



Global Britain

One Page Summary and Questions

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Global Britain

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Questions for discussion

1. What should a Conservative-led UK Government seek to achieve in the world?
2. What is the UK's unique selling point as a global player, and what should our commitments be to other countries? What should be the role of the Commonwealth?
3. On what global issues can the UK have the biggest impact and exercise the most leverage?
4. How should we best target our resources? How should we best prioritise our aid commitments?
5. How can we give today's school and college-leavers better exposure to the challenge and opportunities of the rapidly-growing "BRICS" economies (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa)?
6. How can we help more UK companies export outside the EU?
7. How might we balance our future economic, strategic and humanitarian needs and responsibilities in the world – in the areas of defence & security, soft power, diplomatic priorities, boosting trade, and international development?
8. What metrics could we use to measure the success of Global Britain?
9. Is there any other question you think should have been asked or observation you would like to make?

What Our Manifesto Said

Global Britain

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"Brexit has awoken the world's interest in Britain and it has awoken Britain's interest in the world. That is why our exports have grown 11% in a year while global trade has grown by less than 4%. None of us can know what lies ahead but we can be certain that the scale of our ambition will be the key to what we can achieve together – for our people, our country and for the world beyond our borders." (Rt Hon Liam Fox MP, 1 May 2018)³

"Without DFID, the best development department in the world, bar none, without our NGOs and our charities, many of them the best in their field, and without all our nation has to offer, its institutions, its financial sector, its creative law, its innovation, its entrepreneurs and its scientists, we won't deliver the [UN] Global Goals." (Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP, 9 October 2018)⁴

"As we face our post-Brexit future, Britain has a role to play. It is one that we are uniquely suited to deliver. Remembering our responsibilities. Not overstating our strength, but not understating it either. Because right now our history, our networks and our unique combination of soft and hard power gives us a real ability to shape the course of history in line with our values." (Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, 31 October 2018)⁵

As Conservatives, we believe, among other values, in promoting freedom, enterprise and responsibility; in strong national defence, international cooperation and prioritising the vulnerable.⁶ "Global Britain" is intended to signal that, post-Brexit, the UK will continue to be open, inclusive and outward facing; free trading; assertive in standing up for British interests and values; and resolute in boosting our international standing and influence. It is a Britain with global presence, active in every region; global interests, working with our allies and partners to deliver the global security and prosperity that ensures our own; and global perspectives, engaging with the world in every area, influencing and being influenced.

The time is right to take stock of the UK's role in the world, not only in the light of domestic developments but also in the light of long-term changes in the international system and global balance of power. For it isn't just Brexit that's causing change, other events are even more significant: the rise of China and the Asian powerhouse economies; a growing threat to democracy and democratic values; and the rules-based international order that we built to defend them is being openly questioned.

The UK has a wide range of attributes that have traditionally made it a global player: it is a nuclear-armed P5 member of the United Nations Security Council, the second-biggest military spender in NATO, a major contributor to humanitarian aid around the world, and a key member of networks such as the Commonwealth, the G7 and the G20. Yet it remains unclear what the UK should do with these resources and assets in the post-Brexit environment, and how the UK should exercise leadership on the most urgent and complex issues facing the international system. For "Global Britain" to be more than a worthy aspiration, the slogan must be backed by substance.⁷

What Our Manifesto Said

“We will work to forge a new culture of exporting among UK businesses, equipping them with the tools and opportunities they need to succeed in the global marketplace, and take advantage of new high-growth markets around the world.” (p.15)

“We believe that energy policy should be focused on outcomes rather than the means by which we reach our objectives. So, after we have left the European Union, we will form our energy policy based not on the way energy is generated but on the ends we desire – reliable and affordable energy, seizing the industrial opportunity that new technology presents and meeting our global commitments on climate change.” (p.23)

“Global leadership on development, backed by spending 0.7 per cent of our national income with new rules to spend it more effectively.” (p.30)

GLOBAL BRITAIN (pp.37-41)

The United Kingdom is a global nation. Our history is a global history; our future must be global too. We believe Britain should play an active, leading role in the world. Not because it is our right or inheritance, but because our leadership in the world is the surest way to defend and advance the interests of the British people, and to extend around the world those values that we believe to be right.

The United Kingdom is already a global power. We have a leading diplomatic service and one of the largest overseas development budgets in the world. Our armed forces are respected around the world and enable us to project power globally. Our global businesses and London’s position as the global centre of finance make us more interconnected with the global economy than any other comparable nation.

Britain is already a significant influence for good around the world. Our aid is giving millions an education and an opportunity to rise out of poverty. Our naval vessels are stopping the vile trade in people and in drugs. We are at the forefront of action against global climate change.

We can and should do more, not just because acting as a force for good is an important end in itself but because the result will be greater peace and prosperity for the British people. We will continue to champion British values around the globe: freedom, democracy, tolerance and the rule of law. We will be the world’s foremost champion of free trade. We will expand our global efforts to combat extremism, terror, and the perpetration of violence against people because of their faith, gender or sexuality. We will continue to lead international action against climate change, and the degradation of habitat and loss of species. We will continue to lead a global campaign for the education of women and girls, which is the key to progress in so many countries. We will lead the fight against modern slavery, just as we overcame the trade in slaves two hundred years ago. We will lead a global effort to close down online spaces for those who abuse children, incite violence or propagate hate speech. We shall lead the world in the hard work to end extreme child poverty and co-ordinate efforts against microbial resistance and emerging tropical diseases. And we will take up leadership in a new arena, where concern is shared around the world: we will be the global leader in the regulation of the use of personal data and the internet.

British leadership in international institutions

The security and prosperity of the United Kingdom is built on the international institutions that we helped to found and will continue to help maintain: the United Nations and the UN Security Council, NATO – the cornerstone of our defence, the Commonwealth, the G20, G7 and the World Trade Organization. We will continue to give strong support to an international order in which rules govern state conduct; in our own behaviour we will support this system and apply it in a principled way. We shall continue to seek to reform multilateral institutions, especially in the way they distribute development funds, so that money is used to greatest effect to protect and help the world’s most vulnerable people.

Global partnerships and alliances

Alongside our proposed deep and special partnership with the European Union, we will maintain the historical, cultural and economic ties that link us to our old friends and allies around the globe. We will build upon our existing special relationship with the United States, and forge new economic and security partnerships that make us more prosperous at home and more secure abroad. We will

strengthen our close links with our Commonwealth allies, continuing our mission together to promote democratic values around the world and build on our existing economic relationships to further our common trading interests. We will develop alliances and co-operate more with old friends and new partners.

A global champion of free trade

The United Kingdom will be a global champion for an open economy, free trade, and the free flow of investment, ideas and information. Open and free trade is key to international prosperity, stability and security – it is an essential component of an economy that works for everyone. We believe the UK must seize the unique opportunities it has to forge a new set of trade and investment relationships around the world, building a global, outward-looking Britain.

Promoting British culture around the world

The United Kingdom is home to some of the finest cultural institutions in the world. We will continue to promote those institutions and ensure they have the resources they need to amplify Britain's voice on the world stage and as a global force for good. We will continue to promote democracy, the rule of law, property entitlements, a free and open media, and accountable institutions in countries and societies across the world.

We will place the BBC World Service and the British Council on a secure footing so they are able to promote the best of British values around the globe and build strong ties between our local communities and other countries.

Leading the world in development

British aid helps millions and is a powerful statement of Global Britain's place in the world. It protects our interests: by building a safer, healthier, more prosperous world, we can protect our own people from disease, conflict and instability. This is the right ambition for a country with a global outlook, so we will maintain the commitment to spend 0.7 per cent of our gross national income on assistance to developing nations and international emergencies.

We will continue to use our aid budget in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals, to end extreme poverty, save children's lives, and provide an education for girls. We will work to end the subjugation and mutilation of women, to combat the brutal slave trade in fellow human beings and to prevent catastrophic environmental degradation. And we will continue to lead global efforts to tackle sexual violence in conflict.

British scientists and inventors have helped to address some of the greatest challenges facing the world's poorest people. A global Britain should aspire to do even more: we will significantly increase our funding of UK-led medical and technical research into the biggest threats to global health and prosperity.

There are still ways that we can improve the way that taxpayers' money is used to help the world's most vulnerable people. We do not believe that international definitions of development assistance always help in determining how money should be spent, on whom and for what purpose. So we will work with like-minded countries to change the rules so that they are updated and better reflect the breadth of our assistance around the world. If that does not work, we will change the law to allow us to use a better definition of development spending, while continuing to meet our 0.7 per cent target.

Reforming asylum

We will ensure Britain remains a place of sanctuary for refugees and asylum seekers. The existing system, however, is geared towards people who are young enough, fit enough, and have the resources to get to Britain, rather than those who are most in need of our help.

Wherever possible, the government will offer asylum and refuge to people in parts of the world affected by conflict and oppression, rather than to those who have made it to Britain. We will work to reduce asylum claims made in Britain and, as we do so, increase the number of people we help in the most troubled regions. We will continue to work with other countries in Europe, and the United Nations, to review the international legal definitions of asylum and refugee status.

We will make sure our councils get the help they need to deal with people as they arrive, and establish schemes to help individuals, charities, faith groups, churches and businesses to provide housing and other support for refugees.

Protecting the global environment

The United Kingdom will lead the world in environmental protection. As Conservatives, we are committed to leaving the environment in better condition than we inherited it. That is why we will continue to take a lead in global action against climate change, as the government demonstrated by ratifying the Paris Agreement. We were the first country to introduce a Climate Change Act, which Conservatives helped to frame, and we are halfway towards meeting our 2050 goal of reducing emissions by eighty per cent from 1990 levels.

We will champion greater conservation co-operation within international bodies, protecting rare species, the polar regions and international waters. We will work with our Overseas Territory governments to create a Blue Belt of marine protection in their precious waters, establishing the largest marine sanctuaries anywhere in the world.

Modern slavery

The UK is a global leader in fighting the evil trade in human beings – both around the world and in our own country – for sex and labour exploitation. As home secretary, Theresa May brought forward the Modern Slavery Act, the first of its kind in Europe, appointed the world's first anti-slavery commissioner and set up the Modern Slavery Taskforce to bring together the heads of MI5, MI6 and the National Crime Agency to coordinate our response to criminal gangs operating across the world.

We now need to go further. We need to focus on the exploitation of vulnerable men, women and children for their labour, people who are moved around our own country and between nations, as if they were not human at all. We will review the application of exploitation in the Modern Slavery Act to strengthen our ability to stop criminals putting men, women and children into criminal, dangerous and exploitative working conditions. And the UK will use its power to push the United Nations and other international bodies to make Modern Slavery a thing of the past.

STRONG DEFENCE IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

Our world is full of opportunity but is also riven by conflict, terrorism and threat. As a global power, we have a responsibility to sustain our fine armed forces so that they can defend the realm, our overseas territories and our interests around the globe. We will play a leading role in NATO and maintain the ability to conduct strike operations, peacekeeping, security missions and the deployment of a joint expeditionary force. We will maintain the overall size of the armed forces, including an army that is capable of fielding a war-fighting division. We shall expand our reach around the world. We will retain the Trident continuous-at-sea nuclear deterrent to provide the ultimate guarantee of our security.

We have the biggest defence budget in Europe and the second largest in NATO. We will continue to meet the NATO commitment to spend at least 2 per cent of GDP on defence and we will increase the defence budget by at least 0.5 per cent above inflation in every year of the new parliament.

“We will open discussions with the leading tech companies and other like-minded democracies about the global rules of the digital economy, to develop an international legal framework that we have for so long benefited from in other areas like banking and trade. We recognise the complexity of this task and that this will be the beginning of a process, but it is a task which we believe is necessary and which we intend to lead.” (p.82)

Endnotes

¹ Cover photo: [DFID \(CC BY 2.0\)](#)

² *The government's negotiating objectives for exiting the EU: PM speech*, Rt Hon Theresa May MP, 17 January 2017: [link](#)

³ *Brexit and beyond: Britain's place in the world in the 2020s*, Department for International Trade, 1 May 2018: [link](#)

⁴ *The future of UK aid post-Brexit*, Department for International Development, 9 October 2018: [link](#)

⁵ *An Invisible Chain: speech by the Foreign Secretary*, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, 31 October 2018: [link](#)

⁶ *Conservative values summary*, Conservative Policy Forum, 17 November 2017: [link](#)

⁷ *Global Britain*, House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, Sixth Report of Session 2017–19, 12 March 2018: [link](#)