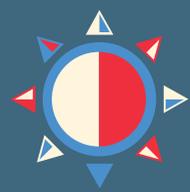


A global force for good

Ten ideas for UK foreign policy



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Our global world

We are often told that we live in a “global world”. What does this really mean?

For many of us, it means the world is open and accessible. It creates opportunities – to travel, learn, engage, work and consume – physically and through our screens. For business, it can mean more customers and qualified staff. For universities and research institutions, access to the best minds.

We feel the ease of communication across boundaries. We benefit from international laws that do everything from protecting the rights of people with disabilities to banning ozone-depleting substances.

The networks that exist today have delivered real gains for people in the UK. For better and for worse they have also made us more dependent on others. Our connectivity brings with it the potential for universal impact. Whether it's job creation in Sheffield or the health of honeybees in south Wales, the things we care about increasingly have a global dimension. Climate change, conflicts, pandemics, extremism – what happens in other countries matters to our own lives. A global world is also a smaller one.

Our national interest

In the UK, as in many countries, policy-making has been slow to embrace the extent to which national and global interests now dovetail. The financial crisis made us look inwards, less prepared to put our efforts into global challenges and institutions like the United Nations, which is our best hope for tackling them.

This must change if Britain is to survive and prosper. Investment in global solutions, some of it financial but much of it political, will yield benefits now and in the future. But for this to occur, the public must be onside.

UNA-UK believes that policy-makers, the media and grassroots groups like ours have a duty to stimulate support for action at the global level. We must make the case that effective international cooperation, with all its compromises, is squarely – and greatly – in the interest of people in the UK, and that we all have a stake in building a safer, fairer and more sustainable world.

An engaged UK

Britain's global role has changed considerably over the past century, but by most measures – wealth, trade, firepower – we are still an influential country. This influence is now largely channelled through our membership of the various groups and bodies that make up the international community, particularly the UN.

UNA-UK believes the UK can maximise this influence and be a global force for good, as a leader, a convener and an example to others.

By providing leadership and expertise, the UK can support the adoption next year of a global development agenda that drives sustainable growth and builds stable, prosperous societies. By galvanising support for a robust climate agreement and resisting lowest-common denominator compromises, the UK can help safeguard the environment for future generations.

The UK can also lead by example. By ensuring its arms export practices meet the highest global standards and by embracing – and implementing – its international human rights commitments, the UK can strengthen the global system as well as its ability to hold others to account whilst protecting its own citizens. From greater engagement with UN peacekeeping to laying out concrete plans for nuclear disarmament, the UK can set the bar high and establish compelling precedents.

A global force for good

The 21st century is dominated by challenges that require effective global action. It is essential that institutions like the UN have the tools to respond. This is as much about political support and fresh ideas as it is about funding.

The UK has a privileged position at the UN. As a top financial contributor, it has great sway over what is spent and how. Its permanent seat on the Security Council gives it real influence, from authorising military intervention to appointing the UN's chief. The UK is in a prime position to shape and build support for UN initiatives, to champion reform where needed, and to put forward creative ideas on how to make it more effective.

Gains for us all

The UK did much to create the international laws and institutions we have today. It can best serve its interests, now and into the future, by recognising the value of its relationship with the UN. Having shaped the global system, the UK is also better than most at navigating and developing it.

The UK should play to its strengths and use the opportunities presented by these systems to secure positive outcomes for the British public and for the world.

Ten ideas for UK foreign policy

On the next pages, we outline 10 ways in which the UK can act as a global force for good. This is not a wish list requiring huge amounts of expenditure. These are targeted ideas for how the UK can use its strengths – leadership, a global network, expertise and diplomacy – to deliver wide-ranging national and international benefits.

Public support for this agenda is crucial. UNA-UK will play its part, working with its members, supporters, local branches and youth groups across the UK, but politicians and the media must raise their game too.

There must be better public understanding of the need for an effective global system and awareness of how the United Nations benefits people in this country.

Your support

UNA-UK strives to make the case for the UN and for global cooperation. Our aim is to build a critical mass of support in the UK for an active and progressive multilateral foreign policy. In the coming months, we will be working with government, parliament, civil society groups and the media to raise the profile of foreign policy issues.

Our grassroots membership will be engaging people in their schools, universities, businesses and communities to discuss the relevance of these issues to people in the UK and the importance of UK action.

We would like your views on the foreign policy challenges we face, your thoughts on our ideas and your own.

Find out more and get in touch:

una.org.uk/manifesto @UNAUK #globalforceforgood

Ten ideas for UK foreign policy

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STRATEGY TO **PREVENT**
MASS ATROCITIES

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MORE INTENSIVE
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LEADERSHIP TO **PROTECT**
HUMAN RIGHTS
INTERNATIONALLY

UNA-UK believes that these 10 recommendations for UK Government action, with full public support, represent an investment in Britain's future and in a safer, fairer and more sustainable world.

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01



A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY TO PREVENT MASS ATROCITIES

After the slaughter of 800,000 people in Rwanda in 1994, the international community vowed: never again. 20 years on, civilians are still being massacred, from Iraq to South Sudan. Genocide, war crimes, mass rape – these ‘crimes against humanity’ diminish us all. Inherently unacceptable, the fall-out from such atrocities can also threaten our security. The UK must make atrocity prevention a priority.

At the 2005 UN World Summit, world leaders unanimously agreed that states have a ‘Responsibility to Protect’ (R2P) populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

Since then, states have struggled with when and how to implement this responsibility. In countries such as Sudan and Sri Lanka, the response was largely confined to hand-wringing. In Libya, robust action was taken but with consequences. In Syria, the death toll continues to rise and recent events in Iraq and Gaza have shown the inadequacy of our current systems.

As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the UK has a clear responsibility and an important role to play in shaping the international response. UNA-UK welcomes the UK’s efforts at the Council and in championing R2P at the international level.

Now, the UK must ensure that its own systems and policies are working as effectively as possible to prevent atrocities. This means enhancing its R2P strategy; integrating R2P principles across government policies; and making

atrocity prevention an explicit priority. The Government’s R2P Focal Point will play an important part in achieving this. The role should be well resourced and supported at the highest levels.

The UK should:

- 1 Acknowledge publicly and in relevant strategies that preventing atrocities is in the national interest
- 2 Improve cross-departmental action on R2P, including by incorporating indicators on genocide and crimes against humanity into early warning systems and country analyses, as these crimes can happen during peacetime as well as during conflict
- 3 Ensure that the Conflict, Stability & Security Fund is geared to support R2P and atrocity prevention goals
- 4 Implement the UN’s best practice recommendations on R2P Focal Point activities, including a review of the UK’s readiness to respond to atrocity crimes



MORE INTENSIVE ENGAGEMENT TO STRENGTHEN UN PEACEKEEPING

Across the world, UN peacekeeping has proved to be the most effective framework for stabilising post-conflict situations and preventing them from threatening regional and global security. Compared to missions led by countries, UN operations have fewer costs and a higher degree of success and legitimacy. The UK should do more to support them.

The UK plays an important role in the approval, design and funding of UN peacekeeping operations. However, over the last 20 years, there has been a marked reduction in its practical engagement.

This is most visible in the decline of UK troop contributions, from a peak of over 3,500 personnel in 1993 to fewer than 300 today, mostly based in Cyprus. The UK's capacity to provide specialist support, from expertise to equipment, remains largely untapped. Just five UK police officers currently serve in missions. The UK does not provide any military experts.

The winding down of operations in Afghanistan gives the UK an opportunity to reassess matters – a view supported by senior military figures. UNA-UK believes that greater practical involvement will not only strengthen the UN's peacekeeping capacity but also contribute to the UK's own security goals. Developing the UN's rapid response capacity, for instance, could avoid the need for UK-led interventions. By demonstrating its own commitment, the UK will also strengthen its hand when calling on developing countries to step up their financial and military support.

Greater engagement need not involve large increases in UK funding or boots on the ground. Much could be achieved through relatively small increases in troop contributions and through targeted, specialist support.

The UK should:

- 1 Contribute more practical expertise to UN peacekeeping operations, such as rapid response teams, police officers and specialists on gender issues
- 2 Provide more logistical support to UN peacekeeping operations, such as transport vehicles, surveillance drones and helicopters
- 3 Review its current stance on UN peacekeeping, set out in the Joint Doctrine Note 5/11, which confines the UK's role to 'niche capabilities', as well as the decision-making processes for deployment to missions



A CLEAR PATHWAY TO ERADICATE NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The UK signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968 in the belief that a world free from nuclear weapons was in the national and global interest. Although 189 states have taken on this legal duty to disarm, this objective remains unfulfilled, undermining not just our safety but our international system and relations. It is time for the UK to set out a concrete plan on how it will actively contribute to multilateral nuclear disarmament.

Five years ago, there was a sense of renewed momentum for disarmament, as the recognised nuclear powers (China, France, Russia, the UK and US) acknowledged the grave dangers posed by existing arsenals, as well as by proliferation. This has all but disappeared. Increased instability has seen them revert to focussing on the nuclear ambitions of others, rather than reducing their own – a blinkered approach to the serious decline in global security.

Recent events make international disarmament efforts more, not less, urgent. The UK should work energetically, in particular with the US, to bring about two important treaties – on nuclear testing and fissile materials – that have been gathering dust for too long. It can also provide leadership by encouraging genuine dialogue on disarmament between the five powers and other states, for example, by joining the substantial majority of countries that are discussing the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapon use.

At home, while the UK has made modest reductions in its arsenal, it remains committed to the continuous deployment of a comprehensive nuclear

deterrent, despite its high cost and low utility in tackling the most probable security challenges facing the UK, from terrorist groups, for instance.

It is time for the UK to set out and implement a concrete plan on how it intends to further multilateral disarmament and fulfil its own obligations under the NPT. The coming months offer several opportunities to do so at the national and global levels.

The UK should:

- 1 Set out the conditions under which it would disarm and how it intends to support progress towards these conditions
- 2 Reconsider its nuclear programme during the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review, including the criteria applied to determine the number of warheads and the level of patrolling; and stimulate meaningful public debate on the future of its nuclear weapons
- 3 Participate fully in global meetings on non-proliferation and disarmament, including the 2015 NPT Review Conference



ROBUST POLICIES TO CONTROL ARMS, DRONES AND 'KILLER ROBOTS'

Conventional weapons kill half a million people a year, yet the UK continues to sell arms to countries with poor human rights records. Given the alarming absence of international regulation, drone technology is rapidly proliferating and advancing towards a new generation of 'killer robots'. Robust controls are urgently needed.

Designed to reduce the devastating effect of armed violence, the Arms Trade Treaty agreed at the UN in 2013 makes it illegal for a state to authorise arms transfers where there is a significant risk that the arms will be used to commit human rights abuses or crimes against humanity.

Having championed the Treaty, the UK can now set a powerful example by implementing it to a high standard and by sharing best practice. This requires a tightening of UK export controls and the adoption of a more cautious approach on licences for sales to states with poor human rights records.

The UK should also lead the way in seeking robust controls for unmanned armed vehicles (drones) and lethal autonomous weapons (killer robots). International law is yet to catch up with the new modes of warfare enabled by these weapons. This is already having an impact on the ground. Drone strikes outside conflict zones have caused hundreds of civilian casualties with little or no public accountability – a dangerous precedent, and one that could blow back on us.

The UK has a positive record in arms control, having played key roles

in securing not just the Arms Trade Treaty but conventions banning cluster munitions and landmines. Looking forward, it should help to define and build support for responsible international standards and controls for these weapons and ensure its own policies and practices are robust and accountable.

The UK should:

- 1 Tighten its arms control systems to reflect best practice under the Arms Trade Treaty, promote universalisation of the Treaty and provide international assistance for effective implementation
- 2 Respond fully to UN calls for explanations on drone strikes that have led to civilian casualties, build international consensus on drone use and clarify the role of UK intelligence in US drone operations
- 3 Place a national moratorium on the development of lethal autonomous weapons and support robust international controls for these weapons

LEADERSHIP TO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS INTERNATIONALLY

The UK should be proud of its historic role in shaping the international human rights system, which helps to protect millions around the world and to create more stable, prosperous societies. Unfortunately, too many people see their rights unfulfilled, denied or abused – leading to misery, poverty and conflict. For their sake and to increase global security, the UK must continue to provide leadership on human rights, including by setting a positive example and by strengthening the UN's capacity to address violations.

As an elected member of the Human Rights Council (HRC) – the main UN forum responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights – the UK has a key role to play in identifying, publicising, monitoring and addressing human rights violations.

It is vital that the UK uses this high-profile position to set a positive example. It has already made a significant contribution to the development of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) – a process by which every country's human rights record is assessed every four years – by setting out detailed responses to recommendations and publishing a mid-term progress report. It can build on this by encouraging greater public and parliamentary involvement in the process.

Other examples of UK engagement have been less commendable. Two recent visits to the country by independent UN human rights experts were marked by criticism and controversy. In March 2014, the UK voted against a modest proposal at the HRC on human rights concerns about drone use on the basis that such matters were not within the Council's remit, an argument often used by more obstructive states.

In addition to setting a good example, the UK has much to offer in finding creative approaches to strengthen the UN's human rights machinery so that all states may be held to account for their rights records.

The UK should:

- 1 Set a good example by ensuring that all parts of government fulfil their international human rights obligations and promote best practice, for example, by submitting timely reports to UN bodies and by displaying exemplary cooperation with UN experts
- 2 Increase parliamentary oversight of the UK's engagement with these mechanisms, for instance, through debates on the outcomes of each HRC session and the UK's own UPR report
- 3 Use its HRC membership to encourage practical steps to strengthen the UN human rights system, such as formalising UPR best practice, improving links with the Security Council and increasing civil society access



A STRONG COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARD HUMAN RIGHTS AT HOME

International human rights laws, norms and standards provide crucial protections for people in the UK. Indeed, British citizens have played a key role in achieving these hard-won gains at the global level, and in making them a reality at home. These rights should be reinforced and celebrated. By striving for an unimpeachable human rights record, the UK is serving not just its own people, but strengthening its ability to act as a credible advocate for human rights internationally.

Having taken its first tentative steps towards state accountability in the *Magna Carta* nearly 800 years ago, the UK can be viewed as a trailblazer in the field of international human rights. It has been at the forefront of protecting individual freedoms, playing a key role in creating the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and the nine 'core' UN human rights treaties which form the basis of the international system we have today. Together, these treaties protect everything from the right to a fair trial to the equal rights of men and women.

In the UK, many of these rights can be found in the Human Rights Act (HRA). The HRA has made an invaluable impact on human rights protections in the UK: British soldiers fighting abroad are now covered by the same rights they enjoy at home, elderly and vulnerable people in care homes are protected from abuse and women fleeing domestic violence can claim the right to refuge. And breaches of these rights can be challenged directly in British courts, without needing to resort to international mechanisms, although these too can offer protection.

Uncertainty around the HRA, however, threatens to weaken the human rights we now take for granted and to tarnish the UK's standing on the world stage. As we debate how best to safeguard these freedoms in the run-up to the 2015 general election, all parties should re-commit to fulfilling the UK's international human rights obligations and enabling people in this country to have the highest standards of human rights protection.

The UK should:

- 1 Ensure that any changes to the UK's domestic human rights law arrangements strengthen, not weaken, current protections
- 2 Commit to ratifying the two core UN human rights treaties it has yet to sign: the Convention on Enforced Disappearances and the Convention on Migrant Workers
- 3 Ensure there is a positive domestic debate on the importance of human rights and the value of national and international human rights mechanisms



A BOLD PLAN TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The UK has earned its reputation as a leader in promoting gender equality and protecting women's rights, but there is a real risk that hard-won gains may be lost amidst the numerous UN negotiations due in 2015. The UK must work with partners around the world to ensure that this does not happen. It should also continue to strive to tackle gender inequality and promote women's empowerment here in the UK.

Taking place in 2015, the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing+20) – the historic UN agreement on women's rights, empowerment and gender equality – provides a useful opportunity to take stock of progress towards these goals.

In the UK, the Government's own progress review concludes that whilst significant progress has been made, gender discrimination is still prevalent in this country. At the global level, many of the seminal gains made at the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 are at risk two decades on, in the areas of sexual and reproductive health and rights, for instance.

The UK is viewed as an important player in promoting the rights of women internationally. The UK takes the lead on women, peace and security issues at the UN Security Council and has galvanised global action to address sexual violence in conflict. Its focus on women and girls in its development work has been widely commended, and it has been a consistent champion for women's rights at the Human Rights Council.

The UK can build on this record by using its position and experience to

ensure that the gains of recent years are not lost, and that efforts made at Beijing+20 complement and reinforce two other significant UN initiatives in 2015: a high-level review of Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and the culmination of the process to agree a new global development framework.

The UK should:

- 1 Work to secure a standalone goal on gender equality in the new global development framework that is universal in scope, with targets for both developed and developing states
- 2 Ensure that the implementation of its National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP) sets the highest possible standards and that it assists other states in developing their own NAPs ahead of the high-level review in 2015
- 3 Use its statements at Beijing+20 not only to defend the gains of the last 20 years but to set out its vision for the next 20 years of advancement in women's rights



CONCERTED ACTION TO PROMOTE PROGRESSIVE NEW DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Adopted in 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – the UN's most ambitious development drive – have delivered real gains for millions around the world. But too many have been left behind. The creation of a new set of goals is an opportunity to end poverty and to build sustainable societies that will ultimately benefit us all – the UK should make the most of it.

The new set of 'sustainable development goals', due to be agreed at the UN next year, must build on the MDGs whilst addressing their inadequacies, including those areas to which too little attention was accorded, such as inequality and the impact of conflict. It should have human rights and good governance at its heart, plus specific actions to ensure that vulnerable groups are not left behind.

The process for creating the goals is well underway. Interestingly, it is set to be universal in application, with targets for rich countries as well as developing ones. If retained in the final outcome document, this will be a huge step forward in terms of creating a true global partnership for sustainable development, with shared responsibilities.

To date, the UK has been a leading player in the process, with the Prime Minister serving on the High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The UK has also led by example by becoming, for instance, one of just a handful of countries to meet the longstanding UN target of allocating 0.7% GNI to development assistance.

The UK can capitalise on its development clout and multiply its

impact by ensuring its own best practices are reflected in the new goals, by setting an example in terms of rich-country responsibilities and by ensuring coordination among UN frameworks.

The UK should:

- 1 Ensure the post-2015 process gives due consideration to financing, from traditional and non-traditional sources
- 2 Define the institutional reforms needed to underpin the new agenda, including systems to promote multi-sector partnerships and better mechanisms for data collection
- 3 Champion opportunities for ongoing public and parliamentary involvement in the design, delivery and evaluation of the goals
- 4 Embrace the universality of the new framework and lead by example, including by setting out its own plans for achieving the proposed targets, for example, on sustainable consumption
- 5 Call for early discussions on how the sustainable development goals will relate to and reinforce global climate targets



A VIGOROUS DRIVE TO SECURE THE CLIMATE DEAL WE NEED

After years of frustrating negotiations, the international community has made December 2015 its deadline for adopting a global agreement on climate change. Getting there will require ambition, leadership and dedication from the UK.

Climate change demonstrates the need for global cooperation like no other issue. But to date, there has been little appetite for a binding international treaty, with many countries advocating a system whereby states set their own targets to be tracked under an international agreement.

Such a system is a long way from being the robust agreement that UNA-UK would like to see. While some major emitters have taken significant domestic action in recent years by introducing progressive regulation and targets, there is a real danger that the sum of national actions will not be anywhere near the response we need.

However, an agreement on this basis could be a pragmatic milestone in international action if states find ways of ensuring that this patchwork of domestic actions can develop into a coherent, transparent and effective multilateral framework. To date, such ambition has been sorely lacking.

The UK must continue its efforts to raise the level of ambition. At the UN, it should champion ways to inject more rigour into the proposed agreement, through sticks and carrots; and call for discussions on how the global climate and development processes will reinforce each other. At the EU,

it should encourage its partners to revise the EU tactic of making stronger emissions-reduction targets conditional on action by non-EU states. Now is the time to display leadership and forge ahead, including by setting more challenging targets for the crucial period to 2020, when the new deal is intended to take effect.

The UK should:

- 1 Support the call for national targets under the agreement to be assessed collectively against the back-drop of the global 2°C warming limit
- 2 Work with the EU to propose a robust reviewing process that encourages ambition and includes penalties – for instance, lack of access to green funds – for poor performance
- 3 Encourage the EU to set an example by adopting a higher emissions-reduction target – such as 50% by 2030 – to be met regardless of what other states decide, and by committing to significant action before 2020
- 4 Call for early discussions on how the sustainable development goals will relate to and reinforce global climate targets



SUPPORT TO ENHANCE THE UN'S EFFECTIVENESS BY IMPROVING ITS LEADERSHIP SELECTION

The UN is an essential tool for the UK – and international community – to address global challenges. It is in the UK's interest to support efforts to increase the UN's capacity to do so. This includes lending its voice to the growing calls to improve the process for selecting the next UN chief.

There are many ways in which the UN could – and should – be strengthened. Some efforts, such as Security Council reform, are currently mired in disagreement. Others, like the drive to improve the appointment process for the Secretary-General, have momentum and proposals for action that are backed by a majority of UN member states.

While there is no 'silver bullet' for UN reform, bold and principled leadership by a skilled Secretary-General with a strong mandate would contribute significantly to the UN's effectiveness. He or she has the power to prevent conflict through mediation, build progressive partnerships with businesses and NGOs, and encourage action by governments.

It is crucial that the best possible person is appointed to the role. But the appointment process is opaque and outdated, with no selection criteria, no public scrutiny or formal rules. It is not geared to produce the best possible candidate, outstanding incumbents notwithstanding, and no woman has ever been appointed.

Only the Security Council plays a meaningful role in the process, endorsing a single candidate for the rest of the UN's membership to rubberstamp.

The endorsement is subject to veto by the Council's permanent members: China, France, Russia, the UK and US. In short, while the Secretary-General stands for the world's seven billion people, just five countries hold sway over the appointment.

As one of those countries, the UK can play a crucial role in championing steps to improve the process ahead of the next appointment, due to take place in 2016.

The UK should:

- 1 Champion a process focussed on producing the best possible candidate based on formal selection criteria and grounded in best practice on equality and diversity
- 2 Call for the appointment to be made in a timely and structured manner, with milestones and deadlines
- 3 Support more meaningful involvement by the UN General Assembly, for instance, through debates with the candidates and the option of a shortlist with more than one name
- 4 Advocate greater transparency and opportunities for engagement by civil society, the general public and media

UNA-UK

The United Nations Association – UK (UNA-UK) is the UK's leading source of independent analysis on the UN, and a UK-wide grassroots movement.

UNA-UK believes that a strong, credible and effective UN is essential if we are to build a safer, fairer and more sustainable world. We advocate strong government support for the UN and demonstrate why the UN matters to people everywhere.

We pursue this mission by:

- Connecting people to the work and values of the UN
- Influencing decision-makers and opinion-shapers to support UN goals
- Explaining how the UN works and what it can realistically achieve
- Stimulating debate and action on how to make the UN more effective
- Equipping our members and supporters to further all of these aims

UNA-UK derives great strength from its members and supporters, and UK-wide network of local, school and university branches. Together, they form a critical mass of support for the UN in the UK and beyond.

UNA-UK is a charitable company limited by guarantee (no.1146016). We are completely independent of the UN and receive no funding from it.

una.org.uk