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# KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON – HOW THE UK’S DEFENCE AND FOREIGN SERVICES PROVIDE STABILIZING EFFECTS DURING PERIODS OF POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY

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JCSP 45

*Exercise Solo Flight*

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By Wing Commander Justin Blackie

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## **KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON – HOW THE UK’S DEFENCE AND FOREIGN SERVICES PROVIDE STABILIZING EFFECTS DURING PERIODS OF POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Her Majesty’s Government of the United Kingdom (UK) outlines the intentions for armed defence and foreign services through periodic security reviews, where it details the ends, ways and means. Ends are the objectives that the government seeks to achieve through deployment of foreign policy and security services; ways are the channels it intends to take and alliances it wishes to commit to; and finally, the means are the capabilities and resources required to undertake desired actions. The careful nurturing of foreign relationships in pursuit of national interest can take years to decades and beyond to undertake. Therefore, crucially the UK must be able to maintain stability of international relationships to deliver against desired foreign objectives.

Military armed forces and security services principally provide governments with the ability to deliver coercive, “hard power” as defined by the American political scientist Joseph Nye, be that in defense of the state or through offensive action to project national interests. Additionally, “soft power” attraction can be obtained through perception and assessment of outcomes that reach foreign nations.<sup>1</sup> In the case of Britain, the armed forces’ professionalism and training offered to other states is also a source of soft power attraction.<sup>2</sup> Through the UK’s armed forces and foreign services, hard and soft power, “smart power”, effects can combine to more efficiently achieve end states.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Nye, *The Future of Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011): [hard] 21-22, [soft] 81-83, 105-106.

<sup>2</sup> UK Government, Parliament, *Persuasion and Power in the Modern World - Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence* (March 2014), Chapter 4, para 110, last accessed 6 January 2019, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldselect/ldsoftpower/150/15008.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Nye, *The Future of Power*...xiii-xiv.

Through implementations of power, the British Armed Forces and other foreign departments provide a pillar of strength and stability for the UK's partnerships and foreign policy. Moreover, due to their enduring presence, these institutions transcend changes in government. Thus, a supplementary value of an armed force and the wider defence engagement is to maintain international relationships through long established alliances and coalitions.

Within this paper a contextual background of foreign security policy and political changes affecting the UK will be provided since the turn of the millennium. Then, illustrative examples within three sections will be analyzed of Britain's defence and foreign services working in key institutions and with selected partners. Firstly, an assessment of multipolar relationships through undertakings within the United Nations (UN), Northern Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and coalition operations. Secondly, an understanding of bilateral relations and commitments made with the United States (US) and France. Thirdly, an appreciation of long term investments made through foreign development aid and allied defence procurement programs. While not exhaustive, these examples will provide evidence that will highlight how mainstay resources support state stability. Through this process, the paper will demonstrate that regardless of political uncertainty and *precisely because* of the roles within key organizations, the UK's foreign services provide a stabilizing force through military alliances, relationship building actions and long term investments.

## **CONTEX – BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY CONTINUITY DESPITE POLITICAL CHANGE**

Since the turn of the millennium, the UK has had four terms of Labour governments (with a change in prime minister after the third term), one term of coalition government between the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, followed by two Conservative governments (with a

change in prime minister) and one Conservative minority government. However, the June 2016 Brexit vote to leave the European Union generated the greatest political unrest. Interconnected to a global phenomenon, the UK does not operate in isolation. Britain influences and is influenced by political fluctuations across the world, which is more prominent with close allies. Over the same period, France has seen a Socialist Party, a liberal Democracy, the Union for Popular Movement, followed by the Socialist Party, and presently the Republicans. France's recent internal political unrest comes from *des gilets jaunes* who are concerned with rising prices of living and a perceived unfair tax system favoring the elite. The US has been party-political more stable with eight years of a Republican Party, eight years of a Democratic Party and back to Republicans. However, despite events surrounding the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and the electing of the first black president, the recent change in presidency may have caused the most widespread world interest.

Considered from a state stability context, what remains constant throughout changes of political parties are those that serve the government: neutral bureaucracies, diplomatic services, and militaries that under civilian control do not exercise their own political agendas. Additionally, many of these serving personnel will uphold careers that last several presiding parties. In all true democracies the armed forces and civilian servant organizations ought to be non-partisan, allowing these elements of government to keep operating and providing stability despite any political uncertainties that may occur. Defence and security policies will be molded by different ruling political parties, but in the case of Britain this will be shown to follow a theme of defending the UK through interconnecting with the world and ensuring prosperity. Through implementation of foreign policy, the armed forces and foreign services provide the tools with which to exert influence and ensure strength in their consistency. Long term continuity of

international relations that coincide with national interest are fundamentally driven by *raison d' être* rather than politics.

The Labour Party's 1998 Strategic Defence Review (SDR) established UK defence for the turn of the millennium and provided a comprehensive view of what was expected from the security services. The Review was presented as "radical" reflecting a changing world, which would reshape the armed forces. Heavily focused on partnerships, the SDR detailed that security was "indivisible from that of our European partners and allies", referring to the transatlantic relationship as well as continued engagement in Europe. The Review also demonstrated that the UK Government comprehended the speed of technology change and recognized the need to work closely with allies to counter problems and ensure interoperability, especially with US forces.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, George Robertson, then Secretary of State for Defence, recognized the need for combined politico-military activity. At a Defence Diplomacy Northern Atlantic Defence NATO forum, he referred to projection of British interests overseas would be supported by "military assistance, advice, training, loan of personnel, and provision of equipment to friendly countries whose security benefits from our help". Fundamentally, this was not a new mechanism that UK service members had conducted, but would continue to maintain and strengthen foreign relationships.<sup>5</sup>

This backbone role of upholding international relationships, which the security services provided, was continued to be highlighted in the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review

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<sup>4</sup> UK Government, *Strategic Defence Review* (July 1998): 4, 11, 14-15, last accessed 23 April 2019, [http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121026065214/www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/65F3D7AC-4340-4119-93A2-20825848E50E/0/sdr1998\\_complete.pdf](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121026065214/www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/65F3D7AC-4340-4119-93A2-20825848E50E/0/sdr1998_complete.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> UK Government, *The Strategic Defence Review White Paper* (October 1998): 26, last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/RP98-91/RP98-91.pdf>

(SDSR), under the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government. The 2010 SDSR detailed:

Alliances and partnerships will remain a fundamental part of our approach to defence and security. Internationally, we rarely act alone. Maintaining and building constructive and reciprocal bilateral relationships across all aspects of national security can enhance capability and maximise efficiency.<sup>6</sup>

At the 2011 Conservative Party spring conference, William Hague, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, would continue to promote the importance of the international relationships roles that foreign affairs and security services would undertake:

We are clear that Britain will be ready and willing to confront threats to international security and to help those less fortunate, through our diplomacy, our generous development aid, and our continuing military power... Under our Government Britain will extend its reach and influence, develop new networks of friendships and alliances, and help make our own country more prosperous and secure.<sup>7</sup>

The Conservative 2015 SDSR was persistent in explicating the close relationships with all European Union (EU) member states, and detailed the part security services would conduct in strengthening old relationships. The Review explained: “[w]e are extending and expanding our defence and security relationships with our European partners, notably France through our commitments under the 2010 Lancaster House Treaty, and Germany”.<sup>8</sup> This bilateral commitment with France incorporated improving interoperability between each other’s militaries

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<sup>6</sup> UK Government, *Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Defence and Security Review* (October 2010): 59, last accessed 22 April 2019, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/62482/strategic-defence-security-review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/62482/strategic-defence-security-review.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> William Hague (speech, Conservative Party spring conference, Cardiff, 6 March 2011), last accessed 24 April 2019, <https://www.newstatesman.com/2011/03/foreign-policy-british-britain>

<sup>8</sup> UK Government, *National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015* (November 2015): 14, last accessed 20 April 2019. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/555607/2015\\_Strategic\\_Defence\\_and\\_Security\\_Review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/555607/2015_Strategic_Defence_and_Security_Review.pdf)

and was entrenched in sharing nuclear weapons technology.<sup>9</sup> A role that the British Armed Forces could continue to conduct, despite any political unrest which may occur in Europe. Furthermore, Britain has sought a similar bilateral relationship with Germany, and continues to work closely with armed forces across Europe such as the Netherlands.<sup>10</sup> These are unions that would maintain important security relations and provide stability with European allies.

Shortly after the Brexit referendum, the Minister of Defence, Michael Fallon, reassured European allies by detailing the commitments the UK Government was making to defence in Europe. UK military support providing deployments of Typhoon aircraft to Romania and an armored battalion to the Baltic States, including Poland and 800 personnel to Estonia.<sup>11</sup> To further calm international relations, UK Government future partnership papers were released, including a foreign policy, defence and development paper that encompassed and reaffirmed the commitment of the UK's defence and foreign services to allies:

The UK – through our global diplomatic, defence and security, and development action – has played a major role in providing for European security and defence. This will continue, and UK interests will also be served, through strengthened bilateral relationships. The UK will maintain strong alliances with EU Member States, alongside partners beyond Europe, including the US, and from across the Indo-Pacific, the Middle East, and Africa. The UK will also continue to ensure that NATO remains the cornerstone of our defence, be a champion of the UN and multilateralism, and be active in other international organisations. And we will continue to work closely with other countries to drive further reform and effectiveness from the UN and all our multilateral partners.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Richard G Whitman, “The UK and EU Foreign, Security and Defence Policy After Brexit: Integrated, Associated Or Detached?” *National Institute Economic Review* 238, no. 1 (2016): R45.

<sup>10</sup> Jan Marinus Wiersma, “Brexit and the Future of European Security and Defence Cooperation” *Security and Human Rights* 27, no. 1-2 (2016): 92-93.

<sup>11</sup> UK Government, *UK Steps Up Measures to Reassure European Allies* (26 October 2016), last accessed 22 Apr 2019, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-steps-up-measures-to-reassure-european-allies>

<sup>12</sup> UK Government, *Foreign policy, defence and development, a Future Partnership Paper* (12 September 2018): 2, last accessed 22 Apr 2019, block quote: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/643924/Foreign\\_policy\\_defence\\_and\\_development\\_paper.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643924/Foreign_policy_defence_and_development_paper.pdf) Additional paper released: UK Government, *The future relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union* (12 July 2018), last accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-future-relationship-between-the-united-kingdom-and-the-european-union>



An appreciation of British foreign policy and actions over the last 20 years demonstrates that the UK Government's commitment to retain close interconnections with allies is not going to be easily derailed by Brexit. Anand Menon, for the Financial Times, believed that Brexit could even boost British support to European security, noting that many debates that look to the contrary lacked precedent or compelling evidence. He detailed when France left the NATO military command structures in 1966, while some thought they were abandoning their allies, Paris continued to discuss future, and later signed, co-operation agreements with NATO. Being freed from imposed EU political measures, would allow for an easier collaboration between the British military and European allies.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the UK's policy has consistently looked to NATO and the UN as key alliances, within which to conduct the focus of foreign security arrangements.

## **MULTIPOLAR RELATIONSHIPS – ALLIANCES, COALITIONS AND OPERATIONS**

Seated as one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (SC), the UK has been one of the most influential participants. In 2016 the UK was the sixth largest contributor to the UN's regular as well as peacekeeping budget. By 2018 this increased to the second largest financial contributor and the third largest contributor in terms of civilian personnel, underlying the UK Government's pledged of responsibility for upholding peace and security.<sup>14</sup> This demonstrates Britain's commitment to back up intent with resources – beyond

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<sup>13</sup> Anand Menon, "Britain's military standing would not suffer after Brexit, Financial Times" (24 April 2016), last accessed 24 April 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/a6f95c18-087d-11e6-a623-b84d06a39ec2>

<sup>14</sup> UK Government, *House Of Lords, Select Committee on International Relations, The UK and the UN: Priorities for the new Secretary-General*, HL paper 60 (3 November 2016): 41, last accessed 26 April 2019, 2016 contributions: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201617/ldselect/ldintrel/60/60.pdf> Fabrizio Hochschild, *UK Government House of Lords Select Committee, International Relations Corrected oral evidence*, (United Nations General Assembly 9 May 2018), last accessed 28 April 2019, 2018 contributions: <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/international-relations-committee/united-nations-general-assembly-2018/oral/83389.html>

strategic level politics, policy statements and headline grabbing speeches, there is a necessity for a capacity of steadfast people who implement and drive forward actions.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) works closely with the UN and has a worldwide network of over 14,000 people in nearly 270 diplomatic offices. Examples of the FCO's work within the UN are the meticulous efforts on promoting women's rights and combating sexual violence in conflict to preventing torture and the death penalty. Moreover, the FCO also spent ten years campaigning and 7 years negotiating on the prevention of the sales of arms being used in serious violations of human rights, culminating in the Arms Trade Treaty in 2013.<sup>15</sup>

From an armed forces perspective, Britain has been involved in two aspects of the 2001 Afghanistan war. Firstly, as part of the US led coalition Operation *Enduring Freedom* initiated by SC Resolution 1368. Secondly, under SC Resolution 1386 the UK was authorized to lead the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission, supporting the Afghan transitional authority to obtain security over its country; the mission was later taken over by NATO in 2003 with the UK still as a member.<sup>16</sup>

This commitment of resource to the UN, including the large numbers of UK foreign services personnel (civilian and military), enables the delivery of mainstay, day to day work that ensures the UK Government preserves relationships, influences, and has the ability to shape the world aligned with British interests. While the UK is unlikely to diverge too far from European security, this commitment to the UN could be even greater after Brexit. Mr Paul Williams,

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<sup>15</sup> United Nations Association UK, *The UK's Work With The UN*, last accessed 29 April 2019, <https://www.una.org.uk/get-involved/learn-and-teach/uks-work-un>

<sup>16</sup> Karen A. Mingst, Margaret P. Karns, Alanna Lyon, Inc OverDrive, and OverDrive ebook. *The United Nations in the 21st Century* (4th ed. Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 2012), 106-107.

Director of Multilateral Policy at the FCO, believed “when we leave the European Union, the UN is going to become an even bigger part of our world view than it was before”.<sup>17</sup>

Having lasted more than 40 years, NATO is the most predominant armed force alliance and is central to Western European security. The integration of multinational military personnel in the command structure of this organization has permitted NATO to become resilient to an ever changing, both internally and externally, political and security environment. As shown throughout analysis of British security policies, NATO remains the cornerstone of UK defence. Within NATO, the UK has sought to combine research and development, exploit cooperative technology, increase common training, pool capabilities, and increase logistics co-operation.<sup>18</sup>

Akin to Britain’s commitments to the UN, the heart of the UK’s commitment to NATO is the practical personnel embedded within. Author Sven Biscop, writing in *International Affairs*, uses the NATO commander structure as one that demonstrates that NATO is a “technical organization rather than a political centre of gravity”.<sup>19</sup> Similar interpretations can be observed within the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), where “EU/NATO Chiefs Staff and other non-elected military experts” have been seen to shape political policy and not elected politicians.<sup>20</sup> These observations highlight the role and significance of armed forces personnel within alliance command structures, and their ability to not only carve out policy but also maintain international relationships, supporting foreign security.

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<sup>17</sup> UK Government, *House of Lords, The Select Committee on International Relation, Inquiry on UK Priorities For The New Un Secretary-General*, Evidence Session No. 1 answer to question 7 (6 July 2016), last accessed 26 April 2019, <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/international-relations-committee/uk-priorities-for-the-new-un-secretarygeneral/oral/34958.html>

<sup>18</sup> Philip Hammond, *NATO: the case for collective defence in the 21st Century*, UK Government (5 January 2012), last accessed 24 Apr 2019, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/2012-01-05-nato-the-case-for-collective-defence-in-the-21st-century--2>

<sup>19</sup> Sven Biscop, “The UK and European Defence: Leading Or Leaving?” *Royal Institute of International Affairs* 88, no. 6 (2012): 1311.

<sup>20</sup> Giovanna Bono, “European Security and Defence Policy: theoretical approaches, the Nice Summit and hot issues,” (February 2002): 3, last accessed 25 Apr 2019, <https://bits.de/CESD-PA/esdp02.pdf>

Not exclusively shackled to UN mandates or NATO to conduct operations, Britain's security services have retained flexibility through the ability to form impromptu coalitions. Through maintenance of a capable armed force the UK Government has been able to exert greater influence over coalition operations, such as Afghanistan 2002 Operation *Enduring Freedom* and Iraq 2003 Operation *Iraqi Freedom* which reflected the UK Government's policy to shape multilateral effects. While the UK played a major role in the launch of the EU's CSDP in 1999, during the 2003 Iraq crisis when there was not complete consensus in NATO and Europe, Britain changed course and joined the US, prioritizing this special relationship.<sup>21</sup> During this period the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) committed 45,000 troops to the 2003 Iraq War, and 6,000 troops to Afghanistan participating with almost 60 other countries.<sup>22</sup>

Disregarding the political reason for going to war (Iraq) and conceivably enhanced by an inability to quickly reach an end state (Afghanistan), coalitions of the willing fought conflicts have brought allies together, and in the case of the Afghanistan War adversaries (Russia), to fight an agreed common enemy. The amount of troops and countries working and fighting alongside each other, in often close proximity partnerships, through Operation *Enduring Freedom* built understanding, cooperation and relationships. When forced into a situation against a common foe, foreign services and armed forces can work through political barriers that were previously in place and improved working partnerships can be obtained.

The 2011 Libya conflict demonstrated that even without an initial EU or NATO consensus that Britain was able to rely on the relationship with France to form an ad hoc

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<sup>21</sup> Jolyon Howorth, "EU Defence Cooperation After Brexit: What Role for the UK in the Future EU Defence Arrangements?" *European View* 16, no. 2 (2017), 192.

<sup>22</sup> Douglas T. Stuart, "NATO and the Wider World: From Regional Collective Defence to Global Coalitions of the Willing," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 58, no. 1 (2004): 42.

coalition until other members joined.<sup>23</sup> Speaking at the Conservative Party spring conference in 2011, the UK Secretary for State, William Hague explained that “[i]t was a British-drafted Resolution that was adopted unanimously at the UN Security Council, referring Libya to the International Criminal Court”.<sup>24</sup> Post the conflict, David Cameron, UK Prime Minister, would detail some of the capabilities of the British Armed Forces effort: 2,300 British troops; 36 aircraft that flew 3,000 missions and 2,000 strike sorties; eight warships; and a hunter-killer submarine. He would also explain that the “Secretary General of NATO said that he thought this was one of the most professional and most successful operations in NATO’s 62-year history”.<sup>25</sup>

While this paper does not seek to analyze the post conflict success of Libya, the operation provides a good example of multinational alliances and organizations coming together under the initiation of the UK foreign services. An initiation that: occurred in a coalition, while under a UN mandate, and led to a NATO alliance (ways); could only be instigated with the ability to deploy credible and effective military capabilities (means); and was able to be delivered against a desired intent (ends). The mainstay activities of Britain’s robust foreign services and armed forces underpinned and ensured coalition and alliance cooperation, enabling measures of effects to be delivered for collective security interests; activities that continued to remain a core component of British defence policy.

A few weeks after the Brexit referendum, a declaration was agreed between NATO and the EU Member States. The “Euro-Atlantic community” recognized, despite impending political changes, that there was an inherent security interconnection that required a new ambition to enhance interoperable defence and security capabilities. This declaration would safeguard that

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<sup>23</sup> Sven Biscop, “The UK and European Defence...1308.

<sup>24</sup> William Hague, (speech, Conservative...

<sup>25</sup> David Cameron, (speech, Service Personnel Returning from Libya Downing Street, 6 December 2011), last accessed 24 April 2019, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-to-service-personnel-returning-from-libya>

even if Britain resided outside the EU that NATO allies would work together with EU Member States to ensure a collective defence of common threats.<sup>26</sup> This was a political declaration that was able to be made because of the importance the UK Government placed upon capabilities and security personnel, to continue to work with EU allies on collective defence.

The armed forces personnel that work alongside European states as defence allies appreciate and understand a need for collective security. Indeed, Frédéric Mérand, from the department of sociology in the University of California, assessed that military officers within Europe are more pro-European than the general populace. He detailed that European foreign officers do not see each other “merely as strategic partners for the pursuit of short-term objectives”, but more “colleagues” who unite under a common banner. He concluded that the officers are not strictly nationalistic and view the defence of Europe as a core part of their role.<sup>27</sup> While Mérand’s analysis was specific to Europe, the same military officer allegiance can be extrapolated to bilateral agreements with countries that share similar values, security concerns and military capabilities.

### **BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS – SPECIAL TIES WITH THE US AND FRANCE**

The US has many similar outlooks to the UK, a connected history and a strong military alliance that stems back to World War 1. The US also has the key addition of language which brings culture: books, music, film and much more that helps bind the two nations. This relationship was strengthened during the Cold War through the politico-military relationship within NATO and the UNSC. While the link between the US and Europe might have wavered post-Cold War it did not, and through the UK, the US maintained a strong ally into a key part of

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<sup>26</sup> NATO, *Joint declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, (8 July 2016), last accessed 24 Apr 2019, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133163.htm?selectedLocale=ru](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133163.htm?selectedLocale=ru)

<sup>27</sup> Frédéric Mérand, “Dying for the Union? Military Officers and the Creation of a European Defence Force,” *European Societies* 5, no. 3 (2003): 276-277.

the world that it shared many values with.<sup>28</sup> To offset any loss of influence in the EU and to retain a global influence, Britain's foreign and defence services have maintained the special relationship with the US. Indeed, despite changes in political parties on both sides of the Atlantic, this has been seen as the hallmark of every government since World War II and the formation of the Atlantic Charter. A key strength to this relationship is not just the UK's military capabilities but their willingness to work with the US and commit them.<sup>29</sup>

As the US shifts focus away from Europe and focuses on the Asia-Pacific region, there is less inclination to provide European defence and a greater expectation for European countries to take control of issues within their own region.<sup>30</sup> Despite this, under the Obama administration, close military ties were maintained with the UK through nuclear weapons, Special Forces, and intelligence sharing.<sup>31</sup> Indeed the Five Eyes intelligence sharing community (UK, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand), has only strengthened over time and uses security and defence services to collect, share and act against common threats. As an example, in 2016 the UK MOD announced the movement of a military satellite to cover the South East Asia region. This reallocation enabled the sharing of a key intelligence asset, which aided the continued preservation of the special relationship as US interests pivoted.<sup>32</sup>

Britain has a different, special relationship with its closest neighbor that is becoming equally as important. France has a deep seated history with the UK, some good and some bad, but the modern era has demonstrated they have more in common. The two countries: are

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<sup>28</sup> Tim Oliver and Michael John Williams, "Special Relationships in Flux: Brexit and the Future of the US–EU and US–UK Relationships," *International Affairs* 92, no. 3 (2016): 549.

<sup>29</sup> Rick LaVere, "Great Britain's Departure from the EU and the Implications for British Security and Defense," *International Politics Reviews* 4, no. 2 (2016):117-118.

<sup>30</sup> Robert M. Gates, *The Security and Defense Agenda* (Brussels, Belgium, 10 June 2011), last accessed 27 April 2019, <https://archive.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=4839>

<sup>31</sup> Tim Oliver and Michael John Williams. "Special Relationships in Flux...554.

<sup>32</sup> George Allison, "Britain relocates Skynet military satellite over Asia-Pacific region," *UK Defence Journal*, (25 June 2016), last accessed 24 April 2019, <https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/britain-relocates-skynet-military-satellite-over-asia-pacific-region/>

geographically collocated; share a colonial past; have similar full-spectrum military capabilities including nuclear weapons; are both UNSC members; exhibit similar global reach outlooks, in contrast to Germany; and share similar beliefs and common values. Moreover, over the last 100 years the two countries have had combined security threats through the First and Second World Wars, as well as the Cold War. More recently concerns have moved to disturbances in Europe, as well threats from the South and East including terrorism. In countering these threats, there is a necessity that these two states maintain the connection between their armed forces and foreign services. This is especially true given that Britain and France can be regarded as the only European states able to truly project military force outside of their region.<sup>33</sup>

The British and French leaders, Tony Blair and Jacques Chirac, laid the present security foundation in the 1998 Anglo-French summit in St Malo to call for greater defence collaboration within the EU, which led to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). While the UK Government had a lackluster approach to the CFSP and vetoed proposals for development, the Anglo-French relationship would continue.<sup>34</sup> Despite issues with the CFSP and France's difference in approach to NATO, security relationships would strengthen through a UK-France declaration in 2008.<sup>35</sup> French president Nicolas Sarkozy acknowledged the necessity for Britain to maintain the UK-US special relationship of "extremely brotherly and deep-rooted ties which for 300 years have bound [the UK] to America". Moreover, while he recognized the importance of the Franco-German friendship, he expressed in favour of Britain "but it is no longer enough to enable Europe to act and bring its full weight to bear. We need to rally the 27. We need first of

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<sup>33</sup> Benjamin Martill and Monika Sus, "Post-Brexit EU/UK Security Cooperation: NATO, CSDP+, Or 'French Connection'?" *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 20, no. 4 (2018): 848, 857-858.

<sup>34</sup> Richard G Whitman, "The UK and EU Foreign...R44, R46.

<sup>35</sup> Catherine Glière, "EU Security and Defence: Core Documents 2008. Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies," *Institute for Security Studies* (Paris, France 2009): 102-106.



all this new Franco-British entente”.<sup>36</sup> This agreement was further cemented in 2011 through the Lancaster House Treaty which has helped bind the two countries through nuclear and joint research.<sup>37</sup>

In 2019 along with France, Britain signed up with seven other EU countries in a joint military intervention force, designed for rapid deployment in times of crisis. This commitment designed to complement NATO, sees the UK Armed Forces help to maintain ties with Europe; an initiative that the UK will be able to participate in despite of Brexit. A French government source expressed that the UK’s participation was essential, as the two states had similar culture and military analytical methods in tackling a crisis, and “[t]hat culture [was] not shared between every EU member state”.<sup>38</sup> This demonstrated a continuation of not only Britain’s commitment to maintaining European stability through armed forces cooperation, but also how positively France viewed this renewed relationship with Britain, which had persisted over the last 20 years. This relationship has also included research and development in the area of complex weapons and procurement programs.<sup>39</sup> Crucially, for example, leaving the EU would not require Britain to leave the Organization for Joint Armaments Cooperation which manages the A400 tactical air transporter procurement program.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Nicolas Sarkozy, (speech, President of the French Republic to the UK Parliament, Royal Gallery, 26 March 2008):7,10, last accessed 28 Apr 2019, <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/upload/PresidentSarkozyaddress080326.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> UK Government, *Treaty Between The United Kingdom Of Great Britain And Northern Ireland And The French Republic For Defence And Security Co-Operation*, Treaty Series No. 36 (2011), last accessed 30 April 2019, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/238153/8174.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/238153/8174.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> Daniel Boffey, “Nine EU states sign off on joint military intervention force,” *The Guardian* (25 Jun 2018), last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/25/nine-eu-states-to-sign-off-on-joint-military-intervention-force>

<sup>39</sup> French Armed Forces Ministry, “Director-General of Armaments Meets with British Counterpart in Lancaster House Treaty,” *Defence-Aerospace*, (29 March 2018), last accessed 30 Apr 2019, <http://www.defense-aerospace.com/articles-view/release/3/192066/france%2C-uk-advance-joint-missile-programs%2C-ok-next-fcas-step.html>

<sup>40</sup> Matthew Uttley and Benedict Wilkinson, “A Spin of the Wheel? Defence Procurement and Defence Industries in the Brexit Debates,” *International Affairs* 92, no. 3 (2016): 577.

## **LONG TERM PLANNING – DEFENCE PROCUREMENT AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

European military procurement consortiums, such as A400M (UK, France, Germany, Spain, Turkey and Belgium) and Typhoon fighter aircraft (UK, Germany, Italy and Spain), have a multinational industry and military personnel presiding alongside each other. These personnel work collectively on technical, logistics and financial issues, as well as collaborating to exploit operational and interoperability effects. Once fully committed to a capability development program, the UK Government is unlikely to disengage from their foreign partners due to unrest or political uncertainties. Furthermore, these multinational programs have and will continue to bind the UK MOD with its partners, doing so over several decades while the capability is developed and remains in service.

John Deni published in *International Affairs* in 2014, presented concerns over defence interoperability between the US and its European allies after an exceptional depth of interoperability born out of the ISAF commitment during the Afghanistan war.<sup>41</sup> However, the UK MOD has branched out further than many of its European counter parts by operating US procured aircraft such as C-17, Airseeker, Chinook, Sentry, Reaper and C130J. Perhaps more significantly, is that the UK is the only Tier 1 program partner alongside the US, in the fifth-generation F-35 (UK designated Lightning) fighter aircraft program, giving Britain privileged influence and industrial benefits. Moreover, this helps the UK MOD to maintain interoperability with the US and ensures the ability to practice together on exercises and more easily cooperate in future conflicts. Indeed US Marine F-35s supported the UK carrier HMS *Queen Elizabeth* on her

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<sup>41</sup> John R. Deni, “Maintaining Transatlantic Strategic, Operational and Tactical Interoperability in an Era of Austerity,” *International Affairs* 90, no. 3 (2014): 583-585.

sea trials in October 2018.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, the UK MOD will not only use the fully operational carrier to project its own influence, but also as a way of enhancing the US special relationship through alignment of combined interests maintaining influence over China.<sup>43</sup>

In 2018, the UK had the largest defence budget within the EU and the second largest in NATO; being one of only five NATO members meeting a two percent target.<sup>44</sup> Although the size and numbers of troops have reduced since the Options for Change policy was introduced in the late 80s, SDSR15 saw a weighted defence budget put towards technology and equipment. The Review assessed that the defence industry had a turnover of £30B which included £11.9B of exports, and employed 215,000 people directly with a further 150,000 in the supply chain.<sup>45</sup> Protection and sustainment of this industry remains important for the UK government, to maintain a technological advantage over adversaries with a secure supply chain enabling freedom to act.<sup>46</sup> Experts Uttley and Wilkinson further assess that the single European Union market has had little impact on European defence procurement, citing article 346 of the 2007 Lisbon Treaty, which gives member states the freedom of the production or trade of arms for the protection of “essential interests of its security”.<sup>47</sup> However, Britain is not fixated just on

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<sup>42</sup> Sergeant Megan Friedl, “Marine Sets Sail with Royal Navy for F-35 Tests,” *US Department of Defence*, (5 October 2018), last accessed 29 Apr 2019, <https://www.defense.gov/explore/story/Article/1655752/marine-sets-sail-with-royal-navy-for-f-35-tests/>

<sup>43</sup> William James, “Post-Brexit UK ready to use “hard power” - defence minister,” *Reuters* (10 February 2019), last accessed 26 April 2019, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-defence-idUKKCN1Q000J>

<sup>44</sup> UK Government, UK Defence Expenditure, House of Commons library, Number CBP 8175 (8 November 2018), <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8175/CBP-8175.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> UK Government, House of Commons, A Brief Guide to Previous British Defence Reviews, International Affairs and Defence Section, (19 October 2010): 8, last accessed 29 Apr 2019, [Options for Change] <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7313/CBP-7313.pdf>. UK Government, *National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015*, 75, last accessed 19 April 2019, [Industry analysis] [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/555607/2015\\_Strategic\\_Defence\\_and\\_Security\\_Review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/555607/2015_Strategic_Defence_and_Security_Review.pdf)

<sup>46</sup> Matthew Uttley and Benedict Wilkinson. “A Spin of the...570.

<sup>47</sup> Foundation for EU Democracy, *Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*, Treaty of Lisbon (2007): 193, last accessed 19 Apr 2019, <http://en.euabc.com/upload/books/lisbon-treaty-3edition.pdf>

defence procurement and ensures appropriate spread of foreign resources to meet the security objective.

In contemporary counterinsurgency or Peace Support Operations (PSO), even before the fighting has stopped, there is often a requirement for redevelopment work to achieve the grand strategic effect; ultimately to enable a stabilized and humanitarian secure country that is able to become self-sustaining. The UK's Department for International Development (DfID) has come to the fore over the last decade and, within the international development community, is widely considered to be a leading provider of superior advice on the delivery of development aid.<sup>48</sup> The UK has been the largest contributor to the World Bank's International Development Association since 2007.<sup>49</sup> In 2017 the UK's contribution, at 13 per cent of the total, was half a per cent more than the US and greater than twice of that from Germany or France.<sup>50</sup> DfID, akin to the UK armed forces, can be viewed as an organization that provides excellent continuity between changes in government in the quest of ethical and realist foreign policies.<sup>51</sup>

In the case of the 2003 Iraq conflict, Britain's hard power military deployment paved the way and was in support of soft power effects that followed. DfID provided humanitarian aid to Iraq through the granting of multi-million pound contracts to UK companies. While to date Iraq security may still have further to go, the net effect of UK aid during this period was to inaugurate regional economic interests, which have increased the UK's influence and attraction through

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<sup>48</sup> UK Government, *Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence*, House of Lords Oral and Written Evidence vol. 1(A–G): 35, last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/soft-power-uk-influence/soft-power-ev-vol1-a-g.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> Iain Rogers, "Britain now top World Bank donor," *Reuters Business News* (14 December 2007), last accessed 27 April 2019, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-worldbank-donors/britain-now-top-world-bank-donor-idUKN1433022720071215>

<sup>50</sup> International Development Association, *Donor Contributions to IDA18 Replenishment*, World Bank Group, (end March 2017), last accessed 27 April 2019, <http://ida.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/ida18-donor-contributions.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> Emma Bell, "Soft Power and Corporate Imperialism: Maintaining British Influence," *Race & Class* 57, no. 4 (2016): 77.

reconstruction and securitization projects.<sup>52</sup> This soft power attraction obtained through PSOs and developmental aid realizes the wider stabilization of British interests abroad, as well as setting up partnerships which the UK rely upon in the future.

In a select committee on soft power and the UK's influence, Lieutenant General Simon Mayall, a retired British officer and Middle East adviser to the UK MOD gave evidence on the improvements in post conflict reconstruction through the unison of DfID, the FCO, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and the armed forces. He agreed through historical experience the UK Armed Forces have become extremely effective on the ground and through their actions have also created soft power effects. He explained: "That attractive nature, backed up by the credibility of being a well equipped, well trained, well disciplined [armed forces] of a certain size gives us influence with allies, dare I say with opponents, and with natural colleagues in the operating space".

Further, the General used the example of Gulf States and their concerns for conventional forces to protect against Iran, which provided a "defence prism...to influence [Gulf States] on a range of other issues". He also detailed that these defence relationships translated into commercial advantages. Specifically the educating and training of personnel, who prefer to come to UK military academies, constructed around a whole-package approach tied to defence industries and military sales, such as Typhoon aircraft (and previously Tornado) to Saudi Arabia.<sup>53</sup> This demonstrates the depth to which civilian foreign services, armed forces and industry can combine to produce political influencing effects amongst foreign states. These

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>53</sup> UK Government, *The Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence*, Evidence Session No.3 Heard in Public, (July 2013), [attractive nature] questions 46, [defence prism] question 58, last accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/soft-power-uk-influence/c080713Ev3.pdf>

partnerships are constructed and last over decades and provide a mainstay strength that ensures stability for British overseas interest despite political uncertainties.

## CONCLUSION

The foreign, security and defence aspects are one of the easiest parts of leaving the EU.<sup>54</sup> In 2016 the UK MOD's defence expenditure represented approximately 25 per cent of the EU's \$265 billion total and 10 per cent of the total 1.5 million troops, which the UK is more likely to deploy than most other states. If Britain was to fully disengage from European led coalitions, capability gaps would be created that may not be easily filled by other member states to support France. Firstly, due to the high tariff UK MOD equipment of aircraft carriers, warships, expansion of multi role aircraft fleets, including the introduction of the Lightning 5<sup>th</sup> generation fighter aircraft.<sup>55</sup> Secondly, continuing to shake off post Second World War legacy, Germany would need to become increasingly involved in the fighting components of more than peace support operations such as Mali in 2016. Moreover, any future conflicts that the remaining members of EU engage in are likely to be in the UK's interest.<sup>56</sup>

Given Britain's strength remains in NATO, British Professor Malcolm Chalmers, Deputy Director-General of the Royal United Services Institute, agrees that post Brexit the UK will remain a considerable influence in European security. He also speculates of a UK-EU special relationship, which will continue to coordinate foreign and security policy issues that have common concern. As the strongest European military power, Chalmers supports the view that the UK will continue to have great influence in Europe. He goes further and uses an expression from

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<sup>54</sup> Richard G Whitman, "The UK and EU Foreign...R49. Sven Biscop," All Or Nothing? The EU Global Strategy and Defence Policy After the Brexit," *Contemporary Security Policy* 37, no. 3 (2016): 432.

<sup>55</sup> UK Government, *National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015*, (2015): 28, last accessed 20 April 2019.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/555607/2015\\_Strategic\\_Defence\\_and\\_Security\\_Review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/555607/2015_Strategic_Defence_and_Security_Review.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> Sven Biscop, "All Or Nothing ...436-437.

Whitehall officials whom referred to the UK as having a “security surplus”, of foreign security intelligence skills and defence capabilities over EU counterparts.<sup>57</sup> Additionally, the UK’s relationship with the US will likely be more of a global partner rather than a route through to Europe/EU. President Donald Trump’s “make America great again” nationalistic approach could drive the UK and EU closer on defence issues, which will be conducted through bilateral agreements, as has already been initiated with France over the last two decades.

It would be extremely challenging for politicians to influence foreign security and defence alliances through the pledging of meaningful cooperation, if they did not have embedded, credible smart power capabilities to back up political desires. This paper has not set out to defend the existence of armed forces, but in the case of the UK has provided another perspective to the benefits that defence and foreign security services provide to supporting the stabilization of the state. The UK’s defence spending remains relatively strong and the British Armed Forces have sought after capabilities, personnel and services. This is aligned with a proficient foreign diplomatic service and high spending levels from a well-regarded foreign aid department. This is why the UK Government has legitimacy as a key leader in the UNSC and NATO, underpinned by strong, special international relationships with the US and France.<sup>58</sup>

This paper has not considered how applicable the presented thesis would be to other states, but not does presume it is unique to the UK. Further work could assess which other countries are successful at using their foreign services to produce stabilizing effects. Additionally, this paper did not review memoirs of ex-political leaders to assess their reflection after being in office. Further work could examine reliance on defence and foreign services to

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<sup>57</sup> Malcolm Chalmers, “UK Foreign and Security Policy after Brexit,” *The RUSI Journal* (January 2017): [UK-EU special relationship] 3, [security surplus] 4.

<sup>58</sup> Malcolm Chalmers, “A Force for Influence? Making British Defence Effective,” *The RUSI Journal* 153, no. 6 (2008): 22-23.

ease uncertainty and maintain an influence on multilateral partners, even when their political stance at the time may not have outwardly recognized this fact.

The phrase a “force for good” was used in the UK’s SDR White Paper in 1998, signifying the role defence services would conduct in discharging responsibilities throughout the world, specifically in humanitarian disasters and against aggression of dictators.<sup>59</sup> Malcolm Chalmers postured over a “force for influence”, referring to Britain being greatest when it is able to influence the US over particular missions or conflicts.<sup>60</sup> This paper has shown that regardless of political unrest or changes in world order, the UK defence and foreign services display their true strength as the mainstay for UK foreign affairs, and have become a *force for stabilization*. Ultimately the UK can rely upon the people it has invested in to protect and promulgate foreign affairs, they are the guardians of Britain’s global interconnections, with this in mind Britain can *keep calm and carry on*.

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<sup>59</sup> UK Government, *Strategic Defence Review (July 1998 ...7, 12, 290*.

<sup>60</sup> Malcolm Chalmers, “A Force for Influence...20-23.



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