. Will the Government consider establishing an informal but influential network of democracies such as the G7, together with India, South Korea and Australia, to present a common front in upholding the rule of law?

Answered by: Lord True | Cabinet Office

My Lords, of course I agree with the sentiment of the noble Baroness. As she says, the UK works as part of a vast range of different multinational organisations, from the G7 and G20 to the Commonwealth, NATO and dozens of others. The membership of each group individually is limited, but taken collectively they mean that the UK partners with a great number of countries in one format or another. That will continue to be the philosophy guiding us forward

Climate Change: International Co-operation

24 Nov 2020 | 684 c675

Asked by: Alyn Smith

Climate change is going to drive the future crisis that humanity is facing. Parts of the world will get wetter and parts drier, with all the world more climatically unstable, population growth and resource scarcity. Climate change is going to be at the heart of every crisis that we are going to face. The UK is undertaking the integrated review of foreign and defence policy right now. I will be grateful for an assurance from the Minister that climate change will be high on the agenda of that review, and that he will take good note of the Scottish National party's suggestions, which we submitted to the review in good faith. We all need to work together on this, because climate change is a crisis facing humanity as a whole.

The hon. Member is right to highlight the fact that climate change is going to be an important factor in the foreign policy of all countries around the world. We recognise that in terms of pressure on food production and resources, the potential implications and the conflicts that may come about because of that. That is why climate change and our response to it, development and diplomacy will all go hand in hand through the integrated review.

Answered by: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

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Asked by: Alyn Smith

I am grateful to the Minister for that reassurance. I suggest that he has a read of the SNP submission to the integrated review. There are some very good ideas in there, not least to maintain development at the heart of climate mitigation and to fund it properly. If I were a Minister in a Government who stood on a manifesto in December to maintain 0.7%, I would be considering my position were that to be walked back upon. Is he considering his?

Answered by: James Cleverly | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

I am very proud of the fact that the United Kingdom is and will remain one of the most generous aid donors in the world. We have focused relentlessly on ensuring that the work of the United Kingdom Government across all Departments focuses on addressing the poorest in the world, as well as the implications of climate change.

UK Export Finance: Environment Protection

2 Mar 2020 | 18402

Asked by: Tulip Siddiq

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 13 February 2020 to Question 14007 on UK Export Finance: Fossil Fuels, how many meetings officials in the UK Export Finance Environmental, Social and Human Rights team have held with representatives from the (a) Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and (b) Committee on Climate Change in each of the last five years.

Answered by: Graham Stuart | Department for International Trade

Representatives from across UK Export Finance (UKEF), regularly meet officials from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to discuss strategic, operational and specific project-related matters. This includes issues relating to climate concerns, fossil fuels and the transition away from fossil fuels.

As the Committee for Climate Change has a domestic focus, UKEF has not engaged with it.

Refugees: Climate Change

29 Jan 2020 | 6066

Asked by: Jonathan Edwards

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for the Government's policies of the ruling of the United Nations Human Rights Committee on climate change refugee repatriation.

Answered by: Heather Wheeler | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The British Government has taken note of the views of the UN Human Rights Committee's in the case concerned, which are not legally binding. We also note that the Committee made wider comments, including on the responsibilities of receiving states in relation to non-refoulement where the effects of climate change have been a driver of migration. However under the 1951 Refugee Convention, climate change does not of itself constitute a basis for requesting/granting refugee status.

Evidence shows that climate extremes and environmental degradation are often amplifiers of other principal migration drivers (economic, social and political), but decisions to migrate are rarely mono-causal. We recognise the complexity of causes of migration and the importance of providing people with options for sustainable livelihoods that do not compel them to migrate. More broadly, as climate change increases its impact on migration it is imperative that efforts are redoubled to limit warming and to help vulnerable

people to adapt to change. Climate change is a reality that requires greater and more coordinated adaptation and mitigation planning.

5

Other Parliamentary material

5.1

Written Ministerial Statements

FCDO Update

[UK Official Development Assistance departmental allocations 2021-22](#)

21 Apr 2021 | HCWS935

Dominic Raab | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The FCDO has responsibility for delivering £8,115m of Official Development Assistance (ODA) spend this year, approximately 80% of total UK ODA. I have recently concluded the FCDO's internal business planning process to allocate this budget for 2021/22 in accordance with UK strategic priorities against a challenging financial climate as a result of COVID. This statement updates the House on the conclusions of that process.

Throughout the business planning process, we strived to ensure that every penny of the FCDO's ODA spend brings maximum strategic coherence, impact and value for taxpayers' money.

The resulting portfolio marks a strategic shift, putting our aid budget to work alongside our diplomatic network, our science and technology expertise and our economic partnerships in tackling global challenges. We will focus on core HMG priorities for poverty reduction, including getting more girls into school, providing urgent humanitarian support to those who need it most, and tackling global threats like climate change, COVID recovery and other international health priorities. Based on OECD data for 2020, the UK will be the third largest donor within the G7 as a percentage of GNI.

The Integrated Review has helped guide the process, by setting out how an independent and sovereign global Britain will act as a force for good and use its influence to shape the future international order. To deliver that vision I have allocated resources to the seven priorities I set out to Parliament on 26 November:

- Climate and biodiversity. FCDO will maintain a strong climate and biodiversity portfolio of £534m as we host COP26. In total, the FCDO will deliver more than £941m of activities this year, across all themes, that count towards the UK's flagship £11.6bn International Climate Finance target.
- Global health security. FCDO will spend £1,305m on global health. We will focus on the UK's position at the forefront of the international response to Covid-19, through our commitments to COVAX, GAVI and

WHO, and through bilateral spend where the need is greatest in Africa.

- Girls' education. FCDO will spend £400m on girls' education. We will invest directly in over 25 countries, helping to achieve the global target to get 40 million girls into education and demonstrating our commitment at this year's Global Partnership for Education summit.
- Humanitarian preparedness and response. FCDO will spend £906m to maintain the UK's role as a force for good at times of crisis, focusing our work on those countries most affected by risk of famine, including Yemen, Syria, Somalia, and South Sudan. A £30m crisis reserve will enable us to respond rapidly to new crises.
- Science & Technology. FCDO will make £251m of R&D investments across all seven themes of this strategy, with £38m targeted directly at science and technology including new innovations to tackle development challenges, including innovations in satellite imagery and AI to support humanitarian responses.
- Open societies and conflict resolution. FCDO will spend £419m to harness the UK's unique strengths in conflict management and resolution, and to project our support for democratic values and institutions, human rights, and freedom of religious belief. We will further drive impact and support democratic values and institutions through our diplomacy, including our new sanctions policy, which will shortly be extended to cover corruption. We have also protected Civil Society programmes, particularly Comic Relief, Commonwealth Veterans, Jo Cox Memorial grants within UK Aid Direct, UK Aid Match and VSO.
- Economic development and trade. FCDO will spend £491m to support new trade relationships with developing country partners, complementing our wider multilateral and capital investments to build the trade and investment partners of the future. We will use CDC and multilateral partners to drive mutually beneficial growth with strategic partners in circumstances where private sector investment is not practicable.

A further £3,159m will meet the government's cross-cutting contributions to multilateral partners and global funds, including our pledge to remain the largest donor to IDA19, the African Development Fund, and other multilateral development banks; support Arms-Length Bodies such as the British Council; and cover FCDO operating costs. This is complemented by the ODA spent by other government departments, which I set out in a Written Ministerial Statement on 26 January 2021.

Within this framework, I have also ensured that the UK is able to exert maximum influence as a force for good in Africa and strategically tilt towards the Indo-Pacific. FCDO will spend around half its bilateral ODA budget in Africa, where human suffering remains most acute, including a major shift to East Africa to reflect the UK's unique role and clear national strategic

interest. One third of FCDO bilateral ODA will be spent in the Indo-Pacific and South Asia, in support of our deeper engagement in that region, promoting open societies, reinforcing trade links and promoting climate change collaboration.

In China, I have reduced FCDO's ODA for programme delivery by 95% to £0.9m (with additional ODA in this year only to meet the contractual exit costs of former programmes). The remaining £900,000 will fund programmes on open societies and human rights.

The UK remains a world leader in international development, not only through the impact of these financial allocations but also through the creation of the FCDO, integrating diplomacy and development to deliver greater impact. We will return to our commitment to spend 0.7% of gross national income on ODA when the fiscal situation allows.

Thematic allocation

Thematic area	FCDO ODA allocation 2021/22, £m
Climate change and biodiversity	534
COVID and global health	1,305
Girls' education	400
Humanitarian preparedness and response	906
Open societies and conflict	419
Science, research and technology	38 (plus thematic R&D)
Trade and economic development	491
Financial transactions	863
Programmes with cross cutting themes	1,940
ALBs, International Subscriptions and other fixed costs	1,219
Total	8,115

5.2

Ministerial Statements

Integrated Review

16 Mar 2021 | House of Commons | 691 cc161-79

PM statement on the Government's integrated review of security, defence, development and foreign policy

Global Britain

16 Jun 2020 | House of Commons | 677 cc666-83

5.3

Debates

[Queen's Speech \(6th day\)](#)

19 May 2021 | House of Lords | | 812 cc589-674

[...]

Lord Ahmed | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

[...]

The integrated review has sent a clear message that we are very much joined-up in our thinking and strategic in our approach. The review has also sent a strong message about what we stand for as a country: as an independent actor on the global stage, an active European country but with a truly global perspective. It is a commitment to be more proactive and adaptable; to be more dynamic; to engage with partners and work with civil societies and key Governments. We will call out abuses of human rights through our sanctions policies but also through working with key partners. Whether it is on health, climate or human rights, we will continue to play our central and pivotal role as global Britain on the world stage. It is a commitment of global Britain to work with our allies, and as a force for good. It is a commitment of global Britain that we will proudly take forward in the years ahead.

[Integrated Review: Development Aid](#)

28 Apr 2021 | House of Lords | 811 cc522-63GC

[Global Human Security](#)

13 April 2021 | House of Commons | 692 cc1-23

[Global Britain](#)

11 Jan 2021 | House of Commons | 687 cc70-129

[...]

Elizabeth Truss | Secretary of State for International Trade

[...]

As I was saying, we now have the opportunity to set our own path by rejecting the twin errors of values-free globalisation and protectionism. Instead, as the United Kingdom, we are rooting our approach in the fundamental values of sovereignty, democracy, the rule of law and a fierce commitment to high standards. That is why we are bringing together a coalition of like-minded nations to advance high standards worldwide — from food and animal welfare to the environment and data. With fellow democracies such as Japan and Canada, we are championing innovation, a cleaner planet, women's economic empowerment and much more. We have demonstrated this through the fantastic deal we have struck with the EU to ensure we can keep

trading freely with zero tariffs and zero quotas, alongside deals covering 63 countries. No other nation has ever negotiated so many trade deals simultaneously, and I am proud of the results we have achieved.

At this tough time, we need to embrace our future as a confident, optimistic and outward-looking global Britain, delivering jobs and prosperity at home while helping lead the fight for free and fair trade abroad. My hope is that all sides of this House can join me in celebrating how far we have come and the huge opportunity we have in 2021, striking deal after deal with our friends and family worldwide to support our values and full economic potential. This is global Britain in action.

[...]

Emily Thornberry

[...]

First, it is amazing and deeply disappointing that in the 30-plus continuity agreements secured by the Government over the past two years there is not one single new provision that strengthens the global fight against climate change — not even in the enhanced agreement with Japan. Secondly, it is not just a missed opportunity but a failed responsibility that there is no sign in any of the 30-plus agreements of the Government giving even the slightest consideration to human rights.

Egypt and Cameroon are by any standards among the most brutal regimes in the world today, yet the Government signed deals with both countries in December, with no apparent hesitation over their human rights records at all, and no apparent effort to strengthen human rights provisions in those agreements to gain some leverage over their behaviour. With Singapore, Vietnam and Turkey, the Government went one step further, signing new trade agreements which contain no substantive clauses on human rights at all, and not as much as a side-letter to address the issue. Is it any wonder that Members in the other place, with an increasing number in all parts of this House, believe that the only way to get Ministers to take human rights seriously when it comes to future trade deals is by obliging them to do so by law?

[...]

As I said earlier, if any of this was a case of incredibly detailed treaty negotiations coming down to the wire in an effort to get the final text right, we might all accept it. But then we might have come back with something more than this — the agreement with Mexico, just five pages long with an eight-page annexe; then they really would have no excuse. But then there is the unfortunate reality of the 30-plus continuity agreements signed by the Government these last two years: no ambition, no improvements, no action on the environment, no progress on workers' rights, no consideration of human rights, no time for parliamentary scrutiny, and not a single benefit in terms of trade that we did not already have. So I am grateful to hear all the

talk from the Secretary of State regarding the new trade deals which she aims to sign this year and next, and I am sure that this is the first of many debates that we will have on those prospective deals.

[...]

Hywel Williams

Global Britain reimagines the past, ignores the present and, in its naivety, diminishes the future. It is a product of the exceptionalism that diminished the UK's relationship with the EU. Global Britain captures the arrogance of the Westminster Government towards the non-England UK.

The Foreign Secretary said that global Britain will be

“the best possible allies, partners and friends with our European neighbours”.

Those neighbours are bound together by a European vision of peace, protected by political, economic and social interaction. This was rejected by this Government. Delusion and nostalgia trump political reality, trump global interdependence and even trump geography itself. The delusion is obvious to all, save for the deluded. My party advocates a policy for Wales of proximity to Europe. We recognise our shared values, our diversity, our political and economic interests and the sheer fact of geography that draws us to our mainland.

The Foreign Secretary said the UK will be an

“energetic champion of free and open trade” — [Official Report, 3 February 2020; Vol. 671, c. 26]

having just struck the first trade deal ever that put up barriers to trade. Most distasteful is the claim that the UK will be a “stronger force for good” — this coming from a Government who have cut international aid, have supplied arms to autocrats and have lavished praise on demagogues like Donald Trump, and that is going well, is it not?

This year, the Republic of Ireland has again taken its seat on the United Nations Security Council. This achievement for a small nation is an emphatic rebuttal of the Unionist contention that nations like Wales and Scotland are too small and too poor to be independent and successful. These past four years of failure have proved that one London-shaped national interest does not serve our four unique and diverging sets of interests. We have our own international priorities. For now, we must have equal powers to approve future trade deals. That is imperative.

Global Britain's withdrawal from Erasmus is a disgrace: curtailing the life opportunities of our best, and with no reciprocal arrangements for students

from our neighbours. But not to worry, we will have, I am sure, a “world-beating” alternative, no doubt destined to join all the other world-beating triumphs of this Government. Finally, there is the Government’s stupidest self-damaging spasm: the little England denial of visas for performers, rejecting a reasonable and mutually beneficial EU offer of 90-day visas both ways.

Wales can achieve great things as an independent sovereign nation, free to make a positive and honest contribution to address the global challenges of our times. Global Britain comes nowhere near that aspiration.

[...]

Stephen Farry

[...]

Looking ahead, the promotion of democracy, human rights and good governance must be central. The UK must be a leader in the United Nations on peacebuilding and human security. It must be a leader on climate change, both at home and abroad. I am concerned that these concepts have been given very little space and attention in the integrated review to date. That needs to be addressed if we are going to talk about a genuine global UK.

[...]

Gareth Thomas

[...]

It is also striking that, in the year when the UK will be hosting the world’s climate change summit, not one of the trade agreements that the Secretary of State signed last year saw any progress on the environment and climate change. Also, as other hon. Friends have mentioned, many of the deals that the Secretary of State signed did not include even the most basic provisions on human rights. It was good to hear the right hon. Member for Bournemouth East (Mr Ellwood) briefly require the Secretary of State to mention India. The Secretary of State has been astonishingly quiet on trade with the Indian subcontinent. India’s market is set to be the world’s fifth largest within five years, and given that Britain is bottom of the G7 for growth in our trade with India, a little more effort to open those markets would, I say gently, be timely.

[...]

Greg Hands | Minister for Trade Policy

[...]

This year marks the beginning of a new chapter in our national story, going into the world as a sovereign, independent trading nation. The responsibility now falls on all our shoulders, both in the Government and in this Parliament, to take full advantage of the freedom of action that our country has regained. 2021 will be our opportunity to show what global Britain can be, striking trade

deals with new markets and reasserting ourselves as a liberal, outward-looking, free-trading nation and, most of all, a force for good in the world.

5.4 Early Day Motions

[Welcoming refugees during and post covid-19](#)

EDM 97 (session 2021-22)

24 May 2021

Apsana Begum

That this House recognises that, as the 72th anniversary of the Geneva Convention approaches, there are more refugees, approximately 80 million, than at any other time in history; that they are victims of wars, environmental disasters and climate change, human rights abuses, pandemic and poverty; resolves to frame a response to their predicament with a humanitarian-first approach and not to inflict further trauma via detention or criminalisation and thanks refugees for their contribution to the academic, business, cultural and financial fabric of society.

[United Nations Day on 24 October 2020](#)

EDM 1058 (session 2019-21)

22 Oct 2020

Stephen Farry

That this House joins in celebrating United Nations Day on 24 October 2020, marking the 75th anniversary of the United Nations Charter coming into effect; acknowledges the significant contributions made by the United Nations Organisation and the other agencies of the United Nations System to international peace and security, humanitarian protection and assistance, the promotion of human rights, economic, social and cultural co-operation, the global environment and climate change, sustainable development and tackling poverty along with many other interventions; stresses the importance of a rules based international order and international co-operation around shared global challenges; and calls on the Government to ensure that the UK plays a proactive, leadership role in pursuing reform to ensure that the United Nations can have a more enhanced and effective role over the years ahead.

6

Further reading

[Stop burning our rights! What governments and corporations must do to protect humanity from the climate crisis](#)

Amnesty international
7 June 2021

[The UK's Integrated Review overpromises and under-delivers: the verdict of Lady Anelay, Chair of the House of Lords International Relations & Defence Select Committee](#)

The World Today
Chatham House
2 April 2021

[Global Britain in a competitive age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy \(CP 403\)](#)

Cabinet Office
16 March 2021

- [Command Paper CP 403 correction](#) | 26 Mar 2021

[Global Britain, Global Broker: a blueprint for the UK's future international role](#)

Chatham House research paper
Dr Robin Niblett
11 January 2021

[The Integrated Review of UK Foreign Policy: 10 Key Insights](#)

British Foreign Policy Group
Sophia Gaston
16 March 2021

[UK Integrated Review spells end of 'development superpower status'](#)

Devex
William Worley
16 March 2021

[SNP Submission to the Integrated Review](#)

Scottish National Party
November 2020

[The value of a UK strategy on human rights](#)

Foreign Policy Centre
Benjamin Ward
29 September 2020

Finding Britain's role in a changing world: the principles for Global Britain

Foreign Policy Centre

September 2020

Keeping Britain Global? Strengthening the UK's role in the world

UNA-UK [United Nations Association – UK]

April 2017

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