



House of Commons
Foreign Affairs Committee

Global Britain

Sixth Report of Session 2017–19



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*Report, together with formal minutes and
an Appendix relating to the report*

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The Foreign Affairs Committee

The Foreign Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and its associated public bodies.

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The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication

Committee reports are published on the Committee's website at www.parliament.uk/facom and in print by Order of the House.

Evidence relating to this report is published on the [inquiry page](#) of the Committee's website.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Chris Stanton (Clerk), Zoe Oliver-Watts (Second Clerk), Hannah Bryce (Clerk), Dr Ariella Huff (Senior Committee Specialist), Ashlee Godwin, Dr Eoin Martin and Nicholas Wade (Committee Specialists), Clare Genis (Senior Committee Assistant), Alyna Poremba and Zara Wootton (Committee Assistants) and Estelle Currie (Media Officer).

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Summary

Since June 2016, Government Ministers have repeatedly used the phrase ‘Global Britain’ to indicate the UK’s foreign policy ambitions. But Global Britain has not been precisely defined by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which has also appeared reluctant to respond to our requests for basic information about the objectives of Global Britain and the resources to be devoted to it.

The time is right to take stock of the UK’s role in the world, not only in the light of domestic developments but also in the light of long-term changes in the international system and global balance of power. The UK has a wide range of attributes that have traditionally made it a global player, but it remains unclear what the Government believes the UK should do with these resources and assets in the post-Brexit environment, and how the UK should exercise leadership on the most urgent and complex issues facing the international system. For Global Britain to be more than a worthy aspiration, the slogan must be backed by substance. The FCO should place online, in one place, all the statements and speeches that Ministers have made about Global Britain, and all other Government documents in the public domain that set out what Global Britain means, translated into the world’s ten most-used languages. If it comes to be perceived as a superficial branding exercise, it risks undermining UK interests by damaging our reputation overseas and eroding support for a global outlook here at home.

Over the coming year, the Committee will explore in detail the Government’s objectives for Global Britain and make recommendations. This initial report sets out a list of questions the Government will need to answer in setting a coherent strategic direction for UK foreign policy, covering its policy priorities, areas where the UK can have the greatest impact, the resources and infrastructure needed to support the Government’s aspirations, and metrics that can be used to measure success. We will address these questions in subsequent evidence sessions and reports.

Introduction

1. Since June 2016, Government Ministers have repeatedly asserted that the UK's decision to leave the EU does not indicate that the UK will withdraw from global affairs more broadly. This initiative has been badged by the Government as 'Global Britain'. Following repeated requests by the Committee from December 2017 onwards, the Foreign Office provided a memorandum on 1 March 2018 that explained its "vision of Global Britain and the role of the [FCO] in supporting and enabling government departments to deliver this vision".¹ The memorandum said that the "concept" of Global Britain was "shorthand" for the UK's determination to adjust to Brexit and "the pace of change in an ever more challenging global environment",² to "continue to be a successful global foreign policy player",³ and "to resist any sense that Britain will be less engaged in the world in the next few years".⁴ Global Britain, it said, was:

Intended to signal that the UK will, as Ministers have put it, continue to be open, inclusive and outward facing; free trading; assertive in standing up for British interests and values; and resolute in boosting our international standing and influence. It is a Britain with global presence, active in every region; global interests, working with our allies and partners to deliver the global security and prosperity that ensures our own; and global perspectives, engaging with the world in every area, influencing and being influenced.⁵

The most frequent complaint we have heard from several witnesses is that the only thing that is clear about Global Britain is that it is unclear what it means, what it stands for or how its success should be measured.

2. The Foreign Affairs Committee is therefore launching a long-term piece of work to explore in detail the Government's ambitions and objectives for Global Britain, and to seek the views of other experts on these questions. This initial report sets out what has been said about Global Britain so far and the key questions that any new foreign policy strategy should seek to address, and identifies likely areas for further exploration in our work programme over the coming months.⁶

1 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 1

2 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 5

3 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 7

4 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraphs 5 and 6

5 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 7

6 Professor John Bew, Specialist Adviser, has declared the following interests: consultant for the think tank Policy Exchange on a project called 'Britain in the World', examining UK foreign policy (since March 2016); contributing writer (not contracted) for the *New Statesman*; past consultancy for M&C Saatchi on informal basis; father is Cross-Bench Peer in House of Lords (Lord Bew of Donegore)

1 The idea of 'Global Britain'

'Global Britain': what the Government has said so far

3. The Prime Minister first outlined her vision for Global Britain in her speech to the Conservative Party Conference on 2 October 2016. She said:

Brexit should not just prompt us to think about our new relationship with the European Union. It should make us think about our role in the wider world. It should make us think of Global Britain, a country with the self-confidence and the freedom to look beyond the continent of Europe and to the economic and diplomatic opportunities of the wider world. Because we know that the referendum was not a vote to turn in ourselves, to cut ourselves off from the world. It was a vote for Britain to stand tall, to believe in ourselves, to forge an ambitious and optimistic new role in the world.⁷

The Prime Minister has subsequently referred to Global Britain in similar terms in several major speeches, including the January 2017 Lancaster House speech setting out the Government's plans for leaving the EU, and her speech to the US Republican Party Conference in Philadelphia that same month.⁸ She also referred to it in addresses to the World Economic Forum in Davos and the UN General Assembly in 2017, and in an interview with the BBC after her 2018 visit to China.⁹

4. In December 2016 the Foreign Secretary, appointed to the role in July 2016, gave his first major policy speech. Titled *Beyond Brexit: a Global Britain*, the speech at Chatham House set out his vision for the future of UK foreign policy as one of leadership and engagement on the international stage:

I have been repeatedly impressed by the way people around the world are looking for a lead from Britain, engagement from Britain. And so whether we like it or not we are not some bit part or spear carrier on the world stage. We are a protagonist—a global Britain running a truly global foreign policy.¹⁰

5. Similarly, in a speech at the October 2017 Conservative Party Conference, he suggested that the UK had something unique to offer under the banner of Global Britain:

We are big enough to do amazing things. We have the ability to project force 7,000 miles, to use our permanent membership of the UN security council to mobilise a collective response to the crisis in North Korea. We contribute 25 per cent of European aid spending and yet no one seriously complains

7 The Prime Minister, Speech: "[Britain after Brexit: A Vision of a Global Britain](#)", Conservative Party Conference, 2 October 2016

8 The Prime Minister, [Lancaster House Speech](#), 17 January 2017 and [Speech to the Republican Party Conference](#), 26 January 2017

9 The Prime Minister, [Speech to the World Economic Forum](#), 19 January 2017 and [Speech to the UN General Assembly](#), 20 September 2017; BBC News, [Prime Minister interview with Laura Kuenssberg](#), 2 February 2018

10 The Foreign Secretary, Speech: "[Beyond Brexit: a Global Britain](#)", Chatham House, 2 December 2016

that we have a sinister national agenda and that is why the phrase global Britain makes sense because if you said Global China or Global Russia or even alas Global America it would not have quite the same flavour.¹¹

No minister during our inquiry was able to give the Committee a definitive explanation of ‘Global Britain’.

Key themes

6. Before the FCO submitted its memorandum to the Committee, several recurring themes and aspirations had been expressed in statements by the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and other Ministers.

International outlook

7. First, Ministers have framed the vote to leave the EU as indicating popular support for a more internationalist and outward-looking UK, rather than as a turn inward. For example, in his December 2016 Chatham House speech, the Foreign Secretary asserted that

Brexit emphatically does not mean a Britain that turns in on herself. Yes—a country taking back control of its democratic institutions. But not a nation hauling up the drawbridge or slamming the door. A nation that is now on its mettle. A nation that refuses to be defined by this decision. A country galvanised by new possibilities and a country that is politically and economically and morally fated. To be more outward-looking and more engaged with the world than ever before.¹²

8. Similarly, the Prime Minister told the US Republican Party conference in Philadelphia in 2017 that

as we end our membership of the European Union—as the British people voted with determination and quiet resolve to do last year—we have the opportunity to reassert our belief in a confident, sovereign and global Britain, ready to build relationships with old friends and new allies alike.¹³

Old friends and new allies

9. The theme of ‘old friends and new allies’ has also been prominent in Government statements about Global Britain. In her Lancaster House speech, the Prime Minister called for the building of “a truly Global Britain. A country that reaches out to old friends and new allies alike.”¹⁴ She emphasised this theme again in an address to the UK-Japan Business Forum in Tokyo in September 2017, stating:

I believe that this is a good moment for like-minded partners such as Britain and Japan to be doing more together. For as we become a Global Britain—a

11 The Foreign Secretary, [Speech to the Conservative Party Conference](#), 3 October 2017

12 The Foreign Secretary, Speech: “[Beyond Brexit: a Global Britain](#)”, Chatham House, 2 December 2016

13 The Prime Minister, [Speech to the Republican Party Conference](#), 26 January 2017

14 The Prime Minister, [Lancaster House Speech](#), 17 January 2017

European nation still, but one that is outside the European Union—so we will be free to engage more actively and independently, particularly in key Asian markets like Japan.¹⁵

Sir Alan Duncan, FCO Minister of State, said in a speech in Kazakhstan on the same day that a “truly global Britain” would be one in which the UK “strengthens our relationships and reaches out to build new partnerships across the world”.¹⁶ Similarly, National Security Adviser Sir Mark Sedwill told the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy (JCNSS) that Global Britain means “investing and reinvesting in big partnerships, big relationships, around the world ... with core allies and old friends in places such as the Gulf and south Asia, and investing in new partnerships in, for example, east Asia.”¹⁷

Support for the rules-based international system

10. Government Ministers have also stressed that Global Britain means supporting the rules-based international system, which has traditionally been a central component of UK foreign and defence policy. In a November 2017 speech at the Lord Mayor’s Banquet, the Prime Minister said that “to defend the rules-based international order against irresponsible states that seek to erode it” would be one of Global Britain’s key tasks.¹⁸ The following month, Sir Mark Sedwill told the JCNSS that the UK should strengthen its support for the rules-based international system “which will probably become more important in the 21st century as the geopolitics becomes more contested”.¹⁹

Free trade

11. Support for free trade has been a core element of the Global Britain narrative. In her October 2016 speech to the Conservative Party Conference, the Prime Minister set out a vision in which “Britain is always the most passionate, most consistent, most convincing advocate for free trade.”²⁰ Similarly, at the 2017 World Economic Forum in Davos she expressed the hope that the UK “will step up to a new leadership role as the strongest and most forceful advocate for business, free markets and free trade anywhere in the world.”²¹ The Foreign Secretary likewise described agitating for global free trade as the UK’s “historic post-Brexit function” in his Chatham House speech,²² while the Secretary of State for International Trade told an audience in Malaysia in April 2017 that

The UK government’s ambition is to build a Global Britain—a nation that is outward-looking and internationalist, rejecting insularity and continuing to play a prominent role in global affairs. Trade is central to this ambition.

15 The Prime Minister, [Speech to UK-Japan Business Forum](#), 5 September 2017

16 Sir Alan Duncan, [Speech at the First President Library in Astana](#), 5 September 2017

17 Oral evidence taken before the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy on 18 December 2017, [HC \(2017–2019\) 625](#), Q27

18 The Prime Minister, [Speech to the Lord Mayor’s Banquet](#), 13 November 2017

19 Oral evidence taken before the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy on 18 December 2017, [HC \(2017–2019\) 625](#), Q27 [Tom Tugendhat MP]

20 The Prime Minister, [Speech: “Britain after Brexit: A Vision of a Global Britain”](#), Conservative Party Conference, 2 October 2016

21 The Prime Minister, [Speech to the World Economic Forum](#), 19 January 2017

22 The Foreign Secretary, [Speech: “Beyond Brexit: a Global Britain”](#), Chatham House, 2 December 2016

We want Britain to become a global champion of free trade, a nation at the heart of world commerce, working with our international allies and partners to remove barriers and liberalise trading practices.²³

12. As the Prime Minister has sought to expand on the idea of Global Britain, she has stressed that the pursuit of this agenda does not apply narrowly to the domain of foreign policy, but is intended to have beneficial effects at home by demonstrating “the role businesses play in creating jobs”.²⁴ For example, in an interview with the BBC’s Laura Kuenssberg on 2 February 2018, just before returning from a three-day visit to China, she said:

I am doing what the British people want, which is delivering on Brexit, but also getting out around the world, ensuring that we bring jobs back to Britain. Companies will be selling more Great British products to China as a result of this trip. There will be more people in jobs in the UK as a result of this trip. That’s Global Britain in action.²⁵

FCO memorandum to the Committee

13. On 21 December 2017, the Committee requested a memorandum from the FCO setting out details of the Government’s Global Britain policy, its objectives and the timeline on which it is being developed and implemented. The Committee asked the FCO to set out:

- How Global Britain differs from past UK foreign policy;
- What the main obstacles or challenges are to realising Global Britain;
- How UK foreign policy towards Europe, Asia and other regions will change under Global Britain;
- Whether Global Britain seeks to increase or strengthen the ‘rules-based international order’ and if so, how;
- Regional and thematic areas of focus;
- Prioritised objectives and attendant metrics, both across Government and within the FCO, including timescales and deadlines;
- Allocation of resources and responsibilities to deliver, both across Government and within the FCO;
- Mechanisms for coordinating activity across Departments, agencies, and posts;
- Lines of accountability, both across Government and within the FCO.²⁶

The letter asked the FCO to respond by 18 January 2018.

23 Secretary of State for International Trade, Speech: “[Malaysia and Britain: partners in a post-Brexit world](#)”, 6 April 2017

24 The Prime Minister, [Speech to the Lord Mayor’s Banquet](#), 13 November 2017

25 BBC News, [Prime Minister interview with Laura Kuenssberg](#), 2 February 2018

26 [Letter from the Chair to the Foreign Secretary](#), 30 January 2018

14. The Government provided a memorandum to the Committee, following repeated requests, on 1 March 2018. The FCO said that “our strategic foreign policy objectives have not changed”,²⁷ and that the UK would remain “one of the major global players”.²⁸ It emphasised the importance of the “three centres of the global economy and political influence” in “North America, overwhelmingly the United States, in Europe and its neighbourhood; and in the Indo-Pacific region”, which it said were “essential to making Global Britain a success”. It added, however, that “at the same time, to realise fully the vision of Global Britain means being active and influential in all regions, the institutions of the rules-based international order and key global issues”.²⁹

15. While it described the UK’s ambitions, the memorandum admitted that it did not include “comprehensive detail on the resources and finances of the [FCO]”.³⁰ It said that the Department would need “to deliver more with finite resources”.³¹ But beyond describing the additional resources that it had secured to support EU Exit work, the submission lacked detail as to what resources would be available to achieve the many aspirations of Global Britain that the FCO described as including:

- “Investment in all our relationships across Europe”, and the building of “comprehensive relationships” with France, Germany, and Ireland.³² The FCO told us that it aimed to establish a “new, deep, and special partnership with the EU and European states”.³³
- Efforts to “further deepen” the UK’s ties with the US, “in the area of trade”.³⁴
- A “credible and consistent” policy in the Middle East.³⁵
- An “All of Asia policy”,³⁶ including an enhanced relationship with China, India, and South East Asia. The FCO said that it was “committed to strengthening our relationship with [the regional bloc ASEAN] after EU Exit”.³⁷
- A “focus on Africa” that “will need to change and grow”.³⁸ The FCO said that “building and maintaining strong partnerships with regional powers such as Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia and South Africa” will be “an important element of our long-term approach”.³⁹
- Engagement with Latin America, which the FCO said had been “stepped up” since 2010 and that “is likely to be increasingly important for British interests post-EU Exit”.⁴⁰

27 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 8
 28 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 6
 29 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 17
 30 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 3
 31 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 8
 32 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 22
 33 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 12
 34 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 18
 35 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 27
 36 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 30
 37 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 37
 38 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 38
 39 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 40
 40 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 41

- “More effective” support for the UK Overseas Territories.⁴¹
- Achieving “reform and modernisation of global institutions”.⁴²

The FCO’s description of Global Britain is therefore little more than a continuation of the FCO’s current activities, with modest adjustments in some areas. Its wide scope means that it does not clearly list the priorities of Global Britain.

Expert views

16. Prior to receiving this memorandum from the FCO, we took oral evidence from former Foreign Secretary Lord Owen, former EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Baroness Ashton, and former Permanent Under Secretary at the FCO Sir Simon Fraser.

Assessments of Government policy

17. All three expert witnesses were positive about the idea of Global Britain. Sir Simon called it “a very sensible aspiration ... because it is the self-image of this country that we want to have a global foreign policy.”⁴³ Lord Owen similarly said that “we need to think globally”.⁴⁴ Baroness Ashton noted that the UK “is highly regarded across the world as an outward-facing nation” and perceived Global Britain as “a way of saying, both domestically and internationally, that Britain was still going to be an outward-facing nation”.⁴⁵

Lack of clarity

18. None of the witnesses, however, could state clearly what the Global Britain policy entailed in practice. Baroness Ashton described it as an “aspiration”, while Sir Simon called it “a bit of a slogan, or a headline, that people are using with different intent.”⁴⁶ Baroness Ashton added:

There is no doubt that there is a sense of anticipation yet to be realised about what the underpinning policies and strategies will be, to turn what I describe as the aspiration of [Global Britain]—you might describe it as business as usual as an outward-facing nation—into action. What does it actually mean? What will Britain do?⁴⁷

Later in the session, she said:

We are very fortunate in the quality of our diplomats ... They are absolutely able people who, I am sure, spend a huge amount of time working hard explaining that Britain is not leaving the stage but will be extremely active on the stage. I come back to the same thing—you need tools to do that. The tools are, what does this mean? Does this mean we will focus on trade? Will

41 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 14

42 Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [see Appendix], paragraph 44

43 Q81

44 Q57

45 Q8

46 Qq1, 69

47 Q10

we do more in defence and security, and if so, how? Is this about focusing geographically on areas where traditionally we feel that we have a new and interesting role, or is it the invention over time of a very specific brand?⁴⁸

19. Sir Simon told us:

I am not sure exactly at the moment what Global Britain consists of. The Prime Minister has had two opportunities recently, at Davos and in China, to explain it further, but she has not taken them. It would be desirable if a bit more clarity and content were put behind the headline.⁴⁹

Asked whether countries around the world, particularly close allies, understood the objectives of Global Britain, he said:

At the moment, I do not think that they are understood by other countries because, as I said, the concept has not really been developed. I think many other countries around the world are looking at us at the moment in a state of some concern. They are not clear on the direction that we are taking, and are looking for clarity about that. The more evidence we can give of how we want to work with our European allies, America and our NATO allies, and the more clarity that we can give on what we are intending to do in our relations with other countries around the world, the better.

20. Echoing the questions posed by Baroness Ashton, Sir Simon said:

It seems to me that we need to sit down and calmly and hard-headedly think through, if we are going to leave the European Union, where that will leave us on the international stage. What are the objectives that this country, outside the European Union, would seek to achieve in its international policies? What are the priorities for us? What is the message that we want to give to the world, as a former member of the European Union? What are the relationships, institutions and other methods of leverage that we are going to use to seek to achieve our goals? To be honest, at the moment I think that there is a lot of rather mushy thinking about this, and a lot of rather simplistic words. We need to sit down and put hard content behind it.⁵⁰

21. In an evidence session on the UK's influence in the UN, former UK Permanent Representative to the UN Lord Hannay told the Committee:

I have to confess that I have a bit of difficulty with the hashtag of “global Britain”, which I find, in historical terms, deeply misleading. Britain has been a global country for about 500 years. It did not become less so when it joined the European Union, and it will not become more so when we leave. I find it unwise, in the sense that I think it gives a misleading impression. However, do not get me wrong: I am not saying that we do not have to make an effort globally, in the circumstances we will be in when we leave, to maximise our influence by all the means at our disposal. I think that will mean a lot of resource issues.⁵¹

48 Q17

49 Q71

50 Q74

51 Oral evidence taken on 19 December 2017, [HC \(2017–2019\) 675](#), Q42

FCO role and resources

22. Witnesses expressed concern about the level of resource dedicated to making a success of the Global Britain policy. Echoing the conclusions of our report on the *Future of UK Diplomacy in Europe*,⁵² which commented on the FCO’s decision to shift personnel and resources from embassies in Asia to bolster Posts in Europe, Sir Simon said:

If we are now shifting resource back from the emerging powers into the European bilateral embassies, I think that is a shame, though I can understand why it is being done. As you say, it does not cohere very well with the idea of Global Britain. The other problem about these things is that these resource allocations have to be done strategically over time. If you keep on changing course every five or six years, you don’t actually get the benefit. It is a shame if the Foreign Office is obliged to rob Peter to pay Paul, as you say, but I understand why they need to beef up those European bilateral embassies.⁵³

23. Sir Simon also noted a “lack of clarity” across Whitehall about the objectives of UK foreign policy.⁵⁴ He said that “the Foreign Office could take a more assertive role institutionally in sketching out what Global Britain means and setting out the outline of that”.⁵⁵ Lord Owen also expressed concern about a lack of co-ordination in the Government’s statements on foreign policy matters since Brexit. He told the Committee:

If I have to listen to the radio and hear the Foreign Secretary saying something and the Prime Minister contradicting it for very much longer, I will throw something at the wall. You cannot conduct diplomacy on the basis that you have a separation between them.⁵⁶

Failure to secure a UK judge on the International Court of Justice

24. As we noted in our report of 28 February, *2017 elections to the International Court of Justice* (ICJ), the Government was unable to secure the re-election of a UK candidate to the ICJ in November 2017, leaving the UK without a judge on the Court for the first time since its creation in 1946. This failure of UK diplomacy in an area of traditional strength is particularly worrying given the Government’s emphasis on support for the rules-based international system as a defining element of Global Britain.

Measuring success

25. Asked how the impact or success of Global Britain might ultimately be measured, Baroness Ashton said:

Crudely and simplistically, the first measure would be if you could go to six countries across the world, ask them what it meant, and they could roughly explain what it meant in practical terms for them. That is a longer-

52 Foreign Affairs Committee, Second Report of Session 2017–19, *The Future of UK Diplomacy in Europe*, HC 514, para 51

53 Q109

54 Q83

55 Q84

56 Q64

term aspiration, of course, but I think it is very important that it becomes something about which people can say, “I can explain what that means, and define it.”

The second measure would be if the concern that one hears in different countries about where Britain is now going and how it views itself is lessened. Such things take time; it will not be quieted completely for some time, but people could see a direction of travel that makes sense. At present, there is an understanding that there is this concept and aspiration, but not yet of quite how it will work out.⁵⁷

The memorandum from the FCO did not propose any means by which to measure the success of Global Britain.

2 Putting substance behind the slogan

Questions to be answered

26. The time is right to take stock of the UK's role in the world. 'Global Britain' arose in response to the 2016 vote to leave the EU, but wider and longer-term changes in the international system and global balance of power pose more fundamental questions about the UK's strategic position and orientation. Government Ministers often list the attributes that have traditionally made the UK a global player: it is a nuclear-armed P5 member of the United Nations Security Council, the second-biggest military spender in NATO, a major contributor to humanitarian aid around the world, and a key member of networks such as the Commonwealth, the G7 and the G20. But it remains unclear what the Government believes the UK should do with these resources and assets in the post-Brexit environment, and how the UK should exercise leadership on the most urgent and complex issues facing the international system.

27. For Global Britain to be more than a worthy aspiration, the slogan must be backed by substance. The memorandum from the FCO does not amount to a strategy; it lists the Government's aspirations but not the resources that it needs to achieve them. In addition to the essential requirement of a clear statement of objectives and priorities, the Government must commit sufficient resources to achieve its ambitions around the world—including reinforcing the FCO in Asia as well as in Europe. The Government's failure to secure the election of a UK judge to the International Court of Justice in November 2017, as well as damaging UK influence, is clear evidence that the Government needs to work harder and do more to deliver on its promise to strengthen the rules-based international order. If Global Britain comes to be perceived as a superficial branding exercise, it risks undermining UK interests by damaging our reputation overseas and eroding support for a global outlook here at home. The success of the Government's 'Great Britain' campaign should inform the FCO on how the Global Britain policy should be developed, marketed, and utilised across the FCO network and with our international partners.

28. *For the UK to demonstrate genuine global leadership, its foreign policy requires coherent strategic direction, supported by adequate resources. This should be based on a clear-eyed assessment of the UK's interests and position in the world. In conducting such an assessment, the Government will need to go further than its memorandum. By the end of that process, it must be able to answer the following questions:*

- *What does the UK want to achieve in the world?*
- *What is the UK's unique selling point as a global player, and what do other countries want from the UK?*
- *What bilateral and multilateral relationships and institutions should the UK prioritise?*
- *On what global issues can the UK have the biggest impact and exercise the most leverage?*

- *What does Global Britain mean to the people of the UK, and how might a ‘truly global’ foreign policy benefit them?*
- *What policy-making infrastructure and what resources are needed across Whitehall to realise the Government’s global aspirations, and what specific role should the FCO play in this?*
- *What metrics can be used to measure the success of Global Britain?*

The answers to these questions should be made public so that the British people and others can know what the Government intends by Global Britain, and so that our allies and friends can support and partner with us effectively. The Committee believes that it is only if we can be clear about our strategic foreign policy objectives that we can ensure our ongoing strength on the international field. We also note that although previous Prime Ministers have not only come to the House to make statements and answer questions, they have formerly given keynote speeches on foreign affairs in Parliament. We urge the Prime Minister to make a keynote speech to the House, setting out as a matter of priority the strategic thinking behind our foreign policy and the objectives we are seeking to achieve as a nation.

29. *The FCO should begin this process immediately by placing online, in one place, all the statements and speeches that Ministers have made about Global Britain, and all other Government documents in the public domain that set out what Global Britain means, translated into the world’s ten most-used languages. This website should be highlighted prominently on the FCO’s landing page, allowing both the UK public and audiences overseas to read for themselves the Government’s current stated approach to Global Britain.*

The Foreign Affairs Committee’s Global Britain inquiry

30. Over the course of 2018 and 2019, the Foreign Affairs Committee will explore some of these questions with a series of inquiries into aspects of Global Britain. The Committee’s first such report will focus on UK influence and policy in the United Nations.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. The time is right to take stock of the UK's role in the world. 'Global Britain' arose in response to the 2016 vote to leave the EU, but wider and longer-term changes in the international system and global balance of power pose more fundamental questions about the UK's strategic position and orientation. Government Ministers often list the attributes that have traditionally made the UK a global player: it is a nuclear-armed P5 member of the United Nations Security Council, the second-biggest military spender in NATO, a major contributor to humanitarian aid around the world, and a key member of networks such as the Commonwealth, the G7 and the G20. But it remains unclear what the Government believes the UK should do with these resources and assets in the post-Brexit environment, and how the UK should exercise leadership on the most urgent and complex issues facing the international system. (Paragraph 26)

2. For Global Britain to be more than a worthy aspiration, the slogan must be backed by substance. The memorandum from the FCO does not amount to a strategy; it lists the Government's aspirations but not the resources that it needs to achieve them. In addition to the essential requirement of a clear statement of objectives and priorities, the Government must commit sufficient resources to achieve its ambitions around the world—including reinforcing the FCO in Asia as well as in Europe. The Government's failure to secure the election of a UK judge to the International Court of Justice in November 2017, as well as damaging UK influence, is clear evidence that the Government needs to work harder and do more to deliver on its promise to strengthen the rules-based international order. If Global Britain comes to be perceived as a superficial branding exercise, it risks undermining UK interests by damaging our reputation overseas and eroding support for a global outlook here at home. The success of the Government's 'Great Britain' campaign should inform the FCO on how the Global Britain policy should be developed, marketed, and utilised across the FCO network and with our international partners. (Paragraph 27)

3. *For the UK to demonstrate genuine global leadership, its foreign policy requires coherent strategic direction, supported by adequate resources. This should be based on a clear-eyed assessment of the UK's interests and position in the world. In conducting such an assessment, the Government will need to go further than its memorandum. By the end of that process, it must be able to answer the following questions:*
 - *What does the UK want to achieve in the world?*
 - *What is the UK's unique selling point as a global player, and what do other countries want from the UK?*
 - *What bilateral and multilateral relationships and institutions should the UK prioritise?*
 - *On what global issues can the UK have the biggest impact and exercise the most leverage?*
 - *What does Global Britain mean to the people of the UK, and how might a 'truly global' foreign policy benefit them?*

- *What policy-making infrastructure and what resources are needed across Whitehall to realise the Government's global aspirations, and what specific role should the FCO play in this?*
- *What metrics can be used to measure the success of Global Britain?*

The answers to these questions should be made public so that the British people and others can know what the Government intends by Global Britain, and so that our allies and friends can support and partner with us effectively. The Committee believes that it is only if we can be clear about our strategic foreign policy objectives that we can ensure our ongoing strength on the international field. We also note that although previous Prime Ministers have not only come to the House to make statements and answer questions, they have formerly given keynote speeches on foreign affairs in Parliament. We urge the Prime Minister to make a keynote speech to the House, setting out as a matter of priority the strategic thinking behind our foreign policy and the objectives we are seeking to achieve as a nation. (Paragraph 28)

4. *The FCO should begin this process immediately by placing online, in one place, all the statements and speeches that Ministers have made about Global Britain, and all other Government documents in the public domain that set out what Global Britain means, translated into the world's ten most-used languages. This website should be highlighted prominently on the FCO's landing page, allowing both the UK public and audiences overseas to read for themselves the Government's current stated approach to Global Britain. (Paragraph 29)*

Appendix: Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Introduction

- (1) This memorandum explains the Government's (HMG) vision of Global Britain and the role of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in supporting and enabling government departments to deliver this vision. It covers the UK's overseas presence, influence and capability.
- (2) The evidence does not cover the broader spectrum of national security risks and opportunities and UK capacity to deal with them, including mechanisms for co-ordinating activity across Departments, agencies and Posts. These were the subject of scrutiny in the recent National Security Capability Review (NSCR), the findings of which will be published later this spring, and in which the FCO was fully involved. The NSCR had a specific component that reviewed HMG capabilities to deliver Global Britain, which was carried out by a cross-Government team of officials based in the FCO.
- (3) The memorandum does not include comprehensive detail on the resources and finances of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). We refer the Committee to the FCO's Annual Report and Accounts and stand ready to provide further evidence as required.
- (4) We draw the Committee's attention to the evidence memorandum we have submitted this week to the House of Lords International Relations Committee in response to their inquiry into UK foreign policy in changed world conditions.

Context: "Global Britain"

- (5) Britain has always taken a leading role in responding to global challenges and in making the most of opportunities for this country. However, the pace of change in an ever more challenging global environment, where information and influence are dispersed and contested amongst many more actors, both state and non-state, inevitably has a significant impact on how the UK projects influence and protects its national interests.
- (6) Some elements of our interaction with the rest of the world will change once we leave the European Union (EU). Although we will lose some elements of the force multiplier advantages of EU membership, we will gain more flexibility and agility to react, and our foreign policy capability broadly drawn will ensure we are one of the major global players as now.
- (7) The concept of "Global Britain" is shorthand for our determination to adjust to these changes, to continue to be a successful global foreign policy player, and to resist any sense that Britain will be less engaged in the world in the next few years. It is intended to signal that the UK will, as Ministers have put it, continue to be open, inclusive and outward facing; free trading; assertive in standing up for British interests and values; and resolute in boosting our international standing

and influence. It is a Britain with global presence, active in every region; global interests, working with our allies and partners to deliver the global security and prosperity that ensures our own; and global perspectives, engaging with the world in every area, influencing and being influenced.

- (8) Our strategic foreign policy objectives have not changed: to protect our people, project our influence and promote our prosperity. Nor have our commitments to being a steadfast partner to our allies, ensuring our adversaries are aware of our capacity for protecting our national interest, remaining an activist global player in projecting our values, supporting the rules-based international order, and leading efforts to ensure global peace and security. But the shifting global context, a new relationship with Europe, and the need to deliver more with finite resources, requires us to evolve and enhance how we achieve our goals, using HMG assets more cohesively and efficiently to maintain our global standing.
- (9) The scale and range of complexity means the UK cannot always rely on tried and tested methods. HMG will need to understand the local and international context sufficiently to take and manage risks, and experiment with new approaches. This includes working not just across departmental boundaries and with other governments but also building stronger partnerships with other sectors.
- (10) Our ability to do this depends on whether we can analyse, act and influence, across the world and across the breadth of the Government's international priorities. In turn it depends on the range and depth of our bilateral and regional relationships and our influence in global and regional institutions. We have a wide range of assets to deploy in this context through our diplomatic, defence, development and trade activity.
- (11) As regards bilateral and regional relationships, our alliance with the United States remains our top priority and cornerstone of what we wish to achieve in the world. We maintain relationships as equals with the other P5 members of the UN Security Council. We aim to remain key players in the Middle East, in collaboration with the EU in Wider Europe, and to put new emphasis on the Indo-Pacific region, the centre of the world's growth. We have the huge advantage of being part of the Commonwealth, allowing us to engage with a wide network of countries across the world with a similar history, legal heritage, and institutions.
- (12) Our relationship with the EU will of course always be a major priority, and we aim to establish a new, deep and special partnership with the EU and European states to ensure that our work together continues in defending the international order and our shared values. In this way we aim it to become obvious to all that our departure from the EU does not signal a lessening of our international ambition and commitment.
- (13) Our support for the rules-based international system; for free markets; our values and the rule of law; and our meeting of the 2% NATO target and the 0.7% ODA target give us tremendous influence within international institutions. Our leadership and collaboration on issues such as modern slavery; countering terrorism; and migration make a real impact, as do our efforts in multilateral

fora to shift the dial on climate change, to emphasise gender equality—with a particular focus on girls’ education, to reform multilateral institutions, and to clamp down on the Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT).

- (14) Finally, Britain has constitutional and legal responsibility for the 14 UK Overseas Territories (OTs). The overarching objective is for more effective cross-government support to improve security, good governance and climate resilience, and in the short run to protect their interests as we leave the EU.
- (15) To make a success of Global Britain, our international posture must reflect all these interests and all our policy ambitions: ie, strategic alignment of our external policies in the national interest.
- (16) In doing so, we have broader assets available to few other countries and which hugely reinforce our soft power: our high ranking in most international indices of power or attractiveness; our highly competitive business environment; the City of London financial centre; and our renowned legal system. Our institutions such as the BBC World Service and British Council, our cultural heritage, our language, our universities and our record of achievement in science and innovation all hugely reinforce our international strength.

UK influence overseas

- (17) The three centres of the global economy and political influence are in North America, overwhelmingly the United States, in Europe and its neighbourhood; and in the Indo-Pacific region. Maintaining influence in these areas is essential to making Global Britain a success. At the same time, to realise fully the vision of Global Britain means being active and influential in all regions, the institutions of the rules-based international order and key global issues.

United States

- (18) The UK-US relationship represents our most vital bilateral partnership. It has been, for over a century, the most significant and history-defining international partnership. It is a relationship that transcends personalities and party politics—a relationship that matters hugely to both our countries, and which has been a driver of peace and prosperity and provided security to both our countries and beyond. In an age of geopolitical turbulence and uncertainty, the UK-US relationship continues to be of the highest importance to UK interests. In future, after we leave the EU, we can further deepen our already close UK-US ties in the area of trade.
- (19) As with previous administrations, the Government is working closely with the US on areas of key mutual concern and interest. The UK and United States continue to work as leaders within, and proponents of, the rules-based international system. This system, albeit imperfect, has been the driving force behind an unparalleled period of relative stability and prosperity.
- (20) The UK stands together with the United States in facing a resurgent Russia and new forms of threat across the world, as well as the implications of an

increasingly assertive China. We have shared great successes in the last year, for example in the fight against Daesh, and we continue our incomparable co-operation on intelligence issues and our shared commitment to NATO and the collective defence of our allies.

- (21) The current Administration has set new directions for US policy in several areas, some of which differ from our own. That is not unusual and there have always been some differences of perspective in this strong relationship. These do not prevent us working together to maximise our joint work for common goals and global interests.

Europe and its Neighbourhood

- (22) Many of our closest and most like-minded partners are members of the European Union, and our national interests will align in many areas with the interests of our European friends. We will remain unconditionally committed to Europe's security. Investment in all our relationships across Europe will therefore continue. We will need to maintain a significant presence in Brussels in order to engage effectively with the EU institutions and member state representations, and we are developing bilateral strategies aimed at securing our long-term partnerships with our European neighbours. With France, Germany and Ireland, in particular, we must build comprehensive relationships, recognising that our partnership will be important on a vast range of issues and we must have the relationships, structures and network to support this. The recent UK-France summit set the tone for the kind of relationships we wish to achieve beyond EU Exit.
- (23) NATO is vital to Britain's and Europe's security at a time of increasing threats, including from cyber, hybrid and information warfare, across the globe. Behind the US, the UK is the most influential member of the Alliance and among the small group that meets the 2% target for defence spending. In September 2017, Chief of the Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, was elected as the next Chairman of NATO's Military Committee. The UK has stood by allies by leading an Enhanced Forward Presence battlegroup in Estonia and contributing troops in Poland, contributing to NATO Maritime Groups, committing Typhoons to Air Policing Missions in Romania, and training thousands of Armed Forces in Ukraine.
- (24) Our readiness to work with partners in Europe and Wider Europe is shown by our commitment to promote democracy and economic growth in the Western Balkans. The UK will host the Western Balkans Summit in July 2018. This is a firm demonstration of our support for much-needed reform to improve the region's security, boost the economy, and to combat challenges such as illegal drugs and human trafficking.
- (25) Russia has become more aggressive, authoritarian and nationalist, increasingly defining itself in opposition to the West. Russia uses a range of overt and covert powers to pursue its policies—including propaganda, espionage, cyber interference and subversion. In the cyber sector, Russia has targeted the UK media, telecommunication and energy sectors. The Foreign Secretary's recent visit to Moscow—together with our joint attribution of the NotPetya cyber-

attack, in concert with allies and partners—underscored the UK’s firm position on malign cyber activity. Working with European partners, the UK supports the Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats in Helsinki, convening allies for diplomatic engagement on resisting malign interference.

- (26) We remain severely concerned by the evolving spectrum of threats emanating from Russia. We are resolved to meet these challenges while remaining open to appropriate dialogue; we want to reduce risk, talk about our differences, and make clear that interference with sovereign states is not acceptable. As P5 members, we want to engage constructively with Russia in the interests of security and stability, including on pressing issues such as DPRK and Iran. We are also working with Russia to ensure a safe and secure World Cup for visiting fans, with UK-Russia police cooperation underway ahead of the tournament.
- (27) Many of the most intractable problems on the current world scene are in the Middle East—notably Yemen, Syria, Libya, the set of interlinked issues in the Gulf, Iran’s intentions to boost its interests, and the long-running Middle East Peace Process (MEPP). Our long-term objective is to see the Middle East return to stability, addressing conflict and failures in governance, which have led to political and regional turbulence and humanitarian catastrophe. Our policy in the Middle East must be credible and consistent. Central to this approach will be maintaining strong relationships with stable countries in the region, particularly in the Gulf where we have both security and prosperity interests.
- (28) Our core short-term interests are tackling security threats from the region, including: the extant terrorist threats from Daesh and Al-Qaida; migration, from Syria and through Libya; and prosperity—the Gulf collectively is a larger market for the UK than either China or India. We are supporting the Saudi Vision 2030 and other Gulf reform programmes.
- (29) We are increasing our effort across North Africa to help their governments stay ahead of their demographic and security challenges—manifested in different ways in migration through Libya and the Sousse terrorist attack. In 2016, we established an FCO/DFID North Africa Joint Unit, which oversees the new North Africa Good Governance Fund (£40 million this year).

Indo-Pacific

- (30) The UK has an All of Asia policy, working with our many different partners in the region on areas of mutual interest. We are continually looking for opportunities to expand our engagement.
- (31) With China we have a strong economic and global partnership. Central to our approach is the Global Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, established in 2015. It includes engagement through Prime Ministerial summits—most recently the Prime Minister’s January 2018 visit—three annual Cabinet-level dialogues; and a wide range of other Ministerial and senior official exchanges.
- (32) We aim to encourage and support China’s greater cooperation in helping resolve global challenges. Both bilaterally and as fellow permanent members of the UN

Security Council, we engage extensively with China on a range of threats to international security, for example from North Korea, and on challenges such as global health security and climate change. At the same time, we are robust in defending our position on areas of difference, including on issues of human rights and values, on the South China Sea, and on the importance of Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy and freedoms.

- (33) China is a hugely important partner for UK trade as the UK's third largest trading partner, after the EU and the USA. In 2016, UK-China bilateral trade in goods and services reached £59.3bn, up 9.4% on 2015. Recent bilateral visits have delivered major economic benefits, generating billions of pounds of commercial deals. Through the UK-China Infrastructure Alliance, we are aiming to deepen UK-China infrastructure project and finance collaboration. We welcome the opportunities provided by China's Belt and Road Initiative to further prosperity and sustainable development across Asia and the wider world.
- (34) The UK's enduring relationship with India is also central to our aspirations. India is an economic powerhouse, with a growing role in Asian and international geopolitics. A shared past and strong people-to-people links give us influence and access, helping us to tackle security threats, encourage stability, and exploit prosperity opportunities.
- (35) The UK-India relationship has grown closer in recent years, with Prime Minister Modi's November 2015 UK visit and the Prime Minister's India visit a year later, key milestones. In 2016, UK-India bilateral trade was £15.6bn. India is the fourth largest investor in the UK. UK investment contributes around 8% of India's FDI. Financial services and a Defence and International Security Partnership are central to the relationship, buttressed by cooperation across government and beyond. The next important moment in the relationship will be the Commonwealth summit in April, which we expect PM Modi to attend.
- (36) South East Asia is a dynamic region where there are opportunities for greater UK engagement across a variety of sectors, e.g. education, prosperity and regional resilience. More broadly, we have a strong and long-term commitment to the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) between the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore. The FPDA is an important part of our commitment to peace and security in the Asia Pacific region. We will contribute further, in particular through exercises, including with our new aircraft carriers, and joint training, alongside investing in our strong bilateral defence relationships.
- (37) Finally, the UK is a partner country in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), an intergovernmental process to foster dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe with biennial summits of the 53 partners. The UK has Dialogue Partner (DP) status with ASEAN, via the EU, and we are committed to strengthening our relationship with it as an institution after EU Exit.

Other regions

- (38) It is clear that our focus on Africa will need to change and grow. We need to be better equipped both to deal with threats that can have a direct impact on

the UK: population growth, poverty, climate volatility and significant security issues; and to grasp opportunity in the growing markets, as Africa urbanises at pace. We have boosted our network in Africa, including a new High Commission building in Abuja, opened by the Foreign Secretary in July, and a new office in Chad.

- (39) An immediate task is how to use our significant development spend to best effect to achieve our prosperity and security objectives and deliver influence in Africa. It is firmly in our national interest to support Africa to unlock its enormous human and economic development potential. Sub-Saharan Africa has the world's youngest and fastest-growing population, set to double to two billion and to represent a quarter of the world's population by 2050. By 2025, Africa's household consumer and business markets could represent commercial opportunities worth US\$5.6 trillion. But it also faces significant development and security challenges, with an estimated 400 million people in the region vulnerable to conflict, extremism and the impacts of climate change. We are committed to helping our African partners tackle shared security threats, improve stability, reduce extreme poverty, in keeping with our values, and in pursuit of a more stable, secure and prosperous world.
- (40) Africa's emerging powers have a central role to play in shaping a more secure and prosperous future for all Africans, including through their membership of the African Union and Africa's regional economic communities. Building and maintaining strong partnerships with regional powers such as Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia and South Africa will therefore be an important element of our long-term approach in Africa.
- (41) Latin America is likely to be increasingly important for British interests post-EU Exit: Presidents in Argentina, Peru and Brazil have strengthened the group of countries, which share the UK's liberal free trade outlook. The Pacific Alliance (Mexico, Peru, Colombia and Chile) is an important regional champion for free trade. The UK is engaging closely as an Observer State and has good bilateral relations with all Member States.
- (42) Since 2010, the UK has stepped up engagement with Latin America: new posts have opened; trade has increased; we have built stronger ties with Brazil and Mexico, both increasingly important global influencers, and cooperated closely with the like-minded Peru, Chile, and Colombia on climate change, open markets and transparency.

Multilateral institutions and global issues

- (43) Global Britain involves thinking and acting globally. Our support for the rules-based international system; for free markets; our values and the rule of law; and our meeting of the 2% NATO target and the 0.7% ODA target give us tremendous influence.
- (44) The UK also enjoys an influential position, including as a Permanent Member of the UNSC and an active member of other key bodies, for example the Commonwealth, NATO, G7, G20, counter-proliferation regimes and

international financial institutions. The UN and other multilateral bodies often provide the UK and our allies with the legal and moral basis for action, and the UN in particular has unique global convening power. The UK is committed to the reform and modernisation of global institutions to ensure they can meet 21st century challenges and will step up its efforts to secure the appointment of senior UK experts to key international positions, building on lessons learned from the loss of our seat on the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

- (45) Our commitment to the UN will remain core to our foreign policy. As a P5 member, we have a key role in all aspects of the Council's work. We play an important part in efforts to reform the Security Council, improve the UN's finances and strengthen the UN's capacity to deal with economic and social issues, peacekeeping and conflict prevention. We will compete more effectively for senior international appointments where our expertise and capacity for innovation is widely acknowledged and appreciated.
- (46) The Commonwealth is a unique global network: home to one third of the world's population, some of its fastest growing economies and accounting for one-fifth of global trade. It has a diverse membership committed to a set of values founded on democracy and rule of law, embodied in the Commonwealth Charter. It stimulates a wide range of political, non-governmental and people-to-people engagement across different regional and cultural environments. The enduring nature of these relationships, combined with its global and diverse character, offers the UK and its members potential, long term, to reinforce the international rules-based order, and to complement and enhance UK engagement in other multilateral fora. It has a particular strength in addressing shared global challenges across a wide geographical basis - for example, new cross-border security threats, the effects of climate change on small and other vulnerable states, barriers to trade and threats to democracy, good governance and inclusivity.
- (47) The Commonwealth Heads of Government Summit Meeting (CHOGM) in April 2018 will be the biggest international meeting in London for many years. It will be a huge opportunity for member states to commit to further sustained effort to ensure the Commonwealth is using its full potential in addressing these challenges: that is why its overarching theme is "towards a common future" with a particular focus on youth. As Commonwealth Chair-in-Office for the two years following the Summit, the UK will work with fellow member states, including the Commonwealth Secretariat and other Commonwealth institutions, to ensure that progress made in London is sustained and commitments followed up.
- (48) Our leadership and collaboration on issues such as modern slavery; countering terrorism; and migration make a real impact, as do our efforts multilateral fora to shift the dial on climate change; to emphasise gender equality—with a particular focus on girls' education; to reform multilateral institutions and clamp down on the Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT).
- (49) The UK is rightly proud of its leadership on international development. We were one of only 6 countries to meet the UN's 0.7% GNI ODA target in 2016, the third largest contributor of global ODA overall. We are, as the manifesto commitment

makes clear, committed to ensuring that ODA remains fit for purpose and fully supports and helps deliver the UN's Sustainable Development Goals in which we played a full part in securing. Our development budget not only helps us to champion the poor but—alongside the diplomatic network—gives us access and insight on key global issues that matter to partners and are important to UK national interests.

Overseas Network

- (50) To deliver the vision of Global Britain, the UK has the major advantage of global reach through our diplomatic network of 274 posts in 169 countries and territories. It consists of more than 15,000 staff from 31 UK government departments and public bodies, with the FCO, Department for International Trade (DIT), Department for International Development (DFID), the Home Office, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the British Council forming the largest contingents. Locally engaged staff operate alongside UK-based colleagues in front-line positions across the network.
- (51) Our overseas presence is a powerful combination of HMG and local staff skills, knowledge and expertise in a wide range of fields including foreign and security policy; economic diplomacy; financial regulation; trade policy and negotiation; visas; export and investment; science and innovation; migration; development and humanitarian assistance; press and public diplomacy; cultural relations; defence diplomacy; law enforcement; counter-terrorism; consular and crisis management.
- (52) The FCO is at the heart of the One HMG effort, providing the “platform”—both the physical presence of our Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates from where we conduct Government business and relationships day to day in countries, provide consular and commercial services to support our citizens, showcase what the UK can offer—and our staff who provide the expertise, build those relationships, and deliver important services and partnerships. This is a whole of government operation, essential to achieving our international objectives, under the leadership of the FCO Head of Mission. Management of this shared services “platform” is covered by a “Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on One HMG Overseas”, which has been signed by all government departments with an overseas presence.
- (53) The Future FCO Review and Diplomacy 20:20 initiative have examined the role and execution of effective diplomacy in the digital age, making recommendations for changes in working culture and practice, the development and implementation of policy. Better coordination of our effort and more investment in skills and expertise has led to more efficient outputs and greater impact.
- (54) The objective of the FCO's Diplomacy 20:20 change programme is a more expert and agile organisation, supported by a world-class shared services “platform.” Under the agility pillar of the programme, the FCO has started to resource our Europe network and multilateral missions. We have upgraded seven Heads of Mission roles and created another 50 jobs for diplomats across our European and multilateral posts. We have secured additional funding from the Treasury

to support EU Exit work and are now in the process of creating an additional 150 new roles in London and the overseas network to support EU Exit. In recognition of the increasingly challenging global context, planning is now underway to balance the wider size, structure and shape of the overseas network, to ensure it is best equipped to meet our national security objectives.

March 2018

Formal minutes

Tuesday 6 March 2018

Members present:

Tom Tugendhat, in the Chair

Chris Bryant	Andrew Rosindell
Mike Gapes	Mr Bob Seely
Ian Murray	Royston Smith
Priti Patel	

Draft Report (*Global Britain*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

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

Paragraphs 1 to 30 read and agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

A Paper was appended to the Report.

Resolved, That the Report be the Sixth Report of the Committee to the House.

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

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 13 March at 2.15pm]

Witnesses

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

Tuesday 30 January 2018

Question number

The Rt Hon. Baroness Catherine Ashton of Upholland

[Q1–36](#)

The Rt Hon. Lord David Owen

[Q37–68](#)

Tuesday 6 February 2018

Sir Simon Fraser GCMG, former Permanent Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Head of the UK Diplomatic Service

[Q69–117](#)

Tuesday 27 February 2018

The Rt Hon. Alderman Charles Bowman, Lord Mayor of the City of London 2017–18, and the Rt Hon. Alderman Sir David Wootton, Chairman, Mayoral Visits Advisory Committee and Lord Mayor of the City of London 2011–12

[Q118–182](#)

Published correspondence

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

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

- 1 Foreign Affairs Committee ([GLO0003](#))
- 2 Foreign and Commonwealth Office ([GLO0004](#))

List of reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

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

The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2017–19

First Report	Violence in Rakhine State and the UK's response	HC 435
Second Report	The future of UK diplomacy in Europe	HC 514
Third Report	Kurdish aspirations and the interests of the UK	HC 518
Fourth Report	2017 elections to the International Court of Justice	HC 860
Fifth Report	The UK's response to hurricanes in its Overseas Territories	HC 722
First Special Report	The United Kingdom's relations with Russia: Government Response	HC 332
Second Special Report	The UK's relations with Turkey: Government Response	HC 333
Third Special Report	'Political Islam', and the Muslim Brotherhood Review: Government Response	HC 334
Fourth Special Report	Violence in Rakhine State and the UK's response: Government Response	HC 868