

# Policies for International security

*International Security in a networked world – Britain as a global military power; meeting its responsibilities and putting greater emphasis on conflict prevention in the pursuit of the national interest.*

Great Britain is equipped to face the security challenges of the next decade and beyond and to stand firm with its allies. There will be no shrinkage of the UK's global role in the lifetime of this British Government. We have a clear long-term vision of Britain as an active global power and the closest ally of the United States. In a networked world the UK is now equipped to play not a shrinking but a growing and increasingly effective role – both in promoting our interests and in helping meet the major world challenges.

Good afternoon and thank you all for coming to hear me speak today. I am delighted to be back at Georgetown. It has been quite a few years since my last visit in 1982 at the tender age of 21, when I spoke in a debate about British policy in Northern Ireland. I am glad to say that that policy has since been successful, with a great deal of support from the United States. One of the reasons I was keen to come back was the very enjoyable weekend I spent here after the debate, about which I will only say that students at this University know how to have a very good time.

This is my first major foreign policy speech in the United States since the formation of the new coalition government in Britain, between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats. I am here to speak on the theme of international security. But those of you who follow our politics as avidly as we do yours may have some curiosity about our first coalition government in sixty-five years.

It may have surprised you, as it did many in Britain, that such passionate political adversaries were able to form a coalition in just five days after our remarkable General Election in May. If you watched any of the televised leaders' debates between the three Prime Ministerial candidates – the first ever in Britain although such debates have long been a feature of the American political landscape – you may have been even more astonished that we agreed an actual programme of government in the same short period.

Our politics are famously adversarial. William Wilberforce – a God-fearing man who devoted his entire political life to the abolition of the slave trade, who is one of my political heroes – wrote that when he first came into Parliament in the 18th century “you could not go to the opposition side of the house without hearing the most shocking swearing”. Being even-handed he went on to say that “it was not so bad on the ministerial side, though not I'm afraid from their being much better than their opponents”.

In fact we were in such uncharted waters during the coalition negotiations that the journalists camped outside were reduced to seeking symbolism in the sandwiches. One paper reported significantly that the Conservative negotiators “were eating traditional chicken, beef, or egg sandwiches” while “the Liberal Democrats were munching on tuna, and cheese and onion”. But we worked through our political and dietary differences to achieve a government in the

national interest, one that was made possible by the steady evolution of both our parties in Opposition. For since David Cameron took the leadership of the Conservative Party in 2005 we have become a more socially liberal Conservative party, while under Nick Clegg's leadership the Liberal Democrats have become more economically liberal. This has allowed us comprehensively to occupy the centre ground in British politics, at a time when strong fiscal policies are needed to overcome the largest budget deficit our country has ever faced outside a world war and to lay the foundation, we hope, for growth, recovery, and a fairer and more prosperous society.

**Foreign policy is not just about making the right decisions now, but also about positioning our country for the long term so that we can ward off threats and harness positive trends in the world**

Britain last had a coalition government under very different circumstances, during the dark days of the Second World War. Winston Churchill was called upon then to form a coalition that represented as he put it, the nation's “united strength” at a time of immense danger. In one of the first of the 1,750 private telegrams he exchanged with President Roosevelt during the war, Churchill described countries being “smashed up, one by one, like matchwood” as Hitler's armies swept inexorably across Europe. Indeed by the time he had been Prime Minister for just thirty-six days, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg and France had all fallen, leaving Britain dangerously exposed until the formation of the alliance with the United States and with the USSR. Today, it is hard for any of us to comprehend such a threat to our national survival. But the Special Relationship as we now know it, between the United States and United Kingdom, was forged and tempered in those fires.

In the 1940s a story did the rounds about a young man preparing for a career in the Foreign Office who was asked what he thought were the most important things in the world. Without a moment's hesitation, he replied: “Love, and Anglo-American relations.” I don't know if that question still features in our interview process, but our indispensable relationship with America is at the heart of our view of Britain's place in the world. Our close cooperation in global security has always been at the core of our relationship and gives it much of its compelling force and unique character. On top of our cultural and commercial links we have a relationship in defence, nuclear issues and

intelligence that is without parallel anywhere in the world. We also have an extraordinarily close working partnership in foreign policy, as I observe every day in the Foreign Office and enjoy in my relations with your formidable Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Ours is a relationship in which each side has its own distinct identity and interests and where we will sometimes disagree. But today it is impossible to imagine a mortal threat to each other's security that we would not face together, or support each other in confronting. The US-UK relationship is still special, still fundamental to both countries, still thriving and still a cornerstone of stability in the world. In addition to our cooperation on Afghanistan and on Pakistan, we work together on a daily basis to address Iran's nuclear programme and to avert nuclear proliferation in the Middle East;

- US efforts to restart negotiations on a two state solution to the Israeli Palestinian conflict have the wholehearted support and active engagement of the United Kingdom;
- We work side by side on the Western Balkans, where the creation of new states is over, but long term stability and prosperity has yet to be fully realised;
- We are in close agreement over Sudan, which Secretary Clinton and I discussed this morning after the special session of the United Nations Security Council yesterday, which I chaired; and she attended;
- We are working urgently in the area of counter-proliferation to secure loose nuclear material, limit illicit trafficking in nuclear weapons' technology, and to uphold the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty;
- And above all, we share unprecedented cooperation against terrorism.

As the Secretary of State responsible for Britain's Secret Intelligence Service and our signals intelligence agency GCHQ, I witness every day, sometimes every hour, that our relationship saves lives and is indispensable to the security of both our countries. The disruption of the recent Al Qaeda cargo plot against aeroplanes flying to the US, thanks to the efforts of our intelligence services and our partners including Saudi Arabia, is the latest telling example of this bond.

This is why I have chosen to give my speech on security here in America. Our government is determined to stand foursquare with the United States and our allies to confront the security challenges of the 21st century as robustly as we faced those of the past.

In Britain we have never shirked - and under this government never will shirk - the international responsibilities conferred on us by our economic and military strength, our alliance in NATO and by our membership of international organisations.

In Britain we have always been restless and outward-looking in disposition as a people, ready to pay a price to confront threats to international security or to help those less fortunate. We have a proud history, underpinned by broad consensus across much of our society about where our national interests lie and the country we wish to be.

We are the fourth largest financial contributor to the United Nations and one of the largest international aid donors, working across the world from Burma to Yemen to alleviate poverty and support human rights. We are ardent advocates of free trade and the reform of international institutions, including a more representative UN Security Council, a wider European Union and an expanded NATO. We have arguably the best record among the nuclear weapons powers in fulfilling our nuclear disarmament commitments, while remaining committed to our minimum independent nuclear deterrent for ultimate self-defence and as a contribution to the indivisible security of the North Atlantic Alliance. And with our allies we have also shown an extraordinary resilience and determination when military sacrifice has been required. Over the last twenty years the US and Britain have fought five major military campaigns side by side in the Balkans and Iraq during the Operation Desert Storm, and in recent years in Afghanistan and Iraq. In most of these conflicts we provided the second largest contingent of troops of any nation while bearing some of the hardest fighting. Our indomitable Armed Forces are making great sacrifices in Afghanistan at this very moment, alongside those of the United States.

As a nation we are far from immune from mistakes in foreign policy - no country is. But I am confident the UK will continue to be one of the strongest and most effective actors in world affairs in the years ahead. There will be no reduction in Britain's global role under this British government. But maintaining this ambition for ourselves as well as others does not mean standing still or going about everything in the same way as before.

Indeed, as a new Government we knew that urgent changes were needed. For ten years our country has been engaged in continuous military commitments overseas, without any assessment of Britain's strategic interests in the round or the changes taking place around us. Meanwhile the economic underpinning of our strength in defence

The Foreign Secretary with US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton





and foreign affairs had been weakened, as economic development in other nations outstripped our own, even before the financial crisis struck home. And when it did, we were spending more servicing the interest on our national debt than on our annual defence, diplomacy and development budgets combined.

There was also a gap between where we really needed to focus our diplomatic effort to maintain our prosperity and security, and where that effort was actually being channelled. We had neglected to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by globalisation and the emergence of new economic powers and markets. For example we are still exporting more as a nation to Ireland than to India, China and Russia put together, and more to Denmark than to the whole of Latin America – a region of 20 countries and 576 million people.

But added to this, we could also see that the conduct of world affairs has changed dramatically over the last decade. First, economic power and political influence are diffusing around the globe, particularly towards the South and East. Second, the circle of international decision-making is growing wider, and new configurations of countries are emerging who do not always fully share our approach to international issues. Third, international relations are no longer the sole preserve of governments, as civil society, business and individuals play an increasing role. So as I think of it, while the world is becoming more multilateral it is also becoming more bilateral at the same time. We have to reinforce our bilateral relationships and to become more adept at leveraging new forms of influence.

In Britain we have taken a series of steps in our first six months in office to put our country on a stronger strategic footing in the future.

We have established a new National Security Council, the first of its kind in Britain. It brings Ministers and the chiefs of our Armed Forces and Intelligence Services together each week, to consider our strategic interests in the round and to ensure that foreign policy runs through the

veins of the whole of government. This week for example it held its first meeting on the security implications of climate change. It has brought coherence to the oversight of Britain's effort in Afghanistan, conducted the first review of our country's strategic defence and security needs in more than ten years, and produced a new National Security Strategy.

It did so against an extremely challenging financial backdrop – including a defence budget that was over-committed to the tune of £38 billion. To put this in context for you this is larger than our entire annual defence budget, which is why the process was urgent. We have taken difficult decisions which could not be put off any longer.

## We are confident that Great Britain is equipped to face the security challenges of the next decade and beyond and to stand firm with its allies

But I must correct the mistaken idea that we are in some way sacrificing our national defence to meet budget deficits. Strong defences require strong finances. The decisions we have taken are necessary beyond question and will ensure that Britain will be able to defend all its territories and meet all its commitments, including to NATO's target of 2 per cent of gross domestic product spent on defence. It will allow us to emerge stronger in the future when our economy grows. This should be good news for our allies, and a timely reminder to potential adversaries that Britain still packs a punch on the world stage.

As Prime Minister David Cameron said in a speech in London on Monday, in addition to having the fourth largest defence budget in the

world the UK will be one of the few countries able to deploy a fully-equipped Brigade-sized force anywhere in the world, plus the required air and maritime assets on an enduring basis. With the Joint Strike Fighter and Typhoon, the Royal Air Force will have some of the most capable combat aircraft money can buy, backed by a new fleet of tankers and transport aircraft. The Royal Navy will have a new operational aircraft carrier, new Type 45 destroyers and seven new nuclear-powered hunter killer submarines, the most advanced in the world. And we will renew, our nuclear deterrent, Trident, our ultimate insurance policy in an age of uncertainty.

This month we also signed a new Defence Treaty with France. The two largest military powers in Europe will now come together in practical ways to increase our military capability and impact, contributing to NATO and Europe's ability to be more effective in security and defence. This goes alongside our close cooperation in foreign policy with Germany and our highly active involvement in all the foreign affairs discussions of the European

NATO Ministers of Defence and of Foreign Affairs meet at NATO headquarters in Brussels



Union, which extends the impact and weight we bring to bear in foreign affairs. In recent months for instance we have been instrumental in strong EU leadership on Iran and on the Balkans.

Above all we have made no reduction whatsoever in our commitment to the war we are fighting with the United States and our allies in Afghanistan. Alongside our unwavering support for the mission which remains vital to our national security, we will increase our investment in protected vehicles, drones and equipment to counter IEDs, ensuring that our troops have the tools they need. In addition to agreeing the new Strategic Concept which will strengthen the NATO Alliance and chart a clear course for the future, this weekend's NATO summit in Lisbon will commit the Alliance to a long-term partnership with the Afghan people. It will mark an important starting point for our strategy to transfer responsibility for security progressively to Afghan forces.

So Britain will remain a first rate military power and a robust ally of the US and in NATO well into the future. As Secretary Clinton recently said, the UK "will remain the most capable partner" for US forces.

But defence policy must be the instrument of a strong and clear-sighted foreign policy. Today it is not enough to protect our citizens in their communities and within our borders. Our whole way of life requires international trade and travel, the safe flows of goods and people, open seas, secure energy supplies, access to technology, a sustainable global economy and climate and food security. In a networked world, we need to be able to address threats before they reach our shores, and to use diplomacy, development and our intelligence services to help avoid the need for military action which is a last resort.

It is this rounded approach to foreign policy and security that will be a hallmark of the new British government. Foreign policy is not just about making the right decisions now, but also about positioning our country for the long term so that we can ward off threats and harness positive trends in the world.

In Britain this means that we need not only a strong and thriving transatlantic alliance and a leading role in Europe, but also a distinctively British approach to the building of new partnerships around the world, in North Africa, in Asia, in Latin America and in the Gulf - the parts of the world where economic opportunity increasingly lies and where solutions to pressing international challenges also need to be sought. In some cases this will be in parallel to efforts by the US and in support of common goals. In others we will act on our own in pursuit of our own national interest, which we will never neglect to do.

In our first months in office we have launched an initiative to forge closer ties with our historic partners in the Gulf. We have intensified our dialogue with Turkey and renewed ties with old partners like Japan and emerging powers such as India. Last Tuesday I gave the Canning Lecture in which I called a halt to Britain's retreat in Latin America, and called for a diplomatic advance to begin.

We will be building our relations with Brazil, Chile and other Latin American states in the years ahead. And we have set out to reinvigorate Britain's activity within the Commonwealth - a unique network of 54 nation states underpinned by a common language, common attitudes, and by a commitment to the rule of law and good governance.

We are also placing a much greater emphasis on conflict prevention in our National Security Strategy. We are increasing the amount we devote to international development, so that from 2013 we will spend 0.7 per cent of GNI on aid. Within that we are doubling our investment in aid for fragile and unstable countries over the next five years, so that we will spend nearly a third of our aid budget in fragile and conflict-affected states. This assistance will help to create security in some of the poorest countries in the world. We continue to place significant emphasis on the soft power aspect of our influence - another area where your Secretary of State has set a powerful intellectual lead with her advocacy of "smart power" - which in our case includes the British Council and BBC World Service.

And we are meeting head on the insidious and growing threat to our national security from cyberspace. Persistent and sophisticated cyber attacks against our national systems are happening every day - against our banking networks, our intellectual property and our commercial infrastructure. There are over 1,000 targeted attacks on UK Government networks every month. If unchecked, they threaten our prosperity, our defence capabilities and indeed the very heart of our national security.

Cyberspace recognises no borders and no nation can defend itself effectively alone. The United States has demonstrated truly impressive leadership and our cyber partnership with the US is of the first order. We are working towards a joint UK-US approach to this challenge, and devoting an extra £650 million to our own national programme.

The Foreign Secretary & US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton at a NATO meeting in Berlin





We will need robust defences, in this and other areas, so that our nations can benefit from the immense potential of cyberspace in a safe and secure way. But we must do so without undermining the flow of ideas, information and people. This has been essential to our prosperity and growth and is a key underpinning of liberty, allowing citizens to challenge their leaders and hold them to account. If in our response to genuine security threats, we inadvertently halted the last half-century's march to greater freedom of communication, then the terrorists and criminals who currently exploit internet openness really would have won. The UK is determined to seek the right balance between security and freedom.

For we cannot protect our security or influence unless we also champion our own values. Unless we stand up for democracy, the rule of law, political freedom and human rights, and unless others perceive that we do this, we weaken our security and prosperity over the long term.

In our lifetime and that of our parents the United States has been not only the "arsenal of democracy" without which tyranny might have prevailed but has also been, because of its extraordinary political diversity and the power of its example, a source of hope and inspiration to millions of people mired in conflict or oppression elsewhere in the world. My belief and my hope is that the United States will always continue to fulfil this indispensable role in world affairs, and it will find in the United Kingdom a redoubtable ally.

In a networked world deviations from our own values or actions that are seen to cut across international law are quickly detected and instantly spread across the world. In our international diplomacy we not only have to convince our allies or would-be partners, but we have to bear in mind a sceptical global audience of seven billion pairs of ears and eyes. As a politician I would be the first to say that we cannot

hope to convince everyone, or always prevail in international courts of opinion, but neither can we ever ignore them.

If we are to maintain our influence in the world we must always seek to retain the moral advantage. Our adversaries have shown that there are no depths to which they will not stoop. But we, as democratic states, will always be judged by the highest standards. This is something on which the coalition government in Britain and the US administration are in close accord.

We have taken early action to make clear that we will not be complicit in torture or mistreatment. We have published the guidance we give our intelligence and military personnel on the treatment of detainees held by other countries and we have decided to hold an independent Inquiry to consider the allegations that Britain may have been complicit in the past, so that we can learn the lessons and enable our security and intelligence services to get on with their job of making us – and our allies – safe.

So we are confident that Great Britain is equipped to face the security challenges of the next decade and beyond and to stand firm with its allies. We have a clear long-term vision of Britain as an active global power and the closest ally of the United States. In a networked world the UK is now equipped to play not a shrinking but a growing and increasingly effective role – both in promoting our interests and in helping meet the major world challenges, and so there will be no shrinkage of the UK's global role in the lifetime of this British Government.

In the years ahead our intelligence services will continue to work in the most dangerous parts of the world, detecting threats to our security and supporting that of our allies. Our aid workers will continue to be in the front line of combating deprivation, insecurity and hopelessness. Our Armed Forces will continue to be the backbone of our defence

and to train others around the world. Our diplomats will remain among the very best it is possible to have, working from one of the largest diplomatic networks of any country, with new partners as well as our oldest allies. And our government will work to harness all the instruments of our national power more effectively than in the past.

So ours is a foreign policy that will be based firmly on our own enlightened national interest, consciously geared to securing prosperity for our own citizens but always connected to the needs of our allies. It will uphold our values and defend human rights, without which we cannot hope to see stability entrenched and democracy more universally enjoyed, and it will protect the security of the United Kingdom – without which we imperil all we have achieved and hold dear, and in support of which there is no single more important alliance than our unshakeable partnership with the United States of America. **F**

The Foreign Secretary meeting British troops in Bahrain



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